THE ANNALS OF THE UKRAINIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES IN THE U.S., INC.
VOLUME XX, 1998-1999 NUMBERS 47-48

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GEORGE S.N. LUCKYJ

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Published by
THE UKRAINIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
IN THE U.S., Inc.

The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy *of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.* are published by the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., Inc.

All correspondence, orders, and remittances should be addressed to:
The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.
206 West 100th Street, New York, New York 10025

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 59-33060

ISBN 0503-1001

Printed by Computoprint Corp., 35 Harding Avenue, Clifton, N.J. 07011
Tel. (973) 772-2166 Fax: (973) 772-1963 e-mail: computopr@aol.com

For Moira

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With the publication of this volume of *The Annals, The Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the United States* honors one of the founders of the series, its distinguished member and prominent Slavicist, Professor George S. N. Luckyj, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. The biographical essays presented here are intended for a broad spectrum of readers while scholars may find additional information in the Bibliographical Essay.

A Prefatory Note

The present volume was prompted by a desire to acquaint North American readers with little-known but prominent writers of nineteenth-century Ukraine. These mini-biographies, set against the background of their time, may perhaps serve as an introduction to modern Ukrainian intellectual history. In the first decade of its post-colonial history, Ukraine is reassessing its cultural heritage and this is becoming of interest both to its neighbors and to those who knew very little about that heritage. The approach taken here is that of "cultural history," which today, in the words of Gertrude Himmelfarb, "instead of concentrating on the progression of events...has been 'social-scientized'." Regrettably, perhaps, it was not possible to follow this new methodology because of the distance from Ukrainian sources and archives. What has emerged is the somewhat old-fashioned "collective biography of 'elites' - sometimes referred to as "prosopography." I discuss the historical and social background of nineteenth-century Ukraine in some detail in the introductory chapter.

Originally, a short biography of Ukraine's national poet, Taras Shevchenko, was also included in this volume. His life in many ways epitomizes Ukraine's struggle to establish a modern national identity in the nineteenth century. However, since a similar work of mine recently appeared in English under the title *Shevchenko's Unforgotten Journey* (Toronto, 1996), and a scholarly biography by Pavlo Zaytsev is available in English, I decided to omit the biographical sketch of Shevchenko here and to add instead a vignette of Marko Vovchok. Some material on Shevchenko's life may be found in the Bibliographical Essay, which provides more general sources on the leading figures of the nineteenth century. I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues George Shevelov, Lubomyr Wynar and Assya Humesky for their assistance and to Susan Kent-Davidson for her expert editing.

Introduction

Whoever writes our story
will be telling the tale of
the hunt from the hare's
point of view.

Askold Melnyczuk *"What Is Told"*

1

The genre of literary biography is still very popular with readers. It is abhorred by most modern critics. The Canadian writer Robert Fulford says that "we are living in the great age of biography, and in a sense that's surprising. It runs against the main currents of academic thought, which have for decades been moving away from the celebration of great individuals." Gone are the days when biographies served up Freudian or Jungian interpretations of writers' lives. Today they do not satisfy post-modernist pundits. Therefore, by and large, they are sidestepped and relegated to the gatherers of detail and gossip. Literary studies, it is claimed, can either do without them or should concentrate on texts alone.

Yet in Ukrainian literary history, biography may come to claim an important place even at this late date. For decades, under the Soviet regime, literary biography played the role of handmaiden to ideology. The lives of writers were narrated briefly and only as illustrations of competing historical forces. Often they resembled the lives of saints. Their significance in relation to literary works was treated in very simplistic form, and they were regarded as reflections of class struggle.

Today all this is changing. First of all, the archives have been opened, and great curiosity animates researchers of the biographical material contained in them, for decades shielded from the public. Who were these writers, often neglected or maligned in the past? What were their true life stories, and why were so many details of

their biographies hidden? These are legitimate questions, and in the coming years, when publishing difficulties are finally overcome, many new biographies of Ukrainian writers may appear. For these lives will reveal a part of the national memory that has been almost eradicated by the communist regime. As Iris Murdoch wrote: "One of the first things which liberated people want to know is the truth about their past." If national identity is to acquire a new, deeper meaning, then this will be done by reading literary biographies. For writers, not politicians or scholars, have always been at the forefront of national consciousness in Ukraine.

The present volume represents an attempt to approach anew the literary biographies of nineteenth-century Ukraine. This must be done within the context of a modern, although well-known plan. The mid-century's respected biographer Leon Edel believed that "the writing of a literary life would be nothing but a kind of indecent curiosity, and an invasion of privacy, were it not that it seeks always to illuminate the mysterious and magical process of creation." Today, literary biography does not necessarily illuminate a writer's work. The two are believed to be independent of each other. Any attempt to relate biography and the artist's work is dismissed as "biographical fallacy." This indeed may be so, but one will never succeed in a total separation of life and work. However, I have decided here only to mention but not to discuss literary works, and only to indicate some linkage in the life-stories.

My guide in this volume came from another dictum of Leon Edel. "No lives are led," he wrote, "outside history or society. No biography is complete unless it reveals the individual within history, within an ethos and a social complex." This harks back to Goethe's famous maxim that "the principal task of biography is to present a man in the conditions of his time." What may sound like an old cliché could still be a signpost for today's reader and is the central position of the present study. What appears as "discursive encoding," "life-texts," or "generic forms" - to mention only some preoccupations of modern biographers - are ignored. History is not treated as mere background but as part of the writers' individuality. Lionel Trilling's statement that "we have the sense of the past and must live with it, and by it. And we must read our literature by it."(1948) - is our sign-

post. An attempt is made here to impart a sense of the unfolding of the modern Ukrainian historical identity. In a post-colonial world this may be of interest to others.

Seven biographical vignettes of nineteenth-century Ukrainian writers are presented here for the English-speaking reader unfamiliar with Ukraine's past as a possible illumination of Ukrainian intellectual history, rather than of literature. The nineteenth century revealed, for Ukraine, not only the fundamental spirit of its modern culture (ethos), but also exposed its social complex. In contrast to their compatriots of the preceding and following centuries Ukrainian writers of the nineteenth century followed a national, though not nationalistic, vision. The dramatic changes that have occurred in Ukraine ever since can be understood only through these earlier antecedents.

Its nineteenth-century literature is Ukraine's classical heritage, and its creators were the pioneers of modern Ukraine. Their life-stories illuminate not so much their works as the intellectual and spiritual milieu of Russia's colony, Ukraine. Today, in the dawn of the post-colonial era in that part of the world, these lives convey not only historical but human and transcendental values. They remind us more of changelessness than of change. Their ethos has not lost its appeal to the intellectual leaders of Ukraine today, even if they live in a very different world. Their task is unfulfilled and may remain so.

2

Ukraine as a country did not appear on a nineteenth-century map of Europe. A large part of it, marked "Little Russia," was shown as part of Russia, and a smaller part as part of Austro-Hungary. Its people had a culture and a language of their own (the first linguistic maps - Kost Mykhalchuk's in 1871 - show it) but were not conscious of their full identity. They knew they were not Russians or Poles, but, although they were aware of their distinctiveness, their national consciousness was practically non-existent. This was because their elite during the two previous centuries had abandoned them and become absorbed mostly by Russia and other neighbors of Ukraine. This happened to many other nationalities during the expansion of imperial Russia. Each was slowly swallowed up by their colonial masters -

swallowed, but not digested.

The historical past of Ukraine was never quite lost for the ordinary people, even during the era of serfdom (1783-1861). The autonomous Cossack state had officially been named, in the days of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, "Zaporozhian Host," not Little Russia, the name given to the country later by Peter I. The exploits of freedom-loving Cossacks in the seventeenth century, Ukraine's "Heroic Age," were fondly recalled in folk songs and legends. The desire of the common people to be free of their masters lingered on and ignited sporadic peasant rebellions. Some writers in Ukraine wrote in Russian, but often on Ukrainian themes. Members of the educated class, which a little later gave birth to the Ukrainian intelligentsia, wrote memoirs and recalled the critical events of the eighteenth century - the abolition of the Hetman state in 1764, the destruction of the Zaporozhian Sich in 1775, the introduction of serfdom in 1783. These had been severe blows to Ukrainian autonomy, but they were also reminders of a time when people enjoyed some freedoms and privileges. They were not forgotten

Having abolished the office of the Hetman in Ukraine in 1764 and having destroyed the Sich, Russia's ruling monarch Catherine II replaced the office with a Little Russian Collegium headed by the Russian Count Peter Rumiantsev. For once Karl Marx was right when he wrote that "the Zaporozhian Sich was a true free republic surrounded by aggressive empires." In 1783 serfdom was introduced to Ukraine. The Cossack regiments, which had been the administrative backbone of the Hetman state, were abolished, and new regimental units were established. Ukrainian monasteries, which supported much of Ukraine's education, lost their lands in 1786. No class was spared, although the Cossack *starshyna* (officer corps) received in 1785 a charter enabling them to ascend to Russian *dvorianstvo* (nobiliary rank, here translated as "gentry," or "nobility"). They might also have been placated by Russia's annexation of the Black Sea coastal areas, where many Ukrainians settled. Many educated Ukrainians continued to do what was already a trend in the eighteenth century - to go to Russia, which offered them jobs and the intellectual excitement of the "Northern Palmyra." Ukraine became very provincial and was now for all practical purposes an integral part of the Rus-

sian Empire, without any autonomy whatever. After the second partition of Poland in 1793, Right Bank Ukraine also came under Russian rule.

Yet the people in this latest colony of Russia did not aquiesce entirely. The descendants of the Cossack *starshyna* remembered the old liberties of which they were now deprived. While little actual opposition to the new order was voiced, a few voices were raised in protest (Poletyka), and pamphlets and manuscripts eulogizing Cossack history began to circulate. The widest circulation was reached by *Istoriia Rusov* (History of the Russes), of unknown authorship. It defended the idea of "Ukrainian legitimism" and the continuity of an autonomous Ukrainian body politic. National consciousness seemed dormant, but, originally, it was attached to the concepts of the old Cossack rights and liberties. The beginning of the nineteenth century marks a low point in Ukrainian nationhood. The old traditional concept of "estate" Cossack Ukraine no longer existed; the modern ethnic concept of nationality was barely born. The shift that occurred a few years later - from political to literary dissent, was slow but very significant. From that time on, for more than a century, Ukrainian ideas were expressed in books, not in political action. Writers became the standard-bearers of a nascent nationality.

The Russian subjugation of Ukraine brought with it a long totalitarian oppression of the country. Western scholars (Pipes, Seton-Watson) have described and analyzed tsarist Russia in great detail. In Ukraine, this oppression showed itself in the rapid change of government, from the autonomy and self-rule of earlier times to a centralized diktat imposed by St. Petersburg. Tsar Alexander I (1801-25), while at first professing liberalism and introducing some reforms, in the end strengthened the autocracy and police apparatus. His brother, Nicholas I (1825-55), who succeeded him, proved an even greater tyrant. The empire grew by brutal conquest, and Russification was intensified. An ill-fated rebellion by young officers and intellectuals (the Decembrists) was crushed in 1825. Echos of it were heard in Ukraine, where the so-called Southern Society of Decembrists was based.

Formulated in 1832, the political doctrine of Official Nationality (orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality) reinforced obscurantism, reactionary policies, and the isolation of Russia from Western Europe.

Ukraine was propelled in this direction by her new masters against her traditional democratic inclinations. Only a few writers came to her rescue. What her elite had lost, literature was destined to retrieve. At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century the subservience of most Ukrainians was obvious - they were a conquered people. Later, in the 1840s the poet Taras Shevchenko would scold them for "walking well in yokes, better than your fathers did." In the meantime the embers were still alive.

3

At the very end of the eighteenth century (1798) there appeared, not out of nowhere but still very unexpectedly, a major work of secular Ukrainian literature - *Eneida* (a travesty of Virgil's great work) by Ivan Kotliarevsky. First published against his wishes, it was the product of a man whose views were those of the eighteenth century, but it was written in Ukrainian and revived strikingly old Cossack and folk traditions. It would always be regarded as the start of modern Ukrainian literature and would assume an extra-literary dimension in stressing the use of the Ukrainian literary language. From then on, even before the appearance of Ukraine's greatest poet, Taras Shevchenko, language became the most effective weapon in the Ukrainian armory. It remains so today.

Eneida's language, as well as its magnificent poetry, made the work very popular. Kotliarevsky's biographer wrote in 1839: "All Ukraine was elated reading *Eneida* ...The national spirit (*narodnost*) was reflected in the poem as if in a mirror." The birth of a new literary language came just in time to save that language from extinction - at least many people thought so at the time. In 1827 the Russian critic Nikolai Melgunov wrote that "the Little Russian language, belonging to a formerly famous people, will, together with it, most likely disappear and will be preserved in only one record [the *Eneida*]." Similar fears that the Ukrainian language "was dying" were expressed by the Ukrainian poet Amvrosiy Metlynsky. Was the *Eneida* to be relegated therefore to a museum, or was it to become a start of a new era - and not only in literature?

It is significant that a literary work became a turning-point in

history and a writer came to be regarded as a maker of it. If a literary language was, in those days, one proof of a people's existence, then the Ukrainians acquired it through Kotliarevsky. The Russian scholar Izmail Sreznevsky thought in 1834 that this creation "in the hitherto wild desert of Ukrainian literature" gave every reason to elevate the Ukrainian language from the accepted status of a "dialect" (*narechie*) to that of a language (*yazyk*). Although it was only in 1906 that the Russian Academy of Sciences conceded this to be so, the battle for recognition was joined early in the nineteenth century. It consumed most of the energy of Ukrainian intellectuals, who expanded it into a cultural and later a political program. In the true tradition of Romanticism, they regarded language as the "soul" of the people (and nation). All this hinged on individual writers and their works. Who were they as individuals, and what was the milieu they sprang from? A brief socio-cultural background is necessary.

In the seventeenth century, central Ukraine, bisected by the river Dnieper (Dnipro), was known as being on the right (*Pravoberezhzhia*), or the left (*Livoberezhzhia*) bank of the river. It was in the Left-Bank Ukraine that the Cossacks established the Hetmanate (*Hetmanshchyna*) or the Hetman state, which lasted from 1648 to 1764 and included large areas on the right bank. This autonomous state was administered by Cossack regiments located in major cities, primarily on the left bank. Towards the demise of the Hetmanate the centre of authority remained on the left bank (the last hetman of Ukraine, Kyrylo Rozumovsky, 1750-64, resided at the old Cossack capital, Baturyn). It is no wonder, therefore, that the literary revival in Ukraine in the early nineteenth century began on the left bank, not very far from Baturyn, in the cities of Poltava and Kharkiv rather than Kyiv. They, more than the present-day capital of Ukraine, had preserved a spirit of distinctiveness.

Ivan Kotliarevsky (1769-1838) was born and educated in Poltava. Without finishing his schooling in the local seminary he became a tutor to many children of the rural gentry, and during these years he observed the life of ordinary people. Most of his life, apart from military service, Kotliarevsky spent in Poltava. Rejected as a suitor by a landowner's daughter, he turned to writing. An owner of a small, simply furnished house, unmarried, and a keen reader of Rus-

sian and foreign literature, he epitomized a certain type of cultured official, loyal to the tsar but also devoted to the songs and customs of his people. His literary activity was leisurely if deliberate. Writing was a pleasurable diversion. Life was on the whole tranquil, though here and there it reverberated with memories of the Cossack-Hetman era and of folk traditions. These were to be relished and even cultivated. Pockets of the Ukrainian gentry clung to their antiquities, and some even tried to revive them. Their semi-rustic environment favoured conservation as well as conservatism. They did not look ahead, but were pleased to remember the past.

Many of the men who were educated at the Mohyla Academy in Kyiv, were "military clerks" (*soslovie voiskovykh kantseliaristov*), who, in the opinion of the historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky, "replaced the representatives of the Kyivan scholasticism of the first half of the eighteenth century and became the Cossack intelligentsia who prepared the Ukrainian national revival of the nineteenth century." If the term "intelligentsia" hardly suits Ukrainian leaders of the eighteenth century, the milieu of Kotliarevsky and others was one in which literary and scholarly pursuits in the area of Ukrainian history and literature were becoming prevalent, even deep-rooted. The writers gradually transferred the focus of such attempts from earlier pre-secular and ecclesiastical concerns to temporal and national ones.

The terms "national" and "nation" should be used here with extreme caution when referring to the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. In Ukrainian the word *narod* (common people) came to mean "nation" much later. The adjective *narodny* (of the people) was used without any connotation of "national." Yet these words existed, though their meanings then and now differ. The "common people" (*narod*) were of little concern to the educated classes. Although in Western Europe Herder's ideas about the *Volk* date from the late eighteenth century, their impact on Ukraine was much delayed. Only slowly were Kotliarevsky's contemporaries won over to using in their works the language of the "common people," and then very artfully. What Kotliarevsky achieved in this respect in poetry (though in a burlesque genre) was later accomplished in prose by Kvitka.

In 1819, a year after Kotliarevsky joined a freemason lodge,

he completed a Ukrainian play, *Natalka Poltavka,* which was performed successfully in Ukraine. He was also trying to translate La Fontaine's fables into Ukrainian. His friends recorded that he was very fond of telling Ukrainian anecdotes, especially to the "opposite sex," and that he looked "like a typical Little Russian." Kotliarevsky collected Ukrainian songs and drew illustrations to his *Eneida* that were never published, although the poem had several new editions. Shortly before his death he still visited the neighbouring peasant households and chatted to the peasants in their language. Although he regarded Russia as his country (*otechestvo*) he was deeply attached to his native land (*rodina*). He might not have had any feeling of separateness between the two, but he had a deep knowledge of distinction. Foreign travellers observed different life styles in Ukraine and in Russia, not only among the peasantry but also among the gentry.

At the very beginning of the nineteenth century Russian travellers in Ukraine (Shalikov, Izmailov, Levshin) extolled the beauty of the countryside, its soil, and even "its special Little Russian air, conducive to good digestion." They loved this part of their empire, which they called "the South of Russia," (*Yug Rossii*) or Southern Rus' (*Yuzhnaia Rus*). Did the southern climate of Ukraine make its inhabitants more relaxed and somnolent? Perhaps. But the Russian travellers also made comparisons with life in Russia, always to Ukraine's advantage. There was something about Ukraine that appealed very much to the northerners, making them even keener to keep that country within the empire. Not only could they visit it; they could also live there. Thus Ukraine was heavily colonized by the Russians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1858 Russia had 68 million inhabitants; in 1897, 125 million. In that year, according to the first census taken in the empire, almost 4 million Russians lived in Ukraine, or almost 12 per cent of the total population of that country (27.8 million). Most Russians in Ukraine lived in the cities. Colonization continued until it reached almost 20 per cent of the total population found in today's Ukraine.

Russian writers whose roots were in Ukraine (Narezhny, Somov, Gogol) wrote in Russian about Ukraine, depicting it as a land of natural bounties and attractions. A new trend in literature, Romanticism, drew attention to Ukraine, the land of song and legend. Many

Polish writers (Bohdan Zaleski and the so-called "Ukrainian school"), as well as early Russian romantics, wrote on Ukrainian themes. Among the latter, Kondrati Ryleev (1795-1826) wrote Ukrainian historical poems, full of Cossack patriotism and valour. They reflected the views of his Ukrainian contemporaries and his Ukrainian wife. Nikolai Gogol (Mykola Hohol) (1809-52), whose father, Vasyl, wrote comedies in Ukrainian, became a major Russian writer. His early stories deal with Ukraine and depict not only the folklore and history of his native land but also its inhabitants ("The Old-World Landowners"). Gogol chose to leave that milieu for St. Petersburg and a career as a Russian writer. He succeeded in giving birth to the modern Russian novel and was not averse to receiving an annuity from the imperial family. Like some other Ukrainians, Gogol contributed to Russian culture, which often used non-Russian talent.

But he was one of the last to do so. Soon even his younger contemporaries would prefer to stay in Ukraine and write in Ukrainian. They might still continue to do some writing in Russian (Kotliarevsky, Kvitka, even Shevchenko), but the focus of their creativity would shift to Ukraine. Ukrainians living in Galicia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia, which were incorporated into the Austro-Hungarian Empire, showed a similar tendency to express their ideas in Ukrainian. It was the Ukrainian literary language, reborn in its modern variant early in the nineteenth century, that almost miraculously united Western and Eastern Ukraine culturally, despite the political division.

4

In Russian Ukraine the national revival began in its easternmost province - the Slobidska Ukraine, centred around the city of Kharkiv. Settled in the seventeenth century by Cossacks and non-serf peasants (hence the name *slobidska*), the city received a powerful impulse for innovation in 1805 through the creation of Kharkiv University, the first such institution in Eastern Ukraine (in Western Ukraine, Lviv University was founded in 1784; in Eastern Ukraine the Mohyla Academy, founded in Kyiv in 1694 but reduced to a theological academy in 1819, was often regarded as a university). The initiative to establish a university in Kharkiv came entirely from the Ukrainian

dvorianstvo. A committee chaired by Vasyl Karazyn (1773-1842) raised enough money from the Ukrainian gentry to fund the university, which invited some prominent German professors to the academic staff. Karazyn was a fierce local patriot but devoted to raising the cultural level of Ukraine to that of Russia. He was a product of the late Enlightenment and was indefatigable in fostering higher education in his native Kharkiv. While gaining imperial consent to his project of a university, he later offended Russia by espousing economic autonomy for Ukraine. He was subsequently imprisoned and later confined to his estate.

The founders of Kharkiv University had a tradition of public enlightenment behind them. In 1726 a college had been founded in Kharkiv, offering tuition in theology, philosophy, Slavic languages, Greek, Latin, French, and German. Instruction was in Russian, but the students conversed with each other in Ukrainian. Among the lecturers was Hryhorii Skovoroda, who came to be known as the leading philosopher of Ukraine.

Skovoroda (1722-94) was born in a Cossack settlement of the Lubny regiment in Left Bank Ukraine. He studied at the Mohyla Academy in Kyiv, showed remarkable musical gifts, and for two years was a member of the choir at the imperial court in St. Petersburg. As a young man he travelled to Western Europe. From the 1750s on he taught at various seminaries in Ukraine before becoming a private tutor and itinerant preacher, or rather peripatetic philosopher, mostly in the Kharkiv area. He was dismissed from several teaching posts because he did not like the imposed discipline. In becoming a wandering scholar he continued and indeed ended the old Ukrainian tradition of itinerant preachers (*mandrovani diaky*), a profession abolished by Catherine II. Skovoroda wrote poems, philosophical treatises, and many letters. He used an antiquated Ukrainian, Russian, and Latin. A saintly person, Skovoroda acquired the fame of a "Ukrainian Socrates." His philosophy, based on ideas of nonattachment and otherworldliness, touched people of all classes and met with great popular response. Much of it can be understood only with a good knowledge of the Bible. Skovoroda's poetry showed some influence of folk songs.

Skovoroda's life became a legend even in his own time. A

friend and student, Mykhailo Kovalinsky, wrote his first biography, which was followed by those of Danylevsky and Bahaliy. They reveal a truly remarkable man whose habits came from the monastic tradition in Ukraine. That tradition, in the words of one scholar, "was based on religious culture and was alien to the Ukrainian psyche," (Zilynsky). It resulted in a "barren statism of church culture," which was somewhat counterbalanced by the Ukrainian burlesque tradition. The Western European Renaissance penetrated only Western Ukraine, and the Byzantine influence prevailed in the east. In an early biography we read that Skovoroda "dressed simply, ate once a day - late in the evening; he did not eat meat or fish, but only vegetables; he drank milk; he slept for only four hours. He rose early at sunrise and walked in the garden. He was always cheerful and good-humoured, always ready to talk; he liked to visit the sick and those who were unhappy, and he shared everything with the poor." Far from being a hermit, Skovoroda enjoyed human company and had many devoted friends. He believed everyone had his or her path to follow, just as he followed his. He did not like monasteries and was happy with simple peasants. His musical interests never left him, and always on his wanderings he carried a flute or a simple Ukrainian *sopilka*. He was also a strong local patriot and in one of his Latin poems deplored Russian policies in Ukraine. Once Skovoroda was forced to leave Kharkiv after he had moralized too much about the life of the gentry. In his main works, *Narkiz* and *Askhan* he taught how to implement the ancient teaching of "knowing oneself." Some of his verses were recited by the *bandurists* and called *psalms*. Altogether, he was a highly original thinker and individual.

That Skovoroda was welcome throughout the Slobidska Ukraine shows that its people were not only hospitable but enjoyed serious discourse. Very characteristic was the inscription Skovoroda wished to place on his grave: "The World tried to catch me, but failed." Danylevsky calls Skovoroda a "walking university" and connects his activities with those of Vasyl Karazyn, who took the initiative of establishing Kharkiv University. His mark on the intellectual history of the country, set primarily by his own life, was profound. From Panteleimon Kulish in the nineteenth century to Pavlo Tychyna in the twentieth, Ukrainian writers were under Skovoroda's spell.

They emulated his non-attachment and concern with the personal as opposed to the public life. Skovoroda's quietist message, some critics have charged, later became an impediment to Ukrainian activism. But it has survived to this day.

Modern readers might wonder why Skovoroda avoided women. He might best be described as asexual. But this was the outcome of his philosophy rather than his physical preference. In denying the importance of the flesh (so incomprehensible today), he stressed in his works and his life the primacy of the spirit. Yet his biographers record a telling episode in his life. When he was forty-three years old, he was attracted to the daughter of a friend, who persuaded him to marry her. At the very last moment, just prior to the church ceremony, Skovoroda changed his mind and literally fled. He did not know that he was behaving like the later hero of Gogol's play *The Marriage,* Podkolesin, who jumps out of a window before meeting his bride. One can also say that Skovoroda paid no attention to gender, or rather believed in a very modern creed, that both sexes are of equal value. In one of his writings he says that Christ, in stopping a woman near a well started a conversation with her about the "living water." Christ wanted to lead her to a true path, which "was not connected with any gender, male or female, not with time, place or ceremonies, but with the heart alone." This reflects the biblical insight: "in Christ there is neither male nor female." Ukrainian society of Skovoroda's time was hardly ready for this. Its leaders were men, some of whom, unlike Skovoroda, came to write exaltedly about women.

It was the men of Kharkiv who led the first Ukrainian revival. They started by publishing journals and collections devoted to Ukrainian history and customs. Among them were a professor at Kharkiv University, Hulak-Artemovsky, the writers Kvitka and Metlynsky, and a Russian scholar, Sreznevsky. A student of Kharkiv University, Mykola Kostomarov, published some Ukrainian poems and completed a master's dissertation on Ukrainian folk songs, before moving on to Kyiv, where he became a leader of the Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. Without the Ukrainian poets in Kharkiv, who formed the so-called "Kharkiv Romantic school," there would not have been a revival in Kyiv, which began a decade later.

The Kharkiv milieu differed a great deal from the Kyivan

one. The Kharkovites were the products of a small-town and *khutir* (homestead) environment. The best recreation of it we find in the "Description of the Kharkiv Vicegerency at the End of the Eighteenth Century," which offers a detailed topographical account of how the gentry and peasants lived, what they ate, how they dressed, and gives descriptions of their festivities and customs. On the whole, life must have been busy yet relaxed and rather colourful. Danylevsky emphasizes that it was very different from life in Great Russia. Living in the city of Kharkiv was more restrained but active although leisured. The open fairs were famous gatherings for trade and commerce but also for theatre and diversion. The population in the countryside remained almost solidly Ukrainian, while in the city Russians and Russified Ukrainians who regarded themselves as Little Russians (*malorosy*), predominated.

5

Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, had an ancient history going back to the pre-Christian era. Later it became known as the "mother of Rus' cities," famous for its churches. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Ukrainian Cossacks maintained some presence in Kyiv and hetmans Sahaidachny and Khmelnytsky both visited it. In the eighteenth century it was a frontier city, with the district of Podil as a burgher stronghold. To some extent, Kyiv was still regarded not as an intellectual, but a religious centre (with its old shrines and the Monastery of the Caves). Under Catherine II's successor Tsar Paul I, Kyiv became the capital of a new province carved out of territory absorbed, after 1793, from Poland. It enjoyed the so-called "Magdeburg rights" (autonomy), which were reaffirmed in 1802. Gradually it was was incorporated into the Russian Empire and russified. In the 1830s it became famous for its sugar industry, headed by Ukrainians Yakhnenko and Symyrenko. The burgher autonomy was ended in 1835, when Tsar Nicholas I introduced Russian laws into the city.

Early in the nineteenth century Kyiv was predominantly a Russian city, yet with considerable Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish populations. One American historian of Kyiv noticed "the absence of a strong Russian culture" in the city at that time. For a long time pre-

viously the Right Bank Ukraine had been held by Poland; only in 1796 was the Russian province of Kyiv created. Polish influence, especially in education, lingered on even after the unsuccessful Polish insurrection of 1830-31. As in 1825, during the Decembrist revolt in Russia, so in 1830, when the Poles fought the Russians, Ukrainians remained on the whole aloof. They had been subdued by the draconian regime of Nicholas I.

In the 1830s Kyiv had a population of fewer than 40,000. Only a tiny minority were "conscious Ukrainians." But among them were young men who would become Ukraine's intellectual leaders. In 1834 a university was founded in Kyiv, whose first rector was a prominent Ukrainian scholar, Mykhailo Maksymovych (1804-73). A native of Poltava province, he combined a scholarly interest in botany with an equal interest in folklore. In 1827 he published in Moscow a collection of Ukrainian folk songs. His appointment by the tsarist authorities was no doubt designed to counteract Polish influences at the university, which was often closed because of Polish student unrest. Maksymovych was an ardent Ukrainian patriot, ready to proclaim the high qualities of the Ukrainian language and folk tradition. Later, in a polemic with Russian scholars, he defended the Ukrainian origins of Kyivan Rus', the first Slavic state established in and around Kyiv in the ninth century.

Early in 1845 a small circle of young intellectuals was formed in Kyiv. Its leaders were Mykola Kostomarov (1817-85), Panteleimon Kulish (1819-97), Taras Shevchenko (1814-61), Mykola Hulak (1822-99), and Vasyl Bilozersky (1825-99). Their circle, which started as a study group, developed in 1846 into a secret society, "The Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius." The brotherhood had very few members, but it had a constitution and a program, embodied in what was later called "The Books of Genesis of the Ukrainian People." Its author was Kostomarov, who at that time was a lecturer at Kyiv University. This son of a Russian landowner and a Ukrainian serf had studied in Kharkiv and was well acquainted with the history and literature of the Slavs. He believed that all history was rooted in the life of ordinary people, and therefore came to study Ukraine's people and its history since this was where he lived.

Although Kostomarov's booklet was not published in his life-

time, it was circulated clandestinely. Based on the story of Ukraine's past, told in biblical fashion, and drawing on some Polish sources (Mickiewicz), it postulated the future establishment of a Ukrainian republic within a Slavic union. It called for the abolition of serfdom, but its main thrust was political. For the first time in the nineteenth century a voice was raised in favour of Ukraine's political autonomy, if not yet independence. Ukraine was to be a member in a Slavic federation. The Christian spirit of the document was clearly evident - after all, the society was named after the Slavic apostles, -Cyril and Methodius. Perhaps the booklet was also inspired by young Shevchenko's poetry and the general Romanticism of the time. Much later Kostomarov would refer to it as "childish," but it was certainly taken seriously by the "brethren" and by the tsarist police, who, following a denunciation, closed in on the society.

In April 1847 all members of the brotherhood were arrested and brought to a secret trial in St. Petersburg. During the interrogation some (Hulak, Shevchenko) conducted themselves with dignity and courage, while others, including Kostomarov, repented and cringed. The chief prosecuting officer, Count Orlov, was ready to dismiss the society as an immature enterprise, but singled out Shevchenko's poetry as very dangerous. It could, he argued logically, lead Ukrainians to the idea of separation from Russia. Therefore, Shevchenko drew the heaviest sentence. Kostomarov, Kulish, and others were sentenced to terms of internal exile. The tsar was personally informed of the proceedings. It seemed that this rather juvenile attempt to express Ukrainian aspirations had been decisively crushed by the police. Yet the ideas of the brotherhood smouldered in Ukrainian consciousness for a long time and in the end led to a true revival. The life-stories of Shevchenko and Kulish reveal an indestructible myth.

A very special place in the Ukrainian revival is occupied by Taras Shevchenko (1814-61). His poems, both patriotic and political, became widely known several decades after their composition. What propelled him ahead as a leader of the cultural renaissance was not only his poetry but his life-story. After serving ten years as an ordinary soldier while in internal exile, he returned as a free man, not to Ukraine but to St. Petersburg, where four years after his release he died in 1861. Despite the tsar's ban on writing, Shevchenko brought

with him poems written during his exile and continued to write until his death. His creative effort arose from his great personal suffering. For future generations of Ukrainian intellectuals as well as for the many ordinary Ukrainians who were becoming literate, he became both a martyr and a prophet. Often, Ukrainians came to be known as "Shevchenko's people."

During the 1840s and 1850s Ukrainian social and cultural life developed very slowly. On the whole Russian public opinion (with the exception of Belinsky) was well disposed to Ukraine and perceived no threat to Russian domination. The tsarist government felt secure in its autocracy. In Galicia (under Austro-Hungary), Ukrainians slowly discovered their neglected language, history, and folk songs after the publication of poems by Markian Shashkevych (1837) and the activity of the so-called "Ruthenian Triad." They had few political aspirations and looked to Eastern Ukraine for leadership. A similar story was unfolding in Bukovyna. Yet the growth of national consciousness and a feeling of a separate identity was visible in all corners of Ukraine. Landed gentry, an incipient bourgeoisie, and, in Galicia, the clergy, were no longer completely satisfied to imitate their Russian or Polish masters. They were ready for something new and different.

6

The small Ukrainian intelligentsia was hardly equipped to lead the people to a full national awakening. It was further stymied by the issuance in Russia of a circular by the tsarist minister Petr Valuev in 1863, denigrating and deploring the use of the Ukrainian language, which, according to him, did not exist. After what had been a relatively liberal era, cold winds began to blow in Ukraine. Some cultural activity was still carried on by the former "brethren," who had served their terms of exile. Kulish and Bilozersky started a Ukrainian periodical, *The Foundation* (*Osnova*) in St. Petersburg in 1860, which lasted to 1862 and folded mostly due to internal squabbling. It published valuable material by over forty contributors and had wide readership in Ukraine. Practically no Ukrainian newspapers or periodicals were published in Russia until the 1880s. However, in

Galicia, there were numerous papers, which also printed contributions by writers in Eastern Ukraine. In this way much literature that could not appear in Russian Ukraine was made available to Ukrainian readers through Galician publications. If not for this assistance, Ukrainian literature might have decayed completely.

Mykola Kostomarov, arrested on the eve of his wedding in 1847, spent his time of exile in the Russian town of Saratov. In 1859 he was allowed to move to St. Petersburg, where for three years he was a professor of history at the university. Although he had to work far from Ukraine, he devoted many of his scholarly monographs to Ukrainian history. Later he took issue with Russian historians on the patrimony of the Kyiv Rus'. In 1861 he published in *The Foundation* a very bold analysis of the difference between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples and their traditions. A year earlier he wrote, clandestinely, a letter on Ukraine to an émigré Russian journal in London, *The Tocsin,* edited by Alexander Herzen, who was defending the Ukrainian cause, a very rare stance among Russian intellectuals. In his old age Kostomarov took a more moderate but still uncompromising attitude to the development of Ukrainian culture, which he always defended. He always pleaded for educating the common folk in their native idiom. Education in the Ukrainian language was as necessary for the Ukrainian people as was education in Russian for the Russians. In 1882 he wrote a study of Mazepa's era and a historical novel, which he started in Ukrainian but finished in Russian. Not long before his death he married his earlier fiancee Alina.

In the late 1850s a new form of organization evolved in Ukraine that was not banned by the government. It was called *hromada* (community), and stressed the communal spirit of Ukrainian society as opposed to the collective one in Russia. The very first *hromada* was formed by Ukrainians living in St. Petersburg, but in the early 1860s several of such societies were founded in Ukraine, often with financial help from wealthy Ukrainian landowners and enterpreneurs (Tarnovsky, Halahan). In 1861 a *hromada* was established in Kyiv, which apart from scholars and writers included also students. It never had more than just over two hundred members and was without a formal structure, but it proved a very effective cultural organization. Its leader was the historian Volodymyr Antonovych, who ably evaded

Russian persecution. The governor of Kyiv, Chertkov, once swore to destroy this Ukrainian stronghold but never succeeded. Also permitted (from 1859 to 1862) were the Sunday schools, where instruction was in Ukrainian. Gradually young men and women were drawn to this kind of educational work, which was carried on despite a shortage of textbooks. A grass-roots movement was becoming a reality in Ukraine.

This movement, under Russian influence, adopted the label of "populism" (*narodnytstvo)*, although it differed from Russian populism. In Russia the populists believed in the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and eventually embraced violence and terrorism. Some Ukrainians participated in Russian populist organizations, but Ukrainian populism had a different, peaceful orientation. In the 1870s and 1880s it became the dominant ideology of Ukrainian literature. It continued the romantic tradition of discovering the good traditions of the peasants while trying to make their life better. It gathered more strength after the abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861. A separate group of populists called itself *khlopomany* (peasant lovers) and was led by a future prominent historian, Volodymyr Antonovych (1834-1908), a disciple of Kostomarov. Like Kostomarov, he had his roots partly in the Ukrainian peasantry.

It is noteworthy that both Kostomarov and Antonovych were illegitimate sons (the former of a Ukrainian peasant woman, the latter of a Polish gentlewoman). Kostomarov, whose father was Russian, and Antonovych, who was adopted by a Polish-Ukrainian landowner, were irresistibly drawn to Ukrainian life, its history and folk literature. They became the ideologists of Ukrainian populism. They believed that Ukraine had no political future, but would remain in the Russian Empire, with its own peasant culture. But the historical research undertaken by both later provided a basis for a Ukrainian historiography. The time had come for these descendants of simple peasants to lead Ukraine's cultural elite. They had, after all, the shining example of Taras Shevchenko. Their efforts would have to be concentrated on education, scholarship, and literature, since politics, law, and business provided no Ukrainian colouring: Ukrainian intellectuals were not a part of the country's infrastructure, dominated and operated by the Russians.

In 1876 Ukrainian aspirations under Russia suffered a severe blow. On vacation in the German spa Bad Ems, the tsar signed a secret *ukaz* banning all Ukrainian publications, except some collections of ethnographic material. The tragic irony of this brutal attack on Ukrainian culture was that it was in part orchestrated by Mikhail Yuzefovych (1802-89), a Russian official in Ukraine, of Ukrainian origin, who hated everything Ukrainian and inspired the government commission for the "intercepting of Ukrainophile activities." "Ukrainophiles" was the name Russians gave to Ukrainian activists, who sometimes accepted this label. Gradually, however, more of them were ready to call themselves "Ukrainians." In official terminology they remained "Little Russians." Yet there were more young people ready to challenge the colonial order. In the meantime, this colony became the basis of the imperial economy (the label for Ukraine as "the bread-basket of Europe" originated at that time). Towards the end of the century Ukraine provided 62 per cent of all exports from the Russian Empire.

Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841-95) was a young historian who unreservedly declared himself to be a Ukrainian. A lecturer at Kyiv University, he was active in the Kyiv *hromada* and had a following among the students as far away as Galicia. Prior to the Ems *ukaz*, Drahomanov was relieved of his post at the university by order of Tsar Aleksander II. Having reached an understanding with the Kyiv *hromada* , Drahomanov left in 1876 for Geneva, where, with assistance from Kyiv, he established the journal *Community* (*Hromada*), in order to propagate the Ukrainian cause abroad. He did this successfully for several years. Eventually the funds dried up, and he was forced to go to Sofia, Bulgaria, as a university professor. Drahomanov was an outstanding scholar in history and ethnography and was free to write his books abroad. He had a large following in Galicia, where he was friendly with Ivan Franko. His political ideology was that of democratic socialism. He did not believe in Ukrainian independence, but advocated a union of the peoples of Russia on a democratic basis. Thoroughly acquainted with Western European thought, he had a great influence on his niece, the writer Lesia Ukrainka.

Drahomanov's legacy in Ukraine was profound. He convinced many young people to turn to socialism, which was beginning

to penetrate Eastern Europe. This he combined with ever-present concern for his native culture. In his view, Ukrainians had to work hard in order to deserve recognition as a nation. He was never doctrinaire, and his influence on Ukrainian intellectual history was profound. Many circles of "Drahomanovites" arose in different parts of his native land. They were small but more influential than those of the "brethren" of the 1840s. These circles, preaching Drahomanov's ideas provided the Ukrainian intellectuals with an alternative to Russian socialism. Gradually, the movement for recognition of Ukrainian aims grew stronger.

The Austrian government in Galicia at first favoured Ukrainians, who were called Ruthenians (and called themselves *rusyny*), and created institutions to foster local education. But after the abolition of serfdom in 1848 Austria grew cool towards the Ruthenian Council, which tried to unite the Galicians and proclaim their co-operation with Eastern Ukraine. In the 1860s the Austrians came to favour the Poles in Galicia, although they allowed education in Ukrainian, reading clubs for the peasants, and other cultural activities. An association called "The Enlightenment" (*Prosvita*), founded in 1868, maintained reading circles and publications throughout the province. Ukrainians in Galicia, unlike the Poles, lacked a nobility of their own. They consisted of petty gentry, clergy, and mostly the peasantry. In the middle of the century the prevailing intellectual trend was known as national populism. Moscowphilism was also common, subsidized often directly by Russia. In 1873 a "Shevchenko Scientific Society" was founded in Lviv with the financial help of wealthy Ukrainian citizens from the east (Symyrenko, Pelekhyn, Myloradovych). It came to play a prominent role in educational and scholarly life. Close illegal ties were maintained between Galicia and Eastern Ukraine and apart from Drahomanov, figures such as Konysky, Kulish, and eventually Hrushevsky were active in Lviv. Young Ukrainians were organized in "Sich, and "Sokil" which fostered a patriotic spirit. The Galicians were closer to the west of Europe, but at the same time a provincial atmosphere prevailed in the cities.

In the 1870s socialism spread among some Ukrainians in Galicia, mainly under Polish influence. The Ukrainian working class was very small, but this did not deter some intellectuals from placing

their hopes in them, as well as in the impoverished peasants. During the next two decades this movement gathered strength mainly because it attracted such able men as Ivan Franko (1856-1916), a leading writer, and Mykhailo Pavlyk (1853-1915). Pavlyk's wife, Anna, was also an ardent socialist agitator in the villages. They launched many publications, were hounded by the police and imprisoned, and eventually founded a radical political party, first in Ukraine. It was called the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party and held its first congress in Lviv in 1890. Unlike Russia, Austria guaranteed civil liberties and freedom of association, and this enabled Ukrainians to advance politically and culturally from the state of "an inchoate mass of atomized villagers in the 1860s to a nation in the 1890s" (Himka). The Ukrainian intelligentsia in Galicia considered themselves a part of "Greater Ukraine," which included their brethren in Russia. It is interesting that in 1895 a Galician, Yulian Bachynsky, published the first call for an independent Ukraine and called it *Ucraina irredenta* , echoing the Italian irredentists' striving for the reunification of all Italian lands. As in Italy, where the independence movement started in Piedmont, Galicia came to be known in Ukrainian history as "the Ukrainian Piedmont."

In the 1874 census 80 per cent of Kyiv's inhabitants declared themselves speakers of Russian, 11 per cent of Yiddish, 6 per cent of Polish. Of the Russian speakers, 39 per cent were listed as Little Russians. There was reluctance to use Ukrainian, which was regarded as a "peasant language." Yevhen Chykalenko records that, at the end of the century, only eight families of Ukrainian intelligentsia in Kyiv spoke Ukrainian at home. The 1897 census revealed that 80 per cent of the Ukrainian population in the country were illiterate. Yet valiant efforts were made to keep Ukrainian culture alive and spread literacy. Among them was the publication of a scholarly journal *The Kievan Antiquity* (*Kievskaia starina*) - 1882-1907, at first in Russian, and only much later in Ukrainian. It became an official organ of the Kyiv "hromada." In 1897, on the initiative of Volodymyr Antonovch, an illegal congress of all the "hromadas" was held in Kyiv. This led to the creation of the first Ukrainian political parties - the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) in 1900, and the Democratic Radical Party. In 1900 Mykola Mikhnovsky made a speech, that was later printed in

Lviv under the title "Independent Ukraine." At last, the cultural, linguistic, and literary aspirations of the Ukrainians were acquiring a political arm. As the nineteenth century came to an end, there was no longer any doubt that Ukraine was claiming a clear identity among the nations of Eastern Europe.

7

What was the nature of Ukraine's colonial experience in that century? Unlike British or French imperialism in the nineteenth century, Russian imperialism showed no tolerance towards the native cultures or languages of occupied territories. Russia always regarded Ukraine as a part of Russia and tried to stamp out its language and identity. Russification was the order of the day for the Russian government. Russian intellectuals at the beginning of the nineteenth century were favourably disposed to Ukrainian folk culture as something colourful and worth preserving. But by the middle of the century this attitude had changed and become hostile, perhaps because poets like Shevchenko had tried to awaken the historical memory of Ukraine and claim for it a separate status. Decrees banning the use of the Ukrainian language (they extended to translations of the Bible) were draconian. Ukrainians did not necessarily feel themselves to be victims of the empire. The aura of victimhood, so common today, was on the whole foreign to them. Besides, they were often quite fatalistic and saw no end to their oppression, or were not even fully conscious of it. Only some of their leaders, especially the writers and poets, rebelled in their works. Slowly, this opposition became a movement.

It was out of resistance to oppressive Russian measures that the Ukrainian cause, espoused at first by a few intellectuals, became a rallying cry. There could be no active or open resistance, so there was a hidden protest expressed in literature (printed in Galicia, but read in Eastern Ukraine). A battle was fought for the preservation of the Ukrainian language. Still true to the romantic notion that the language expressed the "soul" of a people, Ukrainian writers fought for its protection. Unlike in Russia, where Romanticism stressed personal individualism and creativity, in Ukraine it was taken as a message of liberation of the common people. Ukrainian writers and activists suc-

ceeded where the Irish had failed earlier. By the nineteenth century the Irish had lost their literary language, and their renaissance had to be created in English. Ukrainians avoided this by preserving their folk language in collections of folk songs and in written works of literature. Perhaps to their own detriment Ukrainian language and literature at the same time took upon themselves more and more openly a political agenda. Only towards the end of the century did modernist writers turn to pure art, unsullied by any ideological message, but even then they were few in number.

In Russia populism encountered serious difficulties late in the century because of the open hostility of Russian peasants to the intellectual talk of a selfless brotherhood (Pipes). In Ukraine, however, intellectuals were never very far from the peasants. The greatest Ukrainian poets, Shevchenko and Franko, came from the peasantry. The bond with the peasants was strong, and sprang from a common ethos. There may have been some truth in the elevated if idealized image of Ukrainian peasant life as shown in the works of Kostomarov and other Ukrainian scholars. Ukrainian folk mythology offered food for sophisticated intellectual discourse. Ukrainian nativism could not be confined to a narrow sphere. It fed literature and high culture.

It must have been very exciting for Ukrainian writers to carry on their work and abide by their convictions. In a vast sea of peasants, they were the "chosen ones." Very few in numbers (the Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius consisted of a dozen men), they were aware of their rich history and folklore, and they tried to reawaken and modernize them. Many of them, from all corners of Ukraine, often divided by frontiers, shared the same goal, which Shevchenko placed before them in fiery poetic language. The soft words of the old bandurists were supplanted by a new and inspired rhetoric. It was a time for poets, who remain very plentiful in Ukraine today, but only gradually were they able to engage in other cultural and social activities. Open to progressive ideas from the West as well as from Russia, they were ready to launch a genuine political movement, which came in the twentieth century. The dream of a quiet *khutir* from the Kharkiv era became for them a rather different dream of a liberated Ukraine. Few of them expressed chiliastic visions, and to most of them the events of December 1991 (Ukrainian independence)

would have been in the realm of wild dreams (and poetry). But without them this dream would not have been fulfilled.

In the introduction to Declan Kiberd's *Inventing Ireland*, a history of a country with some similarities to Ukraine, we read that "the Irish movement for independence imagined the Irish people as an historic community, whose self-image was constructed long before the era of modern nationalism and the nation state." Kiberd concludes: "the [Irish] exile was a nursery of nationality." Unlike those Irish who left for England, Ukrainian intellectuals in the nineteenth century had nowhere to go. One of them, Nikolai Gogol (Mykola Hohol) left for Russia, where he made a career in literature (to be sure, written mostly in a self-imposed exile in Italy). Yet after Shevchenko, there were no more Gogols. The Russian language, unlike English, was no world language, and the atmosphere in Russia was very different from that of England. Therefore, writers stayed in Ukraine and were happy to work "on native soil." They left the legacy of a hinterland, which today, in the heyday of environmentalism, is being revalued. If, like all writers, they have left us a narration, it is a fascinating story, also of importance to the present day, when, after more than three hundred years of colonial rule, Ukraine emerged at last as an independent state. Before acquainting oneself with this narration, available in many books in very imperfect English translations of their main works, it is imperative to learn something about the lives of these writers. These mini-biographies should provide an introduction to modern Ukrainian intellectual history, which was made by the men and women of the nineteenth century. Without the stories of their lives, their message will remain unclear.

8

The seven lives outlined here were either distorted or silenced by the Soviet rulers of Ukraine for much of the twentieth century. This is not the place to inquire why this happened. But interestingly enough, it was not only the works themselves that often stood in the way of a communist interpretation of reality; the lives, too, were considered to be subversive. This severe oppression must have led to intense feelings of frustration among these individuals. Frustration

(there is, incidentally, no good Ukrainian equivalent for that word) was both a spur and a hindrance in their creative work. Not only were the writings of Kulish, the references to God in Shevchenko's poetry, the comparisons of Ukraine to Israel by Lesia Ukrainka, and other purely ideological matters not acceptable, but frequently so was the behaviour of their spokesmen or women. Was it the intense dedication of these men and women to their people - to the peasants, and to the history of their native land that was considered to be subversive, and was thus often labelled, quite wrongly, nationalist? Or were their strivings to learn about the outside world and other cultures (apart from Russian) thought to be dangerous and harmful to the empire? Or, perhaps, was it their very humanity that could not be fitted into the required doctrinal mould? We may never know unless we first of all acquaint ourselves with these biographies.

As a postscript one can add a query about how a study such as this relates to the contemporary pursuit of post-colonial scholarship. Edward Said, in his book *Culture and Imperialism,* published in 1993, two years after the collapse of the USSR, writes only a couple of sentences about Russian imperialism, with which he does not deal because of the "centrality" of British and American imperialisms. We can only hope that he or his colleagues will come to that subject soon. Some of Said's generalizations about all imperialisms obviously do not apply to Russian oppression of cultures other than Russian (especially in the nineteenth century). He claims that imperialism *always* (his italics) provokes "an active resistance." This was not so in the case of Ukraine (active resistance was simply impossible). Unlike Britain, Russia built its empire in adjacent territories. This and many other conditions specific to Ukraine call for a different approach to a post-colonial study of Ukrainian culture. As for Said's fulminations against the West in general, these may be dismissed as too partisan. Western imperialist practices were not all bad. (England did not suppress the native Indian culture and indeed helped Indian intellectuals. British writers and intellectuals also helped a great deal in starting the Irish Renaissance). Besides, being dominant in culture is not necessarily bad. Veneration of a national oppressed culture may be sickening. All imperialisms are not the same. Yet Said's approach to imperial discourse has some validity. Where is the scholar who would do

for Russian cultural imperialism what Said has done for the British? Susan Layton's *Russian Literature and Empire; Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy* (Cambridge, 1994) may be a harbinger of things to come. But he or she would also have to be familiar with the "oppressed cultures," not only the "dominant one" (as is Layton), and this might necessitate learning something about Ukrainian literature.

While for centuries Russia was wedded to Byzantine and even Asiatic models, Ukraine was and is very much part of the Western European tradition, and Western Ukraine participated partly at least in the European Renaissance, as Russia did not. It is against such a much wider cultural and political background that the intellectual history of Ukraine must be seen and studied. One should, indeed, start with a study of this background. The writers discussed here were products of their time, but perhaps even more of their personalities. They wrote as they lived, sometimes quietly and modestly, but often daringly, defiantly, and rebelliously.

Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovianenko

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1

The most easterly part of Ukraine, closest to Russia, was the Slobidska Ukraine, a name derived from *sloboda* (originally a settlement of serf-free peasants). Its capital city became Kharkiv. Its origins go back to 1654, but as a city it was established in the middle of the eighteenth century.

The name Kvitka first occurs in the register of the Slobidsky Cossack Regiment in 1666. In 1703 the colonel of that regiment was Hryhoriy Semenovych Kvitka, a forefather of the writer, who was named after him. The colonel supervised the defences of the new city of Kharkiv against Tatar raids. He also helped new settlers to build houses in the city.

The military tradition of the Kvitkas was continued by Hryhoriy's son Ivan, the writer's grandfather, who also became a Cossack colonel by the charter of the Empress Elizabeth on November 22, 1743. He died in 1754, leaving a son Fedir, who could not become a Cossack since their regiments had been disbanded (the local autonomy of Slobidska Ukraine never went beyond the "regimental" level). However, most Cossack officers were granted gentry status (*dvorianstvo*). Fedir Kvitka, the writer's father, became a small landowner. He ran his farm in exemplary fashion. His wife, Maria, was well educated and very strict. She and Fedir also had three daughters - Maria, Elisaveta, and Praskovia, all of whom later married.

Hryhoriy Kvitka was born on November 18, 1778, in Osnova, very near Kharkiv. He was a sickly child, suffering from scrofula, for which at that time there was no cure. Despite all attempts by doctors and local medicine women to alleviate this condition, the child became almost totally blind. A miraculous recovery of his sight occurred when, at the age of five, he was taken by his mother to a prayer service at a monastery. In response to the cure, Kvitka's parents later sent him to a monastery, where he stayed as a novice from June 1804 to May 1805.

This must have had a strong impact on young Hryhoriy, though some letters he wrote at that time do not show an excessive devotion to the church. Since in 1782 Kvitka's father had received his *dvorianstvo,* his family joined the privileged strata of the gentry. However, life at Osnova went on in an unpretentious old-fashioned and patriarchal way. Osnova was visited several times by the itinerant philosopher, Hryhoriy Skovoroda, who died in 1794. Young Hryhoriy Kvitka saw him and listened to his talk. Kvitka's father also ran a small theatre in Osnova, further evidence of his wide interests. Hryhoriy played minor parts on that stage.

Before his stay in the monastery the teen-age Kvitka was enrolled in a cavalry regiment, which he left in 1794 with the rank of captain. He was not in actual military service but his name appeared on the regimental register. From 1796 to 1797 he again enrolled as a captain in a cuirassier regiment, again without actual service, but only fulfilling the duty of a *dvorianin.* In Russia all able-bodied males from the gentry were enrolled in some sort of government or military service. In 1806, however, Kvitka was asked to serve in the home guard unit formed in response to the approaching war against Napoleon. He served but was not very happy about it, since, after 1805, he was anxious to participate in cultural work, an anxiety which intensified with the opening that year of Kharkiv University.

We are fortunate to have some of Kvitka's letters to his close friend Andriy Vladimirov, written over the period 1802 to 1813, which shed light on his views and character. The two young men were brought together as actors in the Osnova theatre and became real buddies, or *pobratymy.* In Ukrainian Cossack tradition, from which they were very remote, this male bonding was common. To today's reader it may at once suggest a gay relationship, but in those days, when male and female society were separate, such relationships, without a homosexual connotation, were common. Young Kvitka's letters to Vladimirov have very affectionate endings - "my angel in the flesh," "yours ever-loving," and "I embrace you and kiss you." They also reveal the less passionate, rational and humorous side of Kvitka.

Writing in 1804 from the monastery, Hryhoriy makes some critical comments about it, saying that "monks are not forbidden to

joke." He confides in Vladimirov, who had recently married, "I love women as people, not as women and I do not seem to offend them by this." In a letter written in 1806, when Kvitka was twenty-eight, he confesses that "I am fed up with everything. I feel something like approaching old age." Two years later, still on the subject of women, he writes that he "finds no pleasure with women. I have said goodbye to them. My hair is getting grey." He tells Andriy that many married people he knows have problems and that he feels sorry for them. Yet, at the same time, he remembers that he is thirty and that he "is disposed to spend my next thirty years with a family." Much later Hryhoriy, who declared that he was never a "ladies' man" (*volokyta*), did get married after all.

In a much later letter to Vladimirov from 1827 Kvitka recalls the happy times in his "beloved Osnova," and its theatre. In memory of those days he invites Vladimirov "to load the sets and other theatrical implements on to a sleigh and drive to the village fairs and large settlements to praise Christ." This reveals that both theatres, in Osnova and later in Kharkiv, were in the habit of joining the carollers at Christmas in the surrounding villages. There Kvitka would observe and participate in the villagers' festivities. Later, this direct knowledge of the peasant way of life came to be very useful for a writer of stories about the Ukrainian village. Perhaps the theatres also produced not only vaudeville but traditional *vertep* (puppet theatre) drama and folksy comedies like the ones Gogol's father used to write.

Theatre, with which Kvitka later worked in Kharkiv, permeated his thinking. Like Skovoroda, he compared life to a stage "where death will lower the curtain on our lives. Then the comedy will end and I do not know what will follow." In the meantime, he was living "as he liked," and wrote that around him he saw "many monkeys, but few people." Between 1812 and 1816 he was very active in the theatre, becoming its director and even falling in love with one of the actresses. His stern mother prevented a marriage. From a history of this theatre published by Kvitka in 1841 we learn that one of the plays produced there was Kotliarevsky's *Natalka Poltavka,* in Ukrainian. The standing repertory was of course in Russian. Ukrainian scenes were considered fit for humorous diversion.

After his father's death in 1812 Hryhoriy renounced his share

of the patrimony in favour of his brother Andriy, who built for himself and his family a stately home nearby with a beautiful park and a concert hall for orchestra and theatre. On one occasion it was visited by Tsar Alexander I, who was reported to have compared it to "a palace." Hryhoriy's generous action may be explained either by his deep religiosity or else by simple magnanimity.

2

In 1816 Kvitka was elected a representative of the local gentry. This was no onerous duty, but involved mediating between gentry and peasants. He also headed the Kharkiv Charitable Society, and after 1831 was made a justice of the peace. For his many services to Russia he was decorated twice (orders of Anna and Vladimir), and in 1836 received a diamond ring. A year later he was made a "court councillor," a mere title, but then titles were very meaningful and important in those days. All in all, he was a most loyal servant of the tsar. He combined all these services, which could not have been very time-consuming, with directorship of the Institute for Girls, a school for the children of impoverished gentry (an American scholar observed that some gentry were indeed destitute). It was one of its head teachers (*klassnaia dama*), Anna Grigorievna Vulf (Wolf), that Kvitka married in 1831.

Anna Grigorievna was not only a devoted wife but also a critic of his literary work, as she was well read in the French sentimental novel. Coming to Kharkiv from St. Petersburg, Anna at first felt a stranger in Ukraine. She even asked her husband to seek employment in the Russian capital so that she could return home. But, as she wrote later, "he loved his native land and refused to move." They lived close to Hryhoriy's mother and often dined with her. According to Kvitka, he soon "decided to abandon my various duties in Kharkiv and, on the prompting of Anna Grigorievna, a wife sent to me by God, I [settled in my native Osnova] and began writing." On another occasion he wrote that "I and my wife - are everything in the world." He felt so secure because Anna was willing to accommodate to his life style and new environment.

Kvitka's literary career began when he was still in Kharkiv.

He started writing short anecdotes from Ukrainian life, but he wrote them in Russian, under a pseudonym - "Povitukhin" (the term derives from "povitukha," the midwife)." The author obviously thought of himself as bringing "new life" into literature. He was also a contributor and later editor of the *Ukrainian Herald (Ukrainski vestnik)*, in which many articles on Ukrainian life were published in Russian. "Letters to My Beloved Countrymen" were published in Ukrainian. This journal as well as other publications showed the great curiosity felt by the local gentry in their own past. In his Russian play, *Gentry Elections (Dvorianskie vybory,*1827) Kvitka sharply satirized the gentry, but refrained from criticism of the established order. Another play was *A Visitor from the Capital (Priezzhi iz stolitsy)*, which had a very similar plot as Gogol's *The Inspector General (Revizor)*. In fact, Kvitka, like Gogol, was a staunch defender of the *status quo*, including serfdom. In his Russian play *Shelmenko - Orderly (Shelmenko-denshchik)*, Shelmenko, the scoundrel, uses Ukrainian, providing, as it were, a transitional stage to Kvitka's Ukrainian works.

With the decision to move back to his native Osnova, Kvitka began to write stories in Ukrainian, signing himself "Osnovianenko," - the man from Osnova. Was he assuming the role of midwife to a new Ukrainian literature? He was aware that this was a momentous step and later tried to analyze and explain it in his letters to Petr Aleksandrovich Pletnev, a well-known Russian scholar and, after 1840, the rector of St. Petersburg university. Kvitka wrote that one day he "had an argument with a writer of Ukrainian verses [possibly the fabulist Hulak-Artemovsky], who said that it was impossible to write 'serious and touching' prose in the Ukrainian language" because it was an unsuitable medium for it. In order to prove him wrong, Kvitka "wrote "Marusia" and demonstrated that it was possible to be enraptured by the Little Russian [prose] language." In another letter to Pletnev, Kvitka explains that he was "vexed to see all [writers] soar into the skies...Why not turn right and left and write about what you see with your eyes." He continues: "Living in Ukraine and learning the speech of the inhabitants, I have come to understand their thoughts and made them tell, in their own words, these thoughts to the public."

This is why he wrote Ukrainian short stories for Ukrainian

readers and, perhaps not fully aware of what he was doing, gave a start to Ukrainian prose. His other outstanding short stories are: "A Soldier's Portrait, "Poor Oksana," "The Witch of Konotop," and "Tumbleweed," as well as a play *The Wedding at Honcharivka* (*Svatannia na Honcharivtsi*, 1836). The sentimentality and humour of his earlier Russian works are also evident in the Ukrainian stories, but the tone is serious, not mocking, satirical, or burlesque. The new subject - Ukrainian village life and mores - is also important. Kvitka was no realist, but in idealizing the life and character of the peasants he was ahead of French, German, and Russian writers, who turned to these topics in the 1840s. Because he had seen village life at first hand, his work had an air of authenticity. The reviewers praised Kvitka's Ukrainian stories, some (Hrebinka, Kulish) stressing their value for being written in Ukrainian, while others (Pletnev, Belinsky) regretted this. Shevchenko liked "Marusia," but later, while praising Kvitka's portrayal of the peasants, criticized his language, which, he claimed, Kvitka had not learned from his mother.

Perhaps a return to his native tongue was possible for Kvitka only in his works. There is, therefore, a personal element in his literary creations, through which he redefined his own identity. This element was language, which, he believed, was preserved in its full beauty only by the peasants. Just a decade later, in the 1840s, Ukrainian romantic writers (Shevchenko, Kulish, Kostomarov, and others) began to build on to their use of this language a cultural ideology, which later came to be called "nationalism." Kvitka was no romantic or nationalist (he condemned the Polish uprising in 1830), but in his life and work he was drawn irresistibly to Ukraine as distinct from Russia. Undoubtedly he became aware, as one scholar (Plevako) put it, of the difference between Ukrainian and Russian culture. Ukrainian was on a lower level, with no high culture of its own, but it began to aspire to one through the creation of literature. A hundred years later, in the 1920s, this "struggle of the two cultures, Ukrainian and Russian," was still being debated.

In the 1840s some Russian writers (Grigorovich, Dal, Turgenev) also began to depict Russian peasant life, though they often offered "physiological sketches" (influenced by French models) and criticized serfdom. Seldom if ever is their portrayal of peasants as

idealized as Kvitka's. There was undoubtedly a great difference between the Ukrainian and Russian peasant way of life. Russian peasants, after all, were described by the Russian historian Mikhail Pogodin in 1826 as "low, horrid and beastly." In his own inimitable way Kvitka, in his Ukrainian stories, was linking his own beliefs and experiences of ordinary Ukrainian peasants with a new concept of a separate national identity. Was he, like his contemporary Markevych, thinking of Russia as his "fatherland" *(otechestvo)*, and of Ukraine as his native land *(rodina)*? Were the two symbiotic? His private thoughts on the subject have not been recorded. But in his works the answer is clear.

There is also the question of Kvitka's personal ambition. He intended to show, as he wrote to an editor, that "it was possible to disprove that we [Ukrainians] can only be ridiculed and derided." He wanted himself and his people to be taken seriously. He wrote to another Ukrainian, Mykhailo Maksymovych, who had published a collection of Ukrainian folk songs, that "we should put to shame those who say that a language spoken by 10 million people, a language which has its own force and beauty, may not be used in literature." Through a written, literary language, he claimed, it is possible and indeed necessary to assert one's own national dignity. He did so not by portraying great male heroes but, oddly enough, by his masterful depiction of women (Marusia, Oksana, Halochka). Some early critics (Kulish) pointed this out, commenting on this feminine ideal of purity, beauty, and fortitude. Here again, Kvitka's own happy marriage may be the biographical influence on his works. His heroines prefigure the female archetypes in Shevchenko's poems.

3

Studying Kvitka's letters written after 1838, one discovers a new dimension in his biography. His first biographer, Danylevsky (1856), noted that the letters Kvitka received from his friends "show their pure and sincere love for the Ukrainian story-teller." However, Kvitka's own letters reveal "a timid, bashful, reserved and at times cunning or backward writer." The letters to Pletnev are especially open and revealing. They show Kvitka as a writer most eager for rec-

ognition. This foible led eventually to a deep neurosis, which he called his "illness," and disguised to his correspondents as "hypochondria" or "depression." There are good reasons to believe that all this was related to his attempt to write in Ukrainian while continuing to produce works in Russian (his major Russian novel, *Pan Khaliavsky* , a satire on old Ukrainian gentry, appeared in 1840). Recognition could only come from Russia, where he was read and, more importantly, reviewed. There were at that time no Ukrainian journals, only the occasional almanacs. True, he heard reports that Ukrainian readers read his "Marusia" with "tears in their eyes," but he craved for more.

This is why Kvitka tried, unsuccessfully, to translate his Ukrainian stories into Russian. He confided to Pletnev that his translations "failed to convey fully the beauty of Little Russian expressions" and that "as soon as he saw his stories in Russian - they were neither this nor that." Some Russian critics praised him, regarding his Ukrainian works as a curiosity, but some belittled him. At least, he felt that they "were making fun of a provincial story-teller." Some Russian writers (Dal, Zhukovsky) visited him, but he was even more pleased when the Ukrainian writer Yevhen Hrebinka called on him. They later exchanged cordial letters in Ukrainian. In 1839 he seriously contemplated going to St. Petersburg, but could not afford it. The capital of Russia was a real magnet to many Ukrainians; at the same time, some were reluctant to leave Ukraine, where life was more tranquil and pleasant.

A neighbour recorded that the Kvitkas' lives "were contained in their home in Osnova, where she, dressed attractively, and having sent her husband off to work, awaited his return for lunch. They never had guests for luncheon. Osnovianenko liked good food, especially the national dishes, dumplings, pancakes, and *varenyky* . But their lunch was simple, like their life, which was not at all like the life of well-to-do Ukrainian landowners." Kvitka did his writing in the evening. He kept in his study books on Ukrainian history and folklore, few as they were, but he relied mostly on his own notes about the life of the Ukrainian gentry and peasantry. These were far apart in his time, but their customs, religion, and even language were similar. He also liked to talk to villagers and his servants, especially to his coachman, Lukian, who always greeted him with a few phrases in

French. Lukian drove Kvitka every day from Osnova to Kharkiv and back. On the way he tended the horses, but in between he would exchange the latest anecdotes with his master. These later surfaced in some of the stories. Kvitka's nephew, Valerian, recorded that his uncle "remained youthful till his old age, when he became very fond of children. He told them stories and took part in their games. Childless himself, he became the children's idol. Ever since his days in the monastery he had remained very religious, often prayed and took part in the life of the parish church, where he directed the choir."

The dilemma - to stay and write in Ukrainian or to go to Russia and seek more recognition - drove Kvitka to consult not only his Russian friends, but, above all, his wife. He was so distressed that she advised him to see a doctor. Hryhoriy described his own condition as "bitterness resulting from all the criticism," which "was unbearable." The doctor agreed that his condition "was serious," and prescribed some medicines. The patient "was ready to flee to the end of the world in order not to listen to people. The mere mention of 'Osnovianenko' shocked me." As a surprise reward for his wife's solicitude Kvitka planned to buy her a fur coat from the proceeds of his royalties. The plan remained unfulfilled, perhaps because the royalties did not materialize.

The split in his loyalties and his inability to reconcile a deeply-felt desire to write and publish in Ukrainian with his taste for praise in Russia, was complicated by an unexpected new relationship established with Taras Shevchenko in 1840. In that year the Ukrainian poet, who was at that time a student in the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, published his collection of Ukrainian poems *The Minstrel* (*Kobzar*). It contained a medium-size poem "To Osnovianenko," in which Shevchenko called Kvitka "father" and "friend," and, offering many lines of his own about past Cossack glory, invited Osnovianenko "to sing" more about Ukraine. Kvitka was overwhelmed by this challenge as well as by the beauty of Shevchenko's poetry. He seems to have been totally stunned. On October 23 he wrote a long letter in Ukrainian to the unknown author:

> My wife and I were sitting and talking when books were brought to us, which, as usual, take our money in advance and offer us the Muscovite rubbish.... when, suddenly I opened

> the parcel and... God Almighty, it was in our language. We started to read it. I will not lie when I tell you that my hair, sparse as it is, stood up and my heart ached... I see my wife wiping her eyes.
>
> 'Whoever has written so well and beautifully?' I say... Now we know that Mr. Shevchenko wrote it. Who is he? Where can we find him?.. I pressed *The Minstrel* to my heart. I respect you very much and your thoughts touch my heart deeply... I could tell you in your own words my story of the Captain's Daughter, then it would be well told...Perhaps you could paint her portrait... From the bottom of my heart I say: write more and gladden my heart. Believe me, I am thoroughly fed up with Muscovite writing...

Shevchenko answered in February 1941. He wrote that Kvitka's "Marusia" "told him everything" about her author, and asked Kvitka to send him some Ukrainian women's costumes so that he could paint them on one of his models. He promised to send Kvitka his paintings of Ukrainian girls. Kvitka replied in November thanking Shevchenko "that you do not pay attention to the fools, the Russians [he used the pejorative *katsaps*] and are continuing to write." He urged Shevchenko to contribute to the Ukrainian almanac *The Swallow* (*Lastivka*), which was being prepared for publication by Hrebinka. When the almanac appeared later in 1841, it contained, among other contributions, a short story by Kvitka and some poems by Shevchenko. In April 1842 Kvitka thanked Shevchenko for his long poem *Haidamaky* which he "had read and smacked his lips." He asked him to write more, so that he "could breathe easier after reading Muscovite lies." Kvitka initiated the publication of a Ukrainian almanac, *The New Moon* (*Molodyk*), and asked for Shevchenko's collaboration.

Contact with Shevchenko reinvigorated Kvitka and turned him once more to Ukraine. Striking was the anti-Russian rhetoric in his letters. He must have recognized instantly Shevchenko's greatness as a poet and felt flattered by his attention and praise. His thirst for recognition was quenched - and by a Ukrainian. Some highly placed people regarded Kvitka as Shevchenko's ally and disapproved of both. Among them was a prominent Kharkovite member of the gentry, Va-

syl Karazyn, who was the initiator of the action that led to the establishment of Kharkiv University in 1805. In a letter to Pletnev, Kvitka complained that Karazyn had tried to suppress Shevchenko's poem dedicated to Kvitka. Although Shevchenko's book of poems was well received by Russian critics, some of them (Belinsky) shortly afterwards condemned the use of the Ukrainian language.

Kvitka's illness returned in 1842. At the New Year he wrote to Pletnev, "I was near death." He was still worried about Russian criticism. "I suffer greatly," he wrote in June 1843, "and see no end to my troubles." Before his death he wrote a history of the founding of Kharkiv. His short history of Ukraine, which he wrote in Ukrainian "for the common people (*prostoliudinov*), remained unpublished. He was pleased to hear from Zhukovsky that the Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna enjoyed reading his story "The Captain's Daughter" (Panna Sotnikovna).

Kvitka died in the arms of his wife, in Kharkiv, on August 8, 1843. His funeral was attended not only by members of the gentry but by the villagers around Kharkiv and Osnova, whom he had immortalized in his stories. His wife died nine years later and was buried next to him. Two years after his death, in 1845, the Danish Society of Antiquarians in Copenhagen made him a member. A French translation of his story "Poor Oksana"(Serdeshna Oksana) by Charlotte Moreau was published in Paris in 1854. An English translation of "Marusia" by Florence Livesay appeared in New York in 1940.

Literary scholars dubbed Kvitka's works classicist and sentimentalist. His life spanned the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and he exemplified the old Ukrainian gentry of that time. Like theirs, Kvitka's life was quiet and secluded, but it foreshadowed the tensions and dilemmas of the new century.

Panteleimon Kulish

Panteleimon Kulish

1

In Ukraine, the land of the Cossacks, one of the major writers of the nineteenth century was directly descended from these national heroes. Unlike Taras Shevchenko, who was a peasant's son, Panteleimon Kulish came from an old Cossack family. Mykhailo Kulish held the rank of Cossack "military companion" at the time of Tsar Peter I. Yet later, through a technicality, the Kulishes did not receive, as did most other Cossack officers, the nobiliary title (*dvorianstvo).* Therefore, Oleksander Kulish, the writer's father, was still registered as a "simple Cossack." His son, Panteleimon, was born on July 26 (o.s.), 1819, in the small town of Voronizh, Chernihiv province. His grandfather, Andriy, was a hot-blooded Cossack, known as "fiery Kulish," a label later attached to Panteleimon. His father was an industrious husbandman, living on a *khutir* (homestead). Panteleimon's mother, Kateryna, came from a distinguished Cossack family of Hladky. She bore Oleksander several children, but only one, Panteleimon, survived.

The little boy was known as Panko, and his mother was worried when he started talking only after he was two. He was a sickly child and needed extra care, which his mother offered lovingly. Uneducated and illiterate as she was, she had great native virtues, among them love and knowledge of singing and folk culture, which she instilled in her son. Later, Kulish's friend Chuikevych would describe this remarkable woman's "regal presence." She was an accomplished singer and story-teller. She died when Panko was six, and the child was devastated. Later he wrote: "I remember her gentle look which accompanied the fables she told me, and the voice full of love with which she told them. This is all that remains of my mother. I grew up as a solitary boy in the company of my father, who loved me passionately but who bored me with his readings." Panko's father remarried, and the boy grew even more aloof. He learned reading and writing

from a cousin, and loved to talk to a blind man, Yakym, who was a great reciter.

Kulish's *khutir* near Voronizh "had pastures with branching birch trees, aspens, and oaks. Close by were thick groves, an apiary with a mysterious old man, and the sad tranquility of the scene filled the heart of the young child with bright sorrow." This poetic recollection of childhood did not obliterate the memory of busy working days around the *khutir,* which also impressed the young boy. All the members of the Kulish clan worked on the farm and in the apiary, along with a few servants. They did not lead the life of landed gentry but were engaged in various household duties. The life-style of the *khutir* so impressed itself on the young Panko that later he was to build on it his own original philosophy of *khutorianstvo.* This life-style was not exactly a peasant existence, but had elements in common with it, most of all the actual work on a farm. Another feature was the relative seclusion. "Around our *khutir,*" he wrote, "there was no property whose owner would be familiar with the cultural life of a large city and had brought some of it to his own corner. For a long time I saw nothing resembling English comfort, French luxury, or even German respectability, neither in my home nor in our neighbourhood." Much later Kulish reminisced that "the order of things, which was established in Little Russia after the times of [the hetmans] Khmelnytsky and Vyhovsky, continued on to our day almost without a change.... We lived the same lives as those of [Mazepa's period]." The descent, however humble, from the Cossack elite, was a bridge, in Kulish's life, from the old Ukrainian traditions to something entirely new, yet firmly linked to the past.

The secluded life led by the Kulishes was from time to time disturbed by a visitor from Vorovizh or Hlukhiv. Both towns were rich in Cossack history. The census of 1764 shows that Voronizh had then 7,909 male inhabitants, including 619 Cossacks. After Mazepa's defeat at Poltava in 1709, Hlukhiv had become the new capital of Ukraine, replacing the plundered Baturyn. Here, in 1764, the Russians had set up the so-called Little Russian Collegium, which, after the fall of the Hetmanate, held supreme authority in Ukraine. The town was

on the river Esman, which would often appear in Kulish's poems as Ukraine's northern border.

Panko's attendance at the high school in Novhorod Siversky, another nearby historic town, was made possible by a woman whom he called his "second mother." She was Uliana Terentievna Muzhylovska, a wealthy landowner who took special interest in the boy. She prevailed on Kulish's father to send him to a gymnasium rather than to be trained as a court clerk. Later Kulish described her in his long story "The History of Uliana Terentievna," published in 1852. At Muzhylovska's house Kulish saw for the first time "furniture of exquisite craftsmanship, silver and chinaware and tapestries on the living room walls. Here civilization has conquered simple nature." He adds that "the democratic soul of the young boy became aristocratic, but not in the pejorative sense of that word. From that time on he began to look down on the lowly life." Yet it was not only affluence that changed the young Kulish; he admired Uliana Terentievna's intellectual and spiritual qualities. She introduced him to the world of art, music, and literature and to foreign languages. Here he met her German tutor, Gotfried; he listened to poetry readings and discovered his own talent for painting. In a word, Uliana Terentievna provided a stimulus for the awakening of his artistic and intellectual curiosity. She also helped Kulish's father financially to maintain the son at the gymnasium. Kulish always remembered his fairy godmother, even much later, when a nephew of hers managed to drive her out of her beautiful home into a nunnery.

Kulish's days in high school are well depicted in his other volume, *Yakov Yakovlevich* , where the hero is one of Kulish's teachers. This truly Gogolian character, reminiscent of Akakiy Akakievich in "The Overcoat" (*Shinel*). taught arithmetic, German, calligraphy, and drawing. He was especially well disposed towards the young Panko, whose father supplied him regularly with fresh farm produce and flour. Young Kulish soon mastered arithmetic and other subjects, especially Russian, in which he was far from fluent. How stubborn he could be is best shown by an episode in which the algebra teacher told him to kneel down for not learning a lesson. Kulish refused to do so

and declared that, if he was forced to his knees, he would never study algebra again. The teacher was adamant, and the pupil abandoned algebra and was allowed to pass to the next grade with the special permission of the principal. A subject in which Kulish truly excelled was art. His drawings were highly admired by teachers and fellow students.

It was here, in the gymnasium, even as he became more and more conversant with Russian language and literature, that Kulish also discovered Ukrainian literature and began writing in both Russian and Ukrainian. The impulse came not so much from reading as from close association with a fellow student, Serdiukov, who had a literary bent and read German poetry in the original. Works in Ukrainian for Kulish to read were very few. We know that among these were those by Kvitka and Hulak-Artemovsky. Under Kvitka's influence Kulish wrote his first Ukrainian story, "The Gypsy" (*Tsyhan*), which was not published until 1831. But we also have Kulish's own record of an event that was of momentous significance for his future as a writer. He describes how he "went into a store in search of nuts and saw five books there. There were the copies of the collection of Ukrainian folksongs and *dumy*, published by Maksymovych in 1834. Kulish bought the book and it became the most fascinating to him and Serdiukov.... He read it to everybody and decided to learn the book by heart."

This happened in 1835, when Kulish was sixteen. Although Maksymovych's book was the product of new trends in literature, Kulish felt its impact from an isolated, provincial point of view. He himself knew many Ukrainian songs, which he had heard from his mother, but Maksymovych's collection legitimized what he felt in his innermost self. He later wrote that this publication "made him in a single day into a Little Russian populist instead of a Great Russian one." To a boy with a literary ambition this was a clear pointer. He would direct his efforts along similar lines. Perhaps because his Russian was still rather shaky, he decided to write something in Ukrainian. Apart from "Gypsy" there may have been other stories that Kulish wrote under the impact of Maksymovych.

Kulish left school in 1836, after completing five grades. He was bored with his teachers and grew very restless. Against his father's advice he left school, but not having completed the full course, he was ineligible to enter a university. He filled his time by becoming a tutor to some landowning families, coming into closer contact with village life. Wandering through villages and talking to old minstrels (*kobzars*), he took them by surprise by reciting the *dumy* by heart. In fact, his appearance was so impressive that once he was taken by some villagers to be the tsar's son, secretly mixing with the people. Perhaps his good looks, which he retained for most of his life, had something to do with it. For a time, in 1837, Kulish served as a petty clerk in the famous Bezborodko Lyceum in Nizhyn, Gogol's *alma mater*. A year later, in 1838, Kyiv University was reopened after the riots by Polish students, and Kulish tried to enrol there. He was declared inadmissible because he was not a *dvorianin*. However, he became a "free attendant" sitting in on the lectures of his idol, Professor Maksymovych. Kulish shared his rooms with his friend Chuikevych at Grafsky Alley, not far from the university.

Maksymovych took an interest in this bright young man and offered collaboration in his journal *The Kievan* (*Kievlianin*), where two of Kulish's short stories appeared in Russian in 1840. With Maksymovych's help he managed to get a story printed in St. Petersburg, which drew a friendly one-sentence comment from the prominent Russian critic Belinsky - no mean feat for a beginner. So far, Kulish basked in the Russian sunshine his professors beamed towards him. By nature he was not a radical and probably did not sympathize with many Polish students who were true revolutionaries. Two years earlier many of them had been arrested and eleven of these, among them two Ukrainians, had received death sentences, which were commuted. But Kulish was busy with his own Ukrainian pursuits, especially the folk songs. Some of them, remembered as his mother sang them, he copied for Maksymovych, who included them in a new edition of his collection. After a year of attending lectures he tried but failed again to be admitted as a regular student.

We know relatively little about his opinions as a student.

Later, reminiscing about that period, Kulish rather vehemently denounced the poor teaching at Kyiv, declaring that his professors were emulating the German *Gelehrten*. He found their lectures boring and irrelevant to his interests. In contrast to the scholastic sterility of the university, he described himself as *ribaldo flagitiosus* (a dissolute ribald). Is there in this note a hidden aspect of the young Kulish? This is doubtful, since it is difficult to see this well-disciplined and religious youth engaging in anything more than pranks. Perhaps singing Ukrainian songs and drinking a glass of wine appeared to Kulish to be ribaldry? However, it is certain that at the university he became acquainted with some Western philosophical ideas (Herder and Hegel). Maksymovych was a follower of Schelling. Herder's enthusiasm for Slavic folk culture and even his prognosis that "Ukraine will one day become a new Greece" could have been another stimulant for the young Kulish. We also know that Maksymovych introduced him to the novels of Sir Walter Scott, who was soon to become a powerful influence on Kulish's literary plans. From another professor, Vasili Krasov, he learned how to appreciate Goethe and Byron.

In Kyiv Maksymovych introduced Kulish to Mykhailo Yuzefovych, an assistant trustee of the Kyiv school district, who was to play an important role in Kulish's life, and, indeed, a rather sinister one in Ukrainian literary revival. Yuzefovych found the unemployed student Kulish a teaching position in a school in Lutsk in Volhynia, deep within the Polish sphere of influence (all Right Bank Ukraine was under Polish rule until 1795). When Kulish arrived in Lutsk in 1842 he found in the school where he was to teach an excellent library, containing over 15,000 volumes, confiscated from a private collection. It was a real joy to work there. Panko spent many hours in the library, reading and also learning French by immersing himself in the multi-volume French translation of Walter Scott's novels. A new friend, Ivan Khilchevsky, who was ten years older and who shared lodgings with Kulish, encouraged his studies and introduced him to many Polish students. Panko also fell in love with two girls (not at the same time) whom he called No. 1 and No. 2, who were to be the first of a long row of women in his life. According to Khilchevsky, Kulish

"spoke the purest Ukrainian, used by no one in this Polonized land." The happy days in Lutsk did not last long. A new principal arrived, who did not like Kulish or Khilchevsky, and they were both transferred to other schools. Kulish was lucky to obtain a teaching position in Podil, a district of Kyiv.

Before leaving Lutsk, Kulish managed to complete his first novel, written in Russian, *Mykhailo Charnyshenko* , his emulation of Walter Scott. The long novel was printed in parts in periodicals in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and was even translated into Polish. Its action was set near Hlukhiv at the time of the Cossacks and showed many adventures and a great deal of antiquarian detail. It also showed evidence of Kulish's considerable historical research in French, German and Russian histories of the Cossacks, as well as in Ukrainian sources. Following the extensive footnotes to the novel, thirty-six pages of them, Kulish drafted an advertisement of his proposed new book on the "History of Little Russian Families." That advertisement shows not only an interest but a true dedication to historical scholarship by proposing to write a history of Ukraine based on documentary family chronicles. Nothing came of it, but, once more it proved his "passionate love of my native land." Perhaps even at this early age Kulish felt inner confidence in his ability to achieve what he later accomplished. Another Ukrainian, Nikolai Gogol, had attempted a similar project in Ukrainian history a few years earlier. It came to nothing, and it is just as well that Kulish did not know about it.

In the fall of 1842 Kulish arrived in Kyiv, where his teaching duties were not very onerous. He found the time to study and to travel. One of his new friends was the Polish writer Michal Grabowski, whom Kulish met at the latter's estate in Oleksandrivka. This was to be a very important relationship for both of them. Grabowski was the leading light of the Polish intellectual circle in Kyiv. Other members were the writers Count Henryk Rzewuski, Jozef Kraszewski, and the scholars Alexander Przezdiecki and Konstanty Swidzinski. Grabowski himself was the author of two books of literary history published in Vilnius (Wilno). He was so taken by Kulish's novel that he asked one of his friends to translate it into Polish. Grabowski re-

garded the Ukrainian Cossack past as part of Polish history (which in a sense it was), and encouraged Kulish to write more about the Cossacks in the style of Scott's Waverly novels.

There is an important ideological twist to Kulish's friendship with Grabowski. The Polish writer, unlike many of his compatriots, was a strong Russophile and urged political accommodation with Russia. Much later, Kulish was to preach a similar idea to the Ukrainians. Grabowski remained Kulish's friend for over twenty years. He collected Ukrainian folklore and books on history, and believed that both Polish and Ukrainian romantic literatures must be rooted in the oral tradition that had its origins in Ukraine. Many Polish writers and ethnographers shared this view. An entire "school" of Polish romantic writers (Zaleski, Malczewski, Goszczynski) wrote on Ukrainian themes. It was also from Grabowski that Kulish first learned about the brutality of the Cossacks, and, from a different point of view, about the primacy of the aesthetic in literature.

Young Kulish was very much impressed by Grabowski and his beautiful wife. He felt, for the first time in his life, that he was in the presence of a family of superior culture, great charm, and deep learning. Three months in Oleksandrivka he passed in studying old chronicles and documents in Grabowski's huge study or wandering among the peasants, whom Grabowski described as "true aristocrats." The men discussed *narodnist* (national spirit), but shied away from politics and religion, not because they might disagree but because Kulish was quite apolitical. They talked of the bloodthirsty *haidamaks* (peasant rebels), and of the patriarchal values of Ukrainian peasant families. Unlike most Ukrainian intellectuals, they "saw the Polish historical role in Ukraine as constructive, as a cultural mission, and the Cossacks, particularly the Zaporozhians, and Khmelnytsky too, as anarchic and destructive." These meetings coloured much of Kulish's later view of Ukraine.

In April 1843 Kulish completed in five days a long epic poem, *Ukraine* (*Ukraina*), in Ukrainian, an imitation of the seventeenth-century songs - the *dumy*. In the preface Kulish compared the ancient *dumy* to Homer's work. Unlike Macpherson, known to the

world as Ossian, son of Fingal, Kulish never claimed that his work was a rediscovered old epic. It remained rather obscure, and one critic called it "monotonous and lachrymose." Yet this first disastrous attempt to imitate folk poetry did not prevent Kulish from repeating his efforts in later years, a project no Romantic could escape at that time. The poem was published later that year by the university typographer in Kyiv, probably at the author's own expense.

2

While in Kyiv, Kulish enjoyed strong support among his countrymen and also from the Russian critics, who liked his work, especially his novel. He received letters of support from two prominent Russians, Mikhail Pogodin and Stepan Shevyrev. In his reply to Pogodin, Kulish expressed a desire to visit other Slavic countries. But, for the time being, he was busy in Kyiv, where he was made an associate of the temporary commission for the collection of antique documents. This gave him an opportunity for further travel in Ukraine. He also met in 1843 some new friends, who came to have great impact on his plans. One of them was Vasyl Bilozersky, who left a record of their meeting: "We talked as if we had known each other for years. I was attracted to him with all my heart." This friendship would last for many years. At that time Kulish also met Bilozersky's sister, Oleksandra, whom he would marry in 1847.

An even more ardent friendship, which became real comradeship, was also formed in 1843 between Kulish and Taras Shevchenko. Both recalled their first meeting, but it was Kulish who described it twice so well. It seems likely that it meant more to him than to Shevchenko. From Kulish's account, quoted in his biography it is clear that Kulish, more than Shevchenko, saw the difference in their social status. Shevchenko was a peasant's son, perhaps with some Cossack blood in him, but Kulish reiterated that he came from the Cossack officer corps (*starshyna*), which in those days still meant a great deal in Ukraine. Kulish was definitely flaunting his ancestral origin, and regarded his new friend as a bit of a bohemian. There were

also temperamental differences between them, which later led to some problems, but which might also have been a source of mutual attraction. Kulish, as he wrote, was happy in his "search for an equilibrium of heart and mind," while he instinctively felt that in Shevchenko, as he said, "the blood pulsed ceaselessly." Both had great talent, but already, Shevchenko was revealing himself as a true romantic poet, something to which Kulish aspired but never achieved. These premonitions were covered up by their common love of Ukrainian history, language, and, oddly enough of fishing.

In the fall of 1844 Kulish met in Kyiv another young intellectual, Mykola Kostomarov, with whom he later formed, together with Shevchenko, a real "band of brothers." At first it was Kulish who was the leader of the trio. His friendship with Kostomarov was instant. "From our first exchange," he wrote, "we became close friends. We used to talk throughout entire summer nights. We might have seemed drunk to a passing observer. And we were drunk, but not with wine." Their intoxication came from discussing Ukrainian history and folklore. Kostomarov, who had just arrived from Kharkiv, where he defended a dissertation on Russian folk poetry, was two years older than Kulish. Both had primarily scholarly interests, although both wrote also poetry. The practical Kulish immediately conceived of a joint project - a publication devoted to Ukrainian history. Apart from Kostomarov, he invited Maksymovych and Sreznevsky to participate.

Like many other romantic projects, this one did not materialize, perhaps because of a lack of funds, but also because, in August 1845, Kulish left Kyiv for Rivne. He did not stay there long, and late in the fall of the same year he went to St. Petersburg, where he obtained a teaching position. He departed from Kyiv at a crucial time, when his friends (Kostomarov, Bilozersky, Shevchenko, and Hulak) had decided to form a secret circle, later known as the Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. Kostomarov was the leader of that group. However, Kulish remained in close contact with Kostomarov by correspondence. He also wrote frequently to Shevchenko. Fortunately, several of Kulish's letters have been preserved, and they offer a valuable documentation of his spiritual growth, as well as of the intellec-

tual climate of this small but very important coterie of Ukrainian activists.

It was perhaps natural that in St. Petersburg, far from Ukraine, and under the close protection of his Russian patron, Petr Pletnev, Kulish should become more aware of his Ukrainianness. Petr Alexandrovich Pletnev was the rector of the university, the editor of the journal *The Contemporary* (*Sovremennik*), and a friend of many writers, including Pushkin, who dedicated to him his masterpiece *Evgeniy Onegin*. He offered Kulish lodgings in his house, but was visibly upset when his daughter Olga, who fell in love with Kulish, was rejected by him because she would not learn Ukrainian. Was this young upstart from Ukraine perhaps abusing Pletnev's hospitality? Yet Olga's father continued to support the young Ukrainian and found him employment as instructor of Russian to foreign students at the university. After all, Ukraine was looked on with favour by many Russians at that time. They included Pushkin, who died in 1837 but who had written on Ukrainian themes and planned to write a book on Ukrainian history (alas, only a few jottings in French have been preserved). However, when Kulish, to reassert his love for Ukraine, started "to write a novel in Ukrainian, which he began in Kyiv in Russian," Pletnev lost his temper. "For my passion for things Ukrainian," wrote Kulish, "he regarded me as half a monster."

While staying with Pletnev, Kulish frequented the salon of Alexandra Ishimova, a Russian writer of stories for children. Later she published Kulish's brief history of the Ukrainian people, which caused him a lot of trouble with the police, although the publication was passed by the censor. Kulish came to be regarded by the Russian elite in St. Petersburg as an ambassador of Ukraine. A revealing look into the young Kulish's mood is offered by the diary he kept in St. Petersburg, which has remained unpublished. He felt that "every man should keep a diary," In it Kulish recorded his honest opinion about his benefactor Pletnev, Ishimova, and others. It was Pletnev who, having read the diary of a Russian priest, advised Kulish to keep a diary, and told him to meet more people ("I always kept aloof from friends"). Because Pletnev was so full of advice, Kulish at times re-

belled against him. He once even tore up the diary, but later continued. He felt very happy, although Pletnev warned him that it is difficult to sustain the feeling of happiness and that Pushkin used to say that "life was very boring." Together they read Walter Scott and Rousseau; Pletnev taught him to be patient in awaiting new publications and also steered Kulish towards religion. But it was Kulish's own view that "a woman cannot be happy without a man, but a man can be happy without a woman." Together with Pletnev, Kulish went to theaters; the last scene in *King Lear* left a deep impression on him. It was a reminder of life's unhappiness.

Kulish's diary casts light on his own ambition and on the philosophy that remained with him throughout his life. He keenly observed women whose company he enjoyed, though often they were busy with "soulless conversation." Remembering Oleksandra Bilozerska, he wrote that "marriage is not for him," but he would like at the same time to enjoy "family happiness." At the same time he was concerned that "marriage would consume all my funds." Finally, he notes rather cynically that "a man striving for higher aims should look at a woman more as a physiologist than as a poet." Kulish was intensely aware of his "mission" in life. With great approval he quotes Pushkin's poem "The Wanderer" (*Strannik*), copying the lines about "keeping to the only aim." This entry is followed by a confession that he feels happiest alone, for then he prays to God to lift up his soul. At times he is aware that he "loves himself more than he should." He doubts whether he is worthy of friendship of such worthy people (Pletnev, Grot, Ishimova). But occasionally, when visited by an old friend, Serdiukov, he recalls Ukraine and his friend's interest in the Ukrainian language.

Despite the many attractions of St. Petersburg ("I would like to take part in the whirlpool of contemporary Russian life"), Kulish's loyalty to his Kyivan friends and to his country never weakened. Writing to a member of Kostomarov's circle, Opanas Markovych, in March 1846, he confesses that "Ukraine and the Ukrainian language have become for me now a veritable temple." Gradually, the Ukrainian language was becoming for him, as it did for Shevchenko, not

merely a rich poetic medium but a proof of nationhood. He found the time to reread Shevchenko's published poems, and on July 25, 1846, wrote a long letter to their author:"With the talent God has given you you could create wonders which would be even more striking than those created by Pushkin's talent. Your works do not belong to you alone and to your own time. They belong to the whole of Ukraine and will speak for it forever. This gives me the right to meddle with the family affairs of your imagination.... You can accept or reject my observations...."

Kulish gave Shevchenko plenty of advice; some of it was taken. But Shevchenko might have resented a little the magisterial tone of his friend. Later this desire on Kulish's part to be an adviser and mentor led to some friction between the two men. Kulish never doubted his own beliefs - they remained unshakable. This was a flaw, but it also accounts for his incredible perseverance. This tendency to counsel is also evident in his letters to Kostomarov. Referring to Kostomarov's partly Russian origin, he wrote: "Why do you say that you are not a Ukrainian? That it is only because of our humanistic ideas that you mingle with us? We are giving you citizenship rights. Besides, your mother is a Ukrainian. I could not love you as much as I do if I did not regard you as Ukrainian." Kulish was one of the first to use the noun "Ukrainian" (*ukrainets*), which Shevchenko never used. Kulish's other letters to Kostomarov discuss broad ideological and philosophical issues, all connected to Ukrainian nationhood. To Kostomarov's concern about the primacy of universal education, Kulish answered:

> Young people taking up the study of Little Russia do not in any way thereby deprive themselves of acquiring a European education. Why take the extremes? One can love one's bucolic *khutir* and grow enthusiastic over the glittering capital more than somebody who does not live on a *khutir*. One can know by heart all our songs, legends, and chronicles and acquire a high degree of European education. I do not understand why, in your opinion, one excludes the other?.... [You say] that man strives for the better and what is better is foreign. No, the living

> element, without which there will be no harmony in your scholarly and poetic endeavours, has dried up in you..... Even if all the Little Russians active today in the literary field should wilt away. I am confident and not alarmed. New ones will come from the people, fresh hearts will appear whom nature itself will teach love of their native land, and they will start work and bring sacrifices with an enthusiasm not seen before.

In another long letter Kulish replied to some negative comments Kostomarov had made in his lectures on Ukrainian history at the university. Rivalling with Kostomarov in his knowledge of Ukrainian history, Kulish wrote: "Impatient and chagrined at [Ukraine's] prolonged wandering in the desert, you attack her with the ultimate curse, calling her insignificant. Wait! There will, perhaps, come a time when the sound of her trumpets alone will shatter walls and fortresses.... I do not accept your division into chosen and unchosen [peoples], and I fear that with such a view of history you will end up in the deepest darkness."

The passionate Kulish was attacking here not only Kostomarov but also Hegel, for his view of the "historic" and "unhistoric" nations. Hegel's argument would be used again and again in the coming decades to "put the Ukrainians in their proper place," but Kulish was the first to challenge that view. History proved him correct. What Shevchenko did in his poems Kulish tried in intellectual discourse. Much later he would change somewhat his view of Ukraine's historical destiny, but for the time being he defended his native land with great vigour. Moreover, he felt that he had a mission to fulfil in this respect through his own work. "In silence," he wrote to Markovych, "I accomplish great things, pregnant with important consequences." There is something romantic, even Byronic, in these words. He did feel lonely in St. Petersburg and found the social life uninteresting. Therefore he continued dreaming of Ukraine.

We do not know how much news he received from Kyiv about the work of the Brotherhood. We do know from a later recollection of these days that Kulish welcomed the creation of the Brotherhood in these words: "[The Kyivan friends] were inspired with a

salutary thought - to raise their nation out of the darkness that was destroying its welfare and making it impossible for spiritual forces to overcome the decay. Among this benevolent youth there appeared Shevchenko with a loud lament for the unhappy fate of the country.... If it can ever be said that the heart came to life, the eyes grew bright, and over men's foreheads appeared flaming tongues, it was then in Kyiv." Perhaps to find out more about the current situation, he decided to visit Kyiv in December 1846. We know that he met several times with the members of the Brotherhood in Hulak's apartment. A new project was discussed, but Kulish, who was invited to head it, refused. The reasons are not entirely clear, but he wrote about it to Pletnev on December 29, 1846. Perhaps keeping in mind Pletnev's skepticism about Ukraine, Kulish referred in the letter to "most ephemeral undertakings," "the pensive faces, lowered foreheads, and knitted eyebrows." He confessed that "inwardly I laughed and was vexed. The coolness of my opinions surprised them and they came to regard me as an egoist from the capital." In the same letter he praised Shevchenko, "who has become more erudite." So Kulish decided to stay out of the joint effort. Was it because of his vanity?

While Kulish was in St. Petersburg and during his brief return to Kyiv he was also thinking of a very personal matter - a possible marriage to Oleksandra Bilozersky. Her brother, Vasyl, wrote that at the Bilozerskys' *khutir* in Motronivka, Kulish met his future bride and her mother. "My mother liked him very much, and my sister was enchanted with him. He fell passionately in love with her." However, Oleksandra's mother thought her fifteen-year-old daughter was not ready for marriage. Kulish had to wait. While in St. Petersburg he thought a great deal of Sasha (short for Oleksandra). Thinking of his future married life, he wrote in his diary, that "instead of publishing folk songs, chronicles, and antiquities, I shall be producing children...I must be careful not to fall under the sway of sensuality." He thought of his future wife as a true companion, and approved of Pletnev's saying that "women have been created to make Socrateses out of us." At about the same time he obtained in St. Petersburg a promise of a travelling scholarship abroad. He was extremely keen on it. Im-

mediately, he planned to take his future wife with him on travels abroad and wrote so to Bodiansky, complaining that she did not know any foreign languages. The practical Kulish was at work here too.

However, the future bride was no dunce. Her father was a regional marshal of the gentry, who loved to read Voltaire. He secured for his daughter a good education at a girls' school near Poltava. There, Oleksandra studied French and German, singing, and took piano lessons. She became very fond of reading, and not just of French novels. Because of her young age Kulish tended to treat her like a child, though he addressed her with the formal *vy* (you). After a very short courtship, the date of the wedding was finally set for January 1847. Kulish was twenty-eight, the bride nineteen. Among the many wedding guests was Shevchenko, the best man. He was in the best of spirits, sang and joked. Five days after the wedding Kulish in a letter to Shevchenko wrote that he "had a very intelligent wife, who knows our history very well." In his diary Kulish noted that, together with his wife, he had read Pushkin and Gogol's new publication, *Selected Passages from Correspondence with Friends (Vybrannye mesta iz perepiski s druziami)*. Unfortunately, he did not say what they thought of Gogol's strange creation.

Sasha has left her account of their courtship, the wedding, and their journey to Warsaw. She was devoted to Panko and wrote that he "has discovered Ukraine as a new America to Pletnev and others." She described the wedding in great detail. It was held in accordance with ancient Ukrainian traditions, including the shower for the bride (*divych vechir*). Sitting at a long table, Sasha looked anxiously at the lit candles. Their flames were steady - a good omen for the newly-weds (they would live and die in harmony). All these elaborate events were followed by immediate departure, one week after the actual wedding ceremony, to Poland. She lamented leaving her parents and her home, "a nest, where not a cloud passed over my head." They travelled by stagecoach and stopped, on the way, in Kyiv, where Sasha was introduced to some members of the Brotherhood. She was overwhelmed by their talk and her husband's oratory, feeling "as if I were in a church, listening to divine music," and remembering that "a

poor *khutir* girl was thrown into the vortex of the idealistic struggle."

The meeting in Kyiv was described later by Kulish as being important because he and Kostomarov were captivated by Shevchenko's unpublished poems "The Dream" (Son). and "The Caucasus," (Kavkaz), which the author had recited to them. Both Kulish and Kostmarov hoped that his poems would influence Ukrainian landowners to show greater tolerance towards their serfs. Kostomarov's mood was elated not only because of Shevchenko's poems but because he had finally an ideal woman, Alina Kragielska, one of the many proteges of Franz Liszt. They were to be married in a few weeks.

Just before Novhorod Volynsky, the coach in which Kulish and his wife as well as Vasyl Bilozersky, were travelling broke down and they had to wait for repairs. Sasha noted the figure of a Jewish beggar, who struck her as more miserable than any serf she had seen in Ukraine. Later, she used this image in a short story, "The Jewish Serf," which was highly praised by her husband. It was also during this journey that Sasha, who was serious about becoming a writer, chose her literary pseudonym, *Barvinok* , after the periwinkle flower, endowed in Ukrainian folklore with magical qualities. Once in Poland, Kulish met many officials and introduced his wife to them. He was also grateful to Sasha, for she had offered a part of her dowry to finance the trip. Early in March they reached Warsaw and met more officials as well as scholars. Then, early in April, quite unexpectedly, lightning struck. During Kulish's visit to the tsarist vice-gerent, General Paskevich, a police order was brought in, placing him under arrest.

Much later Kulish learned that his arrest had been precipitated by a report made by one member of the Brotherhood, Oleksiy Petrov, to the police, in which he denounced the leading members. The matter was passed to the dreaded Third Section (secret police), which ordered the arrest of all members of the Brotherhood, including Kulish, Kostomarov, and Shevchenko. Kulish's wife was deeply shocked by the behaviour of the Russian police officers who searched her husband. Their dreams had been shattered. No Russian friend of

Kulish could intercede, and he was promptly dispatched to St. Petersburg. Vasyl Bilozersky was also under arrest. Sasha, alone, left Warsaw for Ukraine and her home in Motronivka.

3

The accused members of the Brotherhood were brought to trial in St. Petersburg in late March 1847. The word "trial" is, in fact, a misnomer, for the accused had no right to defence counsel or to call witnesses. It was, in fact, a month-long police interrogation with some confrontation between various accused, ending in a verdict against which there was no appeal. The proceedings were held entirely *in camera*; a transcript of them was kept but was only published almost eighty years later. The final report by the chief prosecuting officer, Count Orlov, was submitted to the tsar, who evinced personal interest in the matter, and showed no mercy.

As could be expected, the different accused reacted in different ways to the shock of police interrogation. Kostomarov, whose arrest took place on the eve of his marriage, was completely devastated and penitent. Shevchenko and Hulak remained steadfast and paid for their stubborn attitude with the heaviest penalties. Kulish conducted himself with dignity and courage. First of all, he denied that he was a member of the Brotherhood, and stated that during its active period he was not in Kyiv but in St. Petersburg. To seventy-nine gruelling questions Kulish replied calmly and denied most of the charges. Some of them, such as the accusation that he had used in his correspondence an old Cossack phrase, "with one's own hand," were palpably ridiculous. On several occasions he remained calm when General Dubbelt harangued him in obscene language. His profession of innocence must have irritated the tsarist gendarmes. When the sentences were read out, the heaviest was meted out to Shevchenko. Kulish and Bilozersky received a term of four months' imprisonment with a subsequent sentence of exile, and Kulish was forbidden to engage in literary activity. On his sentence the tsar wrote in his own hand: "Forbid writing and send him to serve in Vologda."

The effect of the sentence on Kulish was traumatic. All his brave resistance during the trial collapsed, and he became extremely penitent. A few days after his interrogation, on April 24, he wrote a letter to General Dubbelt confessing that he "was captivated by a false outlook on things," and that he was profoundly sorry. He implored Dubbelt to forgive him his errors. He promised to correct his "foolhardy actions," by "making amends through my future works." Kulish was no dissident (they were practically unknown in the 1840s in Russia); he was ready to recant and even to cringe in order to rescue his good name. The harsh sentence did not provoke a rebellion, as it did in Shevchenko. Kulish was no rebel. He was, after all, a misguided intellectual who had lost his bearings.

Kulish's wife made efforts to have him declared sick. These were partially successful, for he was pronounced to be in danger of contracting tuberculosis. In August, Count Orlov recommended that he be transferred to serve his exile in Tula, which had a better climate than Vologda. It helped that Orlov could say that Kulish repented his deeds. Kulish was very grateful and wrote to Orlov that he would now "fulfil the duty of a faithful citizen." In September, Kulish and his wife arrived in Tula, where he was given employment as a "clerk of special errands." He complained to Pletnev that he was becoming "the pettiest pettifogger." With Pletnev's intercession, Kulish was given a better job and free living quarters. He grumbled a lot and conducted a game of achieving concessions from the authorities. In this, he gradually succeeded. He was hoping, of course, that eventually they would allow him to engage in literary activity.

At long last he was allowed to write. He composed a work in Russian, *The Eugene Onegin of Our Time* , which is the "corrected" version of Kulish's youthful activities. Everything Ukrainian was played down, everything Russian, including the tsar's "bounty," was underlined. Pletnev liked what Kulish had written, but for obvious reasons it could not be published. Kulish then wrote two novels on Russian historical themes. In one of them he portayed a Ukrainian fisherman, Dunduk, who was strongly criticized by General Dubbelt, to whom Kulish sent the work for approval. This literary grovelling

by Kulish is rather sad, but it was a natural response to the almighty tsarist regime.

Gradually Kulish's life in Tula improved. He and his wife went for long walks in a large and neglected orchard. He was able to read and to study languages. He learned Italian and English, adding these to German and French, which he knew already. He wrote that he was becoming "a great philosopher." He became very fond of Dickens. He also met some new friends, among them the bank director Nikolai Makarov, who allowed Kulish to use his name for purposes of publication. Some of Kulish's works then appeared under the name of "Nikolay M." From his letters to Bodiansky we learn more about Tula, that god-forsaken town, which was famous only for its samovars. Kulish continued to bombard Orlov and Dubbelt with penitent letters. In the end it was a fellow Ukrainian, Alexander Kochubey, a high tsarist official, who played a part in gaining Kulish's release. Kulish presented a series of drawings of Tulan antiquities, which the Emperor liked very much. He then ordered that Kulish "be allowed to live and serve anywhere, not excluding the capital and Little Russia, but to be kept under secret surveillance." In December 1850 Kulish received the news of his release. He was left speechless and had to write on a piece of paper, to show to his wife, a single word - "freedom." This note always remained their most sacred possession.

On their return to St. Petersburg (for Sasha it was not a return), they found a good apartment, and almost immediately Kulish returned to his earlier Ukrainian interests. With Kochubey's and Pletnev's help he received employment in the department of agriculture and then in the department of statistics. The work was dull but not time-consuming, and Kulish could write and study. His wife was studying English and played the piano that her husband had acquired for the apartment. Yearning to visit Ukraine stirred more openly, and yet it was not until 1852 that they both went to see Oleksandra's mother near Borzna. They enjoyed their visit immensely, and it increased their desire to return to Ukraine. Back in St. Petersburg, they talked of it "that it would be blessed if it were not for the fact that the

city was placed in the mud." Kulish tried but failed to acquire a proper rank (everyone of any worth in Russia had to have a *chin* rank) despite the assistance of his influential friends. Apparently, the tsar himself blocked Kulish's tenure of a rank, and as a result he remained, as he had been in Tula, "a clerk of special errands." At the same time Kulish tried to re-enter the literary scene by writing and publishing in Russian his recollections of childhood. These were not well received. Frustrated on every front, he decided to leave St. Petersburg. "In the society in which we live," he wrote, "we are divided by great inequality." He and his wife decided to return to Ukraine.

In May 1853 they left the capital. In a letter to Bilozersky, Kulish described their enchantment with their destination, Ukraine. "What a wonderful climate this country has. The air here has something in it resembling Pushkin's 'spring of oblivion,' which soothes the heart's ardour better than anything. You drive through the steppe, you fill your lungs with air, and you wish for nothing more." His longing for a country retreat was dictated by that side of his personality that wanted to withdraw from the business of life and find new strength in life on the *khutir*. It also came to represent for him "something sacred." Finally, Kulish and his wife found a place near Orzhytsia, which they bought for 2,600 silver rubles, some of it borrowed from Pletnev. Having settled on his *khutir,* Kulish began work on a biography of Gogol, the first part of which appeared in *The Contemporary (Sovremennik)* in 1854. Later he expanded this biography and became an editor of Gogol's works. In his research he came to a conviction that Gogol was not a split personality but a man with a coherent outlook and deep moral convictions. This view was not popular among the radical Russian intelligentsia.

On returning to St. Petersburg for the winter, Kulish found the capital truly "bewitching." Here he became aware of something that he missed in the country. In the middle of February the Kulishes went back to their property in Ukraine. There were some difficulties in managing the farm. The peasants, whom Kulish treated well, took advantage of him and became quarrelsome. For a while he found great pleasure in doing odd jobs on the farm, especially carpentry, in

which he became expert. But he became disenchanted with the peasants and his own idealism. After all, a few years before he had pleaded for the abolition of serfdom. Finally, he decided to leave the *khutir* in the hands of a bailiff and to move to the city. His experiment, on which he had staked so much, had failed. But the idea of the *khutir* was not discarded.

There was one *khutir* where Kulish always felt very happy - Motronivka, the former home of his wife. This was where the Kulishes went to stay in October 1854. Kulish had received an invitation from a well-known Russian writer, Sergey Aksakov, to visit him at his estate in Abramtsevo, near Moscow. The elder Aksakov, whose two sons were prominent Slavophiles, was at that time sixty-three years old. He was the future author of *The Family Chronicle* (*Semeinaia khronika*, 1856). Like Kulish, he was interested in literary autobiography. Since Sasha Kulish did not know the Aksakovs, she decided to stay at Motronivka. Her husband went alone and was well received by the Aksakovs. Young Vera Aksakova left interesting impressions of his conversations with her father in her diary. Both men were fascinated by Gogol, and Kulish gathered more material for his biography. They also talked about Slavophilism, which was not totally alien to Kulish. A disagreement arose when Aksakov attacked Rousseau and George Sand, whom Kulish defended. Kulish also read to the old man fragments of his unpublished novel *The Black Council* (*Chorna rada*). The atmosphere became a little strained, and when Kulish left, Vera Sergeievna thought that "they would not see him again."

Kulish's visit to the Aksakovs must be seen against the broader picture of the times. Russia was nearing the end of the Crimean War (1853-56) which it eventually lost. At the time of Kulish's visit the Aksakovs received the news of the humiliating conditions imposed on Russia after the destruction of its Black Sea fleet. The Slavophiles opposed the war on pacifist grounds and eagerly read Gogol's moralizing works. Kulish agreed with them, but he also had his private thoughts about the war. The apprehension was suddenly dispelled in March 1855, when the tsar suddenly died. Kulish, who

was at the time in Moscow, greeted the news and, like most Russian intellectuals, hoped that the new tsar would bring more freedom. He must also have been thinking of Shevchenko, who was still in exile. Quite unexpectedly he decided to revisit Abramtsevo in March 1855. His relations with the old Aksakov improved and he later kept up a correspondence with him. In one of these letters, in 1856, Kulish wrote, "I am not motivated by mad enthusiasm [for Ukraine], and Little Russia, with its spiritual movement, will in the future be a beneficent influence on Russia." However, he added that Ukrainian culture must be allowed to develop freely. His view of some sort of symbiotic relationship between Ukraine and Russia might have been Utopian, but he clung to it for the rest of his life.

Having received news that his wife was ill, Kulish hastened back to Ukraine. They were soon reunited at the old *khutir*. This time Kulish did not try to work on the farm, but devoted himself to writing. He met some wealthy Ukrainian landowners (Halahan, Rigelman, Tarnovsky) who may have promised to finance publications on Ukrainian history. Kulish was also in touch with the historian Bodiansky in Moscow. Working diligently on some earlier material, Kulish slowly prepared *Notes on Southern Rus'* (*Zapiski o yuzhnoi Rusi*), which was published in 1856. It was a massive and very scholarly collection of ethnographic material, and remained unsurpassed for decades. Kulish's wife, who was becoming bored with life on the farm, helped to copy his work. But his was essentially the solitary achievement of a workaholic. He was urged on in this by a sense of mission. His favourite sayings at that time were: "Magna est veritas et praevalet," and a paraphrase from St. Matthew: "There is a rich harvest, but few to gather it." He was determined to be one of them.

Almost a decade had passed since his arrest. Kulish had gone through the trauma of imprisonment, the abyss of recantation, and finally, upon his release, through an ill-fated attempt to integrate with Russian literature. Now he was returning to his Ukrainian pursuits. His belief in Truth (with a capital T) was unshaken, and his Christian convictions told him to persevere in his search through his work. It became a solitary search. He looked upon life and society as a living

organism, which could be damaged by outside interference. In this Kulish was not unlike some Russian "Westernizers" (Pavel Annenkov) who tried to reconcile "nationality" with "civilization." His work was now centred on Ukraine, but at the same time he had a wider vision for his country, which only very few of his contemporaries could appreciate.

4

Kulish's scholarly and literary achievements in 1856-57 were considerable. Both his biography of Gogol and his *Notes on Southern Rus'* were well received. In 1857 he published, in Ukrainian, as well as in a Russian translation, his novel *The Black Council*, which he had begun writing a decade ago. This marked the beginning of the Ukrainian novel. It remains a great work of romantic imagination, and an interpretation of Ukrainian history, especially the role of the elite. In the novel one of the heroes, Kyrylo Tur, embodies a man of unbridled instincts who at the same time searches for "inner truth." In the Russian "Epilogue" to the novel Kulish expressed his view on the relation of Ukraine to Russia. He contributed to Russian Slavophile journals but kept to his own view of spiritual union between Ukraine, Russia, and even Poland. He was still very energetic, interested in everything except politics, but concentrated on his own work.

In the late 1850s Kulish's personal life became rather complex and perplexing. It has been well described in a separate book by Viktor Petrov, one of the greatest Kulish scholars in Ukraine. However, Petrov's contention that in those years Kulish, a true Romantic, sought an escape in a rural setting and in feminine company because he wanted to recapture his youth, seems a little dubious. In 1856 Kulish was thirty-seven years old and was physically in his prime. He was travelling a great deal without his wife, who was often sick, and he met many attractive young women with whom, in a manner reminiscent of Turgenev and Tolstoy, he loved to be involved romantically. These relations with women who were eager for intellectual stimulation, so common in the nineteenth century, did not lead to love

affairs. They were mostly platonic, but despite or because of this, were intense and serious. Kulish was very handsome, an excellent conversationalist, and could recite Pushkin as well as he did Shevchenko. To Ukrainian women he appealed as a man from St. Petersburg, to Russian ladies as an exotic southerner.

In the middle of 1856, in a letter to his wife, Kulish wrote that she should "rest assured about my health. I will return to you as a young man." It was, however, not his wife but Mania de Balmen who received Kulish's rejuvenated self. The old count Sergey de Balmen, of Scottish and French descent, had been a host to Shevchenko and other Ukrainian intellectuals before the tragic events of 1847. In April 1848 he was arrested for allegedly raising a toast to the French Republic. His brother, Yakiv, was a close friend of Shevchenko, to whom the poet dedicated "The Caucasus," a poem commemorating Yakiv's death during the Russian conquest of the Caucasus. Old de Balmen had illustrated Kulish's short story "Orysia." These memories were still alive almost ten years later, when Kulish met Mania at her father's estate in Lynovytsia and read to her Shevchenko's poems. Yet it was more the physical attraction than national sentiment that drew Kulish to this young woman. She was a radiant beauty, and despite her age (she was sixteen) she embodied for Kulish all grace and harmony. He was aroused intellectually, not erotically. His letters to her are full of lyricism, but also of moralizing. His "eroticism was pedagogic," one critic remarked. Kulish described his meetings with Mania in some detail in letters to his wife: "She has no feeling for poetry, which alone can raise us above the level of life's vulgarities. So without the help of a strong personality, which would enter into a close relationship with her, she will inevitably give up to the forces of life which surround her."

The dream of his Gretchen remained a dream. Kulish could not be bothered to become for Mania "a strong personality," and the sublimated emotion led to dejection. The fact that he wrote to his wife so often about Mania may prove his feeling of guilt. Yet it is clear that Kulish was no longer in love with his wife, or at least not as much as he had been. She was often sick, she was not as well edu-

cated as he was, and she was childless. All these factors contributed to a great marital strain. Sasha often suffered from insomnia and was visited by doctors, who, in the winter of 1856, saw the signs of a serious mental disturbance. Once, at night, she ran out of the house half-dressed. She complained to other people that she was unwanted and felt rejected. Kulish's behaviour towards his wife was not entirely sympathetic. This was confirmed by such impartial observers as Vera Aksakov, who described him as "neglectful and condescending" towards Sasha. Yet there is also some evidence that Kulish was "mortified" by his wife's illness, that he was "becoming insane," and wanted to be with her. For a time Sasha stayed at Motronivka, and eventually her husband travelled to visit friendly landowners in Ukraine or to escape to the capital.

Kulish's next "affair" was with Lesia Myloradovych, the daughter of a small landowner. Lesia became the ideal Ukrainian woman for him because she could sing Ukrainian songs beautifully. She was also an accomplished musician. Her mother was Swiss, and Lesia had received a good education. After a few meetings with her Kulish wrote to her many letters from St. Petersburg. These have been preserved and represent a very fine romantic contribution to Ukrainian epistolary literature. Kulish was so captivated by her beauty that she became to him Pushkin's "genius of pure beauty." In writing to her, Kulish cast himself in the role of a great Ukrainian intellectual, almost a kind of Messiah. There are very strong Byronic overtones in his correspondence. Their "relationship" continued for several years and left a mark on his novel *The Major* (*Maior*).

There is little doubt that Kulish's wife knew about her husband's fondness for young women. This aggravated her illness. Sometimes she blamed herself for everything. "I infect you with all my illness," she wrote; "I swear I am the cause of all the evil. Yet I suffered a thousand times more than all of you." The correspondence between husband and wife shows that he was unaware that he was partly responsible for her condition. At times he missed her and wrote to end what amounted to a separation. Finally, in order to alleviate the worsening situation, Kulish decided, in March 1858, to take Sasha

with him on his first trip abroad.

Before leaving Ukraine, Kulish had to straighten out his publishing affairs. He had established a printing press near one of St. Petersburg's main streets, the Nevsky Prospect. This he managed to do with an advance of 3,000 rubles for his work on Gogol. His printer, Kamenetsky, was kept very busy. Apart from Kulish's own writings (he published a Ukrainian primer for illiterate serfs), he also printed Gogol's *Meditations on the Divine Liturgy (Razmyshleniia o bozhestvennoi liturgii)*. Kulish's enterpreneurial gifts were amazing. He wanted to create in St. Petersburg a base for Ukrainian publications and periodicals. Only a part of this project was realized. One of his main achievements was the publication of the short stories by Marko Vovchok, a writer he helped to discover. Although a Russianized woman of Polish descent, she became a short story writer, second only to Kvitka. Both Kulish and Shevchenko idolized her, as did Turgenev, who translated her stories into Russian. But without Kulish she might not have become well-known.

Throughout their first European trip Sasha kept a diary and Kulish wrote many letters. On arriving in Berlin the Kulishes felt very strongly the contrast with Russia. Everything impressed them - from coachmen to hotel waiters. "People walk slowly," wrote Kulish, "smoking cigars; everywhere there is bustle and gay laughter. I have never seen so many well-dressed children. There is no poverty, as there is in St. Petersburg." Yet looking deeper into the German society he discovered "philistinism," which saddened him. He observed that the Germans were always counting money. But was he blindly following the Russian criticism of the West as "rotten and decadent?" Hardly. He noticed many good things and thought that one could learn from the West. He also was slowly developing his idea of *khutorianstvo* (life of the *khutir*), which he opposed to the European city life. At no time on his travels did he attempt to see Russian émigré intellectuals (Herzen, Bakunin). He felt ambivalent about Western Europe. Perhaps Ukraine could borrow from it, but it also should develop its own lifestyle. He reported in the end that, "having roamed through Switzerland and northern Italy, we were happy to return to

Little Russia." Back in Ukraine, he wrote to Pletnev that "here I feel that I am in the right place.... When I get old I shall become a solitary bee-keeper and cattle-breeder. Love of this way of life, the ability to be at home with the people here, is what supports my inner peace along an unsteady path." Later, recalling this visit to Europe, he wrote that he and his wife had admired what they saw, and "we were sorry that cunning people prevented our native Ukraine from becoming civilized." But that was only an afterthought.

Being convinced that Ukraine needed to be civilized did not conflict with an increased dedication to its history and literature. Kulish, unlike Kostomarov, was never torn between universalism and nativism. In the end he combined the two quite effectively. For the moment he was returning to Ukrainian activities. At the end of 1856 he wrote to Yuzefovych, whom he had every reason to dislike for his anti-Ukrainian views: "The hour will come, perhaps soon, when 'the humble shall inherit the earth.' We have been robbed, we have been insulted only because we were stupid, and were responsible for it because of our inhuman landlords and hetmans..." All Ukraine needed now, in his view, was to develop real culture (what he called *kulturnist*). Ukraine had its own culture, but it was little known. It had to be discovered and then enhanced with European ideas. Kulish was never interested in the creation of a Ukrainian state and said so on many occasions. What needed to be done was to create a cultural base, not so much in national but in human terms.

In Russia at that time rumours were rife, with the accession of the new tsar, about reforms. Kulish listened to them and got in touch with some liberal Ukrainian landowners he knew (Halahan, Tarnovsky) who were members of the governmental advisory board on the liberation of the serfs. He visited their sumptuous houses, where he never felt out of place, as Shevchenko had a decade before. Kulish immediately thought of publishing a Ukrainian journal and began collecting the funds for it. It was to be called *Home* (*Khata*). Permission to publish it was refused in 1858, but only two years later, it appeared in the form of an almanac. The preface he wrote for it remains a classic statement on modern Ukrainian literature and offers a bril-

liant survey of it.

Kulish was still writing impassioned letters to Lesia Myloradovych when he met and fell in love with Marko Vovchok. He edited and helped to publish her Ukrainian short stories, and he knew her husband, Opanas Markovych, a former member of the Brotherhood. Kulish had met Marko Vovchok briefly in 1857, told her that he would make a Ukrainian George Sand of her, and then met her again almost two years later. In the meantime he wrote ecstatic letters about her to Shevchenko and others. In 1859, when Kulish was in St. Petersburg, Maria Oleksandrivna (as he now called her) also moved, with her husband and son, to the Russian capital. Not only Ukrainians (Shevchenko, Maksymovych, Kostomarov) but also Russians (Turgenev, Pisemsky, Tiutchev) admired her work and gathered around her in the *salon* of Varvara Kartashevska. According to the later testimony of her son, "with her auburn hair and large eyes, [she] appeared to be a beautiful flower of Ukraine, brought, God only knows why, to cold St. Petersburg." Turgenev's admiration advanced so far that he later had an affair with her.

Kulish wrote to Lesia asking her to stop writing because he "had found a new nightingale." This time, as far as he was concerned, it was not a platonic or esthetic feeling but a true passion. He was then forty, Maria Oleksandrivna twenty-six. He could also claim, quite justly, that he had discovered her as a writer. There was, however, one flaw, which made every relationship with a woman very difficult for Kulish. It was his egotism and his desire to dominate and to educate women. He tried to do this with Maria. Throughout the affair Kulish wrote to her, but the letters have not been preserved, except for a few excerpts. They show his priggishness - "While giving a great deal, I do not wish to receive too little." In a letter to Kamenetsky he referred to Maria as "that poor female" and bragged that his friends "must be envious that he, like a rogue, has captivated Vovchok."

Marko Vovchok reciprocated Kulish's affection somewhat, even though it was tainted by self-love. Yet she refused to be dominated. She was sorry for him, as "at that time he was trampled by

life...and exhibiting signs of a beginning psychosis. He was, in spite of all the wounds, a man of purity, a passionate worker and one of the best sons of his country." Halahan wrote to his wife that "Kulish has left his wife...Shevchenko expects him to go insane [because of Vovchok]." Apparently Kulish arranged for Maria and himself to travel abroad, but when he arrived in Berlin, she was not there. She became more and more involved with Turgenev, though his biographers discount any physical passion between them. Kulish reacted, surprisingly, very rationally, and wrote to her that he did not mind that she had chosen Turgenev. Ironically, it was with Turgenev that Maria travelled to Berlin. He assured her that "Kulish will not shoot himself." Yet after that Kulish did not like Turgenev and, like many Ukrainians, found the Russian writer not well disposed to him.

Kulish returned home and took his wife on a journey to the Caucasus. The "affair" was over, but it took Kulish a very long time to recover from it. Much later, in the 1890s, he denounced Maria in one of his poems, writing that she "was not a *vovchok* (little wolf), but a *vovchytsia* (a she-wolf). Petrov ascribes some of the blame for the breakdown of their relationship to Marko Vovchok, and a Russian critic described her once as "very crafty." Between her craftiness and Kulish's moralizing, real love had no chance. When Marko Vovchok later abandoned writing in Ukrainian and "went over" to Russian literature (as she did to Turgenev), Kulish probably blamed himself. If the native soil of Ukraine was as rich for local talent as he believed, why was its growth not sustained? The prevailing Russian climate was perhaps harsher and more attractive than Kulish thought.

A few months after his break with Marko Vovchok, in February 1860, Kulish wrote to her a friendly letter, telling her that "literature has revived me again." Now that his own plan for a journal had come to naught, he joined Bilozersky's initiative to establish a Ukrainian journal in St. Petersburg, which was to be called *The Foundation* (*Osnova*). The title must have appealed to Kulish. The first issue came out in January 1861 in an edition of approximately 1,000 copies. It ceased publication in 1862, but in that short time it performed a very important function in Ukrainian literature. Its direc-

tion was liberal and reformist. Kulish played a very important part in it as a contributor and often as assistant editor. In 1861 the journal printed his seminal *Letters from the Homestead* (*Lysty z khutora*), perhaps the best exposition of his philosophy, which was not, as the Soviets later claimed, nationalistic, but profoundly humanist and universalist.

Shevchenko, who died in March 1861, saw the first issue of *The Foundation*. Many of his poems were printed there after his death, as were articles about him. Kulish resumed writing poetry only after Shevchenko's death. One of them, "To Brother Taras on Departing to the Next World," is both cloying and patronizing. Obviously, he wanted to continue "Shevchenko's work" after the latter's death. This was not a wise decision, for he proved unequal to the task. His relation to Shevchenko in the last few years of Taras's life was rather ambivalent, and it was to become more so later, in the 1870-80s. The subject has been studied *ad nauseam* by Ukrainian scholars. A real service to Shevchenko was performed by Kulish in 1860, when he helped to publish Shevchenko's poems in an edition of over 6,000 copies. Kulish's last letter to Shevchenko was written in 1860 from the house of Gogol's mother he was visiting at the time. The tone was very warm, telling Shevchenko that his countrymen in Poltava remembered him well.

When *The Foundation* folded, Kulish was sad, especially because one of the principal reasons for its failure was, as Drahomanov later said - "a mess (*bezporiadok*) in the editorial office." Kulish hated the very idea of anything messy. During this period Kulish was involved in love affairs with two women. As had happened with Myloradovych and Marko Vovchok earlier, he now had two parallel relationships. In a letter to Kamenetsky he wrote, - "Women make advances to me as if I were a Don Juan." Kulish established the more lasting relationship with Paraska Hlibova, wife of the well-known writer Leonid Hlibov. This time the relationship was not platonic; for a while they lived together. Her husband knew of the relationship and had few objections. Kulish even wrote letters to him, full of gratitude. The other woman in Kulish's life was Hanna Rentel, the daughter of a

landowner near Dykanka. She fell in love with Kulish, who sent her books and advised her "to study." By now Kulish was under the influence of Russian writings on the emancipation of women. He advised Hanna that in any future marriage she should have a room of her own. Was he anticipating Virginia Woolf? Hardly.

To escape from his involvements with women he decided to travel to the West. This time he went with his old friend Kostomarov to Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and eventually by himself to the Balkans and Turkey. "I am sick," he wrote, "and I must be cured with foreign languages and customs." In Milan, Kulish visited the famous cathedral and saw no faces among the visitors that were more beautiful than Paraska's. Also in Italy he wrote a beautiful poem, "Lago Maggiore," which he must have visited. In later reminiscences of the trip he portrayed Kostomarov as a hypochondriac, which he probably was. Kulish came home on a boat sailing along the Danube. The trip stirred his poetic talent. Some of the poems it inspired were included in the collection *The Glimmers of Dawn* (*Dosvitky)*, which he published in 1862. It remained his most popular volume of poetry and was reprinted seven times. In the famous introductory canto Kulish writes, that as he rises early in the morning before dawn, he wonders if the "light of day will come." The answer is that it will be "full of new tidings, full of native words." At the end of the collection Kulish included a long poem, *The Great Wake* (*Velyki provody),* which is his polemic against Shevchenko's early view of the Cossacks. Kulish came to regard them as bloodthirsty marauders and anarchists, and deplored their role in Ukrainian history. In the poem his hero is Holka (drawn after the historical character Yuriy Nemyrych), who embodies restraint and wisdom.

Kulish was always interested in the primary education of the peasants. In 1861 he brought out a *A Primer* (*Hramatka*), printed by his own press. He encountered difficulties in selling it, but he was pleased that he helped to defeat illiteracy. In an article in 1869 he dealt with education of children. He opposed swaddling, which was common in Russia and Ukraine. He considered the educational system in Ukraine obsolete and advocated new ideas, some of them

based on the model of education in the United States, which he admired. His ideas reflected the progressive theories of Konstantin Ushinsky, a Russian educator of Ukrainian origin, who was becoming known in the empire. Ushinsky also believed that children should study their native background.

In the early 1860s a new movement arose in Ukraine - populism. It was a moderate plea for supporting national culture without any political aims. In Kyiv, there arose an organization, *Hromada* (Community), dedicated to populism. Kulish did not like the idea. He wrote that the Kyivan group "had many wise men who for some reason bowed to the rabble." He kept his distance, but rarely quarrelled with them. He was slowly turning away from the peasantry towards what was best among them - a certain aristocracy. He wanted to resurrect the best traditions of the Ukrainian nobility and intelligentsia. Unlike some Russian intellectuals, who preached "going to the people," Kulish did not believe in this. Further, he wanted to preserve his independence from any new "movement."

In 1862 Kulish decided to leave St. Petersburg and settle in Ukraine. His printing shop had folded and his royalties from a translation of Macaulay's history of England were exhausted. He went to a new *khutir* near the village of Olenivka, not far from Borzna, and tried once more to become a farmer. His wife was with him. He wrote that it "was a heroic effort" by both of them. While they were away at the *khutir,* momentous events unfolded in Russia and Ukraine. In 1863 there was a Polish uprising, which was subdued by the Russian army. Paranoid Russians accused some Ukrainians (or "Ukrainophiles", as they called them) of sympathizing with the Poles. The following year, 1863, a secret official circular from the tsarist minister Valuev declared the Ukrainian language "non-existent" and restricted Ukrainian publications. This was the beginning of a repressive policy that grew progressively worse. Ukrainians tried to resist, but they had few weapons at their disposal. What could they do when the Ukrainian translation of the Bible by Morachevsky was banned in 1862? This must have been a severe blow to Kulish, the devout Christian. Some Ukrainians, headed by Kostomarov, demanded to see

Valuev, who told them that the restrictions would remain in force. Kulish was consulted but decided to stay out of the controversy. Yet in private he remained defiant. He wrote to Gogol's mother that he was not giving in to a Katkov or an Aksakov: "We are at Termopylae. Damn the mother who bore submissive sons."Yet, despite these protestations, Kulish was slowly preparing to do something that led others to believe that he was abandoning the Ukrainian cause.

5

At the end of 1864 Kulish, penniless as he was, decided to seek employment in Russian-controlled Poland. He finally got what was a relatively high public office, at first as a member of the constituent committee and then as director of the ecclesiastical department for internal affairs. The latter was headed by Prince Cherkasky, for whom Kulish always retained deep respect. The three years he served in Warsaw are perhaps the most difficult to explain in Kulish's biography. Russian policy in Poland was very oppressive and manipulative (some reforms were introduced in order to alienate the peasantry from the gentry). It led to intense Russification. Knowingly, Kulish, who had to leave his wife in Ukraine, became an instrument of such a policy. He tried to explain this step by his good salary and a new rank, but this rationale was unconvincing. A critic wrote that Kulish had "crossed his Rubicon." Was this decision so disastrous, and was it to influence his later life? No one knew at the time. There was in him a strong streak of careerism. Yet it must have reflected some inner crisis, too. He wrote to his friends that he believed more than ever that Ukraine had no political future. Sometimes he even said that he was in Poland to punish the Poles for their misdeeds in Ukraine. All this is rather far-fetched. It did not make his Ukrainian friends happy. In 1867, when one of his superiors, who protected him, was dismissed, he quit his post. Later, in 1872, he wrote that he did so "because of my psychological condition."

Kulish stayed in Warsaw for some time, editing a book. He also responded, a little later, to the demise of Alexander Herzen's

Russian journal *The Bell (Kolokol)* in 1867, deploring that "it stopped ringing." Herzen's journal was published in London and was a mouthpiece of the Russian opposition to tsarist government. It was sympathetic to Ukraine and published an unsigned article by Mykola Kostomarov, which Kulish must have read.

Finally, in 1868, in order to recover spiritually, Kulish went abroad. The journey did not begin auspiciously. In Vienna he caught a chill and had to consult a doctor. He reached Venice in January the following year and was dismayed by the weather, the noisy Italians, and the food they served him. Strangely enough, he reverted to his Slavic prejudices and blamed the Western European way of life for all this. In the spring he visited Prague, which he liked, partly because the Czech scholar Palacky received him well. From there he made a side-trip to Dresden and left an interesting comment on the famous Sistine Madonna by Raphael, who "left the world in the belief that she had nothing for it." He added, in italics: *It is only possible to do something for a few, but not for the world.*

In August 1869 Kulish was back in Ukraine, on his *khutir* "Pidduben." He found the place neglected but was glad to be back. He stayed there for the whole winter, and Sasha looked after the house. His aristocratic tastes received a shock, and he might have exaggerated their privations. The following summer he took his wife on a trip to Italy. This time Venice received him well. He wrote that it "cheered me as an Easter egg does a good man at Easter. You forget all the ugliness you see at home, in silence. The soul takes wings..." Early in 1871 they travelled to Vienna and spent some time there. Kulish's Warsaw salary must have been good if he could afford all this.

While in Vienna, Kulish met the Ukrainian scientist Ivan Puliuy. Between them they started a new project - a Ukrainian translation of the Bible. Kulish was already working on it. Puliuy had contacts with the British Bible Society, which promised to finance this major undertaking. Over several years Kulish worked at it. At first he offered a rather free, poetic translation, which the reviewers did not like. Later, he provided a more scholarly translation. This mammoth

project, in which Kulish was assisted by Puliuy and, later, by Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky, took decades to complete. It appeared in print after Kulish's death, in 1903 in Vienna. Kulish's widow received, after some delay, the sum of 4,400 guldens, which was a small fortune. In the nineteenth century the book (which existed in sections) was not allowed to be sold in Russia. In Ukraine it was first printed in 1928, in Kharkiv, sixty years after Kulish first started translating it, so that, in his words : "soon all the Christian world will learn that there is in the world a new Christian family, fifteen million strong."

In 1874, still in love with the *khutir,* the Kulishes tried to buy a new one, in the domain of Motronivka, which was being subdivided. For the moment nothing came of it, especially as Kulish accepted a clerical position in St. Peterburg as editor of an official journal dealing with the "means of communications." He held it for one year and then succeeded in purchasing a *khutir* near Motronivka. The product of his research in that period was the publication, in 1874, of the first volume of the *History of the Reunification of Rus'* (*Istoriia vossoedineniia Rusi*). The second volume appeared in 1877. They represent his view on the relation of Ukraine and Russia; the latter was a junior partner. The bad reception the book received among Ukrainians was due, however, to complimentary comments that Kulish made about Peter I and Catherine II, as well as to a disparaging remark about Shevchenko's "half-drunk Muse." Having written this, Kulish anticipated a shocked reaction from his readers and tried to explain the remark. "Truth," he argued, "should be dearer than the readers' favour." He thought it was high time to look at the reverse side of the laudatory image of Ukrainian history created by Shevchenko's "dissolute Muse." Still, the remark could be considered to be in bad taste, especially as Shevchenko himself had come to hold a critical view of the Cossacks. At about the same time Kulish wrote a mystery, *Herod's Troubles* (*Irodova moroka*), in which he expressed similar views on Russia and Ukraine, but did not hesitate to criticize Russia. In the final scene an old Cossack addresses the old woman Truth, assuring her that "as long as you are with us, the enemy will not abuse the Cossack home." He felt, as often before, that the truth,

one and indivisible, feminine in gender (*pravda)* and linked by the Cossacks to the Virgin Mary, had to be evoked in 1874 so that the continuity that creates national culture should be preserved. The winds of new tsarist doctrines, however, were blowing strongly against him.

While Kulish and his wife were enjoying life on their new *khutir* ("there is nothing finer in the world than a *khutir"),* Kulish's old friend, Yuzefovych, was scheming against Ukrainians in St. Petersburg. On his initiative a special commission was set up in 1875 and a memorandum was prepared on Ukrainian affairs for the use of the Third Section. The following year the tsar, while vacationing in the German spa Bad Ems, signed, in response to the memorandum, an *ukaz*, banning all publications in Ukrainian except ethnographic materials. As was to be expected, the immediate effect of this pogrom of Ukrainian culture was devastating. Reactions varied. Drahomanov left the country for Geneva, while most remained, determined more than ever to continue their work for the cause. Kulish, as an advocate of Russian-Ukrainian collaboration, felt betrayed. The fact that it all happened at the instigation of his erstwhile friend Yuzefovych, was very painful. Official Russia, which Kulish had tried but could not ignore, once again showed its ugly face. Writing from Motronivka to Oleksander Kistiakovsky, he expressed his deep disappointment. He felt betrayed by the Russians. While staying in Ukraine, Kulish tried to outwit the newly-established censorship, but his book *The Khutir Philosophy* (*Khutorskaia filosofiia*) was rejected and was privately printed in 1879, but was confiscated. This shows, however, that he was prepared to fight.

A good place to escape from the new pressures created by the Ems *ukaz* was Galicia. Here, under Austrian rule, the Ukrainian national revival unfolded almost unhampered. Kulish's first contacts with Galicia had been made in the 1850s. Now he re-established them, but soon found himself in some trouble because of his arrogant manner. Yet, on the whole, the new relationship was fruitful. The Galicians published many of his works as well as works of other writers from Eastern Ukraine. The leader of the Ukrainian intelligentsia,

Ivan Franko, seventeen years younger than Kulish, told later how the efforts to reconcile the Ukrainians with the Poles had failed. That was not the only project attempted by Kulish. He planned to start a new periodical and secured a promise of financial support from the Poles. This infuriated Galician Ukrainians, who in any case regarded Kulish as a Russophile. The project never materialized. It is characteristic, however, that as a result of it Kulish took a desperate step. He renounced his Russian citizenship and was ready to accept that of Austro-Hungary. He even travelled to Vienna to expedite it. But nothing came of it, and Kulish had great difficulties explaining his impulsive decision to the Russian authorities.

While in Lviv Kulish did something that has remained a landmark in Ukrainian-Polish relations. He published, at his own expense, *An Easter Egg for the Rusyns and the Poles for Easter 1882* (*Krashanka Rusynam i Poliakam na Velykden 1882 roku*). It remains an important document in Ukrainian intellectual history, but it had no immediate effect. Kulish did not value highly Ukrainian literature in Galicia and tried, unsuccessfully, to spread there his ideas of Russian-Ukrainian amity. At times he was in utter despair ("We are a disunited people--the descendants of those brigands, whom we turned into heroes. We are barbarians, our thoughts and feelings are most miserable.") These are the familiar self-flagellations of a man who cared deeply. He could be driven to the paradox of praising Shevchenko and calling Pushkin a "miserable clown." These contradictions finally drove him to a sensible decision -- to return home and to settle on his beloved *khutir*. He needed rest and peace.

6

His safest retreat -- *the khutir* , became for Kulish something like the "Heavenly City" of St. Augustine. *Khutir* as the ideal city of God, not of the world, represented to him the indestructible element of human reality. His own deep Christian faith, coupled strangely enough with strong anti-clericalism, told him to go against the liberal ideas of the day because he saw in them an attempt to supplant real

religion with pseudo-religion. His own ego merged with his cultural world-view. His own country became not an opening towards a free society but a bulwark of tradition. He still had enough energy and determination to fortify this tradition, which would have to serve as a springboard for the future.

At the end of 1882 he settled in Motronivka and reported that he and his wife "lived not in luxury, but like Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden." In a year's time his reports on life in the country would be less rosy. At the moment he was basking in the light of one of his new publications, which had appeared in Lviv. Entitled *Homestead Poetry* (*Khutorna poeziia*), it contained 25 poems and two essays. One of the essays describes, for the first time, the milieu of the Kyivan youth during the period of the Brotherhood. It is the only, very eloquent, account by one of the "brethren." The other, *A Letter of Appeal to the Ukrainian Intelligentsia* (*Zazyvny lyst do ukrainskoi intelihentsii*), with an epigraph from Spinoza, is filled with Kulish's indestructible faith in the Ukrainian nation. He also published a short poem, which he republished later, in which he addressed Ukrainians as "A people without luck, honour or respect,.. the descendants of drunkards, vagabonds, and robbers." That his interests reached sometimes, if rarely, beyond Ukraine is best shown in a long poem *Mohammed and Khadija* (*Mahomet i Khadyza*), about the founder of Islam in which the author was interested. The poem was published in 1883 in Lviv. Kulish's interest in Islam may have come from his reading of the English Romantics, especially Shelley.

From Kulish's poems and letters it is possible to reconstruct his daily routine on the *khutir*. He began his working day early, usually at sunrise. Dawn is not only a frequent symbol in his poems but was the time when he actually felt at his best. Usually he worked for a couple of hours before breakfast, prepared by Sasha, with whom he was now completely reconciled. In fact, they were devoted to each other. Sasha was not only a housewife but a colleague. Her husband consulted her and responded to her criticism of his work. She herself became a writer and had some of her stories published. Like Olena Pchilka and Natalia Kobrynska, Hanna Barvinok (Sasha's pseudo-

nym) could be regarded as an early feminist. She wrote about women's hard lives, but in a vein very different from that of Marko Vovchok.

Kulish would always wait impatiently for the mailman. Sometimes he would bring not only letters but also books. Kulish had a small library, but some of the books were the latest publications from Russia and abroad. Among them were the French editions of Ernest Renan and Auguste Gratry, the English author John Tyndall, the German historian Theodor Mommsen. There was, as far as we know, no collection of Charles Baudelaire (d. 1867). Reading of books was second only to writing books.

In November 1885, the day Kulish finished translating *Hamlet*, the *khutir* caught fire. Many books and manuscripts were destroyed, including part of Kulish's translation of the Bible. Later he tried to recreate some of the lost poems from memory. Kulish and his wife lived for a while in a shack near the burned-out house. Later, they rebuilt the *khutir* and renamed it "Hanna's Wilderness" (Hannyna Pustyn). Their material existence was close to poverty. Kulish's royalties were meagre, and more and more this reclusive existence had to be maintained by the couple's great personal efforts. But this did not change Kulish's views on homesteading. Life was hard, but not unhappy. Some comfort they derived from the domestic animals that Kulish and Sashunia loved so much. They had dogs and cats, and their favourite cat was called "Shakespeare." A part of the account by Mykhailo Skuhar-Skvarsky, of a visit to the Kulishes at this time reads as follows:

> I asked the coachman: "Where does Kulish live?" "There," he answered, and pointed to the snowmound. I looked closely and found a hole in the snow which resembled a window and another, larger one, which I took to be a door. I had hardly squeezed through this narrow entry when I found myself in a kind of a dugout, or barn, in some kind of very proletarian dwelling, furnished in a similar fashion. Next to a little low table, which resembled a cobbler's bench, there was a very old man in an old jacket. Next to him there stood a tall, robust old

> woman with traces of former beauty. They met me in silence. Then the picture changed when I told them why I came.
>
> We began a lively conversation. I realized that this very old man was a giant of reason and will. It was clear that not merely the wretched hovel but the entire contemporary world was too narrow for him.

Apart from translations Kulish also worked on some original historical studies. One of them, in three volumes, was *The Separation of Little Russia from Poland* (*Otpadenie Maloi Rosii ot Polshi*), in which, for the first time in Ukrainian historiography, basing himself on many Jewish sources, Kulish described with great sympathy the sufferings of the Jews during the Cossack wars. His creative powers did not forsake Kulish. Sometimes he was still capable of writing good poetry. One especially fine poem, not included in any of his collections, was about Sashunia - "I Look at Your Silver Hair, Beloved" ("Dyvlius na sribny volos tviy, kokhana"). The last collection of his poems to come out before his death, was *The Bell* (*Dzvin*), published in Geneva in 1893. It has some good poems, but most of them are spoilt by Kulish's obsession with denouncing the Cossacks. Another publication was a long poem, "Skovoroda," a topic to which Kulish was very much drawn. A great deal of his poetry he left in the so-called "Black Manuscripts," which remain unpublished.

Kulish's finest poetic achievement was the collection *The Borrowed Kobza* (*Pozychena kobza*), published in the year of his death, 1897. It consists of free translations *(perespivy)* of foreign poets - Goethe, Heine, Schiller, Byron, Fet, and others. Kulish laboured over them incessantly over a long period of time. In a preface he claimed that Ukrainian in poetry is as expressive as Russian or Polish, and hoped that his free translations would help to build a bridge between these nations. His passion for translating Western European poetry was unabated, motivated by his desire to include Ukraine in the culture of Europe. Kulish translated thirteen of Shakespeare's plays, as well Byron's *Childe Harold.* He did it in order "to bend our language to universal thought." Ivan Franko was very appreciative of these efforts and wrote, "in these translations there was a unique

quiet feeling, an amplitude like the broad, strong movements of a mighty ship on a great river." Perhaps even Kulish himself had realized at the end of his life that his *forte* was not original, but translated poetry. His contribution to Ukrainian drama is nowadays neglected. It is contained in a trilogy on a historical theme - *Bayda, Tsar Nalyvai, Petro Sahaidachny*, once more dealing with the Ukrainian Cossacks. Some critics in Ukraine today claim that these plays anticipated in their symbolic structure the plays of Lesia Ukrainka. Finally, Kulish's constant preoccupation with his friends and enemies found its expression in the poem *Kulish in Hell* (*Kulish v pekli*), written in the manner of Kotliarevsky.

Unlike Gerard Manley Hopkins, Kulish could not have written "birds build - but not I build." He was a builder, and, as he wrote of himself, "a pioneer with an axe in my hands."

Once Kulish's complete works are published, they will also include his voluminous correspondence. In the last years of his life letters remained his only contact with the world. He came to correspond with people he intensely disliked - Drahomanov and Pavlyk. In his letters, which are full of puns and jokes, he called Pavlyk "Headless" (Bezverkhy) and Drahomanov - "Zolotoverkhy" (Golden-topped). For their part, Pavlyk and Drahomanov held Kulish in high esteem, although they looked at him as politically naive and a maverick. He did not mind it. Occasionally he wrote to prominent Ukrainian writers (Mykhailo Starytsky) from whom otherwise he remained aloof. He did not forget to write to his old friends (Tarnovsky), although at times his fire flared up in these letters. He informed Tarnovsky, that although he had received the book by Tolstoy, he had no time to open it. The spirit of acceptance, if not of resignation, did make him mellower. Sometimes he fantasized. In a letter to Nadia Bilozerska he expressed his hope that "the future age will be ruled by women, because the evil rule by men has reached its nadir." He described men as "worthless," and praised women for their qualities, including their fine singing. At times he disagreed and argued, as he did with the young Maria Karachevska-Vovkivna, who "has fallen under the flattering charm of patriotism, which once held sway over

me for a long time...If I am wrong in my doctrine now and she, along with her leaders, is heading for a bright future, then I am ready to burn all my papers and break my pen."

Kulish, unlike Gogol, never burned his papers and never broke his pen. He laboured steadily until the very end. In January 1897, just before their golden wedding anniversary, Kulish was almost recovering from a bout of influenza. The winter of that year was exceptionally severe, and going out of doors brought on a relapse. He still tried to write, but it was so cold indoors that he had to wear gloves. After few days Kulish developed pneumonia and on February 2, 1897, while lying in bed and attempting to translate the Bible, he died.

Kulish was buried in traditional fashion on his *khutir*. Two pairs of oxen, draped in black, drew the cart containing the coffin, which was draped with the red *kytaika* - a taffeta cloth with which the Cossacks' eyes were covered after death. Many people attended the funeral. Some of Kulish's papers, a pencil, and a fur cap were laid in the grave, on which was placed a wreath of periwinkles. Two years later Vasyl Bilozersky was buried next to him, and fourteen years later, in 1911, Kulish's Sasha was also laid to rest there.

Marko Vovchok

Marko Vovchok

1

The parents of the first prominent Ukrainian woman writer, Maria Vilinska, were of mixed Ukrainian--Russian, and possibly Polish, origin. Maria's father, Aleksander Vilinsky, was a Russian army officer who served in the city of Orel, where he met his future wife, Paraskovia Danilov, whose mother was a half-sister of the mother of a well-known Russian critic, Dmitry Pisarev. Both the Vilinskys and the Danilovs had their roots in Ukraine but, like many other Ukrainians, settled in Russia in the late eighteenth century. Maria was born in 1833 on the estate of her parents in Orel province. Her childhood was spent there, and she received a Russian education. She remembered later that her father, who died in 1841, copied Ukrainian songs, which were quite fashionable in Russia. But young Maria, apart from Russian, learned French. Later she showed a remarkable ability to learn languages.

When Maria was ten years old her mother remarried. The stepfather, Dmitriev, proved to be a spendthrift and a drunkard. Soon, having spent his wife's money, he left her. To spare Maria the full consequences of this family misfortune, she was sent in 1846 to a boarding school in Kharkiv, where, for the first time, she heard Ukrainian spoken by the servants in the school. She became interested in the language and in Ukrainian folklore. But she was too young to be in touch with the small circle of Ukrainian intellectuals in that city. After three years in school she was sent to stay with her aunt in Orel, Russia. Life in that provincial city was rather dull for a fifteen-year old girl. Later, she would describe it almost satirically in a story "Living Water."

Living waters were cruising through the heart of this youngster not only because she felt stifled and frustrated. Soon after coming to Orel she met, by chance, a Ukrainian exile, Opanas Markovych. Through him she also met a young Russian, Nikolai Leskov, an aspiring, and later well-known writer, and Peter

Kireevsky, a Slavophile and ethnographer, who lived on a neighbouring estate. Markovych's Russian friends were interested in Ukrainian folklore, which they collected with somewhat less zeal than Markovych himself. Maria's tedium disappeared, and she pursued a new interest in Ukraine, which to many Russians was a romantic and exotic country.

Opanas Markovych was almost twelve years older than Maria. He was born on the estate of a wealthy Ukrainian landowner in Kulazhyntsi, in the Poltava district. His father was also a collector of Ukrainian folk songs and folk music. His neighbours remembered him as a very generous host who often gave lavish receptions in his spacious mansion and was reputed to employ dozens of cooks and servants. As time went on his estate diminished in wealth but not in hospitality. His son, Opanas, went to Kyiv University and completed his studies in 1846. While at the university he met a young lecturer in history, Mykola Kostomarov, and some of his friends. In 1846-47, inspired by Kostomarov's ideas, they formed a secret society, the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Membership was very small, but it included, apart from Kostomarov and Markovych, the talented young poet Taras Shevchenko, a student of history and also a writer, Panteleimon Kulish, Vasyl Bilozersky, and a law graduate of Tartu University, Mykola Hulak. Their aim was to work for the abolition of serfdom, to spread education among the peasants, and to promote the idea of Ukraine as a future autonomous republic in a Slav union. Kostomarov composed "The Books of Genesis of the Ukrainian People" as well as a statute of the society. Shevchenko was not an active member, but his poetry inspired everyone.

In April 1847, following a denunciation (*donos)* by one member, all the "brethren" were arrested, despatched to St. Petersburg and tried by the officers of the Third Section. In May they were all sentenced to various forms of punishment. The most severe was meted out to Shevchenko, who spent the next ten years as a soldier in exile. Kostomarov, Kulish, and Hulak were also sentenced to internal exile. Markovych received a three-year sentence to be served in Orel. He was employed as a clerk in a government office and was later allowed to return to Ukraine (some of the other brethren were not given this privilege). Due to the intercession of Opanas's halfsister,

Kateryna Kerstin, he was released a little earlier, in 1850, and allowed to travel to the Kerstin estate in Zolotonosha. On the way he visited the village of Medivka and met a famous countryman, Mykola Hohol (Nikolai Gogol). Together they sang Ukrainian songs. Yet it was hard for Opanas to find work in Ukraine. A friend described him as rather clumsy and "devoted almost entirely to collecting Ukrainian songs and proverbs." After a while, Opanas decided to return to Orel.

His romance with Maria Vilinska began almost immediately and picked up speed at once. Maria was drawn to him not only because they both shared an interest in Ukraine. He must have attracted her very much as a person, for suddenly, sometime in 1850, when pressed to marry a rich Russian landowner, Maria categorically declared that she wanted to wed Opanas. He was delighted, although, in a brief note to her, he expressed gratitude for "taking to her heart a poor peasant" and declared himself to be unworthy of her love. However, in January 1851 the bridegroom received permission to marry "without any objection, granted by the Orel Governor, Trubetskoy." Maria's family's last reservations were overcome and the wedding took place in the bridegroom's modest apartment. Soon afterwards the newlyweds left for Ukraine.

2

At first the Markovyches travelled around the province of Chernihiv in search of a job for Opanas. They visited many places, where he collected more songs and folk expressions. These were later used by other publishers; in 1908 the Ukrainian lexicographer Borys Hrinchenko acknowledged Markovych's contribution to his dictionary of the Ukrainian language. On a visit to his halfsister Kerstin, Opanas was criticized by her (albeit she was a strong Russophile) for marrying a Russian. "There were many eligible Ukrainian girls," she said. Maria accompanied her husband on his "field trips" through the Ukrainian countryside and learned a great deal more about the life of the peasants. During their stay in Chernihiv, Maria gave birth to a daughter, Vira, who died shortly after birth. Life was becoming rather difficult; Opanas was still without regular employment, and only youthful energy and hopes for the better, which Maria showed so

abundantly, saved the marriage. At last Maria's husband found a job at the local paper. This also allowed him to report on local affairs. He met other Ukrainians in Chernihiv, among them a distant relative, Mykola Markevych, an amateur historian, folklorist, and musician. We do not know whether Opanas told his wife much about his earlier activity in the Brotherhood. But certainly he acquainted her with the poems of Shevchenko. By nature, Opanas was not a revolutionary, and his wife was more interested in politics than he was.

In 1853 Opanas and Maria left Chernihiv and went to live in Kyiv, where he obtained employment as a clerk in a government office. In March of that year Maria gave birth to a son, Bohdan, who was to become the apple of her eye. Princess Varvara Repnina, an old friend of Shevchenko, was Bohdan's godmother. Later Bohdan became a journalist, mathematician, and a revolutionary to boot. Three new friends enriched the Markovyches' Kyiv circle - Kamenetsky, who later became a printer for Panteleimon Kulish, Chaly, the future biographer of Shevchenko, and Nis, a well-known folklorist. Opanas and Maria also spent some time at V. Tarnovsky's estate in Kachanivka, a virtual palace set in a huge park. It was in Kachanivka that the Russian composer Glinka composed his *Ruslan and Ludmila,* and Shevchenko painted and wrote some poems. Maria was not only introduced to some memorabilia of the poet but also visited the villagers and collected material for her future short stories of peasant life.

The year 1854 marked the beginning of the Crimean War, which a few years later ended in Russia's defeat. Even during the war there was some intellectual ferment in a country that, for decades if not centuries, had opposed reforms and clung to the old despotism. Some enlightened men talked of the ravages of serfdom and of possible remedies. As a woman, Maria was not directly involved in these talks, but she had strong feelings on the subject. She saw personally the poverty and degradation of the Ukrainian peasantry and deeply sympathized with these simple folk, who told her many sad stories of their lives. Some of them she later used in her writing, which must have started about this time, under the fresh impressions of what she saw. Some of the folk songs she recorded in her notebooks also have the distinct ring of social protest.

In the fall of 1855 Opanas obtained a teaching position in Nemyriv, in the Podolia region, which was in Right Bank Ukraine, until recently under Polish rule. Polish revolutionary traditions were still quite visible in the Nemyriv high school, which had been founded by the Polish magnate, Count Potocki. Most of the students were Poles, and many came from families of patriotic Poles who still remembered the uprising against Russia in 1830. The school's inspector, Delsal, was secretly collecting donations for "Poland's liberation." The Markovyches, who firmly believed in Ukraine's liberation, found kindred spirits here among the Poles. Maria, whose Ukrainian by now was very good, started to learn Polish in order to be able to read the poems of Adam Mickiewicz. A colleague of Opanas, Illia Doroshenko, who was a fierce Ukrainian patriot and a friend of Maria, along with her helped to stage Ivan Kotliarevsky's Ukrainian play *Natalka Poltavka* .

In the summer of 1856 Maria was seized with a great desire to write, in Ukrainian, stories of peasant life. While staying with young Bohdan in a peasant house near Nemyriv, she wrote her first story and showed it to her husband. Opanas was so impressed that he decided to send it to his old friend Panteleimon Kulish, now also free after a term of exile in Tula.

3

In March 1857 Kulish was in St. Petersburg, preparing for publication his collection of Ukrainian folklore, which appeared under the title *Notes about Southern Rus'*. Having received and read Marko Vovchok's stories, he was astounded: "I could not believe my eyes - before me there was an immaculate work of art, full of purity and freshness!" He wrote to the unknown author and months later, when she had replied to his letter, Kulish noted: "I learned that the author had collected these stories among the people, just as he gathered folklore material. But what he thought was ethnography turned out to be poetry." After receiving her letters, Kulish realized that behind a man's name there hid a woman. She probably chose the pseudonym because, as in the case of George Sand, women in those days did not reveal their sex when they published anything. The first

name, "Marko," came from the first part of her husband's surname "Markovych." It is uncertain why she chose "Vovchok" (a little wolf). According to her son, Bohdan, the diminutive "Vovchok" was borrowed from a legendary Cossack hero, Marko Vovk, thus named because of his ferociousness. Later this pseudonym became a target for Kulish when, finally disenchanted with Maria, he called her "Vovchytsia" (she-wolf).

The stories, edited and provided with a preface by Kulish, appeared in the fall of 1857 under the title *Folk Tales* (*Narodni opovidannia*). It is not impossible that Maria's husband helped to edit the language. The ecstatic Kulish wrote to Sergei Aksakov that "I was more proud of them than of Gogol's works" (which he at that time was also editing). Some early readers of Marko Vovchok discovered the difference between her stories and those of Gogol and Kvitka, who wrote in the 1830s (the first in Russian, the second in Ukrainian) but portrayed Ukrainian village life less realistically and less sympathetically than did Marko Vovchok. Maria's works showed real empathy with the serfs, especially with the womenfolk. At the same time, her language was based on the language these poor people spoke. Later critics detected in the stories an implied social criticism of the regime. The book launched Marko Vovchok as an original and successful writer. The Russian novelist Turgenev was so taken with these stories that he decided, with some help, to translate them into Russian. He published this in 1859. In the meantime Maria, encouraged by her success, wrote more stories. Some were set in the city. She was obviously aware of her talent and tried to make the most of it.

Her discoverer, Kulish, was anxious to inform Shevchenko, who was in Nizhny Novgorod, finally returning to St. Petersburg after a long term of exile. Kulish wrote: "This Muscovite-turned-Ukrainian has written marvels." When Shevchenko received the book, he wrote in his diary: "What an enchanting creature this woman is. I must thank her for her stories." Soon after Shevchenko arrived in St. Petersburg, on January 26, 1858, he met Maria. Each liked the other, and they remained close friends. Shevchenko would dedicate his poems to her and wait for her letters.

Strangely, perhaps, two weeks after their meeting Maria left

the capital, with Turgenev, to go abroad. In fact she was fleeing from the attentions of Kulish, who had left his wife and fallen in love with Maria. We know little about this drama, but both Maria and Kulish were passionate people. Perhaps Maria did not want to play the role of home-breaker, but it is also possible that she was attracted to Turgenev, who was then at the zenith of his literary career. However, Kulish did not give up easily. Having extracted a promise from her, he followed her to Berlin. Nothing came of his plans. Maria preferred to stay with Turgenev, who took her to Dresden and from there to London, to meet the famous Russian exile Alexander Herzen. Kulish returned home, was reconciled with his wife, and left for Ukraine.

During her travels in Europe, Maria was joined by her husband. Perhaps it was a *menage a trois,* but some biographers maintain that Opanas tagged along. He was no match for Turgenev, who introduced Maria to many Russian exiles, as well as to the Polish revolutionary leader, Joachim Lelewel. It is clear that Maria enjoyed the company of radicals and revolutionaries and the liberal European atmosphere, while Opanas was still thinking of Ukrainian folklore collections and getting further into debt. A chance meeting in Dresden between Maria and a young Russian, Vadim Passek, led to an affair between them, which in turn made Maria leave her husband. Passek had been born in Ukraine but considered himself a Russian, although he preserved a strong interest in the country of his birth and wrote a great deal about Ukrainian ethnography. He was four years younger than Maria and followed her to Heidelberg. Opanas was also there, complaining that the weather in Switzerland was much worse than in Ukraine. Maria was now separated from her husband, but they did not get a divorce, which in those days was not easy.

Maria frequently wrote to Shevchenko. Her last letter to him was written in beautiful Ukrainian from Rome on March 8, 1861. She described the splendour of this Italian city, which Shevchenko never saw, recalled that he had called her "his daughter," and urged him to take great care of his declining health. The letter reached St. Petersburg two weeks after Shevchenko's death, on March 10. Perhaps moved by the great loss, Maria decided to accept Kulish's invitation to contribute to a new Ukrainian journal *Osnova,* which he and the late poet had planned to publish. This was Maria's farewell

not only to Ukraine's great poet, whom she justly regarded as a friend, but to Ukraine itself.

4

The adulation showered on her by Russian intellectuals in Paris led Maria to devote her efforts to more general, non-Ukrainian topics. She continued to publish, but her literary reputation was not very high. In 1867 she returned to St. Petersburg. Her son, Bohdan, was with her all the time. In September of that year her estranged husband died in Chernihiv. Several years later, in 1875, Maria, while living in Paris, returned to her Ukrainian interests. In consultation with the French writers Etzel and Stahl, she prepared a French edition of a story for children, *Maroussia*, which was published under P.J. Stahl's name, as a "Ukrainian legend told by M. Vovchok"(*d'apres la legende de Marko Wovzog)*. The Ukrainian text of this story has been lost, but there is no doubt that Maria was the author. First published in a journal, the story of a young Ukrainian heroine appeared in book form in 1878 and immediately became a bestseller. It was awarded a prize by the French Academy (*couronne par l'Academie Francaise*), and was translated into German, Italian, and English. It is still reprinted today, and in 1967 its hundredth edition was celebrated. Apart from Gogol's Ukrainian stories, no other work by a Ukrainian author has ever enjoyed such popularity.

Around that time Maria met Mykhailo Lobach-Zhuchenko, who was much younger than she was but who adored her and finally persuaded her to get married. Maria, who was past forty, bore him a son, Borys. Her older son, Bohdan, after being arrested for revolutionary activity, faced many problems. She visited him in prison, pleaded for his release, and became seriously ill, but refused an operation. For a time she lived in Ukraine, where many remembered her fondly. As a Russian writer she did not rate very highly, although in 1899 an eight-volume edition of her works in Russian was published in Saratov. In 1902 Maria revisited Kyiv and published in a Ukrainian journal a story, "The Devil's Adventure," which she dedicated to Shevchenko. She was working on a Ukrainian novel, *The Haidamaks* , when she died, in Nalchyk in 1907.

Soon after her death the leading Ukrainian critic, Serhiy Yefremov, published, in 1907, a short study of Marko Vovchok. After analyzing her stories of peasant life, he concluded that both as writer and thinker she went much further than some Ukrainian writers of the time. Not only had she very successfully depicted Ukrainian village life, but she showed real concern for the serfs and expressed dissident ideas. Even if she had returned eventually to Russian literature, her contribution to Ukraine was inestimable, all the more so because she was a woman.

Maria's life-story also attests to the attraction that Ukraine had for Russian-born intellectuals and writers of the day. Ukraine provided her with ideas that she could not find in her native Russia. Someone even wrote that, unconsciously, she as a Russian writing in Ukrainian repaid Gogol's debt to Ukraine, something Gogol was unable to do in Ukrainian.

Osyp Yuriy Fedkovych

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The land was always known as the "green Bukovyna." Nestled in the verdant Carpathian Mountains, in the southwest corner of Ukraine, it was bordered by the rivers Prut, Cheremosh, and Seret. The name Bukovyna is derived from *buk,* or the beech-tree, which dominates its rich forests. All types of fir trees are also abundant. The earliest human settlement goes back to paleolithic times. The first local tribes, recorded by Herodotus in about 500 B.C., were Goths. The area was also occupied by the nomadic Huns and Avars before it was incorporated into the Kyivan Rus', in the tenth century. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Bukovyna was a part of the Galician-Volhynian principality, and later came under Hungarian rule. From the fourteenth to the eighteenth century Bukovyna was a part of Moldova, which was governed by Turkey. In 1774 a large part of Bukovyna, with its capital city Chernivtsi, was seized by Austria and remained an integral part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until its demise in 1918. The land, therefore, as many other areas of Eastern Europe, was the crossroads of many cultures.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, when this story begins, Bukovyna was a backward, god-forsaken part of Europe. Its population was not more than half a million Hutsuls, who were small farmers and sheep-herders. The word "Hutsul" is of an uncertain origin, but it is quite possible that it derived from the proper name Hutsul, one of the earliest mountain brigands. No one interfered with their indigenous folk culture, which was rich in legends, fables, handicrafts, and woodwork. The Austrian government introduced schools in which German was obligatory. Yet German culture did not penetrate to the villages. Most Hutsuls were Eastern Orthodox, and their graceful wooden churches dotted the countryside. There were also some ancient monasteries.

At the time of the abolition of serfdom in 1848, there flared up in Bukovyna several peasant uprisings, the most prominent led by Lukian Kobylytsia. He was but one of many mountaineers, all going back to the legendary Oleksa Dovbush. The mountainous terrain was

a haven for freebooters of all kinds. Some of them acted as Hutsul Robin Hoods, robbing the rich and aiding the poor. Many legends arose about their exploits, and songs about their adventures were common. In some respects the Hutsul brigands were like the Cossacks in Eastern Ukraine, who, from the seventeenth century on also became legendary. There was a rebellious and adventurous strand in Ukrainian peasantry everywhere, for they were often driven to these adventures by the hard life they had to endure.

The neighbouring Ukrainian province of Galicia, also under Austrian rule, showed in the middle of the nineteenth century some signs of a national awakening, but Bukovyna lagged behind. It is possible to designate Galicians and Bukovinians as Ukrainians because it has since been shown that their dialects are but branches of the same language, which later received the name Ukrainian but in Western Ukraine was known as *ruska mova*, often translated as Ruthenian. Relations between Bukovyna and Galicia were good, and the Bukovinian school system was, until 1868, administered from Galicia. But few links existed between the educated classes of the two provinces. Only in the 1880s cultural life started to develop in Bukovyna, followed by political activities (including the elections to parliament).

It was in Galicia that Adalbert Fedkovych, father of the poet Osyp, was born in 1809. He came of impoverished gentry, and his full name was Hordynsky-Fedkovych, to designate the origin of the clan, the village of Hordynia, also in Galicia. Adalbert finished school in Stanyslaviv in 1823 and worked as a petty clerk in lawyers' offices. In 1829 he moved to a small town of Vyzhnytsia, on the border of Bukovyna, where he worked in a tax collector's office. Later he moved again, to the village of Putyliv. It was here that Adalbert, who was still under age, with permission of his father married in November 1830 a young widow, Anna Dashkevych, who was nine years his senior. The wedding took place in a Roman Catholic church in Vyzhnytsia. His wife came from a priest's family (Greek Catholic priests were allowed to marry) and, in a previous marriage, had born eight children, three of whom were still alive.

The match looked somewhat problematic to Fedkovych's neighbours because the husband offered Anna only his gentry lineage,

while she brought the wealth. The farm that she owned was not very prosperous, but it was well-run and could support the newlyweds. Anna could not read or write, which might have irked her educated husband. However, she liked to dress like a lady, except for wearing a hat, which was not customary in a village. Anna was not totally aloof from the peasants and visited some local fortune-tellers. Adalbert, in the meantime, passed exams that enabled him to become a minor official, a *mandator.* His career seemed secure and he performed his duties well, which took him to neighbouring estates. There he met young women, closer to his own age and education, with whom he may have had occasional affairs. In any case, his marital relations became somewhat strained. In the course of his duties Adalbert was often absent from Putyliv, and his wife became lonely and jealous.

On the 8th of August 1834 a son was born to Anna and Adalbert, who christened him Osyp. Christening, according to Roman Catholic rite, was held a month after Osyp's birth in the town of Vyzhnytsia. Adalbert's decision to do so may have been contrary to his wife's wishes, for she was Orthodox. But once more she gave in to her husband. Catholics were in a higher social strata. Two years later another son, Pankraty, was born, who soon died. In 1841 a daughter, Pauline, was born. She lived until 1853. The first-born Osyp had, therefore, a seven-years younger sister with whom to share his rather lonely childhood. He also played with Marika, the lame daughter of his mother from her first marriage, who was seventeen years his senior. He was very fond of her and liked to listen to her beautiful singing. Marika, in her wheelchair, reciprocated Osyp's feelings and told him many folktales. Oral literature, well remembered and retold, was great enjoyment of these half-educated people.

Osyp's father was a successful *mandator,* but was very strict with his clients, the peasants. They feared him and his high-handed manner. His wife was growing more suspicious of his relations with other women. They often quarrelled, since Adalbert, a member of the gentry, considered himself superior to his wife. The marriage became very embittered, and no doubt had an influence on the children. Secretly, little Osyp began to hate his father and always sided with his mother, who was sometimes physically assaulted by her husband. Osyp's education began at the home of a family friend who lived 3

kilometres from Putyliv. In October 1846, the twelve-year old boy entered a school in the capital city, Chernivtsi. Tuition was in German and included such subjects as geography, geometry, history, physics, and art. Obviously, Adalbert cared for Osyp's good schooling. His son's marks were not the highest, but satisfactory. When Osyp reached a higher grade in school in 1848, his father moved to Chernivtsi, while his mother remained in the country.

The reason for the move was obvious. In 1848 serfdom was abolished in Austro-Hungary, and the post of a *mandator* became redundant. Adalbert moved to Chernivtsi in search of a new job. He was, after all, fairly well-educated and spoke German fluently. His wife, prudently, stayed on the farm. Living apart from her husband, she felt happier. Osyp went to visit his mother on vacations. On one such occasion he was present at the death of his beloved Marika. All were overcome with the feeling of loss and uncertainty. Osyp later called the year 1848 "a catastrophe."

The only relief the teenage boy found at that time was in the countryside. Often he travelled a fair distance from Chernivtsi to Putyliv through the picturesque Carpathians. The forests, and in particular the mountain streams and rivers, made an indelible impression on him. Although not a peasant himself, Osyp felt a bond with nature and the soil. Not less colourful were the Hutsuls in their gay costumes and attire. It was a land of fable, or, as Osyp would say in German - *ein Maerchenland.* His youthful imagination was stoked with striking images for life.

The world outlook of the Hutsuls was centuries old. Its origins reached back to pagan mythology. Earth, surrounded by water, was sacred and life-giving. The soil, therefore, was best left untouched. Most Hutsul agriculture was based on cattle breeding and sheep herding, and it was regarded as sinful to "dig the soil unnecessarily." The sun, the moon, the stars, as well as rain and wind were a part of the immediate environment, charged with magic powers. Nature and animals were considered both friendly and hostile, and had to be propitiated. Humans were a part of mysterious, interconnecting forces. Hundreds of customs, spells, beliefs, incantations, and charms were used almost every day in order to avert evil and secure good fortune. The feeling of awe and wonder pervaded the life of the Hutsuls.

One of the most popular customs was the so-called "living fire" (*zhyva vatra*), a bonfire lit on many occasions and festivals, which signified well-being and sustenance of life. Extinction of a *vatra* was a bad omen. Sometimes *vatra* was lit on the most important festivals - Christmas and Easter. Both holidays were celebrated in a very traditional manner, with special meals and prayers. Churches were centres of gatherings on such occasions. At Christmas carolling was almost obligatory among the young people, and at Easter, Easter eggs (*pysanky*) were painted and exchanged. These were considered as talismans; they also showed great artistic inventiveness. Many other feast-days (*khramy*) were celebrated by the Hutsuls, dedicated to various patron saints. People gathered outside churches, swapped news and gossip, and visited taverns, which were the other centres of social life.

In a Hutsul family the main role was reserved for men. Husbands and fathers were supreme rulers and could veto their daughters' marriage plans. Weddings were festive ceremonies, with the bridegroom, the bride, and the wedding party riding on horseback. Husbands controlled the family property but had no right to their wives' dowries. The forests, valleys, and rivers of Bukovyna were, in the people's imagination, full of good and evil spirits. These were sometimes embodied in legendary apparitions or animals and had to be either carefully avoided or boldly embraced. The "woodspirits" (*lisovyky*) populated Hutsul tales and songs. Singing and dancing often took place in wide open spaces, people mingling with nature. Characteristic musical rhythms were highly original, and special musical instruments (*sopilka, trembita*) were common. Hutsul religion was of totemie origin, but it included a belief in the immortality of the soul. Some pagan beliefs merged with Christian ones. The importance of ritual was evident in all spheres of life. Things had to follow either the calendar or the old established procedure. Deviations were frowned upon. The total world outlook, therefore, was very conservative and would today be considered full of superstitions.

Perhaps the folktales Osyp had heard so often in Putyliv may have something to do with his decision to leave school and to seek fortune in the neighbouring Moldova. He did not do it against his father's wishes, for his father was temporarily out of work. His mother,

reluctant to see him leave, had some relatives in Moldova. In any case, sometime in 1849 Osyp travelled several hundred kilometres east of Bukovyna to Moldova. Sources of evidence about Fedkovych's stay in Moldova are scarce. Later, he told rather fantastic stories about his adventures there, which are not very reliable. They do, however, indicate the reach of his fertile imagination. One reliable source tells us that Osyp worked for a while with a Moldovan land surveyor who was born in Bukovyna. He also lived for some time in the town of Iassy.

Then, in 1851, when still in Moldova, Osyp met a German painter Rudolph Rothkael who left an invaluable memoir of their friendship. Rothkael records that in that year Osyp became an apprentice in the pharmacy of another German, Bredemeier. He describes him as a "well-built young man of seventeen, in whose face one could see a sign of pain and disgust." Rothkael himself was a highly educated man, a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin, and professional landscape painter. In his memoir he mentioned that he introduced young Osyp to classical German literature and gave him lessons in Latin. He also records that Fedkovych did write some verse of his own in German. Osyp was a sensitive boy who was very grateful to Rothkael for opening up for him the world of literature, especially poetry. Their friendship was based on mutual interest in art. Often Rothkael would take Osyp with him into the mountains, where he painted. They talked about the "ewige Kunst."

Rothkael's memoir also reveals a very important trait in young Osyp. One day they were visited by Adalbert Hordynsky. Later Osyp told Rothkael that this was not his father. He made this extraordinary statement "with great indignation," telling Rothkael that his own name was Fedkovych, while the visitor was a Hordynsky. Only a very strong feeling of hatred could have dictated such unusual behaviour. Later Rothkael learned the truth and could not explain Osyp's rejection of his father. But already then a great gulf must have existed between son and father, at least as far as the son was concerned.

Osyp did not like working in the pharmacy, and eventually Bredemeier had to fire him. Future became very uncertain. The young boy had to be rescued by his unloved father, who came and took him

back to Chernivtsi. Adalbert was by then a minor official in that city and lived there in relative comfort, while his wife survived on a farm in Putyliv. We do not know why, but the father decided to send his young son into the army, probably to secure for him some livelihood, but also perhaps in order "to make a man of him." Osyp obeyed with much regret and protest. Later, he idealized the time spent in Moldova as "his happiest years." Before leaving home Osyp was a witness to a brutal beating that his mother received from his father. This further alienated him from a man he now called Adalbert Hordynsky.

Osyp joined the Austrian army in 1852, when he was nineteen, and left it at the age of twenty-nine. He served in the Forty-first Infantry Regiment. After two years he was promoted corporal; then, in 1855, he became a sergeant-major. In 1859 he finally received a commission as a lieutenant. He left the army in August 1863. When Osyp joined the army, his father bought for him the right to be a cadet in order to be considered for promotion to officer rank. The future cadet had to pass a stiff examination. Later he had to undergo basic military training, and only then was assigned to a grenadier company of the Forty-first Regiment in Siebenburgen.

Osyp seemed to like the army discipline, even drill, but was very homesick. In his later poetry the life of a recruit was often his main inspiration. He was liked by his officers and was often asked to sing Hutsul songs when soldiers were on a bivouac. It was through singing that Fedkovych kept in touch with the oral literature of his native land. He left an account of it in his brief memoirs:

> You will never guess how I spent my first months in the army, so I won't relate it to you. My life there was not without poetry. My older sister knew innumerable Ukrainian tales and songs (it was the language we used at home), and because we were very fond of each other, I learned these songs from her while I was still a little boy. My sister did not think then that these songs will help me in the army. But they did. My comrades listened to my singing and loved me for it. It seemed to me that my dear sister's soul shielded me from all evil.

It is almost certain that among the folk stories and songs remembered from childhood was one about Oleksa Dovbush. He was a

historic figure, born in the village of Pechenizhyn, and lived from 1719 to 1745. In this short life he became a legendary Hutsul brigand who led many expeditions of mountaineers against the rich landlords. Finally, according to the legend, he was betrayed by his beloved Dzvinka, and killed in an ambush. The exploits of Dovbush and his mountaineers prompted Fedkovych later to write one of his finest poems as well as a play. The British scholar Eric Hobsbawm in his *Primitive Rebels* discusses Dovbush as an example of "social banditry," and compares him to Sicilian bandits. Banditry, he continues, "although a protest, is a modest and unrevolutionary protest. It protests not against the fact that peasants are poor and oppressed, but against the fact that they are sometimes excessively poor and oppressed..." He also notes that Dovbush creates "merely a dream of how wonderful it would be if times were always good....a dream which lends him superhuman power and a sort of immortality."

After the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854, in which Austria sided with Britain and France against Russia, Osyp's Austrian regiment was moved temporarily to Chernivtsi. Fedkovych, already a sergeant-major, was billeted in town, but avoided seeing his father, who also lived there. His mother came to visit him from Putyliv. In 1859 Osyp returned with his regiment to Siebenburgen. We know that while waiting to be promoted to officer rank he favoured the company of lower ranks, with whom he talked and drank. Among them were many sons of Hutsul peasants. Social life in the army was quite lively, but Osyp's allowance did not make it possible to live extravagantly. In any case, he preferred few friends to large parties.

In 1859 a detachment of his regiment was transferred to Vienna. Osyp welcomed the change. The outbreak of new war in Italy speeded up his promotion. It was as a lieutenant that Osyp travelled from Trieste to Venice in April 1859. Both these cities were under Austrian rule, which was being challenged by Italian patriots led by Garibaldi. Fedkovych's unit was to insure the continuation of the imperial Austrian domination of Lombardy.

Italy, with its striking art, architecture, and music, made a deep impression on Fedkovych. It was here that, in May 1859, he wrote his first poem in Ukrainian, entitled "Night Rest." In it a soldier is resigned to his fate, even to death, in the army. Fedkovych never

took part in actual combat, although his unit was involved in the battle of Magenta. His regiment lost twelve men and twenty-six were wounded. Luckily, Fedkovych's unit avoided the battle of Solferino, which ended badly for the Austrians. In July 1859 a peace treaty was signed at Villafranca in which Lombardy was ceded by Austria to France. Italian cities of Toscana, Parma, and Modena remained under Austrian control. At the end of July the Forty-first Regiment returned from Verona to Vienna, and the Fourth and Fifth battalions, in which Fedkovych served, were sent to Chernivtsi. The young officer took a room in the hotel "Black Eagle" and ignored his father's invitation to visit him. Once he was persuaded to come to dinner, but, after a brief argument with his father, he left before the meal was served. An observer present on this unhappy occasion commented that, in looks, Osyp and his father were very much alike. Only their eyes were different; Osyp's were more melancholy.

For the next seventeen months Osyp lived in Chernivtsi. In this relatively short time he became conscious of his true calling - becoming a Ukrainian writer. This was mostly due to a new friendship with the Ukrainians Antin Kobyliansky, Kost Horbal, and the German Ernst Neubauer. These were young dreamers and idealists, eager to explore their literary talents. Ernst Neubauer was a teacher in the local gymnasium and edited a magazine. He encouraged Fedkovych to write poetry not only in German but also in his native Ukrainian. They met when Neubauer invited Fedkovych to a party in honour of the hundredth anniversary of Schiller's birth. Soon, Neubauer dedicated one of his collections of poems to Fedkovych. As a young student, Neubauer had been active in revolutionary circles in Vienna. Now he settled down in Chernivtsi, but he was still very active and excelled at so-called "improvisations," the open recitations of poetry. His influence on Fedkovych was crucial.

One ballad by Fedkovych was dedicated to Emilia Marossanyi, with whom Fedkovych fell in love. She was the daughter of a widow, played the piano very well, and had a beautiful singing voice. She reciprocated Osyp's feelings, and her mother, poor though she was, was in favour of marriage. However, since the future bride had no dowry, it was up to Fedkovych to provide financial security for their future. His father was unwilling or unable to offer enough

money, and the marriage never took place. Emilia later married a German landowner from Iassy, but soon died at the age of thirty-two. Later Osyp had a romantic attachment to a "dark-skinned Gypsy woman." This liasion soon ended. Yet the theme of a hart-broken lover came to dominate Fedkovych's later poetry.

It was in the house of Emilia Marossanyi's mother that Fedkovych met another Ukrainian, Antin Kobyliansky, who also encouraged him to write in Ukrainian. Kobyliansky was a former student of theology who did not want to become a priest. He wrote indifferent poetry but had good contacts with Ukrainian activists in Galicia. A very gifted man, who later in life went to America and still later became a medical doctor in Prague, he successfully persuaded Fedkovych not only to write in Ukrainian but also to participate in a small circle of Ukrainian intellectuals. One of them, Kost Horbal, read to Fedkovych some of Shevchenko's poetry and lent him Ukrainian books from his own library. Soon Fedkovych's Ukrainian verses came to reflect his patriotic feelings not only for Bukovyna but for the entire Ukraine. Both Kobyliansky and Horbal were natives of Galicia, which had experienced a true national awakening. Now it was spreading slowly to Bukovyna.

Fedkovych's early Ukrainian poems, which he called "songs," were written in imitation of folk poetry and some of Shevchenko's ballads. To one poem, "Thoughts at Magenta," the author even appended a musical score. He rewrote his poems several times and there are many variants of them. Their deep lyricism found quick response with the readers, not only in Bukovyna but also in Eastern Ukraine and in Galicia.

Fedkovych's deep attachment to the peasants is best evident in his long friendship with Semen Nahorniak. He met Nahorniak in the army and after demobilization kept in touch with him, although Nahorniak lived in a distant village in Galicia. He visited him on the occasion of his wedding in the village of Novosilka and later helped him financially. He even invited Semen to Putyliv, but the man from the flat countryside of Galicia did not like to stay in Bukovinian mountains.

In 1862 Fedkovych was transferred from Chernivtsi to Siebenburgen. Although surrounded by the mountains, he pined for his

native Bukovyna. He wrote many short poems full of longing for his homeland. Love for the Hutsul land and its people dominates all his work. He read more of works of Ukrainian literature and began to consider himself one of Ukraine's poets. He even wanted to settle in Eastern Ukraine. During the following year his military sevice came to an end. One of the reasons for his discharge was his poor health, which at that time was diagnosed as intense melancholy. In 1863 he suffered from pneumonia and finally left the army. During Christmas of that year he gave a farewell party to his comrades. A little later, still in poor health, he described in a letter his dream about Ivan Kosovan, whom he now regarded as his true father. Kosovan was a historical figure, but was too young to have fathered Fedkovych. This was simply Osyp's poetic device, invented to reject finally his real father. As soon as Fedkovych was out of uniform, he donned a Hutsul costume, from which he rarely departed thereafter.

Osyp decided to go and live with his old mother in Putyliv. He persuaded her to have his name changed to Yuriy and to become Orthodox. This was a final gesture of defiance towards Adalbert Hordynsky. Now his son would be known as Yuri Fedkovych and would join his mother's church. Having settled with her in Putyliv, he was ready to relax, enjoy the beautiful countryside, and write poetry. In a short story, "Lost Love," he portrayed the Hutsuls in their native glory. He was also claiming that, after Shevchenko's death in 1861, he, Yuriy Fedkovych, had a duty to carry on the Ukrainian poetic tradition. Hundreds of miles away from Kyiv and Lviv, he was in spirit with these distant centres of Ukrainian culture.

However, it proved much harder to write poetry in Putyliv than he had anticipated. The farm had to be managed and cultivated, tasks that Fedkovych was not very good at. In letters to friends he complained that farmwork was killing him. His mother urged him to get married. He tried to follow her advise and courted Julia Diakonovych, a widow. Yet once more fate intervened. Julia was already promised to the teacher Krylaty, whom she married in a hurry in order to forestall Fedkovych's further courtship. His mother consoled him by saying that marriageable girls are plentiful. Further problems arose because by wearing the Hutsul dress, Fedkovych had antagonized many neighbours who followed the German tradition and

looked down on the peasants.

To escape all the troubles Fedkovych took to drink and developed an interest in astrology and palmistry. He even turned against his mother, who could not understand her son's spiritual crisis. She, too, objected to her son's fraternizing with the peasants and wished he would behave like the landlord that he was. On one occasion, when he brought home some of his drinking companions, she created a scene and expelled them from her living-room. Soon after this incident she fell ill and died in January 1864. Her son was devastated and guilt-ridden, but decided not to let Adalbert know about his wife's death. It was the middle of a severe winter; communication with Chernivtsi was bad, and this provided the excuse not to let father know. Adalbert was absent from the funeral, which the son arranged in traditional Hutsul manner. He himself took part in funeral lamentations, washed his mother's face, combed her hair, and prayed. After the funeral, still following the Hutsul custom, Osyp Yuriy walked without a hat, with a black band around his forehead. A little later he learned that his father lost his job and lived on a very small pension. It all seemed rather distant to him then.

His mother's death had a sobering effect on Yuriy. He stopped visiting taverns and hired a manager to run his farm. This left him more leisure time, and he even wrote to a friend that he became "quite lazy." His friends urged him to write and promised to publish his work in Galicia. But he was reluctant to do so and became involved as a defender of the peasants in a court litigation. Without any legal training, he took it upon himself to conduct a case against landlords who denied the peasants the ancient right of using pastures and forests. The case dragged for years and ended in a draw. Fedkovych regarded it as a victory, although some peasants were disappointed. At about the same time Fedkovych courted Paulina Volianska, but once again unsuccessfully. Paulina was not serious about marriage to a man who was regarded as eccentric. Some short poems written at that time reflect this new disappointment. In them love relationship is always fated to end in failure.

To occupy himself, Fedkovych took part in village life. He was elected justice of the peace (*dvirnyk*) and presided over minor cases of criminal infraction. He was highly regarded in this post. He

donated two acres of his land for the local school. Often he organized village dances, in which he took part, in order to draw young people away from the tavern. To visitors from town who came to see "a well-known writer," he answered that he was a simple Hutsul, not an intellectual. At the same time he taught the children of the neighbouring landlords German and French. Once, asked by a visitor why he wrote so little, he answered that he rarely felt sad, which alone prompted him to write. In 1867 Fedkovych even became a candidate for parliament, but the Hutsuls did not elect him because they regarded him as a "landlord in Hutsul disguise." To him this was the ultimate irony. Some of his poems, which he sent for publication to Galicia and to Vienna, were rejected, and this confirmed his distate for writing. At the same time his *amour propre* was wounded. He felt rejected, and he vowed not to write again.

Finally, two young intellectuals from Galicia, Meliton Buchynsky and Antin Sliusarchuk, made a special trip to Putyliv. They have left an account of their visit:

> Fedkovych's house and courtyard showed good order and affluence. It was a large Hutsul-style abode (*dvir*). The furnishings were expensive. The living room had comfortable sofas covered with kylyms. Books could be seen on the shelves as well as musical instruments - the guitars. The kitchen was located in an old adjoining house. It was supervised by a cook who also performed the duties of a coachman. Fedkovych kept a pair of elegant Hutsul-bred horses and had a Hungarian-made carriage. Our host's table was well set and offered us smoked deer, which was his own hunting trophy. In a word, it was a well-appointed and prosperous house.

The conversation between Fedkovych and his guests was about literature. He read to them some of his poems and talked about the projected play about Dovbush. Later Fedkovych received other visitors and was slowly changing his mind about writing. But in 1868 he was elected reeve of Putyliv and vowed to stop writing for three years. He had some problems in his new office. The authorities were displeased that he, a retired officer, kept wearing a Hutsul costume. In response, he relinquished his title of officer, but kept the small pension. In his spare time Fedkovych wrote a Ukrainian primer for ele-

mentary schools, which at that time was not an easy task. The book, however, was never published. The author's interest in education made it possible for him to be appointed, in 1869, a school inspector in Vyzhnytsia, supervising seven schools, including the one in Putyliv. He remained in this office until 1872. In that time his songbook for schools was published in Vienna, at the expense of Meliton Buchynsky. As school inspector Fedkovych fought for the early school-starting age of seven years and for compulsory primary education. He did not stop writing poetry, some of which was published in Lviv.

In 1872 Fedkovych received an offer from "Prosvita" in Lviv to become its editor. "Prosvita" was a leading Ukrainian cultural institution, which also ran a publishing house. In July of that year Fedkovych arrived in the capital of Galicia. He was reluctant to leave the mountains, but he was ready to help in the publication of books for the people. At first he liked his work. Soon, however, he started quarrelling with other writers. With one of them, Levytsky, he "fought a duel" in winning a drinking competition. Gradually, some of Fedkovych's strange predilections (astrology) found their way into the books he edited. "Prosvita" became dissatisfied with his work and demanded stricter control over editing. Fedkovych resented it. His behaviour on social occasions (in the Hutsul tradition, he kissed the hands not only of women but also of men) created a further gulf between him and the Lviv intellectuals. After six months in Lviv, Fedkovych wanted to leave and searched in vain for a job in Vienna. On one occasion in Lviv he was asked to sing to the accompaniment of a *lira,* which he claimed he played well. Yet the evening turned into a disaster because of his playing, which alienated him even further. He felt that as "a man from the mountains" he could not fit into a city society, although individual people told him that they liked his singing. One day, during the summer vacation when most of his colleagues left Lviv, Fedkovych, who was thirty-eight, was overcome with dark thoughts about death and composed a testament. Giving detailed instructions about his Hutsul funeral, he penned these words as the ones he wished to see on his tombstone: "Ideals for the sake of ideals; Beauty for Beauty's sake."

It was in Lviv that Fedkovych met Mykhailo Drahomanov, a well-known Ukrainian scholar and father of democratic socialism.

Fedkovych tried to impress Drahomanov with his scholarly erudition but failed miserably. Drahomanov, who liked his poems, left a very negative report of their meeting. He came to regard Fedkovych as an eccentric. This eccentric, however, told him that he was trying to translate *Hamlet* into Ukrainian. In October 1873 the down-hearted Fedkovych left Lviv. He later described the fourteen months spent there as "black."

Back in Putyliv, Fedkovych faced a cut in income. In Lviv he got used to an extra salary. Now he had to turn to farming. In his spare time he collected material for a description of Bukovyna, which he had promised to Drahomanov. Fedkovych's father, still in Chernivtsi, wrote to him offering reconciliation. Yuriy spurned it. He became more of a recluse and spent spent hours sitting outside his house and playing the *lira.* In September 1875 Drahomanov visited him in Putyliv, showing his concern for a man of ability and talent who, in his opinion, was going to seed. They talked of the latest literary attempt by Fedkovych - to write a drama about Dovbush in the manner of Schiller. It was Drahomanov who, at the end of 1875, published in Kyiv a collection of Fedkovych's short stories. There is an unconfirmed report that Fedkovych at that time was accused of sexual harassment by one of his students of German. He feared arrest, but nothing happened.

In the summer of 1876 Fedkovych learned that his father was seriously ill and decided to visit him. There are moving accounts of the meeting between estranged father and son. Was this last act on Yuriy's part a sign of true reconciliation or simply a gesture necessary to assuage his conscience? He stayed with his father for two weeks, until his death. After the funeral Yuriy decided to stay for a while in his father's apartment in Chernivtsi. Little did he know that it would become his new home. Life in the city proved not very exciting. Fedkovych was shunned by the local intelligentsia, who were mostly Moscowphiles and did not share his Ukrainian sentiments. He sold the farm in Putyliv, bought a little house on the outskirts of the city, and lived there with a servant, who later accused him of homosexualism. In 1880 Fedkovych was jailed for two days for this offence. He became more reclusive and devoted himself to an earlier pursuit - astrology. He studied nearly all literature on the subject available in

German. Two years later he published a collection of poems in German under a pseudonym "Huzul."

Several years later, in the early 1880s, Ukrainian national awakening spread to Bukovyna, and Fedkovych became a part of it. At first he was a reluctant participant, but in 1885 he became the editor of the newly-founded Ukrainian newspaper *Bukovyna*. Fedkovych wrote of himself that he "has awakened from a long dream." The former recluse, but also a bit of an activist, started again to take part in community life and once even gave an impassioned public address to the peasants. They were inclined to listen to him now. In 1886 the Chernivtsi community celebrated festively the twenty-fifth anniversary of Fedkovych's literary career. In thanking those who eulogized him, Fedkovych said that this was the happiest day of his life. He was particularly moved by the greetings he received from his old friend Rothkael.

In 1887 Fedkovych fell seriously ill. He tried to write in bed his poetic testament, in which he expressed his faith in Ukraine's future. All his possessions he bequeathed to his servants. On the 11th day of January, 1888, Fedkovych died of a haemorrhaging stroke. A severe snowstorm did not stop hundreds of mourners from all corners of Ukraine from attending his funeral. The funeral cortege was preceded by the regimental band of the Forty-first Regiment and was followed by hundreds of Hutsuls. They were bidding farewell to their bard.

It was only in the last years of his life that Fedkovych gained wide acclaim. Some of his poetry and prose has retained its freshness and beauty. His works were but a by-product of a life devoted to the life of the Hutsuls. A nativist and not an intellectual, he was, however, swept in the ever-widening cultural movement of Ukraine, which sought a new identity from all corners of the wide land. Once more, literature became the clearest expression of that identity, for it conveyed the uniqueness of Bukovyna to all Ukrainian readers.

Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky

Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky, a leading populist prose writer of the nineteenth century, left a short but detailed account of his childhood and youth. He began thus:

> I was born on November 18, 1838, in Kyiv province, in the small town of Stebliv. The town is not far from the river Dnieper, amidst the hills and streams, on both banks of the small rivulet Ros'. In the middle of Stebliv the Ros' flows in a bend, with steep cliffs on both sides. To the east, beyond a craggy island, the river murmurs. One hears its gentle ripple among the stones. Wherever one looks - there are breathtaking, panoramic views.
>
> My father, Semen Stepanovych Levytsky, was a priest in Stebliv, where my grandfather and my great grandfather also served as priests. In a license for priesthood, my great-grandfather's name was Leontovych, not Levytsky. He changed his name to a more fashionable one - Levytsky. My father stuttered badly, but his speech was eloquent in his sermons. He was slow and rather clumsy in his movements, did not like to work around the house, and liked to shut himself in his study, where he would lie down to read books or to prepare his sermons. We, as small children, did not dare to enter his study, and saw him only at lunch and supper. By acting as he did our father had spurned us, and even as we grew up we kept aloof and were not as close to him as we were to our mother. As we were growing up our father noticed this and would often say, "Why don't my children hug me? I love them so much and I give them everything. But they seem to turn away from me."

We also learn that his father dearly loved his native land. He told his children that Ukraine was an oppressed country and that "the Muscovites are destroying our language and nationality." He told them stories about Ukraine's past, especially about Korsun, a place nearby, where Hetman Khmelnytsky had fought the Poles. Before he died he wanted to build a store in order to compete in commerce with

Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky

the Jews, but he did not accomplish this. All his sermons were delivered in Ukrainian, but in the end the Metropolitan told him to stop doing this. Before his death his son brought him Kulish's Ukrainian translation of the Bible, which was published in Lviv, and this pleased the old man very much. He possessed copies of the history of Ukraine by Markevych and Bantysh-Kamensky, and Ivan remembered reading them at home during the holidays. Later he learned that the village where Shevchenko spent his childhood, Kerelivka, was not far from his own home.

Young Ivan was devoted to his mother. Her maiden name was Anna Lukianovna Trezvynska, and she came from a Cossack family. Her father became a priest at a monastery in Lebedyn. "My mother," wrote Ivan, "was very tall, cheerful, enterprising, and talkative. She loved singing. She grew up near the monastery, loved to read the sacred books to us, and sometimes cried while doing so." Although his mother was very pious and often went to church, she found time to run the household efficiently. She sang Ukrainian songs and did not know any Russian. Everybody at home talked in Ukrainian. After giving birth to a pair of twins, his mother died, when Ivan was thirteen. He knew that his mother "loved him very much, as her eldest son." He lovingly described the house where he grew up:

> It was small and had a living room, a separate room, and a kitchen. When we were small, my brother, sister and I slept in the kitchen, together with our nursemaid, old Motria, who was related to our mother and was brought by her from Lebedyn. *Baba* Motria told us stories, sang songs, and took me to the village when she was visiting people, dropping in on baptisms, weddings, or funerals. I was always with her when I saw the life of the people.... I learned to sing in the kitchen from the girls who worked there, and I loved singing very much.

When he was seven Ivan was sent to his uncle Trezvynsky, who placed him in a school run by the clergy in Bohuslav. Although he heard some beautiful singing there and listened to his uncle playing the violin, he missed his mother. When Ivan was nine, he was accepted as a regular pupil in the Bohuslav monastery school. There the discipline was strict and the only enjoyment Ivan got was from the

women servants, the only females among monks and priests. Ivan became quite fond of Hapka and Palazhka, who reminded him of his mother. In the courtyard of the school he saw many beggars and invalids. He remembered one of them, Saveliy,"with dark, shining eyes, looking like Gogol." Saveliy was an accomplished draftsman and drew churches for little Ivan. One night Saveliy had a seizure, and this incident shocked Ivan. He found the teaching in the school quite tedious and recalled ever so much more fondly the days in Stebliv.

Later, Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky would recreate the world of his childhood in a novel, *The Old-Fashioned Clergymen and Their Wives (Starosvetskii batiushki i matushki*, 1884). "I loved those old-fashioned houses," he wrote on another occasion, remembering Stebliv. Masterfully, he described in the novel the people, their talk, and the gaiety and humour that prevailed despite the religious atmosphere. It was a world that would have disappeared without Levytsky's fond recollections. The way of life that was so dear to him was typical of provincial Ukraine; whether on the left or the right bank of the Dnieper, it flourished throughout the century. It preserved old virtues and foibles. One of these, which Levytsky inherited was the love of solitude and seclusion, which he had observed in his father. Later he too became an original loner, almost a recluse.

His father's influence, in spite of his aloofness, was perhaps crucial. Like his father, Ivan became later reclusive, often confined to his study. From his father he also acquired a palpable love for his native land, which remained the solid foundation of his outlook. This purely intellectual conviction, derived from his father's tales about Ukrainian history, was strengthened by his mother's emotional show of sentiment when she sang Ukrainian songs and spoke her native language. In nineteenth-century Ukraine these were often the mainsprings of the creative energy of writers and artists. They became the leaven of Levytsky's later works. In one of them a character mentions Shevchenko in a way similar to young Levytsky's memory of the poet's native village Kerelivka. He was enchanted with Shevchenko's poetry and wept profusely when he heard of his death. In Levytsky's imagination, Shevchenko's native village coalesced with the picturesque environment of Stebliv. This deep storehouse of memory, connected with a poetic genius, might also have stimulated the writer in

Levytsky.

After a fairly happy period of early youth Levytsky endured a long and rather sterile time of schooling. Life in a *bursa* (a boarding-house for students in a religious educational institution) has been well depicted in Ukrainian prose, including Levytsky's. On the whole, it was a rather miserable existence in a school that was a typical product of the Russian educational system. The curriculum was full of obscurantist ideas of scholasticism, where Greek and Latin were taught in Russian to Ukrainian pupils. The deliberate policy of Russification (*obrusenie*) was enforced by the crudest methods. Levytsky records that Ukrainian pupils, who were in the overwhelming majority, had to wear on their necks slates, on which teachers would write down the students' "sins," - among them - "using the peasant language" [Ukrainian], or "using foul language" (*skvernoslovie*) - [also in Ukrainian]. A pupil who collected many such comments would be soundly beaten on Saturday. Levytsky also records that these sadistic measures bore no results. The Ukrainian boys continued to use their language. The school was headed by an ascetic monk, Fedir, who "was always angry and shouting" and who believed in using the rod on his pupils for the slightest "disobedience." Sometimes he would order several pupils to be whipped at once, a show he enjoyed watching. But, according to Levytsky, at times this was too much even for him, and he would walk away, while the attendants pretended that they were whipping the boys by striking the walls with their rods.

Instruction in school was very dull, but sometimes it was enlivened by the absence of teachers, when some peasant boys would tell stories and report on books they had read. Levytsky remembered them well, and later, while still in school, acquired a copy of a Russian translation of *The Golden Ass* by Lucius Apuleius - not a bad introduction to world literature. Levytsky reported that he learned the book by heart and so did his friends. The remarkable thing about his time at Bohuslav school was that it left so few scars on the young Ivan. He had already learned to hide in his shell, absorbing as much as he wanted and dismissing the rest.

At fourteen Ivan was sent to a seminary school in Kyiv. This was a big move for him, and he was a little apprehensive. He had

heard many wonderful stories about Kyiv: "I had not been to a big city before, and my intense imagination was ready to receive all these wonders." Yet, in a way, Kyiv proved a disappointment. Ivan did not like the ancient Lavra, and was repelled by the dark churches. What fascinated him, however, was "the grandiose Dnieper with its green banks." It was more beautiful than his native Ros'. It is a pity that Ivan probably did not know then the beautiful descriptions of both these rivers by his countryman, Mykola Hohol (Nikolai Gogol), in his Ukrainian short stories, published in 1832. Later, Ivan read them and, probably, regretted that they had not been written in Ukrainian.

Teaching in the Kyiv seminary was much better than at Bohuslav. Even better, there was no corporal punishment. Older teachers continued to hold on to the "dead classicism," but there were also some younger ones who inspired Levytsky with new ideas. From them he learned about new books and publications. However, these were very difficult to obtain. Only when visiting the famous Kyiv fair (*kontrakty*) did he manage to find a French novel by Le Sage, *Le Diable boiteux* . He bought it and read it slowly with the help of a dictionary: "I liked the book very much, and afterwards I bought cheap French illustrated books with the money my father sent me." Among them was *Atala, ou les amours de deux sauvages dans le desert* and *Paul et Virginie* , as well as *Genie du christianisme* , all by Francois Rene Chateaubriand, a popular writer in Russia at that time, who was often regarded as a transitional figure between Classicism and Romanticism. Another popular French novelist whom Levytsky read was Eugene Sue. Levytsky confessed that he could read only half of Chateaubriand's *Christianisme*, but he also revealed that his greatest enthusiasm was reserved for Dante's *Commedia divina,* "with its grandiose and fantastic depictions." He also read Pushkin and Gogol. The first poem by Shevchenko he read was "Woman Possessed" ("Prychynna"), which made a strong impression on him and his sister. They read it aloud together.

After finishing the seminary in 1859, Levytsky became a teacher in Bohuslav. But after only one year, he decided to continue his studies. He enrolled in the Kyivan Theological Academy, which had been founded in 1819 and occupied the same building as its predecessor, the famous Mohyla Academy, dissolved two years ear-

lier. The academy was conducive to more serious study. Levytsky, who by that time had also mastered German, had read widely and subscribed to the only Ukrainian periodical, *The Foundation* (Osnova), which appeared in St. Petersburg. He even planned to send them a contribution. The year 1861 was memorable not only in Russian history (the abolition of serfdom) but also in literature. It saw the appearance of Turgenev's famous novel *Fathers and Children* (*Otsy i deti*, 1862), with its nihilist hero Bazarov. Students were divided ideologically between those who followed the new liberal wave in Russia and those who dreamt of greater rights for Ukraine. About the same time, a secret student circle of "Fourierists" was uncovered at the academy, in which both Russians and Ukrainians participated. Levytsky, who shunned political activism, mentions that one professor was so antagonistic to the idea of Fourierism that he declared that all Ukrainian and Belorussian literature should be burned as soon as it appeared in print. On the whole, however, Levytsky was more hopeful about the future. His student days at the academy were subsequently recreated in his novel *The Clouds* (*Khmary*, 1874), which was published before the ban on Ukrainian books in Russia.

Levytsky completed his studies at the academy in 1865 with the attestation of a "master." He obtained a teaching position as a lecturer in Russian literature at a seminary in Poltava. The pay was miserable (250 rubles a year), and his main interest was not in teaching but in writing. He wrote his first novel, *Two Soldiers' Wives* (*Dvi moskovky*), still in the romantic vein, with much ethnographic detail. Then, as he was thinking of leaving his post for a better-paid one, fate intervened.

After crushing the Polish uprising of 1863, the Russians turned to a new policy in the Polish territories, which were mostly inhabited by Ukrainians. In order to suppress Polish influence it was decided to encourage the Ukrainians and their educational aspirations. Two professors from the Kyiv Academy, from which Levytsky had just graduated, Lebedyntsiv and Kryzhanovsky, were dispatched to the regions of Kholm and Pidlassia and put in charge of the schools. They knew Levytsky, and when he was searching for a new appointment, they made it possible for him to come to these "Polish areas." Eventually he obtained a position in a girls' gymnasium in Kalish,

assuming, ironically, the role of a Russifier, which he hated. He stayed in his new position for six years. Most of his free time was devoted to writing. The result was the novel *The Intruder* (*Prychepa*, 1869), depicting the social life of Ukrainians. He also saw a volume of his prose published and some of his long stories translated into Russian and Polish. He was on the way to becoming a novelist.

In 1867, while still in the Polish provinces, Levytsky made contact with Panteleimon Kulish, who was at that time serving in Warsaw. Kulish put him in touch with the Ukrainians in Galicia. In 1868 Levytsky went to St. Petersburg, where he met Kostomarov. He was beginning to have a name and to associate with leading Ukrainian intellectuals. In 1874, assisted by the Kyiv *hromada,,* his collected stories were published in Kyiv. Yet after 1876 Levytsky had to hide his writing (some of which was published in Galicia), and obtained a teaching position in distant Kishinev in order not to attract the attention of the authorities. He recorded that he wrote in secret, not telling even his father or his closest friends. Perhaps he derived some pleasure from writing clandestinely. Yet, at the same time, he took an active part in the social life of the Ukrainian community in Kishinev. He described this milieu in his novel *On the Black Sea* (*Nad chornym morem*, 1890), published in Galicia. Earlier, in 1879, he had published, also in Galicia, a long novel, *The Kaidash's Family* (*Kaidasheva simia*). He was becoming the leading Ukrainian novelist, and although his works were not innovative, they were widely read and appreciated. According to Franko they showed convincingly the disintegration of the Ukrainian patriarchal family. The same critic praised Levytsky for his realism, pursued without any attempt to dazzle his readers. His novels were certainly not dazzling, but they endured. They could not be compared with the great Russian novels of the time, but they came from the pen of a man who liked and recorded provincial life. It had its great virtues.

In 1885 Levytsky gave up teaching and retired. First he travelled to his native region, and then settled down in Kyiv. Here he lived until his death, acquiring the reputation of an anchorite. He still wrote, but kept aloof from all activities.

Levytsky occupied two rooms in an old house not far from the city centre. At the back there was a small garden and even some

beehives, which reminded him of Stebliv. Serhiy Yefremov has left us the following description of his daily routine:

> Everything was neat and clean, even miniature-like, as was the occupant himself, nicely dressed, methodical in his speech, used to an almost mechanical life. It seemed as if all the stormy events outside, all world happenings and anxieties were barred at the threshold of this small apartment, all passions were dissolved into some stoical wisdom of an old philosopher, mixed with his childlike naivete. At fixed hours Levytsky would sit down at his table to write, regularly producing one novel a year as well as some short stories. Also at regular hours he did his reading. He took regular walks across the city regardless of the weather.... Later, when he moved, he used to walk to the nearby Volodymyr Hill, from where he could see his beloved Dnieper.... Once a year he would take a vacation and visit, without fail, his native corner of Ukraine near the river Ros'.

Levytsky's compulsive daily routine included meals, which had to be eaten at a certain time. He went to bed at ten o'clock, with no regard to visitors. They often came during the day, especially young people, for whom he had become a bit of a legend. He would inevitably ask them for their genealogies. He remained unknown to the wider community and was often dismissed as an eccentric. His novels and stories still dwelt on Ukrainian social life, in both the country and the city, which he recorded faithfully. In 1891 he published, under a pseudonym, in Lviv, a book entitled *Ukrainianism at Literary Summons with Russianism* (*Ukrainstvo na literaturnykh pozvakh z Moskovshchynoiu*). It was an answer to an article by a Russian professor of literature, Alexander Pypin. Levytsky bitterly attacked the influence of Russia on Ukrainian literature and pleaded for complete cultural independence. This was an outburst, showing his pent-up feelings. As early as 1878 Nechuy had published an article pleading for a national literature based on the simple peasant language. He received a sharp rebuttal from Ivan Franko. Much later, he refused to leave his papers to Trehubov, fearing that he might give them to the Russians, who would destroy them because they were in Ukrainian.

In the 1890s Nechuy was persuaded to help finish Kulish's

translation of the Bible. He worked at it very conscientiously and accomplished the task. The complete work appeared in Vienna in 1903. An earlier translation of the Bible by Morachevsky, completed in 1862, was first published in Russian Ukraine in 1906. Levytsky's contribution to establishing a standard literary Ukrainian is less impressive. He became obsessed with linguistic purity and often fought unnecessary battles with people who knew more about the subject. In one of his letters, Franko referred to Levytsky's articles on language as "simply stupid." But this obsession was in line with his personality and general behaviour in the last decade of his life. In 1904 Ukrainians in Kyiv celebrated the thirty-fifth anniversary of Levytsky's literary career. He was persuaded to appear and to deliver a short speech. The young people gave a real ovation to the old man they loved. He was unmoved. In 1910 he wrote a beautiful, long piece, "Evening on the Volodymyr Hills," in which, looking down at the Dnieper he meditated on Ukrainian history and character.

To the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 Levytsky reacted with indifference. He was not interested in what he considered to be political events, and remained absorbed in his work and in rather futile linguistic pursuits. They dealt mostly with the orthography and "purity of the language," subjects that remained the preoccupation of many minor Ukrainian scholars and writers for decades. Trivia were always very important for Levytsky, and in defending his case he often became petty and bigoted. One of his biographers wrote that at the end of his life, he, like the famous character Firs in Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, was left behind by everybody. His death in 1918 attracted little attention.

In the late 1920s, when the Soviet grip was beginning to tighten on Ukrainian scholarship, Yuriy Mezhenko prepared a collection of Levytsky's letters. It was never published, and not until 1968 was it included in the tenth volume of his collected works. It constitutes an important source for his biography. This anchorite could occasionally write good letters, especially about himself and his life. From one of them, written in 1890, we learn that in the late 1860s Levytsky had travelled to Vienna and to Switzerland, a fact that had been unknown before. In many of his letters he repeats the information about his early life that he left in his short autobiography. He ob-

viously enjoyed revisiting these memories. Writing to Oleksander Konysky in 1876, Levytsky repeated the story of his youth, adding some important details. During his days in the Kyiv Academy he apparently was quite friendly with Georgian and Serbian students, who, together with the Ukrainians, tried to argue with the Russian students -- testimony to a common anti-Russian front among the non-Russian nationalities.

Already in the 1880s Levytsky showed great interest in photographs of himself, and even had a bust made of himself. Later, and throughout his life, he showed great care for his own publications, their reviews, distribution, and new editions. In his own lifetime he saw a collected edition of his works published. Much of his correspondence deals therefore with the details of his publications, to which he attached great importance. In fact, all details interested him, and in their collection he showed the avocation of a true "realist." He was also quite ready to give advice to young writers, telling them to get acquainted with the people and their mores. In a letter to Hrushevsky in 1889 he criticized Chekhov for seeing the peasants, in his short story "The Peasants," "from a bird's-eye point of view." Writing in the same year he admitted that Tolstoy "had great talent,.. But it won't make one cry, or even sigh, or smile. Not the same as Turgenev."

Turgenev's *Fathers and Children* had made a deep impression on Levytsky. In his letters he talks about Bazarov's similarity to some Ukrainophiles who "reject clericalism and every kind of overlordship." In some ways Levytsky's response to Turgenev may be found in the heroes he created in his novels *The Clouds* and *On the Black Sea.* In them he stresses the national aspect of the new radicalism that Turgenev depicted in his novel. The hero of Levytsky's novel, *The Clouds,* Radiuk is, like Bazarov, a "new man." But he is devoted to Ukrainian culture and education rather than to general radicalism. In one of his letters he defended Radiuk as the embodiment of progressive Ukrainian ideas, which Levytsky had encountered in Kyiv. The hero of *On the Black Sea,* Komashko, clashes with the "cosmopolitans" and continues Radiuk's defence of the Ukrainian national cause. Yet Komashko is no Ukrainian chauvinist. Apart from Ukraine, he is interested in other Slavic peoples (apart from Russians). It is curious that Levytsky's very uncomplimentary depiction

of the Russians in his novels (which were not published in Russia) did not get him into trouble with the authorities.

In 1900, when Ukrainian symbolism and modernism were showing their first poetic flights, Levytsky roundly condemned them. He wrote a story *Without Fortune* (*Bez puttia*), which he admitted was "a parody on the decadents and symbolists in literature. I do not like them at all." On several other occasions he criticized the modernists as being divorced from the life of the people. Soon after composing his story about the decadents he wrote a lengthy article in the same vein. It remained unpublished until 1968, when it appeared in the tenth volume of his collected works. The article shows some familiarity with Russian and Western European modernist literature, but it has nothing good to say about it. Levytsky rejects it as "quaint, obscene, and rubbishy." It is a great pity that this utterly reactionary document was not published in the 1910s, as it might have provoked a reply by some of the modernists. As it was, no meaningful polemic took place between them. Once more, Levytsky hid himself.

Levytsky demanded that even in the twentieth century Ukrainian writers should write in the language of an ordinary *baba*. There was never a fiercer defender of nativism. His letters of 1902-04 provide yet another insight into the workings of the Russian bureaucracy. He found it very difficult to arrange for royalties paid by the British Bible Society for Kulish's translation of the Bible to be transferred from Vienna to Russia, to Kulish's widow. It took almost two years for the arrangements to be completed because the Russian authorities refused to acknowledge documents written in English and German. The letters after 1910 are full of Levytsky's fulminations against the "Galician language," which he disliked so much. His letters to Natalia Kobrynska show his abiding interest in the emancipation of women.

Levytsky's personality stirred interest in his early biographers. One of them, Serhiy Yefremov, published a short but eloquent account of his life in the early 1920s, when it was still possible for Ukrainian scholars to publish abroad. His biography, informative and scholarly, written from the traditional populist point of view, was followed by a rather unusual, for those times, biographical piece by one of Soviet Ukraine's leading novelists, Valerian Pidmohylny. In

1927, in the Soviet Ukrainian magazine *Life and Revolution* (*Zhyttia i revoliutsiia*), he published his "attempt at a psychoanalysis of creation" of Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky. It is difficult to know whether it stirred much controversy, if any, but it remains until now the only successful Freudian analysis of the life of a Ukrainian writer.

Pidmohylny begins his study by praising Yefremov's short biography and especially his conclusion that Levytsky was "an inner sphinx...within the figure of a gentle old man." To uncover this sphinx, Pidmohylny applies a psychoanalytic approach, although he realizes that biographical data about Levytsky are incomplete. Boldly seizing on an incident in Levytsky's autobiography, where he refers to Turgenev's novel *Fathers and Children* as "Bazarov," Pidmohylny tries to find the key in the Oedipus complex. "In it, and in it alone, we must search for the impulses that conditioned his creativity (the sublimation of suppressed libido) and its direction. In Levytsky the Oedipus complex is strikingly clear. His father appears in the autobiography of the writer as a foreign, distant being."

Levytsky's libido, Pidmohylny argues, was therefore transferred to his mother, whom he adored. He stresses Levytsky's grief after his mother's early death ("she died after childbirth - therefore father killed mother") and points to the fact that "the child's libido was arrested at its first object - the first beloved who died tragically." This explains why Levytsky never married. This complex remained, of course, in Levytsky's subconscious. In order "to receive the approval of the conscious it had to assume a new content." Levytsky's real mother was replaced by "mother nature." It is easy to demonstrate, as Pidmohylny does, Levytsky's infatuation with nature, which often appears in a feminine aspect.

According to Pidmohylny, Levytsky's pseudonym, which he then attached to his name - "Nechuy" may also be explained psychoanalytically. "Nechui" in Ukrainian is derived from "nechuty" - "not to hear." "The pseudonym," writes Pidmohylny, "was evoked by fear of the father." This may be less convincing, but other points in the study strike home. Levytsky's punctuality, orderliness, and stubbornness is ascribed to anal-eroticism. Even his maniacal preoccupation with orthography may be connected to it. Pidmohylny also notes Levytsky's many references to the *babas* (old women) in his works,

to women's clothing, the healing qualities of the water in the river Ros', and other trivia, which suddenly become very revealing.

Following this line of enquiry Pidmohylny makes his final point - of explaining psychoanalytically Levytsky's love of the Ukrainian language, which he learned from his mother and which for him was always associated with his memories of her. His mother did not even know Russian, and her son came to hate it too. But perhaps all patriotism may be traced to love of the mother - who knows? However, Levytsky's treatment of the mother-son relationship in his works deserves further study. Sometimes, a mother kills her infant by throwing him into a river (Ros'?). We are intrigued and fascinated by Pidmohylny's approach, and regret that it could not be developed further in Soviet Ukraine. For it confirms anyone's reading of Levytsky's life, which remains more compelling than most of his novels. It offers an appropriate bridge between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries in Ukrainian life.

Ivan Franko

1

Was the greatest Galician writer of the nineteenth century, Ivan Franko, like his predecessor, Taras Shevchenko, of peasant stock? This has always been taken for granted, for, although Franko's father was a village blacksmith, the family lived like peasants. Franko himself confirmed this. Yet recent genealogical studies confirm that on his mother's side Franko's ancestors did not originate in the peasantry. Franko's mother, Maria Kulchytska, came from the petty gentry (*szlachta*). In 1855 she married a peasant from the village of Nahuevychi, the widower Yakiv Franko. Maria's mother, Ludwika (certainly not a peasant name), lived in the neighbouring village of Yasenytsia, where the young Ivan later went to school. He fondly remembered his grandmother, who died in 1871. In jottings for his autobiography Franko also mentioned that his father "probably came from Ukrainianized German colonists." This might explain his last name.

Ivan was born in the Nahuevychi, in the Drohobych district, in 1856. Although, as he said himself, his memory of his father was imperfect, he remembered him as a blacksmith who was esteemed for his work and who wanted his son to be well educated. Later, in some of his stories, Franko recalled his father's smoke-filled smithy, where the villagers gathered and talked of hard times. Life was difficult for the Galician peasants, and perhaps the little boy was eager to go to school in order to rise above the people he saw in the smithy.

Staying in Yasenytsia with his grandmother and uncle Pavlo, who was a literate peasant, young Franko attended the local school and soon learned to read and write. In school he was taught Polish and German; Ukrainian he had to learn from uncle Pavlo. Although he missed his parents, Ivan was quite happy. His grandmother told him how her brother, whose name was also Ivan, had died during the Polish insurrection against Russia in 1863. Schoolwork did not absorb all Ivan's time. Yasenytsia was located in the Carpathian foot-

Ivan Franko

hills, and the young boy wandered often through the picturesque countryside.

In 1864, when he was eight, Ivan was sent to the so-called "normal" school in Drohobych, run by the Basilian Fathers. He stayed there for three years, not enjoying the very strict curriculum and discipline. Corporal punishment of the boys was common at that time, but occasionally young Ivan protested against the harsh beatings of some of his friends. Yet he also valued the attention he received from other monks who were his teachers. He had an excellent memory and was an outstanding student. Drohobych was a small town inhabited mostly by Poles and Jews. There is no doubt that Franko met and associated with some of them and that, for the first time in his life, he may have met workers, whose lot was perhaps even harder than that of the peasants. In this town, as in his village, he saw plenty of human misery. In 1865 Franko's father died, and he attended the funeral in Nahuevychi. He loved his mother but had to leave her and return to Drohobych. There, two years later, in 1867, Franko began attending the local high school.

Franko left a short but detailed memoir of his "gymnasium days." He wrote that, "despite the poverty, which I brought from my thatched-roof home, my studies were not as hard as those who tried to reconstruct them from my short stories made them out to be." He liked his new school and his new friends, and praised the teachers for being "liberal," even if they were patronizing. Outside school hours the students congregated in their lodgings, which they usually shared. It was there that Franko became friendly with the son of a German colonist, Reichert, with whom he read Schiller and Goethe in the original German and Shakespeare in German translation. Later, another German boy, Schiller, formed, without the knowledge of the teachers, a small circle of boys including young Franko. This was an informal study group, and participants wrote and read literary assignments. The boys came from different nationalities - Ukrainian, Polish, German, and Jewish. There was never any discord on those grounds, and Franko remembered especially a Jewish boy, Isaak Tigerman, who was a brillliant student of mathematics. Jews attracted Franko (he left a short reminiscence of his Jewish friends) because he learned from them a devotion to learning and a family tradition dif-

ferent from the patriarchal Ukrainian tradition that was his own. "The peasant family," he wrote, "lacked cohesion and interests, which make Jewish families warm and lasting. The position of the woman was reduced to that of a house servant. In short, the life of the Christian city population made a grim, even a repulsive impression on me...Even in a very poor Jewish family everything was done in order to help the son in the family."

A special treat for Franko and his friends was to be taken on an excursion by one of their teachers. One of them, Ivan Verkhratsky, was an entymologist and collector of folklore. On one such trip outside the town of Drohobych, Verkhratsky took his pupils to Urych, where they collected rare beetles, saw a bat, as well as listened to some folk songs. On another excursion with the same teacher Franko revisited his native village, where the students collected more insects and a dead serpent. The boys also often wandered out of town in search of mushrooms, a favourite occupation for small Ukrainian children. Franko remembered especially well two of his friends, both peasant sons, who went with him to swim in the local stream. They were very skilled at catching fish with their hands. In higher grades, the young men wanted to show their adulthood by visiting some Jewish taverns and German restaurants. In Jaeger's diner they could only eat pork and drink beer. But they felt very grown-up. Some of Franko's fellow students went on to university, and at the time he was also determined to follow their path. Nearly all of them had a serious attitude to academic studies. Another bond between them was their love of singing. They all belonged to a choir, which provided an outlet for their musical and patriotic aspirations.

Franko devoted special attention during his years in gymnasium to books. In time he amassed a little library of his own, though his resources for buying books were limited. Franko was encouraged in this by a young Polish bibliophile, Limbach, who had a good collection of books. In fact, we know that on the trip to his native Nahuevychi, Franko urged his friends to collect funds for starting a school library. One of the first Ukrainian books that he received as a gift from teacher Verkhratsky, was Shevchenko's *The Minstrel* (*Kobzar*). Franko mentions that he learned most of it by heart. "I had a phenomenal memory and could repeat an hour-long lecture almost

word for word." Verkhratsky was not only an avid collector of butterflies but also an amateur ethnographer and a man dedicated to Ukrainian culture. It is certain that he recognized in Franko a promising talent and tried to enlighten him about Ukrainian literature. His pupil was grateful, and it was only a few years later that, on ideological grounds, he criticized Verkhratsky, who had become a fairly prominent scholarly figure, for his conservatism. Another teacher who might have had an even greater influence on Franko was Yulij Turchynsky, of Polish origin. He was the author of some fables and articles about Poland's national poet, Adam Mickiewicz. An older fellow-student, Isidor Pasichynsky, wrote verses and encouraged Franko to do the same.

In the spring of 1872, when Franko was still in school, his mother died. Her sixteen-year-old-son was completely devastated. He loved his mother dearly, even after she had remarried six years earlier in order to be able to provide for her children, something she was unable to do by herself. Franko's stepfather was good to him and continued supporting him at school. But when his mother died, Franko felt a strange emotional turmoil. He described it in some detail in a letter written in 1878 to Olha Roshkevych, his first love:

> This was in 1872, in the afternoon of the Saturday before Whitsunday. The woman I speak about - my mother - was dying. On the morning of this Saturday, when I was still in class, I was seized with a terrible, unnatural, mad gaiety. I laughed without stopping from 8 to 12. When I arrived at the station in Drohobych I heard - well, I don't know what I heard. I only know that it was raining, I was hungry - I hadn't eaten any lunch - and when I heard that my mother was dying, without stopping I ran all the way to Nahuevychi. I arrived in the afternoon - I was drenched to my skin - and found my mother passing away. My stepfather was sitting near the window, combing wool. I stood near the bed, but did not say a word, nor did I shed a single tear. My mother couldn't speak, but she kept looking at me very intently. I don't know how my face looked then. Early the next day my mother died. During the night she had been talking to another woman, and this is what that woman told me: "God, oh God," said the poor deceased, "my dear Ivan ran all the

> way from Drohobych, he stood near my bed and looked at me so, so angrily. What, my God, what wrong did I do to him?"...Who knows whether this anguish, which I caused my mother in her last moments, will not revenge itself in some terrible way on my entire life?

This deep emotion, felt by a teenager who had become an orphan, shows a seed of poetic talent. When, shortly afterwards, his stepfather married again, young Franko was angry and wrote his first poem, which has not been preserved. It was dedicated to his father. The young poet burned it soon after it was written. He was now determined to leave Drohobych and enter a university. This became possible in 1874, when he graduated with high honours and was bound for Lviv, where he wanted to study philosophy. Before he left, Franko made a trip to Stryi and the neighbourhood. He went alone and enjoyed it very much.

Lviv, which was then known as Lemberg, or Lwow, had received a new charter in 1870, giving it a new autonomy. It was a fairly important centre in the outlying area of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the middle of the century it had the largest Jewish population of any Austrian city (40 per cent of the total city population). It was also a stronghold of the Polish bourgeoisie. The dominant language and culture was Polish. The Austrians also favoured the Poles in city government. When Franko arrived, there was still comparative harmony among the three leading nationalities - the Poles, the Jews, and the Ukrainians, who called themselves Ruthenians. Later in the century there would develop an intense struggle, peaceful as it was, between the Poles and the Ukrainians. In the meantime the city offered to young people like Franko a truly cosmopolitan and Western atmosphere, which was very different from that of the Ukrainian cities in the Russian Empire.

A year later, in 1875, as a university student in Lviv, Franko fell in with some radically minded young men, both Ukrainians and Poles. After the abolition of serfdom in 1848, Ukrainians in Galicia showed signs of new life. Although cut off from real power, which was in the hands of the Austrians and the Poles, they did engage in cultural and educational activities. Many young Ukrainians were sympathetic to the so-called Moscowphiles, who hoped for Russian

overlordship of the Slavs. The Russian government and some Russian intellectuals took great interest in this trend and encouraged and even later subsidized the Russophilism of the young Galicians. The "Academic Circle," with which Franko was associated, was dominated by the Russophiles. Some of them read and disseminated Russian radical literature. This might have appealed to Franko, who was inclined to sympathize with the hard life of the workers and peasants and sought to alleviate it. But he did not like the Moscowphile members of the circle, of which he was the librarian, and, with some Ukrainian friends, managed to oust the Moscowphiles from the executive of the circle. He received great help in this from a Ukrainian scholar who had just left Russia for Europe - Mykhailo Drahomanov. On the advice of Drahomanov, who was a convinced democratic socialist, the Galicians decided to take over a newspaper, *The Friend* (*Druh*), which was published by the Russophile "Academic Circle" and which used a Russianized version of Ukrainian. Franko listened not only to Drahomanov but also to Mykhailo Pavlyk, another student in Lviv, who was also a confirmed socialist. These three formed an ideological alliance that lasted several years and was germane in Franko's intellectual development. Pavlyk was a peasant's son and Franko liked him, but, as he wrote later, "our friendship was in fact a constant disagreement."

There exists a voluminous correspondence between Franko and Drahomanov, whom Franko nearly always addressed as "Gracious Sir," which unfortunately is confined mostly to their socialist activities and tells us little about their lives. Their letters do contain a wealth of information on the cultural history of Galicia. Drahomanov's influence on Franko may have been exaggerated by some critics. Even before starting his correspondence with Drahomanov, Franko had become a socialist after reading Western European and Russian books and discussing them with his roommate Pavlyk. In 1877 Franko wrote a "catechism" of socialism unaided, and it was published by a workers' group in Lviv. Much later in life, in a letter to Krymsky, Franko claimed that, "although undoubtedly Drahomanov had great influence on me, this influence was rather original and negative." In another letter he explained that applying Drahomanov's socialism in Galicia proved difficult because of the latter's insistence

"on ethical principles." Perhaps their eventual disagreement was due to the fact that Drahomanov was fourteen years older. Also, unlike Drahomanov, Franko was interested in Fabianism. This development of his socialism was definitely not pointing, as Soviet scholars have maintained, towards communism. Drahomanov has always been dismissed by Soviet scholars as a liberal and nationalist, and only now has a new approach to this very important relationship become possible in Ukraine.

Although Franko was busy reading and studying at the university, where he did not particularly like the lectures of professor Ohonovsky (later he would describe them as "dead merchandise"), he also found plenty of time for socialist activities. With Pavlyk he reorganized the *Friend* and included in its pages some Ukrainian ethnographic material, describing the life of the peasants. All this was done in Ukrainian, without Russophile touches. Franko, who was barely twenty, became known for his work on the paper and for his short stories, printed there, about the workers' lives in Boryslav and for other realistic tales. He was becoming more radical than his friends, read and translated the Russian writer Chernyshevsky, and travelled to the countryside to talk to the peasants. His energy was boundless, and, while doing all the hard work of agitation, he was also becoming a writer in the realist vein.

The Austrian police were not as ready to act against the radicals as were their Russian counterparts, but in time, they tracked down Pavlyk and Franko. In 1877 several Ukrainian radicals, among them Franko, were apprehended and charged with belonging to a secret society. In a trial in January 1878 most of them were found guilty. Their sentences were relatively light. Franko received a sentence of six months in prison. Later he wrote that the trial made a real socialist out of him. The date of the trial usually marks the beginning of the Ukrainian socialist movement in Galicia. Franko's friend Lunych tried to explain that, at the time of his arrest, Franko was not a socialist, though he was trying to help the peasants. His arrest had hardened his convictions. Moreover, as Franko himself later attested, he was treated in prison as an ordinary criminal and placed with fourteen thieves and vagabonds: "For several weeks I sat in a cell with only one window, in which eight men slept on sofas, and four

under the sofas. Out of sympathy for me my co-prisoners gave me the place under the window opposite the door; since the window had to be open day and night because of bad air, I woke up in the morning with plenty of snow on my head, which came through the open window." In another work Franko refers to his arrest as "senseless prosecution." He "was a socialist merely by sympathy like any peasant, but was far from understanding scientific socialism. This was a fearful and grievous trial for me." The consequences for Franko were also traumatic because many older Ukrainians came to regard him as a criminal.

2

Freed from jail, Franko returned to his early activity with renewed zeal. Together with Pavlyk he published a new Ukrainian socialist paper, *The Friend of the Community* (*Hromadsky druh*), which was also supported by Drahomanov. The paper printed Franko's novel about the exploitation of workers, *Boa constrictor*, as well as some translations of Zola. When, with the police in hot pursuit, Pavlyk fled to Geneva, where he joined Drahomanov, Franko started a new journal, *The New Foundation* (*Nova osnova*). When it folded he began publishing *The World.* (*Svit*). He must somehow have collected the funds needed for these publications. For a while he worked as a journalist for the Polish socialists, but eventually he planned a new periodical, *Progress*, which would follow Drahomanov's line. Nothing came of this venture. Franko did not hesitate to criticize Ukrainian national populists in the Polish press. He became a regular contributor to the Polish socialist press, often writing about Ukrainian problems. This alliance with Polish socialists angered many Ukrainians in Lviv. He then took up the struggle of the Boryslav petroleum workers, whom he considered the true Ukrainian proletarians.

In the early 1880s Franko became somewhat disillusioned with Marxism and his search for the Ukrainian proletariat. Perhaps he came to the conclusion that Ukraine had only peasant proletariat. Therefore he turned his attention to the agrarian question. He did a lot of research and soon developed a plan to establish peasant cooperatives for agricultural production, modelled on those of Henry

George. In the meantime the Ukrainian national populists, despised by Franko, had managed to establish hundreds of reading clubs for the peasants and were conducting a campaign for literacy and national consciousness. Franko felt outflanked. He and his friends were reading Russian radical literature, while the peasants wanted immediate improvement of their lot. Some of them still remembered how, before 1848, men were harnessed instead of horses to pull the ploughs. Now they were ready for more reforms. Many controversies raged throughout Galicia on the peasant question, and the intellectuals were split on what to do next. Pavlyk and his wife continued to conduct socialist campaigns in the villages.

Franko searched for new solutions and, in 1888, seriously considered going to the United States to become the editor of the first Ukrainian newspaper, *America,* in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. The paper had been established by the Reverend Ivan Voliansky, one of the first Ukrainian immigrants. Franko might have heard that Voliansky, "during the famous coal-strike in 1887, was the only Catholic priest who openly sympathized with the striking miners." However, a year later Voliansky came "under pressure from the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who were incensed by his married status [Greek Catholic priest could marry] and succeeded in having him recalled to Galicia." The newspaper folded, and so did Franko's chance of going to America. That some people could appreciate Franko despite his anticlerical beliefs is illustrated by an incident that took place two years later. In 1890 Franko was asked by Professor Izidor Sharanevych if he believed in God. When Franko answered that he did not, Sharanevych said, "inspite of it, I respect you as a hard-working man, and would like you to join the 'Stavropigia' [The catholic Holy Cross educational society in Lviv]."

The Czech ethnographer Ludwik Kuba, who saw Franko in the 1880s, left this impression: "He was blond, verging on red-haired. His eyes were light-blue, a little bloodshot. His face had a gloomy expression, reflecting his past troubles. Two frost-bitten toes reminded him always of his stay in prison." Much later Semen Vityk visited Franko and talked to him in his study, full of papers and books. "Franko could switch in his work from one topic to another, without getting tired. On the same day he would write poetry, trans-

late, write political articles, and correct proofs. In the morning from 8.30 to 9.30 he was with his children, then he started work." This compulsive workaholic was unhappy unless he was busy working. Another friend, Volodymyr Okhrymovych, wrote that "Franko never cared about being in company, never went to soirees, concerts, or dances. He was reserved and avoided taverns or restaurants with bars, but he did frequent coffee houses for a cup of coffee. Even there he kept to himself. At home he did not care about receiving visitors. He did not drink, smoke, or play cards."

Eventually, in the early 1890s, Franko and his followers reached their goals. They established, in January 1890, a socialist newspaper *The People* (*Narod*), and in October of that year they held the founding congress of the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party, with only thirty members in attendance. Soon afterwards serious disagreements began within the leadership of the party. Some members called openly for Ukrainian independence. In 1895 Yulian Bachynsky published his *Ucraina irredenta,* arguing the case for independence, and five years later Franko expressed a similar idea, which for him was becoming "not beyond the limits of the possible."

It was in the mid-1880s, when his socialist zeal began to fade very slowly, that Franko had turned his attention to literature. By that time he was an acknowledged writer of realistic stories, novels, and some fervent poems. Now, however, he came to think more deeply about the nature of literature and its function in Ukraine. Some of his programmatic poems ("The Stonecutters," "The Eternal Revolutionary") illustrate his belief that literature should express progressive and revolutionary ideology. They found very sympathetic readers, although they did not reveal the poet's inner life. In prose he was attracted to social and historical themes, that illustrate the struggle against oppression, as in the novel *Zakhar Berkut* (1883). But he also published several collections of good lyrical verse, in which, perhaps, he sought relief from politics. Political activity exhausted Franko, although he quite enjoyed it. He had real charisma and was a good public speaker. As one friend put it, in his oratory "he always appealed to reason." In 1880 he was arrested once again for inciting the peasants, and finally in 1889 came his third arrest. There was also a great deal of political infighting, feuding, changing of alliances, and

even of old loyalties. Eventually, Franko quarrelled with his mentor Drahomanov over how close Ukraine should remain to Russia. In 1889 he left the radical party and co-founded the National Democratic Party, led by the populists. In 1900 he disagreed with his oldest friend, Pavlyk, by saying that "not only a worker, but also a peasant, an artisan, and even a priest, an official, and a merchant may suffer injustice."

During the late 1880s and early 1890s, when he wrote regularly for a Polish paper, Franko found time to continue his university studies, which he had begun at Lviv University, from which he had been expelled after nearly four years of study. In 1891 he finished a degree at Chernivtsi University with a dissertation on a major literary figure, Ivan Vyshensky. Two years later he defended a PhD dissertation at the University of Vienna, under the supervision of the famous Slavist Jagic. While in Vienna he met several times in a coffehouse with Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism. Franko liked Herzl's idea of creating a separate state for the Jews and compared it to his dream for Ukraine. In 1896 he wrote a favourable review of Herzl's *Der Judenstaat.* About the same time Franko was approached by Martin Buber, who asked him to contribute an article on Galician Jews to the journal *Der Jude.* Unfortunately, Franko was unable to do so. The poet Mykola Vorony remembered how in Vienna he would sit with Franko and the Austrian labour leader Adler in a coffeehouse near the church of St. Stephan: "The discussion was fiery. Franko, the agrarian socialist, would argue with Adler, the spokesman of the urban proletariat. It was an interesting duel."

In the early 1890s Franko published some new poems, *The Prison Sonnets* (*Tiuremni sonety*), which he wrote in jail, and *Jewish Melodies* (*Hebreiski melodii*), where he depicted the poorer Jews who often suffered under the more fortunate members of their own race. Franko saw social conflict and injustice not only among his own people. Perhaps the best "Jewish" poem is "Surka," - "an apotheosis of mother love." The Jewish element in Franko's life deserves separate treatment. Like a true Galician he was very aware of the position of the Jews, but he dealt with it in a new, compassionate way. Franko was ready to help minorities and women. In 1887 he assisted Natalia Kobrynska in publishing her first "feminist" collection, *The First*

Wreath (Pershy vinok). He was often remembered as "the prime encourager of the movement for the emancipation of Ukrainian women in Galicia." In his programmatic poetry he did not hesitate to appeal directly to the people: "*The time has come to serve neither Russian nor Pole."*

In 1894 Franko tried but failed to obtain an appointment at Lviv University. Vice-Regent Badeni and reactionary Ruthenians blocked it. In the same year, with the arrival of Professor Mykhailo Hrushevsky at Lviv, Franko collaborated with him in the Shevchenko Scientific Society. He proved to be an outstanding and prolific scholar. Especially seminal are his studies of Ukrainian apocrypha and *vertep*. Yet Franko's scholarly interests were very extensive, from literary history and criticism to a German translation of Hnatiuk's collection of obscene Ukrainian songs. In scholarship as in life his dictum was - "*humani nil a me alienum puto."* From 1898 on Franko became the *de facto* editor of the leading Ukrainian literary and scholarly journal, *The Literary and Scholarly Herald*, where, once more, he collaborated with Hrushevsky, despite occasional disagreements.

In the late 1890s his poetic achievement rose to new heights. In 1896, there appeared his collection of fine love lyrics, *The Withered Leaves (Ziviale lystia)*, which anticipated modernism, and in 1893 an expanded version of his social poetry, *From the Heights and the Depths (Z vershyn i nyzyn)* was published. The "heroines" of the first collection were Olha Roshkevych, Jozia Dzwonkowska, and Celina Zygmuntovska, but readers knew little about them. In these love poems Franko used almost transparent sexual imagery ("love which ignites blood in my veins"; "just one moment - surely it is not sin"), uncommon in that age of reticence. Later, his feeling towards his wife ("To My Wife," 1887) was quite lukewarm by comparison.

Franko was now the unchallenged bard of Galicia, with many admirers in Eastern Ukraine. At about the same time he published successful plays - *Stolen Happiness (Ukradene shchastia,* 1894) and *The Dream of Prince Sviatoslav (Son kniazia Sviatoslava*, 1895). In 1898 he brought out a collection of poems *My Emerald*. In the preface he wrote that "my spiritual and physical condition is reflected in this work.... I wanted to make it a gentle teacher of morality... If, from any

of these poems, there comes into a reader's heart a drop of kindness, of gentleness, of tolerance...then my work will not have been in vain." A crowning achievement was his long philosophical poem *Moses* (*Moisei*, 1905), on universal themes of history, nationhood, and the human individual as well as of national leadership. Franko's friend, Mykhailo Mochulsky, regarded the poem, as did many others, as "a political testament." He wrote: "The poet knew very well that oppression demoralizes man." Therefore, Mochulsky claimed, the poet intended to create a work that would show that "the mass of the Ukrainian people consists of individuals... who will conquer the spiritual treasures and reach the promised limitless and radiant land of the spirit." Although the poem can be read as a meditation on national leadership, it also shows Franko's search for transcendence. George Shevelov noted that the poem is not a direct echo of the revolutionary events of 1905 but conveyed a powerful message that crowns Shevchenko's tradition of literature as vision.

Franko also wrote a masterpiece of children's literature, *Fox Mykyta* (*Lys Mykyta*, 1890), which contains subtle social satire expressed in very direct language. His efforts as a translator from many European languages were prodigious (Goethe, Heine, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Ibsen). A translation of Goethe's *Faust* was published with Drahomanov's help; with an imperfect knowledge of Russian, Franko also translated Gogol's *Dead Souls*. Like many Ukrainian writers of his time he felt the need for Ukrainian translations of literary masterworks to replace Russian and Polish renditions. In the 1880s he had started publishing a "Little Library," which acquainted Ukrainian readers with world literature. Franko in Galicia and Panteleimon Kulish in Eastern Ukraine were true pioneers in this field. They had many followers.

In 1895 Franko published in Polish an article in which he sharply criticized his fellow Ukrainians, who were "petty and without character." On another occasion he wrote that he could not love Ukrainians "because he loved Ukraine too much" (he used the ancient name, Rus). His disappointment with Ukraine was intense: "Ought I to love the bright future of that Rus' which I do not know and for which I can see no sound basis at all?" In the early 1900s he chastised the budding Galician modernist group of poets "The Young Muse"

for ignoring social and national issues. He was scornful of the new fashion of modernism, perhaps because it came from abroad. Yet at the same time he was sensitive to new poetic trends, as long, he wrote, as "they had a healthy kernel." He was untouched by Vienna "secessionism" and Western European philosophers (Nietzsche), although he was familiar with the West. He told a friend that Nietzsche was "neither a philosopher nor a poet." He preferred Schopenhauer. His attention, even in his poetry, was always focused on Ukraine, its toiling people and its political future. The total creative achievement of Franko, imperfectly gathered in fifty thick volumes of his collected works, is truly impressive, and not because of its size alone.

3

Franko is the first major modern writer of Ukraine because his works bear the indelible mark of his personal experiences. His own life, so rich and tragic, provided him with the material for his literary creations. Fortunately, his letters, reminiscences, and the accounts of his friends supply ample material for a partial reconstruction of his inner life, which so far has been ignored for various reasons by his biographers. That he had an original and keen intellect may be seen in his earliest letters, which he wrote when he was nineteen. But equally uncommon were his sensitivity and judgment. His self-confidence and ambition were constantly tempered by doubts. As a young man with ideas, he must have been like a meteor in the dull and provincial Galician sky.

Writing in German in 1875 to Olha Roshkevych, who was his first love, he said that he "was working too much and too rigorously with my spirit, and as my strength weakens I feel the seed of death, the presentiment of the grave in my heart." This was not a mere mood in the manner of Werther, but something he felt throughout his life. Franko was aware of his existential Angst, and he articulated it in his life and works. It is a great oversimplification to regard him as either a fervent patriot or a socialist revolutionary, although he was those too. The core of his personality lies much deeper. He implored Olha to take his confession of love for her seriously, not as a "play of childish fantasy." When Olha was overwhelmed by his letters and

hesitated a little and told him that he "might be diseased," he reassured and pressed her even harder. He switched to Ukrainian in his letters and told her that she alone could cure his moods. He knew that she had similar intellectual interests and urged her to work with him on some "sociological" projects. On his advice she collected the wedding songs of her village, which much later Franko published in Polish with his introduction. While his letters were not panting with lust or passion, he declared in July 1878 that "platonic love soon becomes boring because it lacks the practical aspect of life, a common struggle for one's convictions and existence." A month later he sent her a twenty-page letter in which he spelled out, as never before, his convictions and plans for a married life. It is interesting that he put economics at the head of a long list of beliefs. Theirs would be not "a bourgeois marriage" but a true comradeship in the struggle for the better future of mankind. World revolution was coming. He had read Marx, but found him difficult to understand. Yet they must strive for an organized socialist life. Their love would be "organic," and their children would be taught "to think rather than to pray." He ended by assuring Olha that his ideal was not a wife who could write but one who was "a woman in the full sense of the word, thinking, wise, and honourable."

We have very few letters from Olha Roshkevych to Franko. It is clear that she was often quite jealous (Franko was attracted to other women, some of whom were taken by this slim, red-haired man), and that she insisted that a marriage should be built on mutual trust. The letter that he wrote to her in January 1879 must have shocked her. In it Franko confessed that he was physically attracted not only to women, but also to men: "I am bolder with men. If you were jealous, then it should be of the men rather than the women. Women sometimes repel me. I have loved more men in my life than women." He explained that this "unnatural attraction to men" was probably due to his upbringing, which "was a segregation from women." "You may say," he ended, "that all this is silly, but it is not." His homoeroticism was, probably, nothing more than voyeurism. Fourteen days later Franko assured Olha that his love was pure and that he was translating Shelley's *Queen Mab*. In February of the same year Franko described in glowing terms his feeling after, most likely,

making love to Olha. At least, from the frequent ellipses that the Soviet editors have left in the text, it is clear that some sexual contact must have taken place. He wrote: "I could not have even dreamed of what has happened. Happiness came on its own. How did you feel? Please, write." She wrote an ardent reply, and he was in seventh heaven.

However, Franko decided to write to the Reverend Ozarkevych who had informed him that he had proposed to Olha. Franko was stunned, but wrote very courteously, saying that Olha would "live with her suitor more securely." He also assured Olha, who herself was a daughter of a priest, that he was not offended if she had decided to be the wife of a priest (*popadia*). After all, he could not provide for a wife, while a priest certainly could. He suggested that at her wedding the guests donate some money for publications he was planning for the peasants. But in fact, after knowing and loving Olha for seven years, he was heartbroken by her decision. An important part in all of this was played by Olha's parents. At first they had approved of Franko, but after his arrest Olha's father came to dislike him. It was he who forced Olha to marry Ozarkevych, a brother of Natalia Kobrynska.

The final denouement of this love story is difficult to unravel. Throughout their relationship they had to circumvent Olha's father, a confirmed Moscowphile, who came to dislike Franko's views and who sometimes intercepted his letters to Olha. There was therefore an element of secrecy and deception. Olha's father also strongly supported Ozarkevych's marriage proposal. Yet Olha's behaviour in the critical last phase is also a little confused and sometimes hard to understand. Her letters to Franko are not always coherent. However, it is interesting that even after her marriage she kept in touch with Franko. She continued working on translations that he had asked her to do. Obviously, she feared being reduced to a housewife. Then, at the end of 1879, she suggested that she and Franko meet secretly in Kolomyia. She wanted to talk to him and also urged him to go to Russia. Franko agreed to the meeting, which took place in Kolomyia early in March 1880. Later he described it in one of his short stories. On the way from Kolomyia to some friends in Bereziv, Franko was arrested. He spent three very hard months in the local jail. The ending was

therefore more dramatic than either of them had anticipated. But it made good literature; Olha appears in several of his poems.

In contrast to his correspondence with women, Franko's numerous letters to Drahomanov are businesslike and show him to be a practical and pragmatic activist. There is some discussion of socialism, but the rather dry details of contemporary political debates predominate. However, in a letter written in 1895 Franko confesses to Drahomanov that "by disposition, I am more a romantic than a realist. All the works with realistic content that I wrote brought me much more suffering than those romantic 'leaps' which simply relax me." This romantic quality, which perhaps naturally enough was combined with his dedication to socialism, may be seen in other relationships with women, especially with Jozefa Dzwonkowska and Celina Zhurovska (later Zygmuntowska), both Polish. His relation to them was more than platonic - it was chaste.

To Jozefa he wrote a letter in Polish, calling her "my dream-like illusion." Celina played an even greater role in his life and poetry, although he met her only in the mid-1880s. In a letter to Ahatanhel Krymsky, Franko wrote that "it was fatal for me, while I was already corresponding with my future wife, I saw from afar a young Polish lady and fell in love with her. This love tormented me for the next ten years." Like many men of his time, Franko emulated Verdi's heroes, who suffered a "silent passion." In February 1899 he wrote a short, beautiful poem in Polish "To C." With both these mysterious women he practiced his voyeurism, which sustained his poetic powers. Here a separate study is needed. Articles by Maria Strutynska point in the right direction. Quoting Franko's poem to Celina, where he speaks of her as "a fire that consumes but also gratifies," she comments that "love is fed not by what it receives, but by what it gives." In another poem Franko speaks of Celina as his "feminine ideal." Many poems in *Withered Leaves* reflect his love for her; they are personal confessions, not literary inventions. When Celina got married, Franko did not forget her, and after the death of her husband, when Franko was already quite ill, he persuaded her to come and live with him as a housekeeper. Celina outlived him, and to the end of her days preserved the striking beauty that had so enchanted him. Asked after the war what she thought of Franko, Celina answered that she "preferred

dark men, and he had red hair." A typical Polish comment, Franko would have said. However, Celina preserved two postcards from Franko. In one he had written "Perhaps you will remember the old idiot, who could not forget you."

In 1884 Franko decided to visit Eastern Ukraine, where he had many friends (by correspondence). But when the notorious Galician socialist finally got a visa from the tsarist government, he went to Kyiv, and not only to visit friends. He had conceived of a strange idea - marrying a woman from Eastern Ukraine. Again the romantic demon was at work. In a letter to Krymsky written in 1898, Franko admitted that "I wed my wife without being in love, but following the doctrine that one should marry a Ukrainian [from Eastern Ukraine], who would be more educated." Through some friends, among them the mother of Lesia Ukrainka, Olena Pchilka, he met a young woman, Olha Khoruzhynska, a relative of Yelisey Trehubov, a member of the "Hromada." A graduate of the Kharkiv Institute for Young Women, she was living with her sister, Antonina, in Kyiv. When she was introduced to Franko, her friends tried to belittle him as "not good looking," and a Galician. Before replying to Franko's proposal of marriage, she visited Galicia and liked what she saw. Franko went back to Lviv and corresponded with her, urging her to reply to his letters promptly. Finally, in 1886 they were married in Kyiv. After the wedding the newlyweds listened to speeches praising the union of Galicia and Ukraine. The young couple went to live in Lviv. Olha found it difficult to adjust to the new living conditions and to people who were so different from the Kyivans and spoke what to her was a dialect.

However, she was determined to be a good wife. She was not the woman Franko was in love with. She looked after him well, bore him several children, and subsidized his publications, but in the end the effects of what was, after all, emigration to another country, drove her insane. In a novel about Franko, published in 1987, Roman Ivanychuk wrote perceptively that Olha Khoruzhynska "became a real wife for him, something that Olha and Celina could not do." In the 1900s Franko's wife became mentally ill and had to be hospitalized. In 1901 he wrote to Trehubov that "living with Olha will drive me to an early end; therefore I would rather lead my earlier vagabond life in

order to have peace within four walls." By that time Franko himself was in failing health. In the last years of his life, when his wife was in an asylum, he tracked down his "dream-like illusion" Celina and invited her to come and live with him. She, who was now a widow with two sons, agreed, and came to look after Franko in his house on Pininski street. His wife, Olha, continued to suffer, and he with her. She outlived him by twenty-five years.

There was yet another woman in Franko's life, Yulia Schneider, who wrote poetry under the pen-name Uliana Kravchenko. His letters to her reveal still another aspect of Franko's search for an ideal. He was a confirmed atheist. (The Soviet editors compiled fairly objectively a 400-page volume of his articles, entitled "The Manifesto of an Atheist." Most of them, however, show Franko's anti-clericalism rather than his atheism). But the unquestionable fading of religion, which makes him very "modern," did not extinguish in Franko a yearning for transcendence. In fact, many of his works explore the meaning of human existence. Only such reading, and not attempts to see in them a social commentary, is rewarding. In his friendship with Uliana Kravchenko he felt free to discuss, first of all, his views on the love of women. "I have no luck with women," he wrote in November 1883, "and will never have any - all because of my clumsiness." He pretended that he was "a simple peasant," and that by love he did not mean a sexual relationship, which he found "one of the lowest degrees of feeling." He thought that only two women were in love with him, but he could not return their feelings. Therefore he wanted to be a friend (once again he confessed that he liked to admire "women's beauty from afar") and warned Uliana that their feelings could "easily become something more." He liked emancipated women, and he was anxious to remain her friend and to discuss her poetry and literature in general. They continued to correspond. But why was a friendship with a woman necessary to Franko? With his male friends he could not and did not discuss ideas as he did with Uliana. Even with his "beloved" friend, Mykhailo Pavlyk, he often quarrelled and could only write about mundane matters. Women, by contrast, remained for Franko an ever-present link to the transcendent. In a relationship with them he sought and found the sense and meaning of life.

4

Yet another woman correspondent was a well-known Polish writer, Eliza Orzeszkowa (1842-1910), who had asked Franko to write to her in Ukrainian, which she followed with great interest. He did this in a letter in 1886, in which he described succinctly the situation of Ukrainians in Galicia. It is worth quoting *in extenso* :

> As an eyewitness I can tell you that despite greater freedom, the situation in Galicia is not better and perhaps even worse. What is killing us is the influence of the German school and the narrowmindedness that was bound to result from the narrowness of our borders and relations. The Ruthenian society in Galicia is not doing well. Our intelligentsia is small and atomized, fighting over orthography and language, and for fantastic dreams of the future, without noticing that what surrounds it, or working at what is at hand. It is ill-educated not only in scholarship but also in social matters; it does not know what to follow. Our misfortune is that the greater part of this intelligentsia consists of priests. Even though they have done a little towards a national awakening, they have stamped it with their own badge and are trying to squeeze it to the narrow framework of their interests. True, it seemed for a while that secular intelligentsia, permeated with Ukrainophile ideas, will take the upper hand. But the Ukrainophilism of the 1860s was romantic and limited itself to the defence of separateness of the Little Russian nationality. It did not go over progressive Western European ideas and therefore could not stand up to the priestly--Jesuit reaction, which it eventually joined. Only in the mid-1870s did a new generation of young people to which I belong come to the fore. It brought to the program of our populism new demands - apart from defending our nationality, we demanded that intellectuals serve the working people, defend its economic rights, and promote a realistic portrayal of the people in literature. But now we too are broken and divided and cannot establish even a small journal.

Franko's passionate dedication to helping and enlightening the people never changed. But gradually it took new forms, more re-

flective and literary, which he could discuss with his friends in various Lviv cafes. If the atmosphere there became stifling he could always escape into literature. His letters from that time are full of reflections on his own work and advice to other writers. In a letter to Krymsky in December 1890 Franko urged him to give up politics and to "write verses, short stories and translations of Hafiz in order to gain respect and name in literature." In the 1890s as before, Franko earned his living through journalism, often writing for Polish periodicals. His earnings, which also included royalties, were meagre and for most of his life he was hard-up. His relations with the Poles were on the whole good, and the Polish writer Jan Kasprowicz was the godfather at the christening of Franko's son Andrij. Relations with the Poles were spoilt by Franko's attack on Adam Mickiewicz, whom in one of his articles in German in 1897 he called "the poet of treason." Franko's illusions that Ukrainians and Poles could work together were temporarily dispelled. But this only shows that Franko, honest and outspoken as he was, was not afraid to offend his friends. Often, in letters to people he did not agree with, Franko used very sharp language. Once he called his correspondent "a liar" (letter to O. Partytsky, October, 1882). He always placed honesty above politeness and therefore often alienated people. But he was also ready to apologize. His thoughts were not limited to Ukraine. In 1902 he wrote a letter of condolences to Mme. Zola.

Of special interest are Franko's relations with Lesia Ukrainka, whose poetry he admired but also criticized. Soviet scholars portrayed this relationship in very friendly, if stereotyped, terms. Recent publications in Ukraine, however, have shed new light on it. While showing mutual respect, these two writers engaged in polemics and quarrels. In the 1890s they seriously disagreed about the direction of the Ukrainian movement. Franko, in an article, criticized those Ukrainians in Russia who took part in Russian revolutionary activities (Zheliabov, Kybalchych). Lesia Ukrainka disagreed. It is noteworthy that Lenin also criticized Franko for this view. Franko preached close contact between the intelligentsia and the peasants, while Lesia Ukrainka disagreed. She published, under a pseudonym, an article criticizing Franko. On the other hand, he maintained that "under the influence of socialist ideas, some young Ukrainians have come to ne-

gate their own nationality." He also criticized her "abstract, philosophical patriotism." Yet, in the end, they remained friends, even if Franko objected to Lesia Ukrainka calling him "cher maitre." It was also a clash between Eastern and Western Ukraine, but in the end the two remained united.

In September 1898, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his literary activity Franko made a speech in which he reiterated that, "as a son of peasant folk, brought up on the peasant's coarse fare, I have always felt myself under an obligation to devote my life's work to the plain people....I have always laid the utmost stress on the attainment of common human rights, for I know that in so doing, people will best gain national rights for themselves. In all my activity I have desired to be regarded not so much as a scholar, a poet, a publicist, as to be, above all, a man." This faith he never renounced, even in moments of utter despair.

5

In 1908 Franko, who as early as 1889 had complained in a letter to his wife of severe "moral and physical illness," became ill with a mysterious disease that did not leave him until his death. Physical and mental suffering, however, did not affect his mind or his capacity for work. The last decade of his life reads, therefore, like the last act of a Greek drama. Franko himself tried to analyze his illness in a long article, dictated to his son, Andriy. It was never published and is probably in some archive in Ukraine. Andriy, who was an epileptic, died before his father did. A gossip-based opinion that may be believable but has never been proven was that Franko had contracted syphilis, which in those days was incurable. The disease had the symptoms of syphilis - paralysis of his limbs, especially his hands. Yet his mind remained lucid to the very end.

Before he became ill, Franko in 1904 made a short trip to Italy. His knowledge of Western Europe had been so far limited to Vienna. He was in Italy for twelve days, and visited Venice, Florence, and Rome. He left unpublished impressions of the museums in Rome, complaining of the high-priced admission tickets to the Vatican Museum. In 1908 Franko went to Lipik in Croatia for a cure,

which brought no relief. While there he visited Livorno in Italy. He was not only stoic, but fought with all his strength against the disease. At one time, when his right hand was paralyzed, he wrote with his left. He also regarded his illness as some kind of scourge and tried to understand it. It might have been a rare illness which at that time was untreatable.

In 1909 Franko visited Kyiv for the last time. Some Kyivans were astonished to hear him speak good Russian to some Russian guests. But Franko was an accomplished linguist and spoke Polish and German like a native. In her memoirs Maria Hrinchenko, the wife of a major populist writer, recalled that Franko was present at the funeral of Petro Kosach, Lesia Ukrainka's father. "At first I thought it could not be Franko, since he was ill. But when I looked closer I recognized him. Yes, it was Franko, with sad, faded, and blood-shot eyes. Next day he came to see us. With his lame hands he was quite helpless. We had to dress him, feed him and give him tea." Later in the same year Franko went to Odessa, still hoping to find a cure for his illness. In 1913, on a visit to Chernivtsi, the capital of Bukovyna, Franko was still able to recite excerpts from his *Moses*. On the initiative of the writer Hnat Khotkevych, a call was issued to all Ukrainians to assist Franko financially in those difficult times. Yet, on the whole, he was well provided for.

In the last decade of his life Franko continued to write and directed his attention to young people, for whom he had become a hero. He did not bathe in this hero worship, but felt that the young needed encouragement. He addressed several articles to them. He knew that he had become an exemplar to Ukrainian youth, for whom his moral authority was undiminished. They had always looked to their writers for leadership, and he fulfilled this role admirably. He sincerely believed that a writer had a responsibility to his people, not only to his readers. In "An Open Letter to Galician Ukrainian Youth" in 1905, Franko, fully conscious of the historic revolutionary events in Russia, called on young Ukrainians in the Russian Empire to "create out of the great ethnic mass of the Ukrainian people a Ukrainian nation, an integrated cultural organism, capable of an independent cultural and political life." He called on them "to feel Ukrainian, not Galician or Bukovynian, but Ukrainian without official borders." This

was how, through his own example, Franko led Ukrainian intellectuals into the twentieth century, leaving behind their past efforts. He knew that a great deal remained to be done, especially in self-education, but he was confident of the future.

Now that he was crippled, Franko did not often appear in public, and when he did, he had to be helped and the pages of his speeches turned for him as he read them in a trembling voice. But he did not give up. He also anticipated great changes in the world and in Ukraine. Shortly before the outbreak of the First World War he vacationed in the picturesque Hutsul village Kryvorivnia, where, in earlier years, he had shared accommodation with other prominent writers. In 1914 he interceded on behalf of a Hutsul he knew well, Vasyl Yakibiuk, who had been called up. Franko offered to pay 100 kronas to release him from military service. It was in Kryvorivnia that he heard of the declaration of war. He did not despair, but was full of hope and was sorry that he was unable to work harder.

A visitor to Franko's modest home at number 4 on Pininski street left a description of its interior: "The furniture was very simple. A few pictures adorned the walls - a portrait of Shevchenko, and Trush's painting of the river Dnieper. There were piles of books and papers on a simple long table and a beautiful little horn, a gift from [the opera singer] Solomia Krushelnytska. This is where the poet worked. Bookshelves stood against the walls, full of books, all in very good order." Franko was given to hallucinations, but now they were not connected with writing poetry but with his illness. Apparently, he imagined that the root of the disease was hidden in his hands, which he tried to hide. In one of his letters in 1909 he blamed the paralysis of his hands on "unusual relations with the spirits." The old demons had turned nasty, and he could not fight them any more. Occasionally, he would go for a walk along the Lviv streets he knew so well. Unfortunately, he was unable to visit the famous coffeehouse "Monopolka," where he used to talk to his friends in the 1890s. An impression of Franko's solitary walk has been preserved by an onlooker, the poet Petro Karmansky: " He trudged along the streets like a human phantom, gaunt, with lacklustre eyes, trailing behind him his paralyzed hands, which he swung like a bird with broken wings."

Back in Lviv in 1915 Franko was a guest for a time at the

headquarters of the Ukrainian Sich-Sharpshooters, a military formation in which his son Petro was serving. On Christmas Eve the poet felt well enough to go back to his own home. On the 9th of March (Shevchenko's birthday) he made his last will. He died on the 28th of May, 1916. Vorony reports that it was Celina who "came and closed his dead eyes." In spite of wartime conditions and police restrictions, the funeral turned into a mass demonstration. One of the eulogists said that the people were bidding farewell "to a brave warrior for the destiny and honour of those Ukrainian people who died before the realization of the idea of a free Ukraine." They also buried a great poet and an ineffable individual. Uliana Kravchenko, who was at the funeral, wrote that he will be remembered most of all as "The Stone-cutter." She was referring to one of the poems that first made Franko famous, "The Stone-cutters" (*Kameniari* - not foreseeing, of course, that in 1996 a book would be published in Ukraine on *Franko - not a Stone cutter*). The poem begins and ends with the following stanzas:

I dreamed a wondrous dream, before my eyes unfolded
A vast and barren plain, a flat, forbidding moor,
And I was standing there, with heavy irons loaded,
Before a mighty rock, a lofty granite boulder,
And alongside of me stood many thousands more...
.....
And we all advance, in a mighty undertaking,
By high ideals united, hammers in our hands.
What if we are reviled, or by the world forsaken!
We're laying out the road, the rock obstruction breaking,
And in our wake will follow the happiness of Man.

Lesia Ukrainka

1

Few Ukrainian writers came, like Shevchenko and Franko, from the peasantry. Most originated in the somewhat higher strata of society. There was a sizeable Ukrainian gentry, not all of it Russified, but holding on to ancient traditions. They lived in cities or on their small estates, kept in touch with ordinary people but were part of essentially urban culture. In the second part of the nineteenth century some of them educated their sons and daughters in the Ukrainian spirit. One such family was that of Petro and Olha Kosach. Outside of Russian schools Ukrainian education of their children could only be literary. All other avenues were barred. They studied and read at home books on Ukrainian literature, history and ethnography. Most of them knew the Ukrainian language. Some wanted to become writers and scholars themselves without severing their ties to the people.

The origins of the Kosach family can be traced back as far as the fifteenth century to Bosnia-Herzogovina. It is unclear how this well-known noble family eventually came to Ukraine and settled in the Chernihiv area. In the seventeenth century the Kosaches are mentioned as high-ranking Cossack officers. Petro Kosach, the father of Lesia Ukrainka, was born in 1841 in Mhlyn. A student at St. Petersburg and Kyiv universities, he became a fairly high government official moderating peasant disputes. Some landlords complained that in the course of his duties he favoured the peasants. He lived in the small town of Zviahel in Volhynia, where he also had a small estate. In 1868 he married Olha Drahomanov, a sister of his friend and later well-known scholar Mykhailo Drahomanov. The Drahomanovs were a gentry family of Cossack descent and came from Hadiach. Both families were moderately wealthy, though some gentry was quite impoverished. Petro and Olha had six children born between 1869 and 1891. Second-born, on February 13, 1871 (o.s.), after son Mykhailo, was daughter Larysa. She was always called Lesia.

Olha Kosach came from a well-educated family that spoke

Lesia Ukrainka

Ukrainian at home. Olha's husband, like most Ukrainians who lived in cities at that time, preferred to use Russian, but his wife insisted on bringing up their children in Ukrainian. Lesia's mother wrote children's stories in Ukrainian and was known as a minor writer under the pseudonym Olena Pchilka. In 1882 a collection of her poems was published in Galicia (there was a ban on Ukrainian publications in Russia). There is no doubt that she exercised great influence on Lesia, who, at the age of nine, wrote her first poem in Ukrainian. It was from her mother that she heard Ukrainian songs and folk tales. From her father Lesia inherited her upright character and determination. Petro Kosach was a member of the Ukrainian society "The Old Community" in Kiev but he was a rather passive member since he was a busy tsarist official. Occasionally he donated money for Ukrainian causes.

As a small girl Lesia showed interest in literature and learned to play the piano. These interests never left her. Her childhood in Volhynia was carefree and happy. The picturesque surroundings were described by one her friends as "a real fairyland." With her brother she staged dramatic scenes from Greek mythology or from improvised journeys into foreign lands. Much later, under promptings from her mother, Lesia and Mykhailo translated some of Gogol's stories into Ukrainian. Local folklore supplied another feeding-ground for her imagination. The Kosaches had very close relations with the peasants, and Lesia learned from them songs and folktales. She spent hours in the company of village girls and visited the homes of their parents, which were often quite simple but always hospitable. Her aesthetic sense developed from these village roots. Later Lesia recorded that one of her central characters in a play, Mavka (water-nymph), was based on a tale she heard when she was five. With her younger sisters she never played with dolls, but fashioned for them dresses woven of grass and flowers. In their games the children impersonated wood-spirits and dryads. Lesia did not know that in 1878 her father was transferred to Lutsk because of his "Ukrainophile" sympathies and because he had visited his brother-in-law in Paris. But as a nine-year-old girl Lesia learned of the arrest of her aunt Olena Kosach, who was deported to Siberia for five years. The child became conscious of the precarious position of Ukrainian intelligentsia in the Russian Empire. In response to her aunt's arrest Lesia wrote her first

poem "Hope."

The Kosach family was always in touch with the peasants and their customs. One such occasion, during the Christmas season, was the "blessing of the water" in January. Lesia went there with her mother, observed the religious ceremony, but got her feet wet and frozen. Her mother regarded this incident as the beginning of the illness that plagued Lesia all her life. At first, the child suffered from general infirmity. Later, in 1885, the fourteen-year-old Lesia developed severe pain in one of her legs, which was diagnosed as tuberculosis of the femur. For several years she had to walk on crutches. Later, tuberculosis spread to other parts of her body. She underwent several major operations, which were only partly successful. Tied to her bed for months, Lesia read a great deal and studied foreign languages for which she had a great talent. As a young woman she mastered German, French, and Italian, and the last foreign language she learned was English. She became pensive but not withdrawn, and she grew up surrounded by loving parents and siblings. She was unable to attend school, but had tutors and her mother as her teachers. Throughout her illness Lesia showed great fortitude and stoicism. She was, indeed, quite defiant, and retained not only all her faculties but wrote hundreds of poems and dozens of plays. The battle with her illness that dominated all her life had many more triumphs than setbacks.

In 1881 Lesia's mother took her children to live in Kyiv and to get some education. Apart from going to school Lesia visited the Lysenko family, where she took music lessons from Lysenko's wife, Olha, who was of Scottish descent. Under her care Lesia became a proficient piano player. She and her brother loved to wander through the city and were frequent visitors with the Lysenko family, who later played quite a role in Lesia's life. In Kyiv Lesia saw Ukrainian women taking an active part in voluntary cultural activities. Educational efforts soon multiplied, and nearly all were headed by women - a good example to Lesia.

In 1882 Lesia's family moved to a small place in Volhynia, Kolodiazhne, where her father bought an estate. He continued his service for the government. The house they bought was small but was surrounded by a large garden and many trees. In the living room,

decorated with embroideries, there were busts of Shevchenko, Aristotle, Socrates, and Dante. Lesia's father had a small hut built near the house, in the orchard, for the children. It had three small rooms - pink, white, and blue. Lesia worked there. She also played with the village children and was temporarily free of pain. In her free moments she tried to read Heine in German. This poet came to exercise strong influence on her, and later she translated many of his poems and his satire *Atta Troll* into Ukrainian.

In October 1881 Lesia was taken to a Kyiv clinic for her first operation. Two small bones were removed from her left hand. The operation could not be called a success, for Lesia's condition did not improve. For some time she could not play the piano. Soon, also her leg became very sore. Doctors prescribed bathing in the sea, but it was not until 1888 that Lesia went for a prolonged period of time to Odessa on the Black Sea. She loved the sea and travelled across to Akkerman on the mouth of the Dniester. The sea always relaxed and inspired her, and while travelling she was never seasick. Seawater had good effect on her body, and for a while she abandoned crutches and walked with a cane only. Next to reading Lesia liked letter writing. Many of her letters have been preserved, and they hold the key to her biography. In 1884 Lesia's first poem was published in the journal *Star* in Lviv. Her mother thought that Lesia could become a real poet.

In 1889 Lesia's mother, in desperation, took her to a folk healer-homeopath. However, the old woman Bohush, who lived near Hadiach, could not effect a remedy despite all her knowledge of medicinal herbs. Back at a dacha near Odessa Lesia wrote to her mother in detail about the hot weather, the other visitors at the dacha, and about her continuing efforts to write. Laboriously she prepared a Ukrainian translation of Victor Hugo's *Les Pauvres Gens.* She wrote a long letter to her brother Mykhailo, who was active in a circle of young Ukrainian writers, "Pleiada,"(after La Pleiade, led in the sixteenth century by Pierre Ronsard, dedicated to the elevation of the French language), in Kyiv. Lesia wanted to keep in touch with literary developments. "Your letter pleased me very much," she wrote, "I shall now get to work. Literature, after all, is my profession." Obviously, this eighteen-year-old girl was quite serious. She went on translating Madame de Stael as well as *Gulliver's Travels*, and com-

pleted the Heine project. She was also concerned that apart from translations of world literature, young Ukrainian writers produce books for the peasants who were literate. She asked Mykhailo to send her Petrarch and Leopardi in Italian. Her translation plans were far-reaching and very ambitious. Included in them were Byron's *Don Juan,* Goethe's *Faust,* Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables,* and some novels of Dickens as well as Russian and Polish classics. The list is truly impressive and no single translator could undertake such a task. Yet Lesia was ready to make her contribution.

2

In the same year (1889) Lesia wrote a long letter to her uncle Mykhailo Drahomanov, who lived in exile in Sofia, Bulgaria. He became Lesia's true mentor. This outstanding scholar of history and ethnography was also the father of Ukrainian democratic socialism and had strong ideological influence on his young niece. Forced to emigrate from Ukraine in 1876, after the notorious Ems *ukaz*, banning almost all Ukrainian publications, stymied all social activities, he went, first, to Geneva, where he established a Ukrainian journal *Community.* He did much to acquaint Western Europe with the Ukrainian cause, which was very little known abroad. In her letter Lesia reported that "among the young Kyivans there is spreading the notion of 'Europeanism'; they are learning European languages and are reading European writers." She told her uncle that she was trying to find a good teacher of English. She was sorry that her brother Mykhailo was more interested in mathematics than in literature, for, in her view, a nation's future depended on literature. This rather naive notion was shared by many young Ukrainians who were anxious to assert their identity through the use of language and literature. It also had for them the attraction of "forbidden fruit," since the Russian authorities did everything they could to obstruct these basic ingredients of culture. In her letter Lesia also wanted to know if Bulgarian literature was more developed than Ukrainian. In a postscript she said that she was reading a French book on the sociological approach to literature.

The visit to Kyiv and the acquaintance with the members of

"Pleiada" have, in her own words, "added wings" (*okrylyly)* to Lesia. The image of wings stayed with her all her life. Her first collection of poems (1893) was titled *On Wings of Songs.* It appeared with her pseudonym - Lesia Ukrainka. The city of Kyiv made a strong impression on Lesia. It was situated on several hills, with the river Dnieper winding through it and many golden-domed churches adorning it. Many historic monuments were silent reminders of the city's glorious past. Unable to walk far, she saw it from a carriage of a friend of her family. Later she would visit the homes of several Ukrainian families, which were close to one another, giving the area the name "Ukrainian street." The Ukrainian intellectual elite, to which Lesia had entrance because of her mother, consisted of writers, artists and musicians. Yet they were a very small minority in a Russified and Russian-speaking capital of Ukraine. One source mentions only eight families in Kiev who used Ukrainian at home. Many more of them were "conscious Ukrainians," although they used Russian.

At the same time Lesia visited the doctors. In her letter to her mother she described the painful treatments they prescibed - "extractions," and "cauterizations." Some advised an operation, and she was getting ready for it when it was postponed. "Better to have an operation," Lesia wrote, "and have done with it." But it was not to be. When suggestion was made that she go for an operation to St. Petersburg, she wrote to her mother that she was afraid that "Russia will bring us, Ukrainians, no luck."

While in Kyiv, Lesia did not neglect to visit the Ukrainian theatre or the concert given by the famous composer Mykola Lysenko. Theatre and music were the only Ukrainian arts not banned. Young Lesia was a frequent guest in the homes of Lysenko and the writer Mykhailo Starytsky, whose daughter Liudmyla became her close friend and recorded these visits. "In our families," she wrote, "there reigned a literary spirit - anyone who had even a spark of talent found it impossible not to write." She also described how a few years later her father greeted Lesia's first volume of poetry: "This was a general celebration. My father put on his pince-nez, picked up the paper-knife, gently patted the grey-blue volume as if it were a child and began to cut the pages carefully. This book lay in front of us like a message about the possible fate of the Ukrainian language."

Lesia's association with the Lysenkos and the Starytskys lasted a long time. Liudmyla Starytska compared it to the atmosphere of the Rostov family in *War and Peace.* Similarly to the Rostovs, the three families, who were known as "the united states," shared not only love and affection but also their creative plans. Under the influence of her mother, her uncle, and the Kievan circle Lesia became an ardent Ukrainian patriot, deeply conscious of Russian colonial oppression of her native culture. She began to consider her poetry to which she paid more attention, as a mission in a national cause. Some foreign writers inspired her. Apart from Heine, she enjoyed reading the "proletarian" poetry of the Italian writer Ada Negri. It is significant that Lesia's interest was almost exclusively in Western European and not in Russian literature. It was Europe that inspired her intellect and her Muse. In this respect she felt like a pioneer, for few could resist the avalanche of Russian literature and culture. Writing to her brother, she compared herself to Sisyphus lifting the heavy stone. Yet, she said, she will continue to sing her songs and do her work.

Lesia's health preoccupied her parents more than it did her. She assured her mother that life in the Crimean dacha was not bad. She was helping to make jam, to be able to read and think. Her spirits were high, although her leg was painful. In consultation with her uncle, her parents decided to send her to Vienna to be examined by a specialist. There was a well-known clinic there where they performed operations. Lesia thanked her uncle in a long letter, but asked him at the same time about collecting songs, something that all young people in Ukraine did at that time. She confessed also that her own poetry showed no social tendency and asked him if it was a good thing. She was tired listening to intellectual disputes about the aim of literature and wanted to write as she felt. Her uncle replied that he was now in favour of "European radicalism," but that in Ukraine most intellectuals were still of populist persuasion, which probably did not appeal to Lesia. That year Lesia wrote her well-known poem "Contra spem spero," which expressed best her philosophy.

For a while the Kosaches took up residence in Kyiv. This suited Lesia, who with her friends, was busy on translation projects. These were not only to introduce Ukrainian readers to foreign authors, but also to develop the expressiveness of the Ukrainian lan-

guage. Liudmyla Starytska recalled that these meetings of Lesia's friends were of people "who cared for writing and the spirit of Ukrainian life. One felt a great solidarity of interests and social responsibility." Later, Lesia recalled that "these were the most precious memories of my youth." It was decided to take Lesia to Vienna to see a specialist. With her parents she travelled through Lviv, where they stopped and met two Galician radical intellectuals, Ivan Franko and Mykhailo Pavlyk. The latter wrote to Drahomanov that "Lesia simply stunned me with her education and her keen mind. For her age she is a genius."

In January 1891 Lesia arrived in Vienna. Ukrainian students in that city visited and helped her. Doctors decided not to operate because of Lesia's exhaustion. They attached to her tubercular leg an apparatus to alleviate pain. Lesia was disappointed. In Vienna she came across some writings of Olha Kobylianska, with whom later she became very friendly. Both women tried to steer Ukrainian literature away from populism. Lesia also wrote a letter to Mykhailo Pavlyk, a Galician radical and friend of her uncle, who edited the paper *People.* She told him that she "felt free," went to theatres, operas, and saw the sights. She hoped to go to the sea, which always improved her health. In a letter to brother Mykhailo she complained that she "could feel on her neck the traces of the chains of captivity," that she experienced in Ukraine.

In the meantime she stayed in Vienna for two more months, enjoying the city and reading the "neo-romantic" novel *Lorelei* by Kobylianska, which she liked very much. However, she was also critical of its structure. A keen literary taste is evident in Lesia's comments on literature, which, she felt, waited in Ukraine for a renewal. Her impression of Vienna is summed up in a letter to her uncle: "At first I felt I arrived in a different world, a better one and more free. I will find it all the more difficult now to go back to my country. I am ashamed that we are not free and sleep quietly in our chains." She was pleased that Western European ideas were slowly making inroads in Ukraine. Galicia, where the (Austrian) government was much more liberal than in Russia, interested Lesia, and she began a correspondence with its leading Ukrainian intellectual, Ivan Franko.

In June, Lesia, accompanied by her mother, reached the sea-

side resort Evpatoria in the Crimea. She was relatively happy but missed her piano. Her brother visited her, and slowly Lesia recovered her strength and continued writing. On moonlit nights she listened to the sea. In a letter to Pavlyk, Lesia asked "Will I ever be free? After nine years of captivity I have become a skeptic. If only for one year I were free from my yoke!" She confided in her uncle that she could not get involved in political debates. She wanted to continue her work and learn more about Ukrainian folklore, which she collected. Popular Ukrainian novelists of the day, Nechuy-Levytsky, Konysky, and Hrinchenko were not to her liking. She was attempting to write something different than the populist writers did, but at the moment she had little strength since her other leg became quite painful. She bought herself a Bible, which "contained grand poetry." For Christmas she returned to Kolodiazhne, where they celebrated in the traditional manner - supper consisting of twelve meatless dishes, followed by carolling around the Christmas tree. Her brother Mykhailo was there, recently arrived from the University of Dorpat.

In the New Year - 1892 - Lesia thanked her uncle for suggesting a topic of Robert Bruce. This she later developed in her long poem *Robert Bruce - King of Scotland* (1894). She wrote that "Ukrainian poets should be forbidden to write patriotic verses," but many of her later poems were considered deeply patriotic. Yet she believed that poetry should be free from any tendency. Lesia was staying in Kolodiazhne despite the cold and damp weather because she wanted to avoid the epidemic of cholera that was rampant in other parts of Ukraine. Sickly and exhausted, she complained that "she was only half alive."

In March 1893 Lesia travelled to Kyiv, where she received an advance copy of her first book of poetry *On Wings of Songs,* published in Galicia. Her spirits were high, and she "was in the mood of spring." Her literary friends in Kyiv invited her to contribute to their collections. When approached to participate in a "journal for women" Lesia, who was a moderate feminist, replied that women should share their interests with men. She confessed that she "has severed connection with the earth and lived somewhere in heavenly spheres. It would be good if someone scorched the wings of my fancy, for it flies like a whimsy..." Her letter to Makovey, about a meeting of Ukrainian writ-

ers, was intercepted by the tsarist police, which had started a file on Lesia Ukrainka (all without her knowledge).

In May, Lesia wrote to Osyp Makovey, who reviewed her book. She agreed that her poems were too sad. At the same time she defended the poet's private vision. Poems should not be related to the poet's life, for they may depend more on the weather than on biography: "I would be very hurt on the day when I would see my detailed biography in print." Obviously, she regarded not only her own life but the life of a writer as something private. She was glad that her poems were discussed, and she planned in her next book "to take a step forward." Also she complained that slow travelling by rail in Ukraine was "Asiatic. It is a great pity that everything here is moving at snail's pace. Surely one day we will be doing better, but when?" Impatience with her own progress as a writer and with everything else that was happening in Ukraine is evident in all her letters. Her uncle assured her that some people in Ukraine are doing good work. "What in Europe is done publicly and openly," he wrote, "in Ukraine has to be done privately." He also enlightened her about social democracy and how it has taken root in Galicia. Under his influence Lesia deplored religious education in Ukraine, which recommended the study of the saints' lives as models for heroism. Heroism alone, she claimed, leads nowhere. Yet, surely, her own life was becoming heroic.

3

Lesia was very much aware of the role of the intelligentsia in people's lives. She saw the shortcomings of a purely populist approach, which limited itself to the enlightenment of the peasants and groped for a more radical leadership. Art and literature, in her view, had autonomy of their own and should not be used as propaganda. Also, a writer should not be judged by his or her biography but by works alone. Autumn 1893 was spent in Kyiv in lively association with old friends. Lesia came to know and respect Mykola Kovalevsky, a close follower of Drahomanov, who was popular with the radical left. She also tried to mediate the linguistic disputes between the Kyivans and the Galicians. Both had to agree on one Ukrainian literary language and not quarrel over word usage. She actively partici-

pated in the literary evenings of the "Pleiada." She was aware that she had a place in the "Ukrainian movement," and her focus on it would never change. Lesia was in no way an elitist who only kept in touch with her peers. She regularly wrote to her grandmother, telling her about her everyday life. She had great sympathy with ordinary folk and considered that they were often much wiser than the intellectuals who pretended to lead them. Her correspondence with her mother was very regular, once every ten days. Lesia apologized if she was late, and once promised to write twice a week. In her spare time she took English lessons. To her father she wrote less frequently, nearly always on "budgetary" subjects. She tried to assure her parents that she was feeling better and that they should not waste money on medicines. Writing to her uncle on the New Year, 1894, Lesia wished him good health but not happiness, in which "she did not believe." She sympathized with his efforts to say unpopular things to Ukrainians. His attitude of a true dissenter was something she admired and imitated. It was in response to his promptings that she started to write a biography of John Milton. She never finished it but wrote a dramatic poem *In the Wilderness (U pushchi)* about the Puritans in New England.

Later in 1894 her father was transferred to Kyiv, and they all settled there. To Makovey Lesia wrote that she did not share his interest in the "feminist question" and that, in her opinion, men and women writers should be treated equally. She repeated her opposition to old populist slogans and asked for "a new flag to be raised." Little did she realize that it was her poetry that was helping to raise a new flag. Only occasionally did she vent her anger against the populist writers. Once she wrote in a letter that she "could not find a single intelligent person" in the novels of Nechuy-Levytsky. Lesia reported to her uncle that her English was improving. She felt duty-bound to keep in touch with him, but was not ready always to listen to his advice without comment. Drahomanov knew that she had a mind of her own, but like him, she placed great hopes in young Ukrainian intellectuals. In June 1894 Ivan Franko wrote a glowing review of Lesia's *Robert Bruce,* which was published in Galicia.

In May 1984 Lesia decided to visit her uncle in Sofia. She wanted to talk to him and also take greetings from a circle of Kyivan

friends who admired him. They regarded themselves as "Ukrainians," not "Ukrainophiles," as the Russians liked to call them. The journey, through Lviv, lasted four days. Exhausted, Lesia was greeted by Drahomanov, whose health had deteriorated. Some doctors told him that he had an incurable disease. Lesia noted that her uncle had to rest frequently; his voice was weak. Yet, although he felt quite feeble, he had to lecture at the university. They talked about events in Ukraine. Her uncle was a constant guide to her thinking as well as her reading. Earlier he had asked her to paraphrase into verse various excerpts from the Bible. Now he advised her to read Verne's *Precis d'histoire juive.* The history of the Jews would supply Lesia's imagination with topics for her later works, in which the misfortunes of the Israelites often reminded her of the oppression of her own nation. Although Drahomanov's influence was paramount in her historical and ideological outlook, her literary creations show aesthetic originality of her own. Lesia was also anxious to learn about Bulgaria, where there was at that time some talk of revolution. Early in July, Drahomanov left for Paris. Lesia and her cousins stayed in a mountain resort near Sofia. She wrote several letters to Paris, discussing with her uncle the latest book by Ernest Renan. In a letter to Pavlyk she confessed that she loved travelling and was planning a boat trip down the Danube. In October, Drahomanov returned to Sofia from Paris. He was unwell, and Lesia acted as his secretary. To please him, she played his beloved *Barcarolle* by Tchaikovsky.

Lesia decided to spend the winter in Sofia. In January 1895 she wrote an open letter "to comrades in Ukraine." She reminded them of their common struggle and asked "whether the time has come in our country to show people a brighter future." She asked them not to be silent and to support Pavlyk's radical newspaper in Galicia, as well as to collect funds for the peasants. "As long as we do not have a wide stream of free press," she wrote, "we will perish in a dead sea." She ended the letter to Pavlyk, by reaffirming her faith in her people, although they were passive. She believed they had a future. Early in June, Lesia was ready to leave Sofia when, suddenly, on June 8 her uncle died of a ruptured aorta. He did not want to have a church funeral, but Bulgarian law insisted on it. It was then decided to ask a Protestant pastor to bury Drahomanov, avoiding thus the Orthodox

priests whom the late scholar had disliked so much. Lesia was so devastated that for some time she could not even write letters. Then she wrote to her mother that Drahomanov "taught me how people bear evil and fight their destiny." She collected some of her uncle's papers and, as a tribute to him, started to translate into Ukrainian Renan's life of Jesus. Early in August, Lesia finally reached home.

Back in Kolodiazhne, in order to recover, Lesia plunged into household chores. She separated cream from milk, fried mushrooms, and cooked Paradise apples. "We have a surplus of butter and cheese," she wrote, "so we could export it to Kyiv." An intellectual that she was, she enjoyed housework and cooking. Soon she revisited Kyiv, taking there a lump of earth from Drahomanov's grave. In the fall she took part in literary activity, complaining that in her absence during the past year some people have forgotten her. She was ready to get back to work and planned an edition of her late uncle's works. Young Ukrainians were being arrested in the city. Lesia responded by writing poems defiant of the tsar and sending them to Franko for publication. She wrote to him that "she was not giving up her weapons." In the fall of 1896, when the tsar was paying a state visit to Paris, Lesia sent to a French newspaper a fierce protest against tyranny. A Georgian student, Nestor Hambarashvili, drew Lesia's attention at that time. He told her about the national aspirations of his countrymen, and Lesia saw many parallels with Ukraine. Later, he sent her a gift - a Georgian dagger (*kinzhal*), which she treasured for a long time.

In January 1896 Lesia and her friend Ivan Steshenko founded in Kyiv "a separate social-democratic group." It seems that she was toying with the idea of some political activity in the spirit of Drahomanov. She made it clear that the Ukrainian social-democratic group was to be independent of the Russians. The history of Lesia's group was deliberately suppressed by the Soviets, but has been researched by émigré critics (Lavrynenko). Lesia remained faithful to her uncle's political ideals of what we would call "socialism with a human face," which also condemned violence, although she foresaw the eventual fate of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, the progenitor of the Bolsheviks. Perhaps because politics was not her metier and also because she may have invited the failure of "ethical socialism" in a

country where force exercised by the government provoked force in reply, Lesia withdrew from the group.

On the 25th of that month Lesia was a bridesmaid at the wedding of her friend Liudmyla Starytska to Oleksander Cherniakhivsky. She also met there Mykhailo Kryvyniuk, who later married Lesia's sister Olha. In a letter to Drahomanov's widow, Lesia asked for an address of a children's aid society in London. She wanted to help - and not only Ukrainian children. Her leg was painful again, and she still hoped that an operation would improve her condition. But once again the operation was postponed because of Lesia's general poor health. She was given injections of iodoform instead, which were very painful. Her mother reported that Lesia was suffering but was not downhearted. Just after the last injection Lesia wrote to Kryvyniuk, who was under arrest, that she must gather strength, because "we, Ukrainians are born, live, and die in prison, and even when we leave it we miss it." She added that she lives like a gypsy and hopes very much to wander off somewhere. In June, finally, she was able to leave Kyiv and go to the Crimea. She wrote from Chukurlar near Yalta that her leg was feeling better after bathing in the sea.

4

It was in Chukurlar that Lesia met the Belorussian intellectual Serhiy Merzhynsky, who was taking cure for tuberculosis of his lungs. Serhiy was active in Marxist circles in Kyiv. They were to become intimate friends. Lesia learned from her father that her first play, *The Blue Rose (Blakytna troianda)* received the censor's permission to be staged. She was visited by her brother Mykhailo and recalled their good times together. She told him that she hated being an invalid. Gradually, however, her leg improved. Lesia's mother came to visit her at Christmas, to discover that she was busy writing a play. Lesia was also reading the poems of Elizabeth Browning. Later, her sisters Olha and Oksana visited her in Yalta and found her in a state of nervous exhaustion. She made some very critical comments about Tolstoy's view of art and dismissed the great Russian writer as a philosopher. Lesia's sisters stayed with her for Easter, when they made

some Ukrainian Easter eggs (*pysanky*). In June, Lesia left Yalta for Ukraine. For some time she stayed in Hadiach, where she was visited by Merzhynsky. In July, Ivan Franko published a short article on Lesia Ukrainka in his journal in Lviv, calling her "perhaps the only man in today's Ukraine." Her reputation for courage and iconoclasm was growing. In a letter to her sister she wrote: "It is a sin to be an invalid when there is so much work to be done...I am determined to come out among the people or to die under the knife." She assured her mother that she is ready to face a big battle.

In 1898 Lesia came to know the man who was the first organizer of peasant co-operatives in Ukraine. Mykola Levytsky, well-educated and prosperous, devoted himself, under the impact of the British co-operative movement, to establishing co-operatives among the peasants in Ukraine. In June, with her sister Lila, Lesia left Odessa for Elisavetgrad in the Kherson province to see Levytsky. She stayed on a co-operative farm, observed the work and talked to the peasants. She was very much encouraged by what she saw. Perhaps, in such a movement lay Ukraine's future. In November of that year Lesia joined other Ukrainian writers in the tribute to "the father of modern Ukrainian literature," Ivan Kotliarevsky. It was an impressive occasion, and Lesia recited a poem. She must have felt that the intellectuals and the peasants had a common goal - a free country.

At the end of the year Lesia's parents contacted the famous German surgeon Ernest Bergman who was at that time in Ukraine. He advised them to bring Lesia to Berlin for an operation. On January 17, 1899, Lesia, accompanied by her mother and brother Mykhailo, reached Bergman's clinic in Berlin. The operation was temporarily postponed because of Lesia's fever, but on January 26 Bergman performed a successful surgery on her right femur, lasting an hour and a half. Afterwards Lesia slept well after a heavy dose of morphine and she made a quick recovery. She stayed in Berlin for several months, even venturing out to Potsdam. She also started to correspond with Olha Kobylianska, a Ukrainian writer in Bukovyna, who was to become a truly kindred spirit. She praised the influence of German literature on Kobylianska and discussed feminism as it was then understood. A German writer, Ludwig Jakobowsky, visited Lesia in Berlin and wrote to Kobylianska that he found her "face animated by inner

spirit and looking beautiful."

On June 19 Lesia left Berlin and travelled via Kyiv to Hadiach. In Kyiv she had a bad fall and spent three days in bed. Bad luck seemed to follow her. From Hadiach she wrote to Kobylianska inviting her to Kyiv. In July she received an edition of Goethe's works in German which Merzhynsky sent her with a fulsome dedication. On August 1 Kobylianska arrived in Kyiv and later went with Lesia to her home near Hadiach. They talked and relaxed, while Lesia played for Olha Chopin and Schumann. These two women, from opposite corners of Ukraine, found a common language and felt no barriers. Kobylianska left in the middle of September, refreshed by the visit and becoming Lesia's close friend and confidante. From Kobylianska, Lesia learned more about the Galician short story writer Vasyl Stefanyk, whose work she admired. He sent her a book of his stories, which dealt with peasant life in a new, modernist manner. Kobylianska sent Lesia her latest novel, *The Princess (Tsarivna),* which was an expanded version of *Lorelei,* which Lesia already knew. Lesia's translations of Heine were being printed in Lviv. She was also translating Maeterlinck's *L'Intruse* .

In September 1900 Lesia went to Minsk to visit the sick Merzhynsky. It was obvious that she was falling in love with a man who was dying of tuberculosis. She still kept in close contact with Kobylianska, praising her for "being a true artist. Es lebe die Kunst!" Seized by a real wanderlust, she travelled from Minsk to St. Petersburg to see her sister, and then to Dorpat to visit her brother. At an evening in honour of Shevchenko she read some of her latest poems. Under Merzhynsky's influence Lesia had translated a pamphlet by the Polish social-democrat Simon Dickstein. She was becoming involved in political activity of the left. She read Marx's *Capital,* but found it heavy going. "I cannot find," she wrote, "a strict system in it which some fanatics find in this book...No, this *novum evangelium* demands more faith than I have." In 1900 Lesia published an article in the St. Petersburg journal *Life (Zhizn),* which is claimed to be the first feminist statement by an Eastern Ukrainian woman writer. Its tone was rather mild.

Early in 1901 Lesia went again to Minsk to stay with Serhiy. He had been bedridden for half-a-year, had high fever and was spit-

ting blood. Lesia tried to read and to play the piano for him. He asked her to sit at his bedside, told her that she was an inspiration to him although he was dying. He could not bear being left alone and Lesia stayed with him day and night. Serhiy died in Lesia's arms on March 3. Two days later, after the funeral, she left for Kyiv. Lesia wrote some poems devoted to Merzhynsky, which remained unpublished until 1946. However, from her correspondence we know that she was interested in the fact that the English poet Dante Gabriel Rosetti concealed some of his poems in his wife's coffin. We do not know if Lesia contemplated a similar action, but it is almost certain that she was familiar with the poetry of Rosetti, and perhaps even with the poems of his sister Christina.

In order to minimize her grief Lesia decided to travel, via Lviv, to Chernivtsi to visit Olha Kobylianska. She stayed at her home and slowly recovered listening to Olha's conversation and her play on a zither. A reception was arranged for Lesia by the Ukrainian community, at which she had to make a speech, something she never liked to do. It is significant that she mentioned in it the growth of the social-democratic movement in Eastern Ukraine. At the end of May Lesia went to a nearby mountain resort of Kimpolung. She continued writing to Olha, calling herself "someone blonde," while referring to Olha as "someone dark." Her confidence was restored by the beautiful surroundings. Occasionally, however, she felt "as if she were losing her mind" when she remembered Serhiy.

To occupy herself Lesia embarked on a tour of Bukovyna and visited many picturesque Hutsul villages. For part of the journey she was accompanied by a young ethnographer, Klyment Kvitka, who was nine years younger, and whom she later married. At that time Lesia's parents disapproved of Klyment. The mountain air and local mineral waters (Burkut) had a good effect on Lesia's health. In her letters she described her travels in great detail. A Volhynian herself, she felt, strangely enough, at home among the Hutsuls. She also found the time to put the finishing touches on her poetic drama *The Possessed Woman (Oderzhyma),* which was published in Lviv in 1902. She had begun this play a year earlier in Minsk, when she stayed with Serhiy. She herself said later that "it was born of her sorrow" while tending the ill friend. In the play her personal suffering

has been successfully transmuted into the boundless love of Miriam for the Messiah. Lesia considered the play her best work. Still haunted by Serhiy's death, Lesia wrote to Kobylianska that "she must show now highest courage - the courage to live."

At the beginning of September, Lesia left Chernivtsi for Kyiv. In her letters to Olha, Lesia often used terms of extreme endearment - "my beloved," "my dearest," etc. This led one critic (Kostetsky) to suggest that their relationship was lesbian. A hundred years ago, at a time of very different sensibility, it would not have been so regarded. There was probably little or no physical contact between the two women, though the language of their letters appears homo-erotic. But even so, there was a strong feeling of love. "The bisexual attractions of women writers," writes Solomea Pavlychko, "and corresponding depictions of lesbian caresses were not exceptional for early modernist culture. However, Ukraine with its particular circumstances did not, and indeed would not, shelter a bohemian artistic milieu like the Parisian avant-garde salons." When Lesia died, her mother, in answering Kobylianska's condolences, wrote that "Lesia was really in love with you." One benefit of the journey to Bukovyna was the publication of a new collection of her poems *Echoes,* in Chernivtsi.

As the bad fall weather approached, Lesia decided to travel south - to the Italian Riviera. After a lengthy train journey through Vienna and Venice, a city that dazzled her with its splendour, she reached San Remo on November 23. There she stayed in the villa of the Sadovsky family, the friends of the Kosaches. She wrote a very long letter to Kobylianska telling her in great detail about the good mood induced by the Italian atmosphere, and ending: "Someone would like to kiss and stroke someone." She plucked mandarine oranges from trees in the garden and enjoyed eating fresh figs. Her keen sense of music was fulfilled by "the Italians, who sing and are never silent." Her health improved and she coughed no more. She "lived by the sun, the sea, and letter-writing." Doctors told her that her illness was curable. On her thirty-first birthday Lesia vowed to work harder.

In 1980 some of her letters written in San Remo in 1903 have been found in the Hoover Archives in the United States. Most of them are in Ukrainian, but one is in French and one in English. They were

addressed to the Ukrainian socialist Feliks Volkhovsky, who lived in Western Europe. In one of them Lesia expresses her true opinion about Russian socialist organizations in Ukraine, which she did not trust very much because they did not acknowledge Ukrainian aspirations. She was afraid that they still believed that "all Slavic rivers will flow into a Russian sea." However, she was ready co-operate, but "as equals." This shows how she tried to combine socialism with strivings for Ukrainian independence (*samostoiatelnost'*). She added that "by nature I am wilde [in English] and I do not like bosses who direct me."

Lesia decided to travel to Switzerland to see a specialist. He, mistakenly, assured her again that she can be cured. She also visited Kuzma Lakhotsky, an old friend and a printer of Drahomanov, who was active in social-democratic circles. After a few weeks in Switzerland she returned, full of new hope, to Italy, visited Florence, Naples, and Palermo. She feasted her senses on Italy's beauty. From Sicily she went by sea through the Mediterranean to Odessa. Lying on the deck she planned her plays, which were really dramatic poems. In the middle of the sea she was in the full enjoyment of her copious mental resources. In mid-June she reached Kyiv. There she looked after her sister Oksana, who was recovering from a mental breakdown.

5

Travelling must have appealed to Lesia, even if it was for health reasons. It is remarkable that her parents, whose resources were not unlimited, could finance it. Travels widened Lesia's intellectual horizons and, of course, made her more homesick. In the fall Lesia revisited San Remo, where she was joined by sister Oksana. Lesia showed her all the sights, but was herself busy planning to write a treatise on Ukraine's relation to Russia. The history of the exploitation of the former by the latter interested Lesia no less than it had her late uncle. In a long letter to Franko she talked about Galician affairs, did not hesitate to criticize her *maitre,* and was usually quite outspoken. The year 1903 was for her, in her own words, "critical. I stand once more at the crossroads, as in the days of my youth. A great deal must

be decided and thought out." It was the new literary vogue - Modernism - that Lesia was feeling more akin to. She plunged into a polemic with the populist critic Serhiy Yefremov, who in an article accused her of siding with the symbolist and decadent poets. She prepared a reply, which was never published. However, in her letters to her mother and to Kobylianska, Lesia staked out her aesthetic position: "I tried not to be sarcastic. One cannot say, as Yefremov does, that symbolism and decadence are the same thing. Ibsen and Bjornson, for instance, are symbolists, but not decadents; Maupassant and Chekhov, in their mood and philosophy are decadent, but not symbolist." Lesia disliked "the labels attached to labels" and did not want to be called "modernist," although her works were not in the realist and populist tradition. Was the label "Neo-Romantic" more suitable for her? Was she perhaps reluctant, like many other Ukrainian modernists, to sever ties with the idea of serving the people? This was a dilemma of those who wanted to go forward but did not want to break with the past. It is significant that Lesia rejected at that time Pavlyk's invitation to come to Galicia and devote herself to political activity. She preferred to stay in Kyiv and devote her time to writing.

The disagreement with Yefremov was private, not public, and caused no bitterness. The two remained in contact. Lesia was busy writing *The Babylonian Captivity (Vavylonsky polon),* one of her "Jewish" works with strong Ukrainian connotations, as was her earlier drama *On the Ruins (Na ruinakh).* In 1903-04 a strong political ferment began in Russia, which led to the revolution of 1905. The new mood was reflected in Lesia's works. Was the colonial status of Ukraine going to change a little? All Ukrainian intellectuals hoped so. Although Lesia spent a great deal of time abroad, as one of her friends wrote, "she was like a hot-house plant, torn away from native soil." In her thoughts and her work she was all the time concerned with her country, which nearly always appears as a martyr. Remembering Drahomanov's testament, Lesia realized, however, that "my uncle wished me to find my own path." It was to this new path that she devoted all her energies.

While still abroad Lesia heard that her sister Olha had been arrested but soon released. Ukrainians were used to constant harassment by the police. Lesia travelled back to Ukraine via Zurich and

Prague. She made a detour to Chernivtsi to visit Kobylianska. It was to be their last meeting. Lesia offered to translate Kobylianska's novel *The Earth (Zemlia)* into Russian. Back in Ukraine she rested at her mother's summer home, Zeleny Hai. In September she went to Poltava for the unveiling of a monument to the "father of modern Ukrainian literature," Ivan Kotliarevsky. She was photographed with such literary luminaries as Starytsky, Kotsiubynsky, Stefanyk, and Khotkevych, a sure sign that she was regarded as one of them. The trip exhausted her, and she travelled to rest in Tbilisi, in Georgia. A few days later she received a severe blow - the news of the death of her brother Mykhailo. She became so depressed that she stopped writing letters. Even her good friend Klyment Kvitka, who was also in the Caucasus, could not console her. Only at the end of June, after her return to Ukraine, could Lesia write about her loss to Olha Kobylianska. She also told her that in the fall she would travel back to the Caucasus. She had been invited there by Klyment Kvitka's mother, who had a big house in the mountains.

The New Year - 1905 - Lesia celebrated in Tbilisi by going to a large public meeting that passed a resolution for the abolition of censorship. Later she watched a demonstration that ended "in pools of blood in the streets." A few months later censorship was indeed relaxed, and from 1906 on, Ukrainian publications could appear in Ukraine. In that year the Russian Academy of Sciences declared Ukrainian to be a separate language. All this helped in the development of Ukrainian literature. The leading journal *Literary and Scholarly Herald (Literaturno-naukovy visnyk)* was transferred from Lviv to Kyiv(in 1907), and most of Lesia's dramas were published there. Lesia's friend Klionia (Klyment Kvitka) was living in his mother's house and was sick with malaria. He was employed as a lawyer at the local court. The wave of revolution enveloped Georgia. There were strikes, demonstrations, and public meetings. Lesia observed this national awakening of Georgia and wrote that "this is an unhappy land because of ethnic hostilities." Yet she was keenly aware of the analogy between Georgia and Ukraine. Her father wrote her that liberalization in Ukraine was progressing very slowly. Her mother was more optimistic. In a letter to the writer Ahatanhel Krymsky, Lesia said that her "muse has been harmonized with civic mood." But her favourite

motto remained Byron's line: "Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art."

In the middle of June Lesia rejoined her family in Kolodiazhne. Soon after she went to Kyiv, where she suffered from a bout of neuralgia. But to her this was a minor complaint. Her younger sister Isidora, who was in St. Petersburg, was ill with typhoid fever and malaria. Lesia decided to visit her. At that time the capital of Russia was overflowing with demonstrations and general unrest. Lesia joined a throng of demonstrators on the Nevsky Prospect. Yet she wrote that she was glad to leave the city, which she never liked." It was interesting," she reflected, " to see these grandiose and joyful, as well as tragic events." Back in Kyiv, she watched the strikers and demonstrators defying the proclamation of the state of emergency: "I live in utter chaos... no one knows what will happen tomorrow." This did not keep Lesia away from social and political activity. Young Ukrainians were forming new organizations and fought for their rights. Lesia was among them. New Ukrainian newspapers were being established. The so-called revolution was only mildly violent, and most people expected not a radical change but an improvement of conditions. While in Kyiv Lesia worked in the library of *The Enlightenment* organization, demonstrating her willingness to help others. In February 1906 she summed up the previous year in a letter to Kobylianska: "It was a difficult, terrible, but also grandiose year, with many contrasts, high hopes, and disappointments, a year of great victories and severe wounds. It was so also for me, for it tested the strength of my spirit. I know now what I can and cannot do." Lesia's plans to revisit Kobylianska came to nothing.

6

Travel abroad and constant battle with her illness confirmed Lesia's old attitude to her writing. Her friend Liudmyla recorded that Lesia felt "like a hot-house plant who had little strength to live away from her country and yet was always with it." In Ukraine she was drawn to "civic" poetry in view of political developments, but she preserved her independence and never scheduled her work so as to respond to "demands of the day." In her dramatic poems she aimed

far beyond the contemporary issues. Her intellect made a "titanic" effort to overcome her weak body. "I burn slowly," she wrote to Liudmyla, "without stopping, and I must end, like a candle does. Let my friends, however, have the illusion that the candle will burn for ever."

In January 1907 the police searched the Kosaches' home in Kyiv. Lesia was briefly detained but then released. Now she personally knew what arrest meant. Many of her friends had to go to jail. In March, Lesia accompanied the sick Klionia to Yalta. They decided to live in a common-law relationship, very unpopular at that time. He, too, suffered from tuberculosis. Together they travelled in June back to Ukraine and announced their intention to get married, which they did the next month in a very quiet ceremony. Lesia wrote to a friend that "we want to share our bad luck." This decision Lesia took against the advice of her mother. They took up residence in Kyiv but soon left for the Crimea and eventually for the Caucasus, where Klonia found employment. Lesia's father sold a piece of land that was Lesia's inheritance and gave over 8,000 rubles to her and her husband. Klionia's health improved, and Lesia continued working on her drama *Rufin and Priscilla* .

Unfortunately, soon afterwards Lesia had to travel to Berlin, where doctors diagnosed her latest illness - tuberculosis of both kidneys and the bladder. No operation was possible, but the patient was advised to travel south to a warmer climate. With her husband she went to a sanatorium in Evpatoria in the Crimea. There she learned that her first play, *The Blue Rose (Blakytna troianda),* was to be staged in Kyiv in January 1909. In that month Lesia and her husband travelled to the Caucasus. Lesia almost gave up writing poetry and concentrated on plays, or rather dramatic poems. They were nearly all set in foreign or biblical lands and discussed universal human problems in the form of conflicting intellectual ideas. Sometimes they are reminiscent of Ibsen. Her mother was right when she said that these works of her daughter were often far ahead of contemporary Ukrainian readers. But at almost the same time Lesia also wrote a treatise on Ukrainian folk songs, in particular those played by the *bandurists.* Although cosmopolitan in her outlook, she was at the same time intensely involved with Ukraine. On April 2 she received the news of her father's death in Kyiv. He was buried next to his son Mykhailo.

As Lesia's illness progressed, she decided to take her doctors' advice and travel to the warm climate of Egypt. In a letter to a friend Lesia said jokingly that she "was destined to live in Asia, and now will go to Africa and like a Princess Lointaine will become a legend." In November she and her husband set out on a long trip to Helouan near Cairo, where they spent their winter at the Hotel Continental. Lesia continued writing, and her health temporarily improved. Her friend Liudmyla Starytska wrote that "the journeys to Egypt were a miracle of Lesia's spiritual strength. Ill, feverish, prepared for death at any moment, she set out for the long journey. On her departure she had calm words of reassurance for everybody." Lesia visited Cairo, saw the Sphinx and the pyramids, and met there a Ukrainian historian, Yavornytsky , who was also a visitor. In May she and Klionia returned to Ukraine, but almost immediately left for the Caucasus. There, in Kutaisi, she wrote her masterpiece, the play *The Forest Song (Lisova pisnia).* It was in the form of a fairy tale based on the legends and songs of her native Volhynia and Polisia. Lesia wrote this drama, in her own words, "in moments of ecstasy" in less than two weeks. "I simply remembered our forests," she wrote to her mother, "and became homesick for them." In this work her neo-Romantic philosophy found its best expression. A rather different play, completed in 1910, was *The Boyar's Wife (Boiarynia),* in which Lesia dealt with a Ukrainian historical topic and voiced strong anti-Russian sentiments. Twenty years later the play was banned by Soviet authorities.

In 1911 Lesia bought herself a typewriter, which was the latest in technology of her time. She typed not only her own works but also did some typing for remuneration. She wanted to earn a bit of her own money. Her royalties also brought in some income. She worked on a history of ancient peoples of the East, which was published after her death. In writing to Krymsky that year she described herself as she often did in other letters: "I am very stubborn, a skeptic, a fanatic who has accepted a tragic view of life."

7

In 1911-12 Lesia made two more journeys to Egypt. In Helouan she gave private lessons in French and German to supplement her income. She did not want to accept all the money her mother and sisters kept sending her. Lesia's letters from Egypt discuss in detail her medical condition and dwell on deterioration of her health. They are given without any emotion. As Lesia's illness progressed, her creative powers increased. She wrote that she "was possessed by some despotic dream, which torments me at night." And again: "During the night, the throng of images does not let me sleep and torments me like illness. Then a demon appears and commands me to write." A great deal of her poetry is, indeed, demonic. It perfoms a Promethean function of calling on the reader to struggle with all kinds of evil - a never-dying Romantic message. Sometime, however, she was drawn to foreign subjects - Don Juan. She wrote a play, *The Stone Host (Kaminny hospodar)* ["mit Todesverachtung I threw myself into universal themes, avoided by my countrymen"] and confided in Starytska that "the Russians, like [Peter] Struve and the company of our elder brethren will say it is a truly *khakhol* audacity." Struve was a Russian liberal who denied the Ukrainians their national aspirations and thought there was no need for Ukrainian translations of foreign poets. To express her opposition Lesia planned to embark on translating Verhaeren and Verlaine.

In October 1912 Lesia sailed alone for the last time to Egypt. The sea voyage was perilous since there was a minor war going on in the Mediterranean She wrote to Kobylianska that she planned to write something on Egyptian themes. But she was, in her own words, "only half alive." While her health improved, or at least stabilized, she became very weary of the hot climate and longed for her Kolodiazhne. She wrote to Kobylianska that "Egypt was golden, pure golden. On the horizon golden sands without end, and on the sides of the train golden wheat, flowing into the sand. It is harvest time in Egypt, while in Ukraine people wait for St. George's feast."

The following spring she decided to return to Ukraine, and on April 23, 1913, her boat docked at Odessa. A friend described her as "looking pellucid; only her large eyes gazed intently and in her pupils

one could see something deeper than life." She reached Kyiv in the middle of May, and received there a great public ovation. A friend recorded that it was a very sad ceremony: "Lesia's pale and translucent figure with arms full of flowers, with words of energy and faith, and with death in her eyes." Soon she left for Kutaisi, where her husband had temporary employment. Before leaving the Ukrainian capital she was taken to a hill overlooking the Dnieper. It was her farewell to the city she loved. In Kutaisi, Lesia's health broke down, yet she continued dictating to her husband a story of Arab life. Her mother and sister Isidora came to sit at her bedside. Doctors advised that she be moved to Surami, which was on a higher altitude than Kutaisi. Lesia requested that her beloved sister Olha come from Ukraine. However, the request came too late. Lesia's mother telegraphed Olha that Lesia's condition was becoming hopeless. On July 19 (o.s.), just as Olha was reaching Surami, Lesia died with her hands being held by her husband and her mother.

As her life was extinguished, her work was gaining an ever widening acclaim - partly because of its own high and unusual quality, but partly also because of her heroic life. Like D.H. Lawrence, who also died of tuberculosis, Lesia succeeded in overcoming her illness in creations that this illness partly inspired. They had something invincible in them that uplifted Ukrainian readers for generations to come. Strangely enough, her full life-story remained untold.

A Bio-Bibliographical Essay

The genre of literary biography has been sadly neglected in Ukraine. Or rather, it has often been prostituted by biographers who followed ideology rather than life-stories. Ideological preconceptions (nationalist or communist) dictated most published biographies of writers, who were viewed as national heroes and their lives seen as a service to the cause and the people, or, else they were codified according to class origin and dedication to communism. In both cases, personal elements in writers' lives were discounted, misinterpreted, or simply left out. Many truncated and biased life-stories of great men and women of Ukraine were thus fed to readers for over a century.

Even now, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when a fresh look at literature is becoming popular, biographies written from a new, more modern perspective are not being published. Perhaps personal lives are still being kept under wraps. This is not the place to inquire why. A new beginning has to be made somewhere. Perhaps a North American curiosity about the individual and his or her place in history, which prompted this study, can lead to a new start in the field. It need not necessarily rest on the vain hope that these writers' lives will prove more appealing than their works. Yet the authors deserve a new approach.

Available sources for full biographies were not fully accessible to me. The Ukrainian archives, both at the Academy of Sciences and in private hands, which have been opened only recently, were beyond reach. Basic facts were known, but it was often impossible to corroborate them fully. Often what was intimate in these life-stories had to be conjured up. The available published letters of Ukrainian writers, a most valuable source for a biographer, contain very little about personal experiences - for instance, the loves of these men and women that would interest today's reader. Because of generally accepted reticence on the subject and also because of lingering notions of "romantic love," the men and women of nineteenth-century Ukraine avoided these topics in their letters as well as in their works. Unlike in England where in the middle of the nineteenth century,

writers in private correspondence referred to "man as a sexual animal" (see Peter Gay's *TheTender Passion,* Oxford, 1986), in Ukraine such discourse cannot be found. This does not prove that Ukraine was more puritanical than England; on the contrary. Simply, in Ukraine we find written references to sex only in the burlesque genre of the correspondence between the members of *wet mugs* (mochemordy, 1840s). Lack of documentation dictated the format of our "mini-biographies." Fuller accounts will have to be written in Ukraine.

Another available, but limited, source for biography are the many Ukrainian autobiographies from the nineteenth century. Excerpts from fifteen of them have been collected and published by the present author: *About Themselves* (*Sami pro sebe*; New York: UVAN, 1989). It is interesting, however, that these writers, too, are very reticent about private episodes in their lives. They told their stories not very differently from their biographers; their lives were perceived as testaments of their work and their dedication to their people. It is not easy, therefore, to look beyond this.

The following notes will contain not only the sources for materials used in this book but also offer more general biographical and bibliographical information on the entire period of nineteenth-century Ukrainian literature. They underline the approach taken here to literature as a reflection of the intellectual history of the time. The biographical framework will help, I hope, to understand the tradition in which these writers were placed. It may, or may not, cast some light on the works themselves, but this is of marginal interest.

1. Leon Edel's *Literary Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957) was the underlying source for the theoretical approach to this study. From the voluminous contemporary critical discussion of literary biography, Park Honan's *Authors' Lives* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990) proved especially useful. Even larger is the literature on literary biographies in Slavic languages. I advocate some acquaintance with the following Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish works, for in this field Ukrainian scholarship lags behind. Not until 1996 did the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences announce a project to publish a Ukrainian Biographical Dictionary. Many similar projects of a purely encyclopedic nature (*The Ukrainian Literary Encyclopedia* (*Ukrainska literaturna entsyklopediia*, Kyiv, 1988-90), have been

abandoned and left unfinished. An émigré publication of a similar nature was unfinished: *The Alphabetarion of Ukrainian Literature (Azbukovnyk ukrainskoi literatury),* edited by B. Romanenchuk (Philadelphia: Kyiv, 1974, vols. 1&2, to letter H). An earlier compendium by Mykola Plevako - *Articles and Bio-Bibliographical Materials (Statti, rozvidky i bio-bibliohrafichni materialy,* New York: UVAN, 1961) is still very helpful.

Early histories of Ukrainian literature contain a great deal of biographical information, although it is not always accurate: Nikolai Petrov, *Sketches on the History of Ukrainian Literature of the Nineteenth Century (Ocherki istorii ukrainskoi literatury XIX stoletiia;* Kyiv: I. Davidenko, 1884); Omelian Ohonovsky, *A History of Ruthenian Literature (Istoriia literatury russkoi,* Lviv: Naukove tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 1887-94, 4 vols.). Serhiy Yefremov's *A History of Ukrainian Literature (Istoriia ukrainskoho pysmenstva,* Kyiv-Leipzig, 1924, 2 vols.) gives no biographical data. The eight-volume Soviet *A History of Ukrainian Literature (Istoriia ukrainskoi literatury;* Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1967-71) offers rich, albeit slanted, biographical material. Brief biographical entries, with bibliographies, may be consulted in V. Kubijovyc and D.H. Struk, eds. *Encyclopedia of Ukraine,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984-92, 5 vols).

Nineteenth-century criticism in Ukraine was influenced by the Russian and French critics, and later in the century by the Danish critic Georg Brandes (1842-1927), who showed an interest in Slavic literatures and wrote an article on Shevchenko.

2. Russian literary historians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries paid much attention to biography. They were influenced by the approaches of the French critics Charles Sainte-Beuve(1804-69) and Hippolyte Adolphe Taine (1828-93), to whom the personality of an author was of great importance. Semen Vengerov published *A Biographical Dictionary of Russian Writers (Biograficheski slovar russkikh pisatelei;* St. Petersburg, 1886), and was followed by many similar publications, including a series of literary biographies initiated by Maxim Gorky in 1933 - *Lives of Distinguished People (Zhizn zamechatelnikh liudei;* Moscow: Molodaia gvardia). Soviet literary encyclopedias included biographies of prominent Ukrainian writers - *A Short Literary Encyclopedia (Kratkaia literaturnaia entsiklope-*

diia; Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1962-78, 9 vols.).

Some Polish sources have been consulted, especially those on the Polish authors who wrote about Ukraine. Their brief biographies appear in many sorces, like *Polish Literature; An Encyclopedic Guide* (*Literatura polska; przewodnik encyklopedyczny;* Warsaw: Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1984, 2 vols.).

3. For a general historical and cultural background of the nineteenth century, the following works have been consulted: Paul Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern; World Society - 1815-1830,* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991: especially sections on Russia). Surveys of Ukrainian history in English contain good information on the nineteenth century: Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine; A History,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988); Dmytro Doroshenko, *A Survey of Ukrainian History,* updated by Oleh Gerus (Winnipeg: Trident Press, 1975); Ralph Lindheim and George Luckyj, eds, *Towards an Intellectual History of Ukraine: An Anthology of Ukrainian Thought from 1710 to 1995,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). The basic histories of Russia, in English, are: Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (London: Weidenfeld and Vicolson, 1974); Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire 1801-1917,* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1967); B. H. Sumner, *Survey of Russian History* (London: Methuen, 1944). For Russian intellectual history see: Isaiah Berlin, *Russian Thinkers* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1978).

4. The following books have been consulted on Kharkiv and its history: Dmytro Bahaliy, *The History of Kharkiv for the Past 250 Years* (Istoriia Kharkova za 250 let, Kharkiv, 1905); Dmytro Bahaliy, *The History of the Slobidska Ukraine,* (*Istoriia slobidskoi Ukrainy;* Kharkiv: Osnova, 1990); *The Description of the Kharkiv Viceregency at the End of the Eithteenth Century* (*Opysy kharkivskoho namisnytstva kintsia 18 st.;* Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1991); Grigoriy Danilevsky, *Osnovianenko* (St. Petersburg: Korolev, 1856).

5. Kyiv does not have as many good sources as Kharkiv. A recently published study in English is by Michael F. Hamm, *Kiev: A Portrait, 1800-1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). Ukrainian histories of Kyiv are by Vladimir Ikonnikov, *Kiev - 1654-1855: A Historical Sketch* (*Kiev - 1654-1855; Istoricheski ocherk;* Kiev, 1904); *The History of Kyiv* (*Istoriia Kyieva;* Kyiv, Naukova

dumka, 1986, especially vol. 2). Of some importance is Volodymyr Miiakovsky's article "Kievskaia gromada," *Letopis revolutsii,* 1924, No. 4, and Yevhen Chykalenko's *Memoirs: 1861-19O7* (*Spohady: 1861-1907;* New York: Ukrainska vilna akademiia nauk v SShA, 1955).

Ukrainian literature on the city of Lviv is plentiful. One may mention: Ivan Krypiakevych's history of Lviv (Lviv, 1910), and Mykola Holubets' history, published in 1925. There are also Polish histories. Recently, a good symposium on the city appeared in German: P. Fassler, T. Held, D. Sawitzki, eds., *Lemberg-Lwow-Lviv* (Koeln: Bohlan Verlag, 1993).

6. Some biographical information is available in Kvitka's collected works: *Works in Eight Volumes* (*Tvory u vosmy tomakh;* Kyiv: Dnipro, 1968-70), especially the last volume). A valuable addition is Pavlo Popov's *The Unknown Letters of Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovianenko* (*Nevidomi lysty Hryhoria Kvitky-Osnovianenka;* Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1966). The best biography, over a hundred years old, is Grigoriy Danilevsky's *Osnovianenko,* (St. Petersburg: Korolev, 1856). Also of note is Mykola Plevako's short article on Kvitka in *Statti i rozvidky* (New York, 1961, pp. 353-63). Perhaps scarcity of documentary material precluded a full-length biography from being written. Much more is known about Gogol's life, yet Gogol's biographies in English pay little attention to his Ukrainian roots. The most extensive treatment is Leon Stilman's unpublished Ph D dissertation "Nikolai Gogol: Historical and Biographical Elements in His Creative Personality" (Columbia University, 1953). The Ukrainian milieu of Gogol's forefathers is well treated in Oleksander Ohloblyn's *The Ancestors of Mykola Hohol* (*Predky Mykoly Hoholia;* Munich-New York: Ukrainian Historical Association, 1968). It is significant that Gogol's first biographer, Panteleimon Kulish, called his study *Notes about the Life of Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol* (*Zapiski o zhizni N.V. Gogolia;* St. Petersburg; A. Yakobson, 1856, 2 vols.). It was the life rather than the work of his famous countryman that interested him. The present author's *The Anguish of Mykola Hohol a.k.a. Nikolai Gogol* has been published in 1998.

7. There is a wealth of material on Shevchenko's life (not included in this volume since it is fairly well known), but there are few

good biographies of Ukraine's greatest poet. Most of those written under the Soviet regime also contain an ideological message. The first biographical sketches of Shevchenko were published by non-Ukrainians. A Polish critic of Italian origin but born in Ukraine, Guido Battaglia, who participated in the Polish uprising of 1863, published his *Taras Szewczenko; Zycie i pisma jego* in Lviv, 1865. The Austrian scholar Johann-Georg Obrist wrote *Taras Grigoriewitsh Szewczenko; Ein kleinrussischer Dichter* (Chernivtsi, 1870). Much later, in 1902, another foreigner, Georg Brandes, wrote a sketch of Shevchenko's life and works in Danish (in his *Samlede Skrifter,* vol. 10, published in Kopenhagen). To all of them Shevchenko's life seemed as significant as his poems.

The first Ukrainian biography of Shevchenko was by Mykhailo Chaly, published in 1882 (the titles of early biographies are all similar). A well-known writer, Oleksander Konysky, published a new biography of Shevchenko in Lviv in 1898, and it has recently been reissued in Ukraine. In Soviet Ukraine the biography of the poet also became a vehicle of ideology. Examples are the biographies by Yevhen Shabliovsky (1934), Yevhen Kyryliuk (1964), and, in Russian, by Leonid Khinkulov (1960). The only original work of the Soviet period came from the pen of a Russian novelist, Marietta Shaginian (1941). Shaginian had access to a biography by Pavlo Zaitsev, an émigré living in Warsaw. His book was published in Ukrainian in the West in 1955. An abridged English translation (*Taras Shevchenko; A Life*) came out in Toronto in 1988; it remains the fullest English account of Shevchenko's life. An offshoot is G. Luckyj's *Shevchenko's Unforgotten Journey* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1996). Very useful are accounts of Shevchenko's sojourn in Ukraine (Petro Zhur, 1979) and M. Tkachenko's *Chronicle of the Life and Work of T.H. Shevchenko* (*Litopys zhyttia i tvorchosti T.H. Shevchenka;* Kyiv: Vyd. Akademii Nauk, 1961). Two useful compendia in English are: G. Luckyj, ed., *Shevchenko and the Critics,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), and Volodymyr Mijakovs'kyj and George Shevelov, eds., *Taras Sevcenko: 1814-61, A symposium* (The Hague: Mouton, 1962). A Polish writer, Jerzy Jedrzejewicz, wrote a good fictionalized life of Shevchenko in his *Noce ukrainske, albo rodowod geniusza* ((Warsaw: Ludowa spoldzielnia

wydawnicza, 1966). It has been translated into Ukrainian.

Many collected works of Shevchenko have been published in Ukraine and in the diaspora. An English translation, not always satisfactory, of all of Shevchenko's works was published in 1964: *The Poetical Works of Taras Shevchenko: the Kobzar* (trans. C.H. Andrusyshen and Watson Kirkconnell, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964). A British selection of translations from Shevchenko appeared in London in *Song out of Darkness* (trans. by Vera Rich, London: The Mitre Press, 1961).

8. Panteleimon Kulish wrote his own autobiography (in the third person): *The Life of Kulish* (*Zhyzn Kulisha;* Lviv, 1868). His first biography was by Vladimir Shenrok (Kyiv, 1901). It was followed by Osyp Makovey's *Panko Olelkovych Kulish* (Lviv, 1900), and a partial biography by Viktor Petrov: *Panteleimon Kulish in the Fifties* (*Pantelymon Kulish v piatdesiati roky;* Kyiv: Vseukrainska Akademiia Nauk, 1929). Petrov is also the author of a delightful account of Kulish's epistolary "love affairs": *The Romances of Kulish* (*Romany Kulisha;* Kyiv: Rukh, 1930). A very informative book on all aspects of Kulish's life and work, is a symposium, edited by Serhiy Yefremov and Oleksander Doroshkevych, and published in Kyiv by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in 1927. There is, in English, G. Luckyj's *Panteleimon Kulish: A Sketch of His Life and Times* (New York: East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1983). A very much condensed version appears here. A moving memoir by Kulish's wife on his relations with her family may be found in an article in *Buduchnist* (Lviv, 1909). Special thanks are due here to Professor Romana Bahry, who has allowed her notes from Kulish's unpublished diary to be used. The diary is kept in the library of the Ukrainian Academy in Kyiv, Fund - 1-28562. After a long silence (1930-90) imposed by the Communist Party, which regarded him as a "bourgeois-nationalist," Kulish has become again a subject of study in Ukraine. A complete edition of his collected works has been promised. Perhaps a biography will follow.

9. There are several biographies of Marko Vovchok, the most comprehensive one by Yevhen Brandis, *Marko Vovchok* (Kyiv, Dnipro, 1975). A perceptive study, published in the year of Vovchok's death, is by the well-known critic Serhiy Yefremov:

Marko Vovchok (Kyiv, 1907). References to her life and work abound in the reminiscences and notes of Russian writers (Turgenev, Herzen, Dobroliubov).

10. The biographical vignette offered here of Fedkovych was based primarily on a very extensive biography of Osyp Yuriy Fedkovych by Osyp Makovey (*Zhyttepys Osypa Yuriya Hordynskoho-Fedkovycha,* Lviv: Naukove tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 1911). A long preface to Fedkovych's works by Drahomanov, written in 1876, is included in Drahomanov's collected works, *Literaturno-publitsystychni pratsi* (Kyiv, 1970), I. There are scattered studies of his works, but none of his life. A good source for the background of life in Bukovyna in Fedkovych's time is Stepan Smal-Stotsky's *The Bukovynian Ruthenia* (*Bukovyns'ka Rus';* Chernivtsi, 1897). It is noteworthy that a well-known English historian, Eric J. Hobsbawm, paid a great deal of attention to Fedkovych's hero, Oleksa Dovbush, in his book *Primitive Rebels* (New York--London: Norton, 1959). Some Ukrainian writers (Valeriy Shevchuk) wrote short stories about episodes in Fedkovych's life.

11. Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky left an autobiography that was reprinted in Serhiy Yefremov's *Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky* (Kyiv-Leipzig, 1923). Very useful was the last volume of Nechuy-Levytsky's collected works, published in 1968 (Kiev, Naukova dumka, especially vol. 10). Memoirs about him appeared in *Ukraina* (Kyiv, 1924, vol. 4). Valerian Pidmohylny's study, which is subtitled "An Attempt at a Psychoanalysis of [his] Works," was printed in *Zhyttia i revoliutsiia* (Kyiv, 1927, no. 9, pp. 295-303).

12. Ivan Franko's fascinating life still awaits its biographer. What has been published on the subject so far is of very low quality. Once again, ideology has been the main hindrance to impartial treatment. In Western Ukraine, Franko was regarded as a great national hero, in the Soviet Ukraine as a committed socialist and atheist. It was, therefore, a pleasant surprise when, in 1987, at the very beginning of *glasnost,* a novelistic account of Franko's life appeared in Kyiv (*Shramy na skali [Scratches on Rock],)* by Roman Ivanychuk. The completion of the fifty-volume edition of Franko's works (published in Kyiv by Naukova dumka) in 1986 also helped to uncover new biographical material. The latter (especially the last three vol-

umes) has been used here extensively. References to Franko's letters are given dates. Many other letters of Franko to his women friends have appeared in *Ivan Franko: Articles and Materials* (*Ivan Franko: Statti i materialy;* Lviv: Vydavnytstvo lvivskoho universytetu, 1956, vol. 5). Other scattered sources used in the present study were: Mykhailo Vozniak's article in *Za sto lit,* Kyiv, 1927, vol.1; Mykhailo Mochulsky's article in *Za sto lit,* 1928, vol. 3; M. Hnatiuk's article in *Dzvin,* Lviv, 1995, no.8; Yakym Horak's article in *Dzvin,* 1996, no. 2; Volodymyr Doroshenko's article in *Kalendar Svobody na perestupnyj rik 1956,* Jersey City, 1956; and especially the incisive articles by Maria Strutynska in *Nashi dni* (Lviv, May 1942), and *Suchasnist,* (New York, July 1966). Very revealing is Asher Wilcher's article "Ivan Franko and Theodor Herzl," in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* (June, 1982). A post-modernist assessment of Franko's work by Tamara Hundorova, *Franko -- ne kameniar,* was published by Monash University in Melbourne in 1996. The last sentence reads: "Franko's cultural humanitarianism has helped him to create a unique aesthetic concept, which led to an epoch-making phenomenon in the history of Ukrainian literature and culture."

The biography by Ivan Bass (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1966) offers old Soviet cliches. An expanded edition (in collaboration with A. Kaspruk), published in Kyiv in 1983, is not much better. An informative but brief biography of Franko in English appeared in *Ivan Franko: Selected Poems,* translated, with a biographical introduction, by Percival Cundy (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948).

13. A very brief biography of Lesia Ukrainka's in English is included in Constantine Bida's *Lesya Ukrainka; Life and Work,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968). The best Soviet treatment of her life appears in Anatol Kostenko's *Lesia Ukrainka,* (Kyiv: Molod, 1971).

The primary source for this study was Olha Kosach-Kryvyniuk's (Lesia's sister) *Chronology of Life and Works* (*Lesia Ukrainka: Khronolohiia zhyttia i tvorchosti;* New York: UVAN, 1970). It has been supplemented by the material in Lesia's letters published in the three last volumes of her collected edition (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1972-79). A perceptive study of her involvement with social-democratic politics, by Yuriy Lavrinenko, was printed in

Suchasnist (nos. 5,6, 7-8, 1971).

It is appropriate to mention that Lesia Ukrainka expressed her strong objection to any publication of her letters. But, like all writers, she should have remembered that while ***scripta manent, verba volant.***

George S. N. Luckyj, Octogenarian

George S. N. Luckyj (Yuriy Lutsky), the author of this volume, will be celebrating his eightieth birthday in 1999. His life and contributions to the study of Ukrainian literature have been extraordinary. He was born on 11 June 1919 in the village of Yanchyn (now Ivanivka) in Peremyshliany county, Galicia. The son of Ostap Lutsky, a prominent Galician Ukrainian modernist poet and interwar co-operative leader, National Democratic politician, and member of the Polish Sejm and Senate, and of Irena Smal-Stotska, the daughter of Stepan Smal-Stotsky, the well-known Slavic philologist, Bukovynian community leader and politician, Austrian parliamentarian, and professor at Chernivtsi University and the Ukrainian Free University in Prague, young Yuriy grew up in relative comfort and privilege in a family that exposed him to the greatest achievements of European culture and civilization. As a student at the Academic Gymnasium in Lviv, he witnessed the violent excesses of radical Ukrainian integral nationalism and consequently became a lifelong opponent of any form of extremism, political or otherwise. After graduating from the gymnasium in 1937, he had the opportunity to travel to Italy and Germany and to study German literature at the University of Berlin. Before the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, he left Berlin for England on his father's advice and attended a summer school at Cambridge University. Yuriy never saw his father again: Ostap Lutsky was arrested by the NKVD soon after the Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in 1939 and perished in a Soviet concentration camp in 1941.

George Luckyj, as Yuriy Lutsky became known, remained in England during the war. There he enrolled at the University of Birmingham and received a master's degree after successfully completing a thesis on Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World.* It was at that university that he met Moira McShane, his wife to be and his lifelong companion and closest intellectual collaborator. After joining the British army in December 1943, he served as a Russian interpreter for British military intelligence in occupied postwar Germany. There his Anglophile sentiments were undermined by his experience of the brutal repatriation of Soviet refugees and deserters and the complicity of British authorities in that inhumane chapter in postwar history.

George Luckyj was demobilized in 1947. In that same year he accepted a position to teach English literature at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon and emigrated to Canada with his wife and twin daughters. Two years later he left Saskatoon to pursue a doctorate at Columbia

University's Russian Institute in New York City. In that same year his *Modern Ukrainian Grammar* (coauthored with J. B. Rudnyckyj) was first published by the University of Minnesota Press.

It was during his doctoral studies at Columbia that the first of George Luckyj's many important contributions to Ukrainian studies were made. There he wrote a dissertation that became the pioneering monograph *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917–1934* (Columbia University Press, 1956; revised ed.: Duke University Press, 1990). In New York he also became involved in the work of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., a scholarly institution founded by postwar émigré scholars, serving as the founding editor (1951–53) and translator of the academy's *Annals.* He also translated Iwan Majstrenko's *Borot'bism: A Chapter in the History of Ukrainian Communism* (1954).

From that time on, George Luckyj devoted his intellectual energies to informing the English-speaking world about Ukrainian literature, civilization, and cultural and political issues. During his long career as a lecturer and then professor in the University of Toronto's Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures (1952–84), he helped to turn that department into a leading centre of Slavic studies in North America in his capacity as chairman (1957–61). He also served as the first editor of *Canadian Slavonic Papers* (1956–61), the journal of the Canadian Association of Slavists.

George Luckyj's contributions have indeed been impressive; unfortunately, until very recently both they and he did not receive the recognition that they deserve. With the help of his wife Moira, he has been the most prolific English-language translator of Ukrainian monographs and works of Ukrainian literature in the twentieth century. His translations include *The Hunters and the Hunted* by Ivan Bahriany (1954, 1956); Elie Borschak's *Hryhor Orlyk: France's Cossack General* (1956); Dmytro Doroshenko's *Survey of Ukrainian Historiography* (1957); Mykola Khvylovy's *Stories from the Ukraine* (1960); Hryhory Kostiuk's *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Decade of Mass Terror* (1960); George Y. Shevelov's *Syntax of Modern Literary Ukrainian* (1963); *A Little Touch of Drama* by Valerian Pidmohylny (1972); *Modern Ukrainian Short Stories* (1973); Panteleimon Kulish's *Black Council* (1973); Mykola Kulish's *Sonata Pathétique* (1975); Ievhen Sverstiuk's *Clandestine Essays* (1976); and Pavlo Zaitsev's *Taras Shevchenko: A Life* (1988).

As a literary scholar, George Luckyj is best known for two seminal monographs: the aforementioned *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917–1934,* and *Between Gogol' and Ševčenko: Polarity in the Literary*

Ukraine, 1798–1847 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1971), an unsurpassed study of the Ukrainian Romantic generation. He has also contributed many articles on Ukrainian literature, Soviet literary politics and dissent, and individual Ukrainian and Russian writers to Western scholarly journals, encyclopedias, and other reference books; and he served as the editor of the section on Ukrainian literature in vol. 1 of *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopaedia* (University of Toronto Press, 1963).

As a first-year student at the University of Toronto during the 1971–72 academic year, I first developed what became a deep and abiding interest in Ukrainian literature, history, and the political situation in Ukraine and decided to major in Ukrainian and Russian literature. During the third year of my undergraduate studies I took a course on Soviet literature and politics offered by Prof. Luckyj. By that time I had read his *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine* and *Between Gogol' and Ševčenko 1798–1847.* Alongside Ivan Dzyuba's *Internationalism or Russification?: A Study in the Soviet Nationalities Policy* (1968), these two books had a great impact on me, and their author's approach helped to reinforce my conviction that Ukrainian literature was a legitimate area of study and intellectual enquiry, despite the then prevalent attitudes among many academics to the contrary.

During the year (1975–76) that I completed my master's degree in Ukrainian and Russian literature at the University of Toronto, I attended a graduate seminar that Prof. Luckyj offered on Soviet Ukrainian literature of the 1920s. It was then that I saw how erudite a gentleman he really was and how tolerant he could be of other points of view. While I was completing my final paper for my M.A. in the summer of 1976, I had already decided to interrupt my studies and seek employment somewhere. Before I had the chance to do so, I received an unexpected phone call from Prof. Luckyj. He asked me to come to see him in his office. When I did, he explained to me that a Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) had been created at the University of Alberta in Edmonton with the financial support of the Alberta government as the result of several years of lobbying efforts by Ukrainian-Canadian academics and the Ukrainian Canadian Professional and Business Federation. The institute was to have not only a national but also an international profile, and therefore it was to have an office at the University of Toronto as well. Prof. Luckyj, who had been involved early on in the group that had pushed for the creation of a publicly funded institute of Ukrainian studies in Canada, had been appointed associate director of the CIUS in charge of the Toronto office. He offered me the job of his administrative and editorial assistant.

That is how I became one of the longest-serving employees of the

CIUS. Prof. Luckyj implemented a plan to publish several government-subsidized university textbooks in Ukrainian language and literature, and I helped him to see their publication to fruition. Among them were two books that he edited: *Vaplitianskyi zbirnyk* (1977), an important collection of archival documents pertaining to the Free Academy of Proletarian Literature, the most important Ukrainian writers' group of the 1920s; and *Shevchenko and the Critics* (1980), a major collection of articles in English translation about Ukraine's national poet.

Prof. Luckyj also founded the *Journal of Ukrainian Graduate Studies* in 1976 as a forum for the publication of graduate-student papers in the field. I served as the managing editor of that journal, which changed its objectives and became the *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* in 1980, until the end of 1985. Prof. Luckyj served as its faculty advisor and de facto editor in chief until the end of 1982.

The most important project that Prof. Luckyj initiated as associate director of the CIUS was a revised and updated English-language translation of the Shevchenko Scientific Society's encyclopedia of Ukraine edited by Volodymyr Kubijovyč, which had been published in Ukrainian in fascicles every few years since the late 1940s. Until 1982 Prof. Luckyj served as the English-language editor of this *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (5 vols., University of Toronto Press, 1984, 1988, 1993). In 1981 he involved me in this project; a year later I became its chief manuscript editor. I held that position until the encyclopedia's completion in 1993; later that year I was appointed the editor of the *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*.

For over six years Prof. Luckyj and I worked together on a daily basis. For me that experience was enjoyable and educational in many ways. During those years, in the midst of all his teaching, administrative, and editing responsibilities, he still found time to write *Panteleimon Kulish: A Sketch of His Life and Times* (1983), probably as a result of his tried-and-true, disciplined approach to research and writing, which had made him as productive as he was. In late 1992 Prof. Luckyj resigned from his position as associate director of the CIUS. In 1994 he retired from the University of Toronto, but he continued teaching a graduate course there for a few more years and taught for a semester at the University of Ottawa in 1986.

George Luckyj's intellectual output did not diminish after his retirement. In fact, it increased, probably because he no longer had to teach or administer. In addition to continuing to write encyclopedia entries and other articles on Ukrainian literature, he edited *Before the Storm: Soviet Ukrainian Fiction of the 1920s,* translated by Yuri Tkacz (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1986); and

served as the literary editor of the monthly journal *Suchasnist* (1986–88). Since 1988 he has seen the publication of eleven new books that he has either written, translated, compiled, or edited. In English, in addition to his translation of the above-mentioned classic biography of Shevchenko by Zaitsev, they include four textbooks and two popular biographies: *Young Ukraine: The Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, 1845–1847* (University of Ottawa Press, 1991); *Ukrainian Literature in the Twentieth Century: A Reader's Guide* (University of Toronto Press, 1992), revised as "An Overview of the Twentieth Century" in Dmytro Čyževs'kyj's *History of Ukrainian Literature,* 2d ed. (New York and Englewood, Colo.: The Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences and Ukrainian Academic Press, 1997), which George Luckyj edited, as he did the first edition in 1975; *Towards an Intellectual History of Ukraine: An Anthology* (University of Toronto Press, 1996), which he edited with his close friend and colleague, Ralph Lindheim; *Shevchenko's Unforgotten Journey* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1996); and *The Anguish of Mykola Hohol, a.k.a. Nikolai Gogol* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1997).

In the past few years, George Luckyj has become convinced that good journalism is just as important as good scholarship. Consequently he has concentrated on writing in a popular vein, contributing occasional columns on international social and cultural issues to the Kyiv daily newspaper *Den* and producing his recent books on Shevchenko and Gogol as well this collection.

This year George Luckyj will finally receive some of the accolades that have undeservedly eluded him for so long. He was awarded the 1999 Antonovych Prize in recognition of his works on major Ukrainian literary figures — in particular his writings on Gogol (his *Between Gogol' and Ševčenko* was published in Ukrainian translation under the title *Mizh Hoholem i Shevchenkom* in Kyiv in 1998)—and of his great contribution to the dissemination of knowledge about Ukrainian literature in the West.

Over the past several years, George Luckyj and I have met occasionally to exchange information and opinions about developments in Ukrainian studies, literature, and society. In all that time, his wide-ranging intellectual interests and perceptions have remained undiminished. Now, at the august age of eighty, both he and we can look back at his life and see how much he has contributed to laying the intellectual foundations of Ukrainian studies in Canada and the West in general. For this I, my colleagues, and many past, present, and future students will be forever grateful. On behalf of all of us and them, I wish Yuriy Ostapovych *mnohaia lita.* May he continue enlightening and stimulating us through his writings for years to come.

Roman Senkus

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