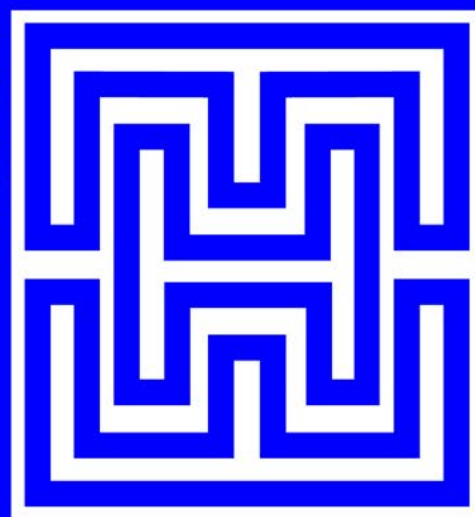


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Зміст

НАРАТИВИ

Rory Finnin. Catalyst of Formation: Vilnius in the Development of Taras Shevchenko	4
George Grabowicz. A Highpoint of Shevchenko's Try Lita poetry (1843-1845): The "Epistle" (An Excerpt from <i>Taras Shevchenko: A Portrait</i>)	10
Decolonizing Slavic Studies. An Interview with Vitaly Chernetsky	19

ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ

Fellowship Research/Language Grants	24
Нові видання членів НТШ-А	26
Нові видання, спонсоровані НТШ-А	28
Мистецький феномен Шевченкових альбомів 1846-1850 і 1858-1859 років	29
Нові члени	31
Вітаємо з нагородами	31
Заходи, проведені в НТШ-А	32
Професійна діяльність членів НТШ-А	38
Наші втрати	40
З діяльності Вашингтонського Осередку	41

ТЕКСТИ

Оксана Луцишина. Вірші	42
Askold Melnyczuk. Poems	44

БІБЛІОТЕКА

Raymond Uzwyszyn. Library and Archives News	48
----------------------------------------------------	----

АРХІВ

Michael Andrec. Archives receive New York Documentary Heritage Program grant	49
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CATALYST OF FORMATION: VILNIUS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TARAS SHEVCHENKO

Rory Finnin

University of Cambridge

Taras Shevchenko was enveloped by the sweeping tones of the Te Deum chant on the morning of Sunday, 6 December 1829. The sixteen-year-old serf lived within steps of no less than twenty churches in Vilnius, and an instruction had been given to perform the Gregorian chant of thanksgiving in all of them. The reason was not liturgically inspired, but politically ordained. As the Lithuanian Courier explained on its front page, the chant was not to mark the feast day of St Nicholas, a figure of humility, generosity, and devotion to the poor. It was to honour the “Great Name Day of His Most Serene Emperor” Nicholas I of Russia.¹

In time, Nicholas I would come to fear Shevchenko, exiling him and personally forbidding him to write, paint, or draw. But in December 1829, Shevchenko posed no threat to the tsar. He was a “quick-witted” orphaned teenaged serf owned by a wealthy member of the nobility of the Russian Empire.² He was far from home, serving a master who was helping to consolidate the empire’s military power along its recently acquired – and still combustible – northwestern reaches. Within the Engelhardt’s temporary residence in Vilnius, Shevchenko was consigned to corners and corridors, summoned to light his master’s pipe and top off his glass. Outside the residence, he ran errands on crowded and noisy streets, learning all the ins and outs of a city for the first time in his life. Around him were thousands of speakers of Polish, a language he had encountered often as a boy but did not yet command. There was so much out of his control and so many things he could not understand.

Yet he must have relished an evening glimpse of the Vilnius central streetscape on 6 December 1829. It was awash in light. The Lithuanian Courier announced that homes in the city were “splendidly illuminated” with lanterns after dusk to observe the Tsar’s “Great Name

Day.” Its front-page report described a lavish ball held in the city in Nicholas’s honour, insisting, notably, that the merriment was “sincere” (*wesołowsc szczerą*).³ The Russian Imperial Governor and Engelhardt’s commanding officer, Aleksandr Rimsky-Korsakov, presided over the party, which gathered a who’s who of high society to dance the polonaise and raise glasses to the sovereign. Among the invited guests were Engelhardt and his wife Sofia, whose “beautiful eyes,” as one Polish contemporary in Vilnius noted, “gleamed more brightly than the diamonds of her splendid diadem.”⁴

With his master and mistress away, Shevchenko chased the flame of his artistic addiction and drew by candlelight while others slept.⁵ His compulsion at the time was imitation. He copied any works he could find and mimicked every method, using a pencil he had lifted from an unsuspecting clerk. Shevchenko was remarkably light-fingered. In fact, over the course of the long journey to Vilnius from Ukraine, he had stolen pictures off the walls of inns and hid them among his possessions. The stash was a gallery of fascination for any teenaged boy, full of images of folkloric heroes and military leaders.⁶ But unlike other young men, Shevchenko did not look on these legendary figures with wide eyes, dreaming of emulating their courage or derring-do. Instead he studied them with a fixed gaze. He analysed the rhythm of their representation – the angle of every sword, the contours of every galloping horse, the shading of every cloud of battle smoke. He reproduced them on leaves of paper with his stolen pencil, over and over and over again.

On the night of the ball, Shevchenko took out what he called his “stolen treasures” and copied them “rever-

1 “Wiadomosci Krajowe: Wilno,” *Kuryer Litewski w Wilnie w Poniedzialek dnia 9 Grudnia v.s. 1829 Roku*, No. 147, p. 1.

2 Shevchenko describes himself as “quick-witted” in Taras Shevchenko, “*Avtobiografia*,” *Zibrannia tvoriv*, u 6 tomakh, vol. 5 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), p. 193.

4

3 “Wiadomosci Krajowe: Wilno.”

4 Gabrjela Puzynina, *W Wilnie i w dworach litewskich: pamietnik z lat 1815-1843* (Vilnius: Jozef Zawadski, 1928), p. 119.

5 This episode is taken from Taras Shevchenko, *Avtobiografia* from *Zibrannia tvoriv*: U 6 tomakh, vol. 5 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), p. 193.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 193. See also Shevchenko, “*Pis'mo T. Hr. Shevchenka k redaktoru “Narodnogo Chteniia*,” *Zibrannia tvoriv* u 6 tomakh, vol. 5 (Kyiv, 2003), p. 198.



ently and meticulously” at a table, with a candle burning brightly at his side. One of the pictures must have been Aleksander Orłowski’s portrait of Don Cossack ataman Matvei Platov, who chased Napoleon from Moscow back to France between 1812 and 1814. It centres on a classic dynamic equestrian pose. [Image 1]

Referring to himself in the third person in his achingly short autobiography, Shevchenko recalled the moment when his final touches on the copy of Orłowski’s portrait were violently interrupted:

He had already gotten to drawing the little Cossacks prancing around the mighty hooves of Platov’s horse, when the door opened – the master and mistress had returned from the ball. In a fury, the master pulled him by the ears and slapped him in the face, shouting that he might have burned down not only the house, but the whole town. The next day the master ordered the coachman Sidor to give him a sound flogging, which was duly carried out with vigour.⁷

Shevchenko’s tone is characteristically sardonic, and he moves from the episode quickly, offering little reflection or elaboration. In fact, in the grammar of his brief, elliptical autobiography, Vilnius is not a comma or a colon, but a parenthesis. It is marginal and ancillary, a casual aside. There is little in the way of supplementary documentation or testimony to help us centre Vilnius in his story on our own. Paper trails tend not to follow

7 Avtobiohrafia, p. 193.

teenaged serfs with no family far away from home. So we are left with question marks, even mysteries, all of which invite our speculative imagination. In fact, they demand it. The poverty of source material about this time in Shevchenko’s life belies the rich significance of Vilnius as his first home beyond Ukraine.⁸ He spent a year and a half there. No other place outside of his native land cultivated his worldview and artistic appetite as quickly.

1.

Shevchenko was fond of toys. On his travels later in life, he would fashion makeshift musical whistles for children to entertain them.⁹ In 1829, Vilnius was his kaleidoscope. The city threw his life into a storm of new shapes and colours while narrowing his visual field along dense streets lined with high facades. For a boy who grew up chasing wide open horizons, the difference was not unwelcome, but it was jarring all the same. The episode with Engelhardt offers us a vivid example. By turns humorous, awkward, and infuriating, Shevchenko’s account of being caught drawing by candlelight illustrates a degree of his provincial naivete. After all, he spent his childhood in a small hut in Kyrylivka, where he and his siblings slept atop the large clay stove that heated the entire home during the day. For a boy who spent his nights on the lezhanka, a lit candle at night may not have been too unnerving.

What Shevchenko underestimated was the perilous position of the two-storey Engelhardt residence on bustling Zamkowa (“Castle,” or in Lithuanian, “Pilies”) Street. [Image 2] It was no self-standing cottage, but a link in a long, tight chain of diverse structures in one of the oldest parts of the city, with its fair share of fire-friendly pharmacies.¹⁰ To one side, the building was attached to a sixteenth-century brick house, originally of Gothic design; to the other side, it was attached to a bakery and tavern dressed up with a neoclassical façade. It had suffered through fire in the past – a conflagration in 1769 consumed much of Vilnius’s old city – and undergone recent renovations before the arrival of the Engelhardt party. At a time when every house in Vilnius was required by law to have a ladder, axe, and

8 Among the scholars shedding consistent light on the Vilnius period in Shevchenko’s life and work is Anatolii Nepokupnyi. (See, for instance, his essay “Baltiis’ki zori Tarasa” in the collection “*U Vil’ni, horodi preslavnim*” [Kyiv: Dnipro, 1989], p. 156.) More recently Viktor Zad’ko and Raimundas Lopata have returned to “Shevchenko’s Vilnius” in *Shevchenkiv Vil’no* (Kyiv: Expres-Polihraf, 2012).

9 O. S. Afanas’iev-Chuzhbyns’kyi, “Spomyny pro T. H. Shevchenka,” *Spohady pro Tarasa Shevchenka*, p. 103.

10 Oksana Val’onene, “Sotsiotopohrafia Vilniusa v xvii–xviii st.: osnovni osoblyvosti ta napriamky rozvytku,” *Ukraina Lithuanica* (2024), vol. 7, p. 48.



full water barrel at the ready, the fire paranoia was real.¹¹

Yet all this architectural density and diversity had an upside. They trained Shevchenko's eye and offered him an immersive crash course in the history of European aesthetics. "Chaotic" Vilnius, as one prominent citizen described it at the time, was home to an ethnically and religiously diverse population of roughly 50,000, most of whom were Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox.¹² Around every corner was a place of worship. Only Krakow could rival Vilnius in the number of churches per square metre. Warsaw and Kyiv did not even come close.



As moral beacons and artistic training grounds, these churches shaped Shevchenko at a pivotal time in his life. On a given day, he would walk out of the Engelhardt residence onto Castle Street, so frequently littered with garbage that it would be impassable after heavy rain. He would turn on to narrow Bernardyńska (in Lithuanian, Bernardinų) Street, named after the nearby Bernardine Monastery. The high, curved, blind walls of Bernardyńska Street offered Shevchenko a bending, dynamic visual frame, and each of his strides placed a new vista within it: a Baroque gate below a red-tile roof,

11 Karpinski A., Nowosielska E. *Požary w miastach Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII wieku i ich następstwa ekonomiczne, społeczne i kulturowe* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2021), p. 230.

12 Jozefas Frankas, *Atsiminimai apie Vilnių* (Vilnius: Mintis, 2001), pp. 49–50. For more on the ways the Russian Empire provoked this religious diversity, see Laimonas Briedis, *Vilnius: City of Strangers* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2008) p. 128.

then neoclassical pediments near Renaissance-style porticoes, and on and on. [Image 3] With each glimpse, the architectural eclecticism in the centre of Vilnius deepened his perceptual vocabulary and broadened his sense of artistic possibility.

At the end of Bernardyńska, only a few minutes by foot from the Engelhardt residence, Shevchenko would stand before a stunning Gothic vision: the late fifteenth-century brick façade of the Catholic Church of St. Anne. [Image 4] It lingered in his dreams his entire life.¹³ With three tall spires fed by a play of intersecting arches, the façade alludes to the concept of the trinity and very likely to the Gediminas Columns, the triadic symbol of the Principality of Lithuania. (Incidentally it also evokes the trident, Ukraine's national symbol today.) According to legend, Napoleon wanted to take the Church of St. Anne "to Paris in the palm of his hand."¹⁴ Its exterior sparked widespread wonder, but its interior in the early nineteenth century was not nearly as grand or monumental as the Notre Dame de Paris,



13 Shevchenko mentions a dream about the Church of St. Anne in his diary entry of 5 September 1857. See Shevchenko, *Dnevnyk* from *Zibrannia tvoriv: U 6 tomakh*, vol. 5 (Kyiv, Naukova dumka, 2003), p. 92.

14 Adam Kirkor, *Przechadzki po Wilnie i jego okolicach* (Wilno: Drukarnia A. Marcinowskiego, 1856), pp. 79–80.



where Napoleon famously placed a crown on his own head. Inside the Church of St. Anne in Vilnius was a space of solemnity and humble prayer. Its side walls were refined but simple, with relatively few paintings or statues to feed Shevchenko's voracious desire to copy and learn and master.¹⁵

The interior of the Catholic Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, meanwhile, was a feast for his eyes. Far down the left bank of the Neris River from the Engelhardt residence, the Church deceives every visitor. Its triadic Baroque face, lacking the dramatic musculature and sinew of St. Anne's exterior, gives an impression of the stately and familiar. But walk inside, and knees buckle at the sight of 2,000 white stucco relief sculptures crowding every inch of archway, cornice, and ceiling. [Image 5] Cherubic angels in flowing drapery appear to push through plaster and stone of the vault; the ancient symbols of the evangelists – eagle, ox, lion, man – protrude from the elevated pulpit. The space is a late-seventeenth-century fever dream by sculptor and architect Giovanni Pietro Perti and painter Giovanni Maria Galli, completed over a span of eight years.¹⁶ Shevchenko must have lost his breath in it.

Because the nave, the apse, the dome – they breathe. They feel alive. As light glides through the space, Perti's stucco figures seem to move and slip through material surfaces, perforating the boundaries between the sacred and the profane. With his private cache of

¹⁵ Władysław Zahorski, *Kościół św. Anny w Wilnie* (Wilno: Druk Józef Zawadzkiego, 1905), p. 16.

¹⁶ Irena Vaišvilaitė, "Vilniaus šventųjų apaštalų Petro ir Povilo bažnyčios dekoru programa," *Acta Academiae Artium Vilmensis* 21 (2001).

stolen pictures, Shevchenko had been chasing line on the static, flat page, but such sumptuous church interiors demanded that he crane his head around every curve and explore the play of surface and void in more dimensions. They detonated his sense of depth and feel for form. He must have taken his pilfered pencil and sketched and copied here too.

2.

Not far from the main altar of the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, Shevchenko would have lifted his gaze to take in Perti's Baroque wonders as well as two striking canvases on the walls inviting devotional prayer. One of these paintings depicts St Ursula ascending into the sky, martyred for the faith alongside her virgin disciples, who look up at the heavens in exhaustion and astonishment. These side chapels and their images meditate on the courage and sacrifice of women. [Image 6] They were the part of the church where Taras would have felt most at home – and where we come upon clues shedding light on the greatest mystery of his early art.

Among his male European contemporaries, only Tennyson comes close to centring women in his poetry as prominently and consciously as Shevchenko. The history of Ukraine's colonial exploitation often led him to exploit in turn the experiences of women as national allegory, but for a man of his era, Shevchenko stood apart in championing what we would associate with feminist ideas. He never ceased foregrounding female perspectives in his work. He critiqued poems that cast women in the position of "silent slaves." "They must play," he once insisted, "the primary role."¹⁷ He was keenly attuned to systems, to structures of oppression – local and global, national and imperial. No trauma was ever singular or incidental. No trauma should be borne alone.

At the core of such tropes as the *pokrytka* – the "covered" woman seduced and shamed by the male coloniser and rejected by her family – is an incendiary condemnation of patriarchy. The patriarchal figures in his work preside over a brittle, top-heavy social apparatus in which the very withdrawal of their gaze and recognition brings humiliation and violence. Orphans endure personal loss, but bastards experience social death:

Evil folk may mock and taunt the
 Tiny urchin orphan.
 But his mother's grave will calm him –
 Hushing all his heartache.
 What of someone, someone out there
 Who has nothing at all,

¹⁷ Shevchenko, "19 July 1857," *Shchodennyk from Zibrannia tvoriv u 6 tomakh*, vol. 5, p. 63.



Whose own father does not know him,
Shunned by his own mother?
What is given to the bastard?
Who will deign to see him?
No kin, no hearth, no home, only
Dirt and streets and sorrow.¹⁸

Losing his parents at a young age led Taras to see problems of gender power as a drama of mothers and fathers. In his poetry, human fates are bound up, one way or the other, in the fate of an idealized mother-figure, either at the surface of the text or deep beneath it. The mother – her struggle, her loss, her triumph – is for Shevchenko a measure of all things. There is something peculiarly traditionalist and conservative in this logic, but its force in his art is unbridled and unwavering. His entire poetic corpus can be read as a sustained plea for a more maternal world.

In the side chapels of the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, Shevchenko would have lost himself among these figures of caring mothers and holy women. He would have sketched their faces, their plaintive upward gazes, their windswept hair, the flowing fabric of their clothing. His pencil would have danced to render the play of natural light on the sculptural ornamental plaster that brought the stories of these women to life. Such experiments with form and technique, with depth and shadow,

¹⁸ Taras Shevchenko, “Kateryna,” *Zibrannia tvoriv: U 6 tomakh*, vol. 1 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), p. 109. Translation by the author.

would have helped make possible the first extant work with his signature – the enigmatic and striking *Bust of a Woman* (1830). [Image 7]

Shevchenko completed this piece, which has been forensically analysed and authenticated, when he was only sixteen years old, months after his arrival in Vilnius.¹⁹ A signature along the bottom edge of the bust speaks to his novice status. It projects the voice of a student certifying, according to established academic practice, his authorship: “Taras Shevchenko drew this.”

His command is exquisite. It conveys a deep feel for being in space. His shading is delicate and composed, communicating, especially under and around the chin, the presence of even light radiating from the upper left and illuminating the tendrils of her hair. His masterful translucent veil glides over the folds of her dress without confusing the lines or layers between them. The only sign of the sixteen-year-old serf is arguably in the presentation of the female anatomy. The head, the neck, the chest – perhaps we should not be surprised by the subtle contest of proportions between them.

But this is hardly the work of an amateur. Behind *Bust of a Woman* is not a young artist tutored only by a provincial deacon or left to his own self-instruction, copying stolen prints by candlelight. It reveals a budding professional with academic training. We know precious little about Shevchenko’s life in Vilnius, but one thing is clear: his owner, Engelhardt, did more for Shevchenko’s art at this time than simply slap him for late-night sketches. In Vilnius it seems that little time was wasted to supercharge his creativity.

The original art object that inspired *Bust of a Woman* remains a mystery. Theories abound. Some suggest that the original was an engraving or lithograph of wide-eyed eighteenth-century French actress Adrienne Lecouvreur.²⁰ Others propose a canvas of the penitent Mary Magdalene, whose emblematic long, loose hair echoes in Shevchenko’s image.²¹ Visions of a rapt and ecstatic Mary Magdalene by Caravaggio and Titian were widely copied across Europe at this time – although a small detail in Shevchenko’s drawing, a brooch-like fibula on her right shoulder, touched by a glint of light, suggests less a biblical subject than a classical one.

¹⁹ Taras Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia tvoriv u 12-y tomakh* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), vol 7, p. 355.

²⁰ See, for instance, Yakiv Zatenatskii, “Chei portret kopiroval Taras,” *Sovetskaia kultura*, 2 April 1964, p. 3.

²¹ See, for instance, Pavlo Zaitsev, *Zhyttia Tarasa Shevchenka* (New York, Paris, Munich: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1955), p. 36.

and Łukaszewicz were students of the legendary professor Jan Rustem (1762-1835), whose teaching at the University of Vilnius advanced a practice of mastering drawing from sculpture before moving to live models. Łukaszewicz was a so-called “free listener” or auditor in Rustem’s classes. Is it safe to say Shevchenko was one too?

A definitive answer is elusive. No institutional documents survive attesting to the presence of Shevchenko at the University of Vilnius, but Bust of a Woman may be all the convincing paperwork we need. It bears the hallmarks of rigorous academic training and suggests direct access to an extensive plaster cast collection, which other often hypothesized mentors, like the itinerant portrait artist Johann Baptist von Lampi the Younger, did not possess.²³ Shevchenko also leaves us a breadcrumb in his writings. He makes one reference to the teacher when sharing professional wisdom about the seminal importance of drawing for any painter: “Old man Rustem, a professor of drawing at the former Vilnius University, used to say to his pupils: ‘Draw for six years and paint for six months, and you will become a master’” (emphasis mine).²⁴ The caution is conspicuous: “his pupils,” not “us” or “me.” It reflects the characteristic modesty of an artist who must have learned from Rustem and his circle at the back of the studio – but yearned to move up closer.



None of these prevailing theories is persuasive, for one simple reason. Shevchenko likely worked from an academic plaster cast in this sketch.²² He was most probably in a studio, his gaze fixed on a three-dimensional material object, not unlike the ones crowding Perti’s nave and side chapels. He was observing light, not conjuring it second-hand. From the distinct shadows to the flowing drapery, from the pronounced, curved eyes to the smooth, stone-like skin, we can feel the presence of sculpture.

Explore the exhibits and archives of the Lithuanian Museum of Art, and you find similar counterparts to Shevchenko’s sketch composed in Vilnius at the same time, including a rendering of a woman with a heavenward gaze by Wincenty Smokowski (Vincentas Smakauskas, 1797-1876) and a drawing of a veiled bust of a woman in ecstatic prayer by Tadeusz Łukaszewicz (Tadas Lukoševičius, 1802-1842). Both Smokowski

²² Iosyp Baliasnyi makes a similar argument in “Shevchenko – khudozhnyk,” *Velykyi poet-revoliutsioner: naukovo-literaturnyi zbirnyk Odeskoho derzhavnoho universytetu, prysviachenyi 125-richchiu z dnia narodzhennia T.H. Shevchenka: 1814–1939* (Odesa: Odeskyi derzhavnyi universytet, 1939), p. 221.

²³ Lampi set up shop in a mansion owned by Count Ferdynand Plater in the winter of 1830. He was renowned for exaggerating the beauty of his subjects. As Puzynina recalls with her characteristic wit, “when an impartial spectator or, heaven forbid, the eye of some jealous lady, expressed surprise at such greatly embellished faces, the witty artist would explain that it is the portraitist’s *duty* to divine, foresee, or correct nature... A dozen years later, the new generation, looking at these portraits, thinks: “How many beautiful women there were in 1830!” See Puzynina, p. 120.

²⁴ Shevchenko, “Do Br. Zales’koho (10 February 1855),” *Lysty from Zibrannia tvoriv u 6 tomakh*, vol. 6 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka), p. 88-89.

A HIGHPOINT OF SHEVCHENKO'S TRY LITA POETRY (1843-1845): THE “EPISTLE”

George G. Grabowicz

The poem “I mertvym i zhyvym i nenarozhdennym zemliakam moïm v Ukraïni i ne v Ukraïni moie druzhneie poslanie” [To the Dead, and Living and Still Unborn Countrymen in Ukraine and Beyond it my Friendly Epistle] has been frequently seen in the Shevchenko canon as a quintessentially “political” poem. It was finished on December 14, 1845. It opens with an epigraph from the First Epistle General of John, Chap. 4, vs. 20: [In the King James version]: “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar”—which immediately qualifies the “political” label: clearly what is postulated here is also ethical (and theological). And it remains, of course, political—and in his ability to conjoin these moments into a single frame lies the power of Shevchenko’s vision. What is also clear from the “Epistle’s” formulation is that it conceives the Ukrainian collective over many generations and over territory that involves both Ukraine and beyond it (primarily Russia, but also Poland); it implicitly evokes a national frame for Ukrainian identity, and as such is one of its earliest articulations. Given the fact that national identity is now generally seen as a matter of choice not of immutable essence, Shevchenko’s formulation also postulates the individual’s ability to choose his or her identity, in effect to decide to be Ukrainian—which in time became a self-fulfilling prophecy for millions of his countrymen.

A key feature, indeed difficulty of the “Poslanie” [Epistle] is that as much as any of Shevchenko’s poems it seems to be entirely of one piece, a riff that appears as a seamless unit—and resists logical partitioning or segmentation, although by sheer necessity (that is in order to parse its themes and/or rhetorical tropes) we can single out its various subsections. That it had an

electrifying impact on its listeners is attested by an early memoir of the younger brother (Mykhailo Bilozers’kyi; 1833-1896) of the Cyrillo-Methodian member and later editor of *Osnova*, Vasyl Bilozers’kyi, who writes that,

“Vasili Vasilievich Tarnovskii-the-father (d. 1865) once told me that in the 1840s he would host literary evenings at his estate which were visited by such people as Mykola Kostomarov, Vasyl Bilozers’kyi and other friends and acquaintances of Tarnovskii and among them also Shevchenko. Once when he was there he read his “Epistle to his Countrymen” which he had just finished. The general content of that work, and particularly those passages where he spoke of Cossack Hetmans whom Shevchenko was the first to see in that critical light of his left on all those present a shattering impression [proizvelo na vsekh prisutstvuiushchikh potri-asaiushchoie vpechatlenie]: from that moment the general admiration for these excellencies and their general standing as heroes and knights of valor collapsed. Shevchenko’s words removed them from their pedestals and put them in their places.¹

Bilozers’kyi may be commended for remembering and noting an important detail—but the role of Shevchenko’s vision at this juncture went much, much further: it was not that in that poem he had debunked this or that historical figure, an “excellency” or a “heroic

¹ PZTDT, vol. 1, pg. 737. See also *Kievskaiia starina*, 1882, No. 10, pg. 69.

figure.” What Shevchenko was doing, in fact, was articulating a new way of looking at Ukraine and her collective past; in effect articulating the groundwork for a new, national perspective on everything Ukrainian. That was precisely the watershed moment, the “shattering impression” that all who heard it instinctively understood: a new way of thinking about Ukrainian identity had been uttered, and once you heard it you could not unhear it; it was ground-breaking. That, however, was to come later in the poem. What come first is a long introduction which frames the poet’s Biblical, prophetic and mesmerizing diction, a diction and perspective that endows the poem with unprecedented power:

І смеркає, і світає,
 День божий минає,
 І знову люд потомлений,
 І все спочиває.
 Тільки я, мов окаянный, 5
 І день і ніч плачу
 На розпуттях велелюдних,
 І ніхто не бачить,
 І не бачить, і не знає —
 Оглухли, не чують; 10
 Кайданами міняються,
 Правдою торгують.
 І Господа зневажають,
 Людей запрягають
 В тяжкі ярма. Орють лихо, 15
 Лихом засівають,
 А що вродить? побачите,
 Які будуть жни ва!
 Схаменіться, недолюди,
 Діти юродиві! 20
 Подивіться на рай тихий,
 На свою країну,
 Полюбіте щирим серцем
 Велику руїну,
 Розкуйтеся, братайтеся, 25
 У чужому краю
 Не шукайте, не питайте
 Того, що немає
 І на небі, а не тільки

На чужому полі. 30
 В своїй хаті своя й правда,
 І сила, і воля.
 Нема на світі України,
 Немає другого Дніпра,
 А ви претеса на чужину 35
 Шукати доброго добра,
 Добра святого. Волі! волі!
 Братерства братнього! Найшли,
 Несли, несли з чужого поля
 І в Україну принесли 40
 Великих слов велику силу,
 Та й більш нічого. Кричите,
 Що Бог создав вас не на те,
 Щоб ви неправді поклонились!..
 І хилитесь, як і хилились! 45
 І знову шкуру дерете
 З братів незрящих, гречкосіїв,
 І сонця-правди дозрівать
 В німецькі землі, не чужії,
 Претеса знову!.. Якби взять 50
 І всю мізерію з собою,
 Дідами крадене добро,
 Тойді оставсь би сиротою
 З святими горами Дніпро! (lines 1-54)

The day goes dark, the sun comes up,
 God’s days are ever fleeting,
 And people are again worn out
 And everyone is resting.
 Except for me. Like one accursed
 I weep both day and night
 On the crossroads of the nations
 Which no one can see
 They don’t see and they don’t know
 They’ve all gone deaf. They cannot hear.
 They traffic in chains,
 They buy and sell justice
 And they mock the Lord
 They place heavy yokes on people’s necks.
 They plow disaster
 And seed more disaster.
 And what will be the harvest? You’ll see

That harvest for yourself!
 Stop what you're doing, you monsters,
 You children of madness
 Just look again on your poor land
 Your one and only land
 And learn to love it with a true heart
 For the ruin it is.
 Rip off your chains, embrace your brother,
 And do not search for, do not seek
 In foreign, distant lands
 What's absent even in the heavens
 Not just some foreign land.
 In your own house is your own justice
 And power and freedom
 Ukraine is here and not abroad
 There is no other Dnipro.
 And you all rush to go abroad
 To seek good goodness
 Holy goodness. Freedom! Freedom!
 Fraternal brotherhood! You found
 And brought and carried from abroad
 And brought back to Ukraine
 A great, big bunch of fancy words
 And nothing more. You shout
 That you're not made to bow to lies.
 And then you bow again, as ever
 And still you flay your brother's skin,
 Those blind unseeing sowers,
 And crowd to see the rising sun
 In German lands once more.
 If one could just remove your stuff
 And what your granddads stole
 Then having rid themselves of you,
 Dnipro and all the holy mountains
 Could finally be orphaned!

The poet begins, as he must, with himself, with the birth-pangs of the poem's gestation, which echo the Hebrew Bible and the personal ordeal that recapitulates Biblical prophecy also in the Gospels. The epigraph from Jeremiah which introduced Shevchenko's earlier "The Caucasus" also resonates with his lamentation "at the crossroads of the nations" at the coming destruc-

tion of Jerusalem. The most striking phrase in the opening lines of the poem's invocation, "Тільки я, мов окаянний, / І день і ніч плачу / На розпуттях велелюдних, / І ніхто не бачить / І не бачить, і не знає — Оглухли, не чують;" [Like one accursed / I weep both day and night/ On the crossroads of the nations / Which no one can see/ They don't see and they don't know/ They've all gone deaf/" refers both to Jeremiah and to Paul from his letter to the Romans (9, 1-3) [New International Version] "I speak the truth in Christ... my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit— I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people..." The tropes and images from the Bible come one after the other as do the images of sowing and the harvest that echo Christ's parables on sowing the seed (see e.g., Matthew, 13, 37-39). The thrust of Shevchenko's inspired philippic is against the land- and serf-owning class who refuse to see the apocalyptic end that is waiting them or their descendants; implicitly, by the very fact of invoking Mickiewicz's conflation of the religious and the political in his Books of the Polish Nation and the Polish Pilgrimage [Księgi narodu i pielgrzymstwa polskiego] that had such a foundational impact on the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood, also served to remind the gentry of their complicity.

As much as anywhere in Shevchenko's poetry, this invocation of a Biblical, prophetic tone endows the "Epistle" with great power. As the poem goes on, however, it also introduces a series of internal tensions, even aporias, that point to the essential difficulties facing the poet: he is, as we see from the opening lines (14 and 15) where he speaks of the yoke imposed on the Ukrainian peasantry, and then clearly with the metaphor of "plowing" and "sowing disaster"— directly addressing the fundamental compact the Russian empire made throughout the 18th and well into the 19th century with the land- and serf-owning gentry (including, of course, also the Ukrainian one) that in return for their support and loyalty the state would allow it to enserf, i.e., enslave its peasantry—the great majority of the population. This compact and the gentry's collusion with it lasted until 1861, when after Russia's decisive defeat in the Crimean war of 1853-1855 the need for it to reform and industrialize became apparent even to the state itself.² Under Alexander II, Russia's peasantry was liberated by royal decree in 1861. As

² Russia's ability to implement both reforms and industrialization was largely ineffectual—as demonstrated by its defeat in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905 and especially in WWI. Industrialization became the hallmark project of Lenin and Stalin.

we have seen at the outset of this chapter, Shevchenko died only a few days before the official publication of the Imperial Manifesto of emancipation.³ Serfdom, of course, is what Shevchenko directly challenges in the “Epistle”; at the same time, however, he is also making a foundational and even more far-reaching case for a separate, specifically Ukrainian perspective on Ukrainian history and identity. The two moments are intrinsically and synergistically joined—which provides the national cause with the power of the emancipation of the utterly dispossessed (the great majority of the entire population) and of national self-realization with the power of narodovlastia or simply democracy. At the same time, the argument he was making to the Ukrainian land- and serf-owning class, was prescient both as to the process of nation-formation in Ukraine and to a revolutionary reckoning that would occur some seven decades later.⁴

There is, however, a broader issue—in effect a complex of attitudes in which Shevchenko combines populist attitudes, a “practical” and “down to earth” skepticism of enlightenment values that are cast here as “German wisdom” and which satirize the fashion for foreign thinking and Slavophilism. The various references to the “German teacher” (*kutsyi nimec’ uzluvatyi*) are a composite of the two leading philosophers of the 18th century Immanuel Kant (1724-1804; who was in fact physically very short and frail) and the highly influential early 19th century philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1830).

A key passage after the introductory part comes in lines 55-62 where the poet vents his rage at the very people he is addressing and presumably ultimately hoping to persuade to free their own serfs. As such it would seem deeply counterproductive—his rage and vituperation are evident: they brim in every line of the passage. One cannot but think that Shevchenko must have felt that for all their pretense and purported interest in German philosophy his literate gentry addressees required

a rude awakening from the person addressing them—especially since he himself was known to the entire Ukrainian public as a former serf:

Ох, якби те сталося, щоб ви не вертались,
Щоб там і здихали, де ви поросли!
Не плакали б діти, мати б не ридала,
Не чули б у Бога вашої хули.
І сонце не гріло б смердячого гною
На чистій, широкій, на вольній землі.
І люди б не знали, що ви за орли,
І не покивали б на вас головою.
Схаменіться! будьте люди,
Бо лихо вам буде.
Розкуються незабаром
Заковані люде,
Настане суд, заговорять
І Дніпро, і гори!
І потече сторіками
Кров у синє море
Дітей ваших... і не буде
Кому помагати.
Одцурається брат брата
І дитини мати.
І дим хмарою заступить
Сонце перед вами,
І навіки прокленеться
Своїми синами!
Умийтеся! образ Божий
Багном не скверніте.
Не дуріте дітей ваших,
Що вони на світі
На те тільки, щоб панувать...
Бо невчене око
Загляне їм в саму душу
Глибоко! глибоко!
Дознаються небожата,
Чия на вас шкура,
Та й засядуть, і премудрих
Немудрі одурять! (lines 55-90)

3 See above, pp.1-3.

4 The immediate setting of the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood was by moral choice and its own founding documents committed it to the abolition of serfdom—but the views of the entire land- and slave-owning class that Shevchenko was addressing here were hardly as unanimous; see my discussion in the Biography Chapter of the book. Shevchenko’s anticipation of a bloody and apocalyptic reckoning was, of course, prescient and came true during the Russian revolution that began in 1917 and soon turned bloody and terrorist after the Bolshevik takeover.

Oh, if you would only never come back,
 If you would just croak, where you presently are,
 The kids would not cry, mother would not weep,
 God would not hear your impudent guff.
 The sun would not heat the stench of your dung
 On land that is broad, expansive and free,
 No one would shake their heads in contempt,
 And they wouldn't see your high-flying wisdom.

Just stop. Try to be human again
 For woe will be your lot
 The folks in chains will soon be free
 And judgement day will come.
 Dnipro and the mountains will spea
 Your children's blood will flow in streams
 Into the wide blue sea.
 No one will be around to help:
 Brother will betray his brother
 And mother her children
 Clouds of smoke will hide the sun
 Forever and ever
 And you'll be cursed by your own sons.
 Wash off your filth; don't dare
 Besmirch the visage of the Lord.
 Don't fool your children
 That they are here to be in charge.
 Because unlettered eyes will look
 Deep into their souls
 And your darlings will discover
 Whose skin they have
 And those who knew it all will now
 Be fooled by simple folk.

Once it begins, his argument resembles an avalanche of issues and feelings, constantly threatening to overpower him; it deals perforce with an entire culture of mendacity and self-deception, where even learning and German philosophy can be turned into their very opposites—not enlightenment but self-deception and solipsism:

Якби ви вчилися так, як треба,
 То й мудрость би була своя.
 А то залізете на небо:
 «І ми не ми, і я не я,
 І все те бачив, і все знаю,
 Нема ні пекла, ані Раю.
 Немає й Бога, тільки я!
 Та куций німець узловатий,
 А більш нікого!..» — «Добре, брате,
 Що ж ти такеє?»
 «Нехай скаже
 Німець. Ми не знаєм». —
 Отак-то ви навчаєтесь
 У чужому краю!
 Німець скаже: «Ви моголи».
 «Моголи! моголи!»
 Золотого Тамерлана
 Онучата голі.
 Німець скаже: «Ви слав'яне».
 «Слав'яне! слав'яне!»
 Славних прадідів великих
 Правнуки погані!
 І Коллара читаєте
 З усієї сили,
 I
 Шафарика, і Ганка,
 І в слав'янофіли
 Так і претесь... І всі мови
 Слав'янського люду —
 Всі знаєте. А свої
 Дас[т]ьбі... Колись будем
 І по-своєму глаголать,
 Як німець покаже
 Та до того й історію
 Нашу нам розкаже, — (lines 91-126)

If you would learn as you should learn
 Then wisdom would be yours.
 But you press on into the sky
 “And we're not we, and I'm not I

And saw it all, and know it all,
 There is no hell, nor paradise
 There is no God, except for me
 And the puny German teacher
 And no one else.” “Alright, brother,
 What are you then?”
 “Let the German
 Tell us. We don’t know that.”
 So this is what you learn abroad.
 The German tells you: “You’re Mongols.”
 “We’re Mongols, we’re Mongols,”
 Naked descendants
 Of Tamerlane’s horde.
 The German will tell you: “You’re Slavs”
 “We’re Slavs, we’re Slavs,” ugly descendants
 Of famous forefathers.
 Scrambling to absorb your Kollar,
 afafarik and Hanka
 Cuddling up to Slavophiles,
 Learning every Slavic language
 Except your own. In time
 Perhaps, you’ll learn to speak it too
 When the German tells you how
 And teaches you your history too.

What comes next is the cherry on top—the piece de resistance, true as much then, in 1845, when Shevchenko wrote it, as it is today when Ukraine is still fighting for its survival; in the meantime it has become a folk saying, testifying to its verity and broad acceptance. It speaks, in effect, to society’s need for self-validation, even more—self-congratulation—and is recognizable as a general human trait. Shevchenko notes it (to jump to a 20th century formulation) as a form of false consciousness, an embellishment of the truth that often conceals a diametrically different reality. He presents it through dialogue—first the ought-to-be reality of popular, self-serving legend (within the poem’s quotation marks)—and then the actual reality, “on the ground,” the unvarnished version he sees:

А гвалту! а крику!
 «І гармонія, і сила,

Музика та й годі.
 А історія!.. поема
 Вольного народа!
 Що ті римляне убогі!
 Чортзна-що — не Брути!
 У нас Брути! і Коклеси!
 Славні, незабуті!
 У нас воля виростала,
 Дніпром умивалась,
 У голови гори слала,
 Степом укривалась!»
 Кров’ю вона умивалась,
 А спала на купак,
 На козацьких вольних трупах,
 Окрадених трупах!
 Подивіться лишень добре,
 Прочитайте знову
 Тую славу. Та читайте
 Од слова до слова,
 Не минайте ані титли,
 Ніже тії коми,
 Все розберіть... та й спитайте
 Тойді себе: що ми?..
 Чиї сини? яких батьків?
 Ким? за що закуті?..
 То й побачите, що ось що
 Ваші славні Брути:
 Раби, подножки, грязь Москви,
 Варшавське сміття — ваші пани
 Ясновельможнії гетьмани.
 Чого ж ви чванитесь, ви!
 Сини сердешної України!
 Що добре ходите в ярмі,
 Ще лучше, як батьки ходили.
 Не чваньтесь, з вас деруть ремінь,
 А з їх, бувало, й лій топили (lines 132-169).

The ruckus, the shouting:
 “Our history’s a noble poem

Of freedom-loving people
 Who were these ancient Romans?
 For God's sakes!—we've got Brutuses
 And Coccleses—famous, well-known!
 Freedom flourished here
 It built great burial mounds and washed
 Its feet in the Dnipro,
 It covered the entire steppe.”
 It washed itself in blood
 And slept on piles of Cossack corpses,
 Desecrated corpses.
 Just take a look at what's our glory,
 But read it word for word,
 Don't skip a beat or a contraction
 Take it all in, and ask yourselves:
 Who's sons are we?
 Who were our fathers?
 By whom, for what,
 Why were they put in chains?
 And then you'll see the face
 Of your famous Brutuses:
 Slaves and minions, Moscow dirt,
 Warsaw trash were your lords
 Your illustrious Hetmans,
 Why do you boast, you sons
 Of our enslaved Ukraine,
 That you walk better in your yokes
 Than did your fathers
 Don't boast: they just cut strips from out your hide
 But them they would just slowly roast.

The reality on the ground is conveyed both by the denial of what the past was about and with it also a reflection on the present, economic and cultural dispossession of Ukraine, as reflected in this image, one of the many that inform his vision:

І на Січі мудрий німець
 Картопельку садить,
 А ви її купуєте,
 Їсте на здоров'я

Та славите Запорожжя.
 А чиею кров'ю
 Ота земля напоєна,
 Що картопля родить, —
 Вам байдуже. Аби добра
 Була для городу!
 А чванитесь, що ми Польщу
 Колись завалили!..
 Правда ваша: Польща впала, Та й вас роздавила!
 (lines 176-189)

Nowadays the clever Germans
 Plant potatoes where the Sitch stood
 And you buy them and consume them
 And praise the Zaporozhians
 But you don't care
 Whose blood this land was soaked in—
 Just so the food is good.
 You also boast that once
 You brought down Poland.
 You're right—Poland did fall,
 But it also crushed you.

And then he gives his final, grief-laden historical, in effect, explicitly historiographic assessment:

Так от як кров свою лили
 Батьки за Москву і Варшаву,
 І вам, синам, передали
 Свої кайдани, свою славу! (ll. 190-193)

That's how your fathers' blood was shed
 For Moscow and for Warsaw
 And how they passed to you their sons
 Their chains and so-called glory.

What follows next is a long final part (lines 194-261) that is transformative for the whole poem. It begins with a continuing lament about how Ukraine's elite exploits and treats the country even more cruelly than the Poles did—but it is focused on the underlying moral and identity issue of the elite not understanding what Ukraine is (or, in effect, could be) and their massive

resistance to any change in their status, i.e., their loss of their slaves/serfs. Seemingly in mid-sentence, however, Shevchenko veers off and turns his argument, the poem itself, into an appeal for national reconciliation and solidarity, specifically asking the gentry to “embrace” their “youngest brother”—the peasantry. This, of course, is entirely prescient in terms of the historical development of Ukrainian society, but it would take decades and involve tectonic social dislocation. At the same time, even more so, this is what makes the “Epistle” the landmark poem it is—prefiguring Ukraine’s leap into modernity, nationhood and national will, and with it a tradition of resilience:

Доборолась Україна
 До самого краю.
 Гірше ляха свої діти
 Її розпинають.
 Заміс[т]ь пива праведную
 Кров із ребер точать.
 Просвітити, кажуть, хочуть
 Материні очі
 Современними огнями.
 Повести за віком,
 За німцями, недоріку,
 Добре, ведіть, покажуть,
 Нехай стара мати
 Навчається, як дітей тих
 Нових доглядати.
 Покажуть!.. за науку,
 Не турбуйтеся, буде
 Материна добра плата.
 Розпадеться луда
 На очах ваших неситих,
 Побачите славу,
 Живу славу дідів своїх
 І батьків лукавих.
 Не дуріте самі себе,
 Учітесь, читайте,
 І чужому научайтесь,
 Й свого не цурайтесь.
 Бо хто матір забуває,
 Того Бог карає,

Того діти цураються,
 В хату не пускають.
 Чужі люди проганяють,
 І немає злomu
 На всій землі безконечній
 Веселого дому... (lines 194-229)

Ukraine has reached its bitter end—
 Her own children now crucify her
 Worse than Poles did
 They spill her blood like it was beer
 And seek to teach her modern ways
 Leading her, a blind cripple.
 Go on and lead her, show her off
 Let her learn to care for her children
 She’ll pay you for her lessons.
 Your greedy eyes will shed their scales
 And you will see the living glory
 Of your grandparents and your fathers.
 But don’t delude yourself
 Go learn and read the foreign stuff
 But don’t deny what’s yours.
 For if you do forget your mother
 Then God will punish you.
 You will be shunned by your own children
 They’ll lock you out of house and home.
 And total strangers will avoid you.
 You’ll always be alone.

The very style of this injunction, particularly its last 10 lines, makes it seem folksy, a form of home-spun wisdom; in the reception it was often simplistically taken as near-nativism, as a form of basic socialization. Underneath it, of course, was also a subtle rhetorical shift, for while the addressees of the poem, from the very outset, were the literate gentry-intelligentsia, with their fashion for Kant and Hegel (“the German teacher”) and then their heroes, the Central European Slavic renaissance, with Kollar, Šafárik, and Hanka (who were all mentioned), the very directness and earthiness of the message suggests that at the same time Shevchenko is also speaking to the peasantry itself; they too are in on it—and they, too, are asked to embrace the upper classes. The actual finale is more than eloquent—it is transformative:

Отака-то наша слава,
 Слава України.
 Отак і ви прочитай[те],
 Щоб не сонним снились
 Всі неправди, щоб розкрились
 Високі могили
 Перед вашими очима,
 Щоб ви розпитали
 Мучеників, кого, коли,
 За що розпинали!
 Обніміте ж, брати мої,
 Найменшого брата —
 Нехай мати усміхнеться,
 Заплакана мати.
 Благословить дітей своїх
 Твердими руками
 І діточок поцілує
 Вольними устами.
 І забудеться срамотня
 Давня година,
 І оживе добра слава,
 Слава України,
 І світ ясний, невечерній
 Тихо засіяє...
 Обніміться ж, брати мої.
 Молю вас, благаю! (lines 236-261)

This then is the true glory
 Of our Ukraine.
 You too must now absorb it
 In order not to dream the lie
 So that the meaning of the burial mounds
 Will now reveal itself to you
 So you, too, can ask the martyrs
 Who, in fact, they really were
 And why they died on crosses.

Embrace then my brothers
 Your youngest brother
 So the weeping mother can smile
 And bless her children
 With work-hardened hands
 And kiss her children with lips now free.
 Ukraine's true glory will revive
 And we'll forget the shame
 And an eternal light will shine
 On you, as you embrace my brothers—
 I ask you, I beg you.

What is particularly striking here is that in this final coda Shevchenko is not so much pleading with his vast audience, which consists of nothing less than literally all Ukrainians, the living, dead, and still unborn, to effect this transformation—he is, literally before our eyes, performing it, as a fait accompli, in effect creating a *mise en scene*, where all the classes are present and where an archetypal and mythical mother Ukraine by her very presence and blessing (as posited in these concluding lines) signals a new Ukrainian collective and with it the national solidarity that it rests on. Through this vision, Shevchenko provides absolution for past collective transgressions—like the very slavery that as he is writing the poem still existed in Ukraine. Implicitly, that fact, and the shame of the historical past, which he had just recapitulated with unprecedented acuity and parrhesiastic frankness, will be forgotten [I *zabudetsia sramotnaia/ Davniaia hodyna*—and the reconciliation itself will also be blessed by Divine benediction [I *svit iasnyi, nevechernii/ Tykho zasiaie*]. This fundamental—and, of course, profoundly historical (and historiographic) transformation—is made according to his mythical vision, within which he is also the priest or magus of a new collective faith. It is an apotheosis of Ukraine—but within it, also, of Shevchenko himself.

An Excerpt from *Taras Shevchenko: A Portrait*
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⁷ In an almost cavalier fashion Shevchenko is referring here to the tortures used by the Poles and the Russians in suppressing Ukrainian resistance, drawing on such sources as the *History of the Russes* [Istoria Rusov], published in Moscow in 1846.

⁸ The fact that this vision was at first understood only partially, as one of simply debunking the Hetmans, etc., see fn. 1 above, as reflected in the memoir of Mykhailo Bilozerskyi recapping Shevchenko's first reading of the poem at Tarnovskii's residence, (see also PZTDT, vol 1, pg. 737) is immaterial. In time the reception proceeded to correct itself and Shevchenko's image and role became clearer. The task of keeping it in focus, however, is ongoing and endless.



We continue our series of conversations on decolonizing Slavic studies with Professor Vitaly Chernetsky, president of NTSU-A. In this interview, Professor Chernetsky shares his view on how Ukrainian studies gradually gained visibility and which prejudices against Ukraine and Ukrainian studies continue to persist.

DECOLONIZING SLAVIC STUDIES: an interview with **VITALY CHERNETSKY**

“There was a built-in prejudice that imperial Russian knowledge was neutral, universal, and rational, whereas any expertise coming from Ukrainians was considered local, specific, biased, and overly emotional.”

NTSh: *Could you speak about your academic training and how it shaped your early views on Slavic studies?*

Vitaly Chernetsky: I graduated from secondary school in Odesa, Ukraine, in 1986. That year I originally planned to apply to the Taras Shevchenko University in Kyiv, but it was the year of the Chernobyl accident, and because of that, the idea of going to Kyiv suddenly felt very worrisome.

At my graduation party, my high school principal encouraged my parents to let me try applying to Moscow State University. The Soviet Union was a highly centralized country. In secondary school, English had been one of my favorite subjects.

I applied and succeeded in getting into Moscow State University, which was very competitive. I entered the program called English philology, as it was known in Soviet times — combining linguistics with literary and cultural studies associated with the English language.

Because of Chernobyl, there was a larger-than-usual group of students from Ukraine in my cohort. We came from many different parts of Ukraine, and we bonded with one another. We spoke Ukrainian among ourselves and supported each other informally. At the same time, I felt that Moscow, while very diverse, was also an imperial center. I definitely felt othered.

Both as a Ukrainian and as someone from Odesa, I encountered prejudice. Even though I am not Jewish, because of the stereotypical association of the city of Odesa with Jewishness, I experienced what I would call secondhand antisemitism. That was shocking and unexpected.

I should not say that all my Moscow experiences were negative. I had a very diverse and talented group of classmates from all corners of the then still-existing Soviet Union, as well as many international students. These were the early years of perestroika, a time of social change.

Ukraine at that time was still quite repressive in the final years of the regime, whereas in Moscow in 1986-1987, you could feel the space of freedom expanding almost daily. Each day one more political topic was no longer taboo. You could see previously banned art being exhibited, new literary works appearing, and bold, innovative things happening in theater.

It was fascinating to observe. At the time, my formal training focused primarily on linguistics. In Soviet days, much literary scholarship was seen as ideologically tainted. Many scholars tried to avoid overtly political or ideologically charged topics by turning to structural analysis. Linguistics was considered safer — at least English linguistics was seen as relatively distant from overt political pressure. (Ukrainian linguistics, of course, would not have been considered neutral.)

But this somewhat escapist approach began to feel insufficient, especially because I was interested in culture and contemporary cultural innovation. Even as a linguist, I sought research topics that were interdisciplinary — bridging linguistics, literary studies, and cultural analysis.

Through a friend, I became connected to the university student theater company. I was not active in theater myself, but it became an important intellectual space for me. Even during the Brezhnev stagnation era, it had been a place where semi-banned or underground cultural activities took place. The theater also served as a platform for contemporary poets to give readings.

In 1987, I discovered contemporary nonconformist poetry there. It was a revelation. These poets were writing in Russian, but they came from many different backgrounds. In that group, there was one remarkable woman — Nina Iskrenko — born in Russia, from the Volga region, with a Ukrainian last name. She was an extraordinary avant-gardist. Her readings were powerful, and her poetry had a transformative impact on me. I would say that encountering her work in 1987 literally shifted my intellectual trajectory. From that moment, I knew I wanted to study contemporary culture, especially poetry.

Moscow State University was a very good place to receive a fundamental education, and there were also opportunities to engage—especially since it was the time of perestroika—with some new trends that were being unbanned, had just been unbanned, or were about to be unbanned. However, it was still not systematic. It was not teaching us independent critical thinking. It was mostly overwhelming us with facts.

So, you had a lot of facts and a lot of practical skills, but you did not necessarily have the vision—the broader perspective—of what to do with them or how to make a difference in the world.

Then something unexpected happened. In 1989, I was informed that I had been selected for a study abroad program in the United States. I had never applied and never imagined such a possibility. As someone without connections, I assumed such opportunities were inaccessible. Apparently, it was a purely meritocratic selection. I was one of two students from my cohort chosen.

I did not get to choose where I would study. I was assigned to Duke University. I had heard of Duke and knew it was a strong university, but I only realized how fortunate I was after I arrived.

In August 1989, I came to the United States — my first trip outside the Soviet Union. When I was ten, I was supposed to attend a children's summer camp in Bulgaria, but after a classmate reported that I had said something critical about the Young Pioneer Organization, I was removed from the list and not allowed to go. Arriving in the U.S. in 1989 was my first experience abroad.

The Berlin Wall fell during my first semester. It was surreal to witness such historic events from the United States.

At Duke, I was assigned to the English department. In the late 1980s, Duke was one of the major centers of innovative literary theory in the United States and perhaps worldwide. Fredric Jameson headed the Literature Program, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick was one of the leading figures in the English department.

Somewhat naively, I asked my advisor whether I might join Professor Sedgwick's graduate seminar. She agreed to let me audit it. She and the graduate students welcomed me warmly and took me under their wing. This group included extraordinary scholars — among them Sara Danus, who would later become permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy, and Saree Makdisi, nephew of Edward Said and now a professor at UCLA.

Despite my strong education in the Soviet Union, I felt I needed to grow further. I wanted to operate at that level. Studying postmodernism with Jameson — arguably the leading theorist of postmodernism — was transformative. Both Sedgwick and Jameson became mentors in a way that was entirely new to me. In the Soviet system, professor–student relationships were distant, and discovering supportive, intellectually generous mentorship was life-changing.

And yes, that pushed me to try to do more. And I also got to know people in the Slavic program there, which did not have anything on Ukrainian studies. But among the professors there at the time who were very supportive of me was Thomas Lahusen, who now teaches at the University of Toronto. He is originally from Switzerland and is doing interdisciplinary work. And at the time, he was engaged in critical study of socialist realism.

And that too was a revelation that this horrible, bad official Soviet literature can be studied through interesting, serious, critical scholarship. So Thomas Lahusen, I would say, was the third academic mentor that I had at Duke who was very important for me.

Encouraged by these mentors, I applied to graduate school. In 1990, I returned briefly to the Soviet Union and then came back to Duke for a master's in Slavic. Funding was available for only one year, so I applied to PhD programs elsewhere and entered the Comparative Literature and Literary Theory program at the University of Pennsylvania.

At Penn, I developed my dissertation on postmodernism and postcolonialism in Russia and Ukraine.

The program allowed intellectual exploration, and my dissertation was largely self-guided. I sometimes wish I had received more structured mentorship, but I remain proud of that work.

As a graduate student assistant, I also worked for Slavic Review for three years, gaining insight into the field from within. Earlier, at Duke, I had worked in the university library under Orest Pelech, a Ukrainian-American Slavic librarian. Soviet libraries' stacks were closed; Duke's open stacks were astonishing. That experience expanded my understanding of academic infrastructure. And Orest was a wonderful mentor and a very nice person.

NTSh: *Your journey toward your academic position here in the States is fascinating in many ways. When you reflect on how Ukraine was represented in the past, is it possible to say that Ukraine, Ukrainian studies, had some institutionalized status?*

VCh: It was very hard to find Ukrainian studies. At Penn, the Ukrainian language was offered through a business school initiative funded by the Lauder family, owners of the Estée Lauder Cosmetics. Professor Leonid Rudnytsky, who at the time was at La Salle University, taught the language, and through him, I connected with members of the Ukrainian academic community and the Shevchenko Scientific Society.

But Ukrainian studies were marginal. There was no institutional structure bringing Ukrainian scholars together. And so, no, I did not see that institutional visibility right away.

It was becoming more visible as we got further into the 1990s. And here I need to acknowledge and pay debt, and praise another great colleague who became a dear friend—the late Mark von Hagen, who taught at Columbia.

I deeply admired him as somebody whose academic background was not in Ukrainian studies, but who became a very passionate convert to the field Ukrainian studies and championed its importance. Especially after he assumed a position of leadership as director of the Harriman Institute at Columbia, von Hagen became one of the most instrumental people to promote the value of Ukrainian studies. The famous 1995 roundtable debate in Slavic Review was around his essay “Does Ukraine Have a History?” The title was deliberately provocative. Of course, Ukraine has a history, but the point is that it has to be the subject of history, not an object of other nations or other people's forces; the point is that it has its own agency and its own presence.

In the mid-1990s, as I was finishing my dissertation, I was literally seeing how the Ukrainian presence was coming alive and becoming visible more and more. And then I was greatly honored: in 1996, a position was created at Columbia University's Slavic Department with the focus on Ukrainian studies. I was invited to apply and then offered that position. As a very young twenty-six-year-old scholar, I tried enthusiastically to build a comprehensive Ukrainian curriculum in a Slavic department, something that, besides Harvard at that point, did not exist anywhere else in the United States academia. The fact that Columbia, in 1996, gave me an open license to teach a comprehensive Ukrainian curriculum was in many ways indicative of the changes that had started to take place. I am sure I made some mistakes due to my inexperience at the time, but I am still proud of my record at Columbia.

At the time, there were several colleagues in the graduate program at Columbia who later became very important advocates for Ukrainian studies. I am thinking, for example, of Valeria Sobol, now a Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I directed her PhD minor on the Ukrainian romanticism in Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish.

NTSh: *But on a larger scale, how did Slavic departments respond to the rising visibility of Ukraine and Ukrainian studies? As you described, the experience at Columbia was positive, but what about the field more generally, so to speak? Well, Columbia was an anomaly. Even there, unfortunately, things did not last.*

VCh: Columbia was somewhat anomalous. I am grateful for the seven years that I had there, but, as you know, I had to leave the university. At that time, I was revising my dissertation into a book. When I attempted to publish my first monograph — a comparative study of Russian and Ukrainian post-Soviet cultural responses — I faced resistance. Basically, nobody was taking the subject and value of Ukrainian culture seriously. Whenever I received publishers' feedback, I was asked to remove the section on Ukraine and publish a book focused only on Russia—or, if I really wanted to keep the section on Ukraine, I was told I should include information on all fifteen former Soviet republics. It thus took me a very long time to place my first book with a publisher.

This reflected the marginalization of Ukrainian topics in the late 1990s and early 2000s. It took years of struggle to prove that Ukrainian studies could be a valuable topic, deserved to be heard on its own terms.

I also experienced explicit prejudice. I saw how little knowledge there was of things Ukrainian, and how many negative stereotypes, unfortunately, existed. As a young graduate student presenting at a conference, I had a horrible, traumatic experience. This conversation took place after a panel. A senior colleague came up to me and said, "I know that all Ukrainians are anti-Semites. Prove to me that you are not an anti-Semite." That comment had nothing to do with my presentation. It was an act of emotional abuse and assault. I blocked it for years from my memory, but I am speaking out about this now because this is a real harm that I experienced. And of course, colleagues making such prejudiced and bigoted comments about Ukrainians could not even fathom that some Ukrainians are Jewish, or some Ukrainians are parts of mixed families. I am not Jewish myself, but I have Jewish relatives within my family.

Such incidents demonstrate the hostility that Ukrainian advocacy sometimes encountered. As a senior scholar today, I consciously mentor my students to help them navigate and resist such situations.

NTSh: *In your recent research, you highlight epistemic injustice, particularly at the institutional level within academia. Very briefly, what are some ways to change the attitudes toward Ukraine and Ukrainian studies that still persist? Even today, after years of struggle, there remains skepticism and a lack of confidence in the future of Ukrainian studies. Slavic departments, unfortunately, change very slowly in terms of major requirements. In most Slavic departments, Ukrainian studies is still a minor field.*

VCh: Epistemic injustice describes how certain knowledge systems are marginalized. Ukrainian knowledge production was treated as local and biased, while imperial Russian knowledge was framed as universal and neutral. Addressing this requires structural change and education of those in privileged positions. After February 2022, many scholars — especially in Europe — made serious efforts to learn Ukrainian and develop projects. In North America, progress has been slower and more dependent on individual goodwill.

For people in the West, epistemic injustice is associated, first and foremost, with gender or race. We had a famous case in which a woman scientist won the Nobel Prize in physics while still an associate professor at her university, because she had not been promoted to full professor; her research was not being taken seriously.

Only after she won the Nobel Prize did the university grant her a full professorship. This is an example of epistemic injustice that is in no way related to Ukraine, but historically, we know how, for example, the position of women in science and their contributions were marginalized and ignored. Similarly, this has happened to scholars of color.

The argument I am making is that Ukrainian knowledge production was treated in a very similar way. There was a built-in prejudice that imperial Russian knowledge was neutral, universal, and rational, whereas any expertise coming from Ukrainians was considered local, specific, biased, and overly emotional. This represents a clear, implicit structural bias. Therefore, structural changes are necessary.

There are many ways in which philosophers who focus on epistemic injustice seek to bring about change and address existing injustices. One of them is the education of people in positions of privilege; they need to acknowledge that they may hold such biases, even if they were previously unaware of them.

I would say that after February 2022, we experienced a moment of shock and horror, and Ukrainian studies, as well as Ukraine more broadly, gained many more friends. Many people had their eyes opened to this historic and systemic prejudice and have been trying to address it. I see this happening to a greater extent in Europe, unfortunately, than in North America.

I know many examples of Slavists in different European countries—for example, in Germany and Norway—who did not speak a word of Ukrainian and knew nothing about Ukrainian culture until February 2022, but who have done remarkable work over the past four years. They are now at an advanced level of proficiency, leading serious projects and developing strong institutional ties. The European system, with its large-scale collaborative projects, is somewhat more conducive to this kind of transformation than the way humanities knowledge production is organized in North America.

We need to build networks of allies, even though it is exhausting. It is also unfair that the labor falls on us. People in marginalized subject positions know this well: the dominant world places on you the burden of proving that what you are saying is important and valuable.

The second step is to develop a strong network of allies. This work must proceed from the ground up. Ukrainians have a powerful example of grassroots impact in the founding of the three chairs at Harvard. That achievement was accomplished by the Ukrainian community over decades, but it was largely an internal grassroots project. What we need now is an external grassroots project.

NTSh: *Would it be possible to outline an ideal picture of what a decolonized Slavic studies could look like?*

VCh: My vision includes regional studies grounded in both Slavic and non-Slavic indigenous cultures. It is also a study of diasporic cultures that originated in that part of the world, and it pays attention to the complicated historical negotiations of power and influence. It advocates for a balanced and rich approach to the diversity that we have.

It also ensures that multiple languages are promoted and that people are exposed to them. There is an emphasis on the idea that knowing more than one language is a great benefit. One of the advantages of studying related languages is that it becomes easier to acquire additional ones. Once you know two, the third, fourth, and fifth—at least at the level of reading knowledge—come much more easily.

This means positioning the field around richness: the discovery of diverse histories and cultural wealth, but also of painful and complicated histories.

It means not being silent and not being ashamed to speak about difficult chapters from both the past and the present. No one is perfect; every human being and every community makes mistakes along the way. The goal is to showcase both the richness and the wisdom we gain from encounters with these many different cultures, as well as the darker lessons we learn.

It requires seeing the world—including this part of the world—as messy and diverse. This imperfect diversity is not something to be forcibly arranged into neat boxes. It must be approached as it is. We need to find ways to address and appreciate its many aspects and, as a result, build constructive, future-oriented knowledge.

SUMMER LANGUAGE GRANT



Elizabeth Crim is a current first-year PhD student at Stanford University in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. She holds a bachelor's degree in Russian, Spanish, and Art History from the University of Colorado Boulder, as well as an M.A. in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies at the same institution. Her research centers around contemporary Ukrainian art and Eastern European Avant-Garde traditions from the beginning of the 20th century.



Stuart McAdams is a sophomore at the University of Pittsburgh, where he is also an Army ROTC cadet. Upon graduation, he plans to commission as a Second Lieutenant and pursue a career in Military Intelligence with a focus on Eastern Europe. This summer, Stuart will attend the Harvard Ukrainian Summer Institute, where he will study Ukrainian language, politics, and society!



Samantha Sharp is a PhD candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature at Binghamton University. Originally from Florida, as an undergraduate she studied English and Secondary Education at Flagler College, and later earned her MA in English from Boston College. As a doctoral student, she has focused primarily on literary theory and modernism in Eastern and Central Europe, her dissertation project comparing avant-garde poets writing in Slavic languages, including Ukrainian. Her academic writing has been published in the collection *Cinematic Ecosystems: Screen Encounters with More-than-Humans in the Era of Environmental*



Crisis, and her creative writing can be found in various literary magazines including *EcoTheo Review* and *Gulf Stream Magazine*. She has spent time living in Armenia and Estonia, and currently resides in upstate New York with her two cats.

Steven Jug is a historian with a dual appointment in the Department of History and Department of Modern Languages and Cultures at Baylor University. He is also co-director of the Slavic and East European Studies Program at Baylor. He designed and began teaching new courses on the history of Ukraine and on the history of east central Europe in the Fall of 2022 to expand departmental offerings beyond the two-semester Russian history sequence. Steven was born and raised in Toronto, Canada among the Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish diaspora communities.



William Layton is an MA student in the Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies program at Harvard's Davis Center. Originally from downstate Illinois, he completed his BA at the University of Virginia in 2025 with Phi Beta Kappa honors. A historian, his research explores public discourse, cultural production, and dissent in Soviet Ukraine following the death of Stalin in 1953, with a specific focus on how Ukrainian national identity was represented and negotiated by both political and cultural elites. He is excited to be continuing his study of Ukrainian language at the Harvard Ukrainian Summer Institute this summer with the generous support of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in the U.S.

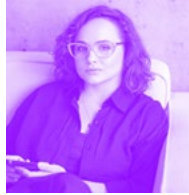
UKRAINIAN STUDIES RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS



Hanna Zaremba-Kosovych (1990), PhD in Sociology, Senior Research Fellow of the Department of Social Anthropology (The Ethnology Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). Her research focuses on social (in)justice, disability studies, intellectual disability, and qualitative methods. She was an analyst in a number of research projects, including WARPAT: The Story of the Rescue of People with Disabilities during the Full-Scale Russian Invasion of Ukraine, You Can Believe: The History of People with Disabilities since 1945 to 2020 (Germany–Ukraine), among others. Zaremba-Kosovych is a co-author of the book *History Is Not Without Us: The Formation of the Movement for the Rights of People with Disabilities in Ukraine*.



Dimko Zhluktenko is an active-duty Ukrainian soldier, drone pilot, and defense technologist with frontline experience in drone warfare. He holds an MPA from the Ukrainian Catholic University and co-founded Dzyga's Paw, a charitable initiative crowdfunding defense equipment for Ukrainian forces. A published author and analyst, his work has appeared in *War on the Rocks*, the *Kyiv Independent*, and other outlets. His fellowship research explores two interconnected questions: how Ukraine transformed the modern battlefield through drone warfare, and how Ukrainians are writing that history while the war is still being fought.

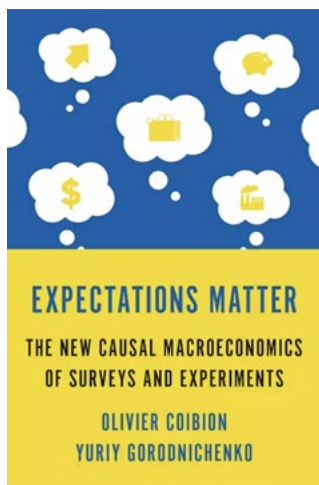


Halyna Hleba is an art historian, curator, and researcher focusing on contemporary Ukrainian art, visual war studies, and memory studies. She is the co-founder and former editor-in-chief of The Wartime Art Archive and currently a Non-Residential Scholar at the Petro Jacyk Program for the Study of Ukraine at the University of Toronto (2025–2026). Her work combines academic research, curatorial practice, and the development of public and lecture programs dedicated to the experiences of war, wartime art, and memory culture. Her current research focuses on artists who join the military, exploring how this experience reshapes identity and transforms the visibility of war in historical perspective.



Hanna Dosenko is a PhD candidate in the Anthropology Department at the University of California, Irvine. She traces pathways of fallen Ukrainian soldiers, and the military personnel, forensic experts, and volunteers who recover and identify them, showing how this work reshapes ties between the living and the dead. Writing at the seam of war and loss, she explores what it means to live alongside death, and to make kin across its threshold.

НОВІ ВИДАННЯ ЧЛЕНІВ НТШ-А



Olivier Coibion and Yuriy Gorodnichenko. **Expectations Matter: The New Causal Macroeconomics of Surveys and Experiments.**

Princeton University Press, 2026. 336 pp.

In this book, Olivier Coibion and Yuriy Gorodnichenko present a fresh empirical approach: using randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to study the causal impact of expectations. Drawing on more than a decade of their research, they show how targeted information treatments can generate experimental variation in beliefs—making it possible to measure how those beliefs influence real-world decisions. Along the way, they reassess the limits of the traditional rational expectations framework and offer a richer, evidence-based picture of how people form and act on their views about the economy.

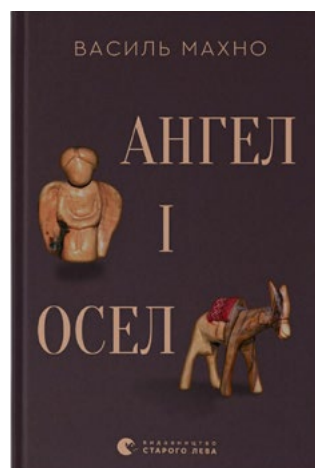


Wasył Machno. **Dom na siedmiu wiatrach.**

PIW. Warszawa 2026, 280 s.

Tom poezji “Dom na siedmiu wiatrach” autorstwa Wasyla Machny to literacka podróż, która zabiera czytelnika w głąb wielowymiarowego świata, gdzie osobiste doświadczenia przeplatają się z uniwersalnymi refleksjami nad tożsamością i przynależnością. Ten zbiór stu nowych wierszy, mistrzowsko przetłumaczony przez Bohdana Zadurę, to zaproszenie do intymnego dialogu z poetą, który z niezwykłą wrażliwością i kunsztem porusza struny ludzkiej duszy.

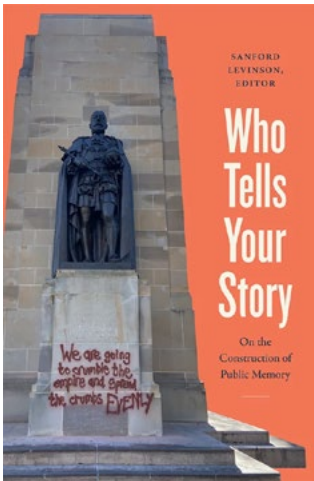
Wasył Machno to postać niezwykła w świecie współczesnej literatury - ukraiński poeta, eseista, dramaturg i tłumacz, którego twórczość przekroczyła już granice wielu krajów, docierając do czytelników w Niemczech, Serbii, Litwie, Anglii, Czechach, Hiszpanii czy Izraelu. W Polsce zyskał uznanie dzięki poprzednim publikacjom, takim jak “Wędrowcy”, “34 wiersze o Nowym Jorku i nie tylko” oraz “Nitka”. Każda z tych książek stanowiła ważny krok w budowaniu mostów między kulturami i językami, a “Dom na siedmiu wiatrach” kontynuuje tę misję, wzbogacając ją o nowe, fascynujące perspektywy.



Василь Махно. **Ангел і осел.**

3 віршами про вогонь і воду. Роман. Львів: ВСЛ, 2026. - 576 с.

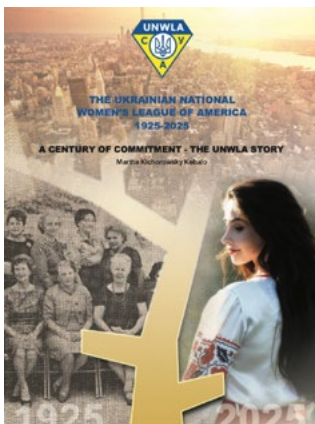
Роман «Ангел і осел. 3 віршами про вогонь і воду» — це багаточасова історія мандрів і повертань, пам'яті й творчості, глибоких сенсів і символів. Тут приватне переплітається з історичним, а час і простір — Бучач, Єрусалим — стають тлом для мультикультурності, притчевості й інтелектуальних рефлексій. Письменник Віктор Прейснер живе на околиці Рівергеда, у тихій мальовничій місцині. Роман про євангельські часи, над яким він працює уже кілька років, має стати знаковим у його творчості. Перед Віктором Прейснером на робочому столі — фігурки ангела та осла, колись він їх купив у Єрусалимі. Ці самі фігурки потім він зможе віднайти у будинку, який поруйнує буревій. Але якою буде доля його роману?



***Who Tells Your Story. On the Construction of Public Memory.* Editor: Sanford Levinson. Contributors: Deborah R Gerhardt, Zach Bray, Randall Kennedy, Aleksandra Kuczynska-Zonik, Larysa Kurylas, Kimberly Probolus, Anna Saunders, Richard C Schragger, Kermit Roosevelt, Emily Greenfield, Bruce Scates, Agata Tatarenko.**

Duke University Press. 2026, 320 pp.

Who Tells Your Story gathers contemporary analyses of monument and commemoration controversies from across the United States and the world. Sanford Levinson and the contributors in this volume ask whose stories get to be told, who gets to tell them, what happens when monuments disappear, and how these memorials impact national narratives. From the removal of Confederate statues in the United States and those of Lenin in Ukraine to the efficacy of national holidays in furthering the causes they claim to celebrate, these essays dissect how the collaborative process of memorialization brings purported intention, private agenda, and final outcome into constant friction with each other. *Who Tells Your Story* is an accessible and provoking examination on public memory and what forces shape it.

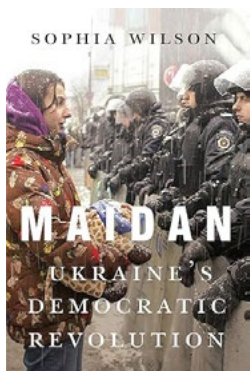


Martha Kichorowsky Kebalo. *A Century of Commitment—the UNWLA Story: Empowering Ukrainian Women’s Community, Citizenship, and Commitment in the Ukrainian Diaspora.*

Ukrainian National Women’s League of America, 2025.

The UNWLA Story chronicles the extraordinary 100-year journey of the Ukrainian National Women’s League of America (UNWLA), a testament to the enduring power of community, culture, and unwavering dedication. From its humble beginnings in 1925 with a handful of visionary women in New York City, the UNWLA blossomed into a formidable force, shaping the Ukrainian-American diaspora and profoundly impacting Ukraine itself. The book details its origins, driven by a desire to unite Ukrainian women, preserve cultural heritage, and advocate for Ukraine’s independence. It highlights the UNWLA’s humanitarian efforts during events like the Holodomor and its role in cultural preservation through folk art exhibitions. Significant contributions made during and after World War II are discussed, including support for displaced Ukrainians and the formation of alliances with organizations such as the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America and the World Federation of Ukrainian Women’s Organizations (WFUWO).

НОВІ ВИДАННЯ, СПОНСОРОВАНІ НТШ-А



Sophia Wilson.
Maidan: Ukraine's Democratic Revolution
(McGill-Queen's Studies in Protest, Power, and Resistance). McGill-Queen's University Press. – 366 pp.

The 2013–14 Maidan Revolution, or Revolution of Dignity, was far more than a series of protests: the coalescence of complex social networks formed a powerful grassroots movement that restored democracy to a country slipping into authoritarianism. Maidan gives a carefully researched account of the underbelly of the resistance process, investigating how participants self-organized to create the resistance, why the peaceful movement eventually turned to violence, and how the revolutionary process changed those who came to change the country. Democratic revolution is a state–society dialogue about rights, and the regime that results depends on the ideas negotiated during revolutionary socialization. Offering an unparalleled opportunity to see that negotiation in action, Maidan draws on more than one hundred personal interviews, oral histories, legal documents, and court hearings. The Ukrainian state used violence and violations of due process to suppress the resistance, thereby declaring new boundaries in rights relations. In turn, the people pushed back in multiple arenas – the protest square, courtrooms, hospitals, churches, and media – to successfully challenge the constitutionality of the state's actions. Western media accounts tend to oversimplify the Revolution of Dignity as a backlash against President Viktor Yanukovich's decision not to sign a European Union agreement. The reality had far deeper implications for the geopolitics of the region. Sophia Wilson's account of the revolution, and the Kremlin propaganda about it, underscores why it is impossible to understand Russia's invasion of Ukraine without first understanding what fuelled the Maidan: the affirmation of democracy and the rooting out of Russian puppet authoritarianism.

From the Olha Mociuk Fund



Володимир
Маслійчук. **Церква
на російсько-
українському
прикордонні.
Білгородська єпархія
у 1660-х - 1740-х рр.**
Львів: Видавництво УКУ, 2025. 356 с.
(Серія «Київське християнство», т. 38).

Проект Білгородської єпархії був частиною великих трансформацій Московської Церкви, що мав упорядкувати церковне життя на системі укріплень (Білгородській укріпленій лінії (черті)), але творення цієї церковної одиниці не враховувало великий переселенський потік вірян Київської митрополії зі своїми звичаями й особливостями, визначеними великим реформуванням Православної Церкви за митрополита Петра Могили і його наступників. На 40-ві рр. XVIII ст. Білгородська єпархія усе ж постає як значний осередок релігійного життя. Велика кількість церков і пастви, наявність істотного навчального закладу, бюрократизація керівництва та водночас істотні відходи від вимог літургійних практик і вказівок Синоду визначали, вочевидь, культурне життя прикордонного простору. Численні казуси будуть важливими деталями для розуміння пізнішого постановня модерних ідентичностей, що незрідка відображено в церковній документації. Інакше кажучи, на прикордонні, здавалося би надетнічні структури, так чи так займалися етнічним маркуванням, визнаючи ці низові різниці. Простір контактів завжди приховує дуже багато відкриттів і неоднозначних висновків.

З Фонду Івана і Єлизавети Хлопецьких

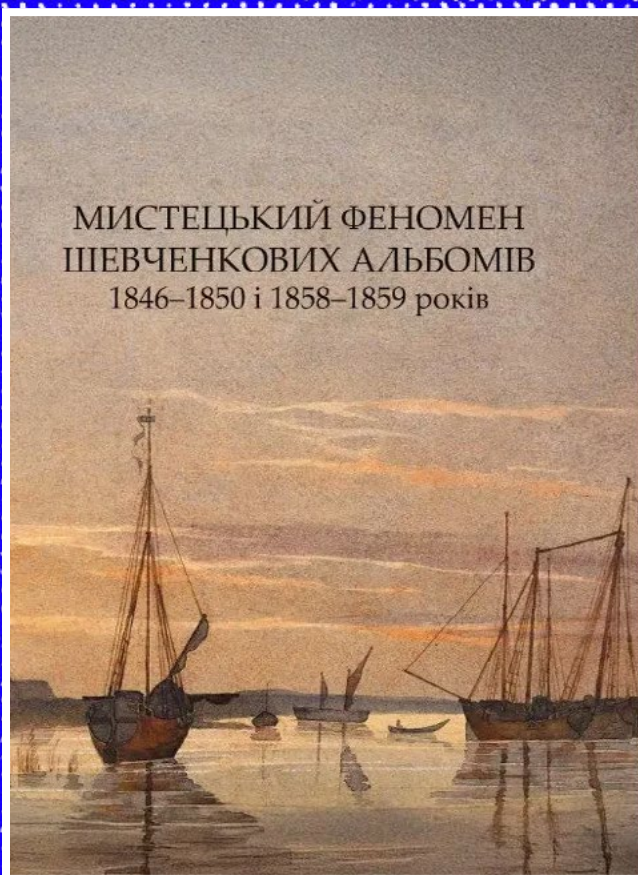


**Олександр
Боронь.
«Од слова
до слова...».
Дальші студії над
Шевченковою
творчістю.**

Київ: Критика, 2025. 432 с.

Новий збірник шевченкознавчих нарисів київського дослідника, завідувача відділу шевченкознавства Інституту літератури, члена-кореспондента НАН України Олександра Бороня тематично, методологічно і структурно продовжує дві його книжки, що побачили світ у видавництві «Критика» раніше: «Ніже тії коми...» (2022) і «Ані титли...» (2024); про них можна прочитати у ч. 11–12 «Критики» за 2022 рік і в ч. 5–6 за 2024-й. Із трьох десятків уміщених у книжці текстів два написано спеціально для неї, решту здебільшого було опубліковано в журналі «Слово і Час», збірнику наукових праць «Шевченкознавчі студії», «Критиці» та ще декількох виданнях у 2023–2025 роках, а ще деякі заплановано до друку в журнальній версії водночас із книжковою. Зібрані під однією обкладинкою нариси згруповано у п'ять розділів, із яких найбільший – «Текстологічні, джерелознавчі та коментаторські аспекти». Усі розвідки наново переглянуто для книжкового видання, виправлено помічені фактичні помилки й недогляди, зроблено необхідні доповнення. Кожен окремий сюжет (або декілька сюжетів, якщо стаття складається з низки самостійних розділів) автор береться розглянути з різних ракурсів і занурити в різні контексти.

З Фонду Івана і Єлизавети Хлопецьких



**Мистецький феномен
Шевченкових альбомів
1846–1850 і 1858–
1859 років. Альбом-
монографія.**

Ірина Приліпко, Надія Бойко, Олександр Боронь, Олена Гомирева, Станіслав Росовецький. За наукової редакції Олександра Бороня.

Київ: Критика, 2025. 472 с.

На відміну від студій над літературними текстами й образотворчістю, вивчення Шевченкових альбомів довгий час перебувало на периферії уваги науковців. Це було зумовлено допоміжним характером самих альбомів, їхнім ніби другорядним місцем серед артефактів, що зафіксували результати творчої діяльності

поета й художника. Збережено загалом п'ять Шевченкових альбомів: цілісно — 1842–1843 років, 1845 року, 1846–1850 і 1848–1850 років, а також розрізнені аркуші з альбома 1858–1859 років. Перші два вже відтворено сучасними засобами поліграфії; зокрема, акварельний альбом 1845 року — не раз. Натомість два саморобні нотатники часів заслання донедавна було репродуковано лише частково. Перший альбом у Шевченка з'явився завдяки Карлу Брюллову, викладачеві Академії мистецтв, який вимагав від учнів у вільний час замальовувати все, що привертає увагу живописністю або становить інтерес для опанування складнощів рисунка. Цей, власне художницький, тип альбома в зрілого Шевченка набув синтетичного характеру, став альбомом-записником, за влучним означенням Павла Зайцева, адже митець використовував його не лише для етюдних замальовок та ескізів олівцем і пером, чорнилом, тушшю або сепією, а й для записів фольклорних текстів. Це було зручне місце створення та зберігання образотворчих і текстових матеріалів, що могли знадобитися в подальшій роботі. Шевченкові саморобні дорожні альбоми 1846–1850 років, що зберігаються у відділі рукописних фондів і текстології Інституту літератури ім. Т. Г. Шевченка НАН України, відомі переважно фаховим дослідникам творчості мистця, а загал, якщо й чув про них, то тільки завдяки самозображенню напіводягнутого художника в одному з них. Альбом-монографія, яку підготували Надія Бойко, Олександр Боронь, Ірина Приліпко (Інститут літератури ім. Т. Г. Шевченка НАН України), Олена Гомирева (Національна академія образотворчого мистецтва і архітектури України) та професор Київського національного університету ім. Тараса Шевченка, нині покійний Станіслав Росовецький (1945–2022), містить точне відтворення альбомів 1846–1850 і 1848–1850 років, а також реконструкцію останнього із відомих нині Шевченкових альбомів, який називають «сулієвським» (за прізвищем одного з попередніх власників) або «курсунським» (за місцем створення частини малюнків). Обидва дорожні альбоми 1846–1850 років у виданні докладно описано й розглянуто послідовно, аркуш за аркушем. На основі листування, мемуарів, офіційних документів тощо відтворено біографічні обставини появи тих чи тих поетичних і фольклорних записів, малюнків та начерків під час перебування Шевченка спершу в Україні в 1846–1847 роках, а згодом на засланні, зокрема, коли він мусив долучитися

до Аральської описової експедиції. Альбом-монографія подає широку панораму Шевченкових щасливих мандрівок Україною (1846 — початок 1847), фатального арешту в квітні 1847-го, випробувань під час Аральської описової експедиції влітку 1848-го і 1849-го років, буднів зимівлі на Косаралі та в Раїмі (1848–1849), перебування в Оренбурзі взимку 1849/1850 року. Видання розкриває перед зацікавленим читачем напружен перипетії Шевченкового життя: від ідилічних картин до майже цілковитої зневіри й безнадії. Альбом 1848–1850 років як творчий нотатник Аральської описової експедиції відрізняється від альбома 1846–1850 років насамперед локалізованішими об'єктами зображення. Тут панує мариністика, є багато зарисовок берегової лінії Аральського моря, трохи менше — флори й фауни Надаралля, життя й побуту учасників походу та місцевого населення. До альбома рисунків 1858–1859 років входять копії фрагментів Рембрандтового офорта, ескіз до офорта «Дві дівчини», численні начерки пейзажів та окремих рослин. Копії з Рембрандта й ескіз до офорта художник змалював у Петербурзі 1858 року (можливо, втім, що й 1859-го), пейзажні начерки зроблено під час подорожі Україною влітку 1859-го. У сукупності замальовки, начерки, чернетки творів, фольклорні записи становлять цілість, яку нині тільки умовно розглядають за окремими сегментами в мистецтвознавчому, текстологічному, фольклористичному та біографічному аспектах. У виданні зроблено спробу відчитати альбоми в певній послідовності — аркуш за аркушем, не розмежовуючи видів творчої діяльності мистця. Довідковий апарат видання складається зі списку джерел і літератури; покажчика літературних і малярських творів із зазначенням дат створення (переписування) та публікації; покажчика імен; довідок про авторів. Видання підготовано і здійснено за підтримки Наукового Товариства імені Шевченка в Америці (з фонду Івана та Елізабети Хлопецьких) в рамках Ювілейного проекту НТШ-А у співпраці Інституту Критики з Інститутом джерелознавства НТШ-А і відділом шевченкознавства Інституту літератури імені Т. Г. Шевченка НАН України

З Фонду Івана і Елізавети Хлопецьких

НОВІ ЧЛЕНИ НТШ-А



Аліє Асанова (Alie Asanova) – філологиня і педагогиня. Докторка філософії з педагогіки Херсонського державного університету. Здобула магістерський та бакалаврський ступені в Таврійському національному університеті імені В.І. Вернадського в Сімферополі. Працює асистентом вчителя в школі Archer Street School, викладає українську мову та літературу в Школі українознавства та релігії парафії Святого Володимира, а також в школі імені Гаспірала Ісмаїла Бея при Американській асоціації кримських татар. Опублікувала низку статей та посібників з двомовної освіти в українському та кримськотатарському контекстах. Володіє українською, кримськотатарською, російською та англійською мовами.



Ніна Шостаковська (Nina Shostakovska) - народна майстриня. Навчалася петриківського розпису. Мурали її авторства прикрашають два ресторани «Рута» у Вашингтоні, округ Колумбія. Співпрацювала з Українським домом, Посольством України та Представництвом ЄС у США. Проводить майстер-класи та тренінги з виготовлення писанок, декорування ваз та різдвяних прикрас. Здобула ступінь магістра міжнародних відносин Київського міжнародного університету.



ВІТАЄМО З НАГОРОДАМИ



Solomiya Ivakhiv
2025
Outstanding
Faculty Award



Anna Nagurney
2025 INFORMS
President's Award



Olena Nikolayenko
2026 Distinguished
Research Award
in the Social Sciences



Marko Temnycky
Cross of the Patriot
of Ukraine

ЗАХОДИ, ПРОВЕДЕНІ В НТШ-А СІЧЕНЬ-ТРАВЕНЬ 2026



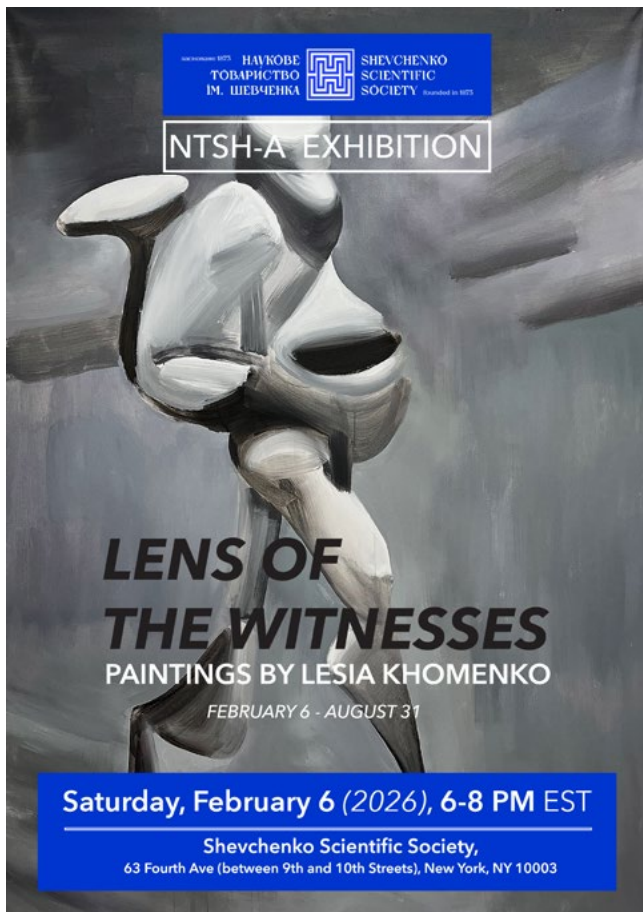
January 17, 2026
A MUSICAL PERFORMANCE BY ANDRII DOROFIEIV

Andrii Dorofeiev is a prominent Ukrainian pianist known for his brilliant technique and explosive stage energy. A graduate of the Feliks Nowowiejski Music Academy in Bydgoszcz, Poland, he holds a Master's degree (2024) with a research focus on the works of Mykola Lysenko. Andrii is a laureate of numerous international competitions, including the Grand Prix at the 20th F. Chopin Piano Competition in Ukraine and the "Golden Parnas" at the International Piano Festival in Poland. The concert program included compositions by S. Bortkiewicz, M. Lysenko, G. Gershwin, and L. Godowsky.



January 24, 2026
WEBINAR: EXPERIENCES OF TIME AFTER DISPLACEMENT

Wars inevitably produce displacement and dispossession. Such experiences also rupture understandings of the past, everyday routines, and visions of the future. The speakers, Julia Buyskykh, Natalia Otrshchenko, and Iryna Koval-Fuchylo, explored how the uncertain present serves as a precarious moment from which past displacements during World War II and experiences following the Russian invasion affect visions of the future for individual Ukrainians and for Ukraine collectively.



February 6, 2026

EXHIBITION: LENS OF THE WITNESSES: PAINTINGS BY LESIA KHOMENKO

Lesia Khomenko is a multidisciplinary artist who reconsiders the role of painting: she deconstructs narrative images and transforms paintings into objects, installations, performances, or videos. The Shevchenko Scientific Society presented Lens of the Witnesses, Lesia Khomenko's fourth solo exhibition in the United States, and her third solo exhibition in New York. In a new body of large-scale paintings based on raw footage from the frontline of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Khomenko incorporates various records into seemingly abstract, semi-representational paintings.

February 14, 2026

POETRY READING WITH MYKOLA VOROBIOV

Mykola Vorobiov was born on October 12, 1941, in the Cherkasy region. He is one of the founders of the literary group known as the "Kyiv School." After his first publication in the Cherkasy newspaper Molod in 1962, with a foreword by Vasyl Symonenko, he was suppressed and went unpublished for 20 years. He participated in the International Festival of Authors in Toronto, Canada, in 1992. He is the recipient of several literary awards: the Pavlo Tychyna Prize (1992), the Blahovist Prize (1993), the "Friends of Rukh" Award (USA, 1994), and the National Taras Shevchenko Prize of Ukraine (2005). He is the author of numerous poetry collections, the most recent of which are Sunken Rings and Ascension (both 2024).



February 14, 2026

TALK: UKRAINE IN THE COORDINATES OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE THROUGH THE PRISM OF OTTOMAN ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS WITH ANDRII ZHYVACHIVSKYI

Andrii Zhyvachivskiy is a historian. He is the author of several scholarly articles on the topic of Ottoman Crimea, the Crimean Khanate, and Crimean Tatars.

In this talk, the speaker attempted to dispel myths and stereotypes about the Ottoman Empire that persist among Ukrainians. The Ottomans were often portrayed negatively in Ukraine’s history, but relations between Ukrainians and Ottomans were not only hostile. It was a centuries-long, continuous interaction ranging from confrontation to cooperation and cultural exchange.



March 7, 2026

WEBINAR: XLV ANNUAL TARAS SHEVCHENKO SCHOLARLY CONFERENCE

The Shevchenko Scientific Society (NTSh-A) and the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (HURI) co-hosted the XLV Annual Taras Shevchenko Scholarly Conference. The speakers included George Grabowicz, Rory Finnin, Mykhailo Nazarenko, and Grace Mahoney. The opening remarks were delivered by Vitaly Chernetsky.



March 14, 2026

**LECTURE: "KYIVAN CHRISTIANITY":
THE NEW CONCEPT OF EARLY MODERN
RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPE**

Ivan Almes is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU), where he also serves as Director of the Ihor Skochylas Center for Religious Culture and Coordinator of the research program Kyivan Christianity. He is editor-in-chief of the Kyivan Christianity publishing series, issued by UCU Press. The presentation focused on the concept and publishing series Kyivan Christianity, which aims to reconceptualize the religious history (and broader cultural history) of Central and Eastern Europe from Kyiv's perspective.



March 28, 2026

**LECTURE: DR. KONSTANTIN FRANK,
UNLIKELY (VITI)CULTURAL HERO?
THE LEGACY OF UKRAINIAN
AGRICULTURE SCIENCE THAT TRANS-
FORMED AMERICAN WINEMAKING**

Daniel J. Epstein (Harvard University) presented the remarkable story of Dr. Konstantin Frank, born in Odesa in 1900, who became a path-breaking agricultural scientist of wine-making against difficult obstacles in Soviet-dominated Ukraine. He pioneered technologies to grow true European wine grapes (vinifera) in continental climate zones with cold winters, previously thought impossible. Daniel Epstein currently works at Harvard's Davis Center as Assistant Director for Scholars Without Borders, an initiative to support scholars affected by Russia's war on Ukraine.

SHVCHENKO SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

Book Launch
**WAR IN MY HOME:
WHEN CONFLICT
BECOMES EVERYDAY LIFE**
(Znak Literanova, 2025)

Paweł Pieniążek,
Experienced reporter, journalist,
and war correspondent

**Saturday,
April 4 (2026),
5 PM EST**
Shevchenko Scientific
Society in the US
63 Fourth Ave (between 9th
and 10th Streets),
New York, NY 10003

April 14, 2026
**BOOK LAUNCH: WAR IN MY HOME:
WHEN CONFLICT BECOMES EVERYDAY
LIFE BY PAWEŁ PIENIĄŻEK**

Paweł Pieniążek is a reporter, journalist, and war correspondent. War in My Home describes the horrific, unending reality of conflict, often focusing on the Donbas region in Ukraine, where war becomes a normalized part of daily life, affecting civilians profoundly. In his book, Pieniążek shares raw, ground-level perspectives on survival, disillusionment, and the struggle to find meaning amidst ongoing war, showcasing how ordinary people endure extraordinary circumstances.

SHVCHENKO SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

**CHORNOBYL: A GATEWAY
TO THE UNCANNY – REPRESENTING
THE DISASTER IN FIRST WORLD
DOCUMENTARIES**

Tetyana Dzyadevych
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

**Saturday,
April 25 (2026),
5 PM EST**
Shevchenko Scientific
Society in the US
63 Fourth Ave (between 9th
and 10th Streets),
New York, NY 10003

April 25, 2026
**TALK: CHORNOBYL: A GATEWAY TO THE
UNCANNY - REPRESENTING THE DISAS-
TER IN FIRST WORLD DOCUMENTARIES**

Tetyana Dzyadevych (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) is a researcher, commentator, and analyst of contemporary Ukrainian and Russian culture and literature. In her talk, she examined how First World documentary films portray the Chornobyl disaster and its impact on Ukraine. The presentation highlighted significant shifts in narrative following the Soviet Union's collapse, asserting that representations of Chornobyl evolved dramatically.

HAYMOBЕ ТОВАРИСТВО ІМ. ШЕВЧЕНКА SHEVCHENKO SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

Book Launch
BOTH SIDES FACE EAST/DURABLE WORDS
 (Academic Studies Press 2025)
 Edited by Julia Sushytska, Alisa Slaughter and ariel rosé



ariel rosé
 poet, essayist, illustrator



Saturday, May 9 (2026), 5 PM EST
 Shevchenko Scientific Society in the US
 63 Fourth Ave (between 9th and 10th Streets)
 New York, NY 10003

Saturday, May 9, 2026
BOOK LAUNCH: BOTH SIDES FACE EAST/DURABLE WORDS (ACADEMIC STUDIES PRESS 2025), EDITED BY JULIA SUSHYTSKA, ALISA SLAUGHTER, AND ARIEL ROSÉ.

A multilingual anthology of various authors responding to the war in Ukraine in their respective languages, along with translations to Ukrainian and English. The book is a fruit of an international project under the auspices of Marci Shore, with the support of Fondation Jan Michalski and the International Renaissance Institute. The collection gathers poems, essays, and stories written and translated in nine languages, reflecting an ongoing effort to communicate and understand across cultures. Both Sides Face East – Durable Words began as a response to the invasion of Ukraine, but it stakes a wider claim on behalf of human value and integrity.

HAYMOBЕ ТОВАРИСТВО ІМ. ШЕВЧЕНКА SHEVCHENKO SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

PANEL ON NEW BOOKS IN UKRAINIAN STUDIES
 In conjunction with the annual world convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, the **Shevchenko Scientific Society in the US** and the **Ukrainian Museum** present a panel on new books in Ukrainian Studies followed by a reception



INVISIBLE REVOLUTIONARIES: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN UKRAINE'S EUROMAIDAN
 by Olena Nikolayenko
 Cambridge University Press, 2025



MAIDAN: UKRAINE'S DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION
 by Sophia Wilson
 McGill-Queens University Press, 2026



JEWISH ODESA: NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES AND TRADITIONS IN CONTEMPORARY UKRAINE
 by Marina Sapritsky-Nahum
 Indiana University Press, 2024

Saturday, May 30 (2026), 5 PM EST
 Shevchenko Scientific Society in the US
 63 Fourth Ave (between 9th and 10th Streets)
 New York, NY 10003

After the panel, the guests are invited to proceed to the **Ukrainian Museum (222 East 4th St., New York, NY 10003)** just a few minutes walking distance from the Society, for a reception that will begin at **7 p.m.**

Saturday, March 30, 2026
PANEL ON NEW BOOKS IN UKRAINIAN STUDIES

The panel featured three authors of recently published books in English:

- Invisible Revolutionaries: Women's Participation in Ukraine's Euromaidan*** by Olena Nikolayenko. Cambridge University Press, 2025
- Maidan: Ukraine's Democratic Revolution*** by Sophia Wilson. McGill-Queens University Press, 2026
- Jewish Odesa: Negotiating Identities and Traditions in Contemporary Ukraine*** by Marina Sapritsky-Nahum. Indiana University Press, 2024

Професійна діяльність членів НТШ-А

Vitaly Chernetsky

Публікації

“Zakhidna slavistyka: zmina paradyhmy,” *Krytyka*, no. 337-338 (November—December 2025): 2-6.

“Towards a Ukrainian Neo-Noir: History, Contexts, and the Case of Oleh Sentsov’s *Rhino*,” in Aleksandr Prokhorov, Elena Prokhorova, and Rimgaila Salys, eds., *The Haunted Present: Slavic Neo-Noir Cinema and Television* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2026), 248-260.

Лекції і доповіді

“Postcolonial Thought and Ukraine: Broadening the Field” (a round table, with Svitlana Biedarieva, Tamara Hundorova, Marci Shore, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak), Ukraine Decolonial Studies Network (online, December 2025).

“Mapping Contemporary Ukrainian Cinema,” keynote address, *Ukraine New Cinema* symposium, Yale University (March 2026).

Orest Deychakiwsky

Plenary speaker of “Congressional Support for Ukraine: Historical Overview and Current Status,” at the 3rd International Academic Conference “Ukraine & the United States: Experience and Prospects for Cooperation,” dedicated to the 250th anniversary of the United States, April 18, 2026 sponsored by Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukrainian Association for American Studies, et al.

Василь Лопух

Інтерв'ю та публікації в пресі

«Фотоархів УСС поповнився унікальними колекціями та сімейними архівами. Розмова з Василем Лопухом», Тетяна Яцечко-Блаженко, *Український тиждень*, 20 березня 2026.

«Фотоархів Українських Січових Стрільців: нові знахідки та перспектива досліджень. Розмова з Василем Лопухом», Тетяна Яцечко-Блаженко, *Український тиждень*, 5 січня 2026.

Василь Махно

Публікації

Книги

Ангел і Осел. З віршами про вогонь і воду. Львів: ВСЛ, 576 с.

Dom na siedmiu wiatrach. Przełożył Bohdan Zadura. Warszawa: PIW, 2026, 280 s.

Публікації в періодиці:

Gimęs iš kalbos. *Vertė Donata Rinkevičienė. Siaures Atenai*. 5/2026.

Three Poems. Tr. Jaroslaw Anders. *Arrowsmith Journal*. Vol. XXXIII, 2026.

Місія поета, Кінь-жінка, Письмовий стіл, Постшевченківське. *Збруч*. Січень-травень, 2026.

Радіо

Радіопрем'єра оповідання «Чому Борхес перетворився на синього тигра?». *Радіо Культура*, 24 березня 2026.

Виступи

Письменник і мова. Проект Оксани Лебедівни «Українська мова і...». НаУКМА. 12 травня 2026.

Olena Nikolayenko,

Publications

"Emotional Contagion and Labor Mobilization in an Autocracy" *Comparative Politics* 58, no. 3, April 2026, 287-312. <https://doi.org/10.5129/001041525X17647180327547>

"Civil Resistance and Gender Norms in Ukraine," *Journal of Pacifism and Nonviolence* 4, no. 1 (2026): 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.1163/27727882-bja00045>

"Origins of the Russo–Ukrainian War: Russian Imperialism in the Authoritarian Regime," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 46, no. 2 (2025): 125-32. https://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/publictn/acta/46-2/06_Acta46-2_Nikolayenko.pdf

Book talk at the webinar, "Women's Participation in the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine," organized by the Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at the University of Chicago.

Book presentation *Invisible Revolutionaries: Women's Participation in Ukraine's Euromaidan* (Cambridge University Press, 2025), in discussion with Dr. Darya Tysmbaliuk.

Discussant at the panel "Contemporary Political Science Perspectives," North East Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, New York University, April 2026.

Chair "Iron Butterflies: How States Transform During War" panel at the annual Master's and Undergraduate Research Symposium, New York University, April 2026.

Anna Nagurney

«Agricultural Supply Chain Networks: Trade, Policies, Food Security and Resilience», Distinguished Engineering Lecture, Purdue University, March 26,

2026. In her lecture she discussed research conducted with her PhD student Dana Hassani as well as colleagues at KSE—Oleg Nivievskyi and Pavlo Martyshev.

«NetwORks and Policies: OR to the Rescue» Nagurney's Blackett Lecture, Royal Society in London, England, published in the *Journal of the Operational Research Society* 77(2) (2026).

«Integrated Crop and Cargo War Risk Insurance: Application to Ukraine,» co-authored with PhD students Ismael Pour and Borys Kormych of the Odesa Law Academy, *International Transactions in Operational Research* 33 (2026): 5-37.

«Rebuilding the Crossroads of Ukraine: Bridging the Gap Between Damage, Recovery and European Aspirations», *Ukrainian Analytical Digest* 14 (2025): 2-9, co-authored with Oleh Nivievskyi and Dmytro Goriunov.

Dr. Nagurney continues to serve on the Board of Directors and the International Academic Board of the Kyiv School of Economics and is one of the leaders of the global partnership established between UMass Amherst and KSE, which includes exchange students from KSE studying at UMass Amherst. On February 27, 2026, she organized a panel of the 3 exchange students and 3 faculty from Ukraine—from UMass Amherst and Amherst College—to mark the 4th anniversary of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The panel received front page coverage in the local newspaper: <https://gazettenet.com/2026/03/02/ukrainians-reflect-on-war-four-years-on>

Mark N. V. Temnycky

Article: "As the War in Iran Continues, Trump Threatens to Withdraw From NATO," *Forbes*, April 3, 2026.

Article: "Russia Planning Long-Range Drone Control Stations in Belarus, Ukraine Warns," *Forbes*, April 5, 2026.

Article: "Hungary Prepares for Elections as EU, Ukraine, and U.S. Await Results," *Forbes*, April 8, 2026.

"The Russia-Ukraine War, 2022-Present," graduate school guest lecture, New York University, April 16, 2026.

Article: "Ukraine Turns to Middle East as U.S. and EU Aid Slows Amid Iran War," *Forbes*, April 9, 2026.

Recognition: International Sports Press Association (AIPS), "AIPS Sport Media Awards 2025: Best Performers From North and South America – Top 10 Opinion Columns," April 21, 2026.

Article: "Zelenskyy Expands Defense Deals with Europe After Middle East Visit," *Forbes*, April 16, 2026.

Panel Moderator: U.S.-Ukraine Business Networking Series Forum, "From Aerospace to Cyberspace: Russia's Ongoing Invasion of Ukraine," April 29, 2026.

Article: "Shakhtar Donetsk Gives Ukraine's War-Wearied Football Fans Reason to Cheer," *Atlantic Council*, April 23, 2026.

Article: "Russia's Economic, Civil, and Political Challenges During the Ukraine War," *Forbes*, April 25, 2026.

† **Наші втрати**

Jerome Flynn
(February 28, 1953 - January 20, 2026)

Член НТШ-А, Assistant Professor of Practice in Management & Global Business

Олександра Дяченко-Кочман
(Alexandra (Lesia) Diachenko Kochman)
(31.01.1934 – 2026)

Член НТШ-А, мисткиня

Адріян Долінський
(30 вересня 1935 – 13 квітня 2026)

Член НТШ-А, фізик

З ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ВАШИНГТОНСЬКОГО ОСЕРЕДКУ

На початку січня 2026 року Осередок отримав із Києва 110 наукових видань Інституту української мови Національної академії наук України. Згідно з домовленням поміж працівниками Інституту, Павлом Гриценком і Андрієм Тетеруком, та головою Осередку Богданою Урбанович, книги подаровано Бібліотеці Конгресу. Юрій Добчанський, заступник голови Осередку та працівник Бібліотеки Конгресу, переглянув надіслане і розпочав каталогізацію книг. З огляду на те, що половина з надісланих книг раніше була внесена до каталогу, вирішено такі видання передати Архівно-бібліотечній комісії НТШ-А для доповнення фондів бібліотеки Товариства.

Надіслано кілька серій: «Бібліотека української ономастики», «Лексикографічна спадщина України», «Не все спливає рікою часу...», проект «Наукова книга» (Молоді вчені), «Словникова спадщина України», «Студії з українського мовознавства», «Українські говори: минуле і сучасність» та «Глибини рідної мови...». Особливий набуток — «Словник української мови в 11 томах. Додатковий том. У 2-х книгах» як доповнення до монументального видання «Словника української мови» в 11 томах, здійсненого у 1970–1980 рр. Варто відзначити, що для історії розвитку української мови особливого значення набувають словники, видані ще у двадцятих роках минулого століття — в часи українізації та «Розстріляного відродження». Нові надходження доповнюють серію словників, переданих Бібліотеці Конгресу ще в березні 2019 року за сприяння Фонду «Україна-США» та Посольства України в США. Перевиданням словників займалося київське відділення міжнародної організації Rotary Club. (див. http://archive.ukrweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2019-19.pdf)





Оксана Луцишина – письменниця, поетка, перекладачка, авторка п'яти поетичних збірок, збірки оповідань і трьох романів. Лауреатка премій “Гранослов”, “Привітання життя”, “Благовіст”, премії Фондації Ковалевих, премії Львів-місто літератури ЮНЕСКО та національної премії імені Тараса Шевченка (за роман «Іван і Феба»). Народилася в Ужгороді. У США захистила дисертацію з компаративістики. З 2015 по 2025 викладала українську мову та східноєвропейські літератури у Техаському університеті у місті Остіні. У 2025 році отримала письменницьку стипендію від Фонду Емі Клемпітт. Членкиня українського ПЕНу.

воздай їм, господи
 воздай у невідь-якому поколінні
 воздай, якщо мусиш, невинним
 або тим хто себе такими вважає
 воздай коли не чекатимуть
 воздай за вагітну жінку на ношах
 воздай за сплячого хлопчика
 за доньку за сина за воїнів
 за цілі родини поховані під уламками
 того що було їхнім домом.
 воздай, господи, і нехай запитують тебе
 у марних своїх теодицеях -
 за що? Нехай пахне у їхніх оселях
 як і у наших - холодом, кров'ю, димом
 і жахом. ми просили би для них меншого,
 але знаємо з досвіду - не утямлять.
 воздай їм, бо справжня пам'ять постає лише із
 власної крові
 про яку маєш час написати.
 із власного болю, бо чужий тут не допоможе -
 як зникне чорнило, ляже він на папір і розтане.
 воздай їм, не скупися.
 не бійся, господи.

натисни стоп: настав магічний час.
 посунув ліс на дунсінан і вперся
 у чорний камінь деревом твердим.
 не буде відпочинку. не барися
 між цих дзеркал, в яких твоє лице
 тужавіє: так дерево у камінь
 повільно обертається, мов берег
 породжує ріку, і відступає
 кудись у даль, углиб своєї суті.
 твоя рука зростається із віттям
 суглобами, суцвіттями, корою
 чи карою. посунув чорний ліс
 на чорний замок. всі часи настали
 одразу, доруйновуючи мову,
 якою я не вмю забувати:
 навромацки шукай бійницю смерті,
 шукай бійницю пам'яті, з котрої
 на тебе суне гілля. швидше, швидше,
 не бійся захищатися. не бійся
 осліпленості. а тепер стріляй.

дякую Господи що взяв грошима
речами кістками котами
віршами очима

дякую Господи що взяв будинком
дахом над головою нічним спочинком
випаленою травною

дякую Господи що взяв чи то забагато
чи то нічого
чим Ти візьмеш, скажи
у ворога мого?

Спокій глибокий, сніг мете біло-біло
І наслухаєш крізь безупинний лет
Як крізь твоє поранене все-ще-тіло
Проліг Карпатський хребет.
Станція. Потяг. Ось і гора Говерла
Звідки вона взялася тут у полях, степах?
Та що тобі казала що ще не вмерла
Літери лічить засніжені на вустах
Чорним по білому - слово таке, дерева
Може, останнє слово простору без дерев
Пам'ять насправді - не жадібна королева
А розділовий знак на зразок тире
Станція. Потяг. Гори сідають поруч
Сяють мов діаманти гуснуть немов льоди.
Їдь. А Карпати, тримаючи оборону,
Над тобою чуватимуть - предки твої, діди.

ти стоїш а довкола сельва чи й так – трава
десь вона пожовтіла а десь вона ще жива
що ти скажеш про сельви досі не знавши сельв?
мокротеча, свідчать, мов кров із дерев, моква

(авто в'їжджає в тунель)

тут хтось жив хоч на трасі які сліди
і окрім як у глибину себе утекти немає куди
бог дощу грає з богом війни у щось
на зразок дитячої гри – запливи у ліс, перейдиозір

по містку, якого не видно, бо ось же, ось –

він уже під землею-водою як цілий цей материк
де туман над сліпими лісами висить мов крик

що не дерево – жолоб, що не оферта – спів
крапель, струменів, цівок, а тіло – лише двійник

що не встиг врятуватися, або і не схотів

ДРОГОБИЧ

Месія уже у Самборі.
Бруно Шульц

Месія уже у Самборі. Прийшов надвечір
Зупинився у когось із сусідів – здається, у Гані
Сказав їй (здається) що приніс нам не мир а меч
Вилив води на лезо – стала вода вином як тоді у
Кані

Тільки одне вікно і світилося у ту ніч неначе
Метелик із білого світла бив крилами із пітьми
І розходилося колами горе його гаряче
І набухали кола невидимими слізьми

Месія заснув у літній кухні на вишмульганій канапі
Межи відер і слоїв межі простих життів
Так Ганя колись у минулу війну переховувала сол-
датів
Щоб із них не постали мертві або святі

Месія заснув – а куди він вирушить завтра
Іще не знає ніхто він може не знає і сам
Світ завмирає на вістрі. Месія уже у Самборі
Гостро болить буття і жалить немов оса



Askold Melnyczuk's five books of fiction have included a *New York Times* Notable, an *LA Times* Best Books of the Year, and an *Editor's Choice* for the ALA's *Booklist*. His essays have been selected for the *Best American Essays'* Honor Roll six times and have been included in a number of anthologies. He received the Walter Nathan Best Essay award from the *Great River Review* and was short-listed for the international Calibre Essay Prize given by the *Australian Book Review*. His fiction has been selected for *Best American Short Stories'* Honor Roll once, as well as twice listed in the Pushcart Press Honor Roll. His poetry has appeared in numerous anthologies, including *The McGraw Hill Anthology*, *The Longwood Anthology*, and *Under Thirty Five: The New Generation of American Poets*. About his book of poems, *The Venus of Odesa*, critic Ruth Hoberman wrote: "observant, precise, and deeply aware of the world's gift for ironic juxtaposition." He received a three-year grant in fiction from the Lila Wallace Foundation and has received awards from the Massachusetts Cultural Council in Fiction, Poetry, and Non-fiction. He shared the Heidt Prize for translation for his work on Oksana Zabuzhko. Individual stories, essays, reviews, poems and translations have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *the New England Review*, *The Harvard Review*, *Irish Pages*, *The Missouri Review*, *The TLS* and elsewhere. A book of selected non-fiction, *With Madonna in Kyiv* is forthcoming from HURI in 2026. He has held residencies at McDowell and the Santa Madalena Foundation in Italy. He's the founding editor of *Agni* for which he received the PEN Magid Award for Editing. In 2006 he founded Arrowsmith Press. He has taught at Boston University, Harvard, and Bennington and currently teaches at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The Sunday Before Easter

*Dreadful it is
How here and there
Endlessly God disperses
Whatever lives.*
Holderlin

1

I prayed each twilight with the crickets
as a boy to another boy, rapt
in his mother's blue-gowned arms:

Otche Nash.

Concentration is prayer;
Poetry the private psalm.

Sunday before Easter
before dawn revives
the city with its debonair
starlings, startled by weather

to wooing, behind
my desk, from where
in the window I can see your double
I pray the only way I can.

I tell you my stories
because they are mysteries,

2

because
the little god who dwells within,
reflecting God, creating
worlds with names, remembers.

My country, formerly the sun
became the oil-slicked water;
sapped pine barrens and barren
suburbia;

the "Venice of New Jersey"
since it flooded every year;
at times, mountains
and ignitable, polluted air

feel familiar
as the silk of your bed,

the blue-gold silk of your breasts.

3

Lviv, Peremyshl, Berchtesgaden:
there God flared in
his latest conflagration, disguised
in brown, or agonized
green;

booted, buckled,
moustache trim, chin
shaved clean as an apple,

proud of himself,
his shining discipline,
the moral courage to shelve
tobacco, moonlight, women.

He puffed himself especially
on his talent for division,
like that evolutionary
wonder, the amoeba;

for rising early, spitting
in his own glum sun,
showering in splinters
of ice-water without wincing,

marching in unison
with himself, raising legs
muscled as if modeled by Rodin.

And he was proud
of his spired libraries
outstripping Alexandria

where the dead speak, and the living are
silent.

He visited a museum
ransomed by lions,
accompanied by an interpreter
from the far city of Babel.

God torched houses.
He castrated boys, inspired
women burning for food
to murder their husbands.

He turned his people back to light.
I saw none of this,

but I remember.

4

I remember and rehearse it
for you--who else
could balance the scales
of justice?

These fairy tales mother
lent me for lullabies.
What once delivered me to sleep
now keeps me up

long after the emaciated hands
of the clock unclasp
and splay to quarter-cross
and the cat, and you, sleep.

The Way of the World

December, 1980

Reading Duns Scotus, I find
this passage, a quotation
from Avicenna:
Those who deny
a first principle
should be beaten
or exposed to fire until
they concede that to burn
and not to burn
or to be beaten
and not to be beaten
are not identical.

The Soviet Army masses
at the Polish border.
Larry Lee, a living soul,
is in Seattle.
He is singing.
Later tonight I'll read poems
by Rudenko, who is in prison
for speaking out for the beaten.
Later still,
Heraclitus
on war, fire, and change.

The Enamel Box

Given my mother by a visitor from Ukraine

It was a country and a house
I'd never seen.
This trinket and odd record of humanity,
starfish, pewter, purple, green—
ancestral garden from a greener age—
and I turn outward to the oak which spring
has, like a famished lover, licked
awake.

I imagine
somewhere beyond the tree
that house, the solitary, careful
child within,
and the dragonflies
rising and falling like pistons
above a sputtering stream.

The mother bakes bread by an open
window, humming softly to a dying sun.
The father smokes a pipe, instructs the child:
“Cultivate wheat and a conscience.
In a pinch, forfeit
the conscience
but save that wheat.”

It jars me, this lecture
I've imagined, because
there ought to be causes
worth dying for,
and my peasant says no.
Is it the mysteries of Eleusis
he's understood, while I

battling each morning uncharitable
Aristotle,
worry the fine points,
obscure to the whole?

The old man says to the boy:
“Anyone tells you God cares
about anything except kindness
is a liar.”

I imagine
a mother, a father, a child, a house:
eternal actors, paramours of joy and pain,
except the child, born all eyes,

who sits at the window
watching the dragonflies
and does not know
centuries are passing.

This is how they pass.

My Father Has a Vision

A cathedral rose
In a pint of yoghurt
You were spooning.

Look! You cried. Look!
I raced in from the other room, fearing
You'd fallen. Look, you cried,

What's it doing there?
And, truly, father,
A gray stone spire

Probed the air
Draped in white silk
Above the eight-ounce cup

Supported by flying buttresses,
A rose window, snarling
Gargoyles spouting fire.

It wasn't the morphine.
You weren't dying of pain. You saw
What you saw.

And the pigeons exploded
Into the room and roosted
Above your bed.

Versions from the Ukrainian

*After Shevchenko:***Never Marry Rich**

Never marry rich—
 She'll chase you from her door.
 Never marry poor—
 You'll sleep in a ditch.

Marry the wind instead.
 What will be, will be;
 If naked, then, naked.
 This way, none will fuss,

Or try to cheer you up,
 Or ask: What hurts,
 My precious? Where?
 No one will care.

They like to say misery
 Seeks company.
 Don't believe it. Better
 Keep it to yourself. Forever.

*Marjana Savka***My God Spends All Night**

My god spends all night forming his battalions,
 Is a crack shot, wages wars.
 My god forgives my curses
 As he polishes his stones.
 My god won't hide behind my back,
 Throws quilted covers over children.
 My god buys tourniquets
 Then lines up to give blood.
 My god can't get a good night's sleep
 While the entire country's standing guard.
 My god allows me never to forgive
 And lets me call things as they are.

*Mykola Rudenko***The King of Tasmania**

*Most of the aboriginal population of Tasmania was
 wiped out by British colonists in the 19th century*

I am he. I am the last. That means I'm king.
 There's still a Tasman Sea, and a Tasmania.
 A country must have a king.
 This is the part I was sentenced to play.

Every crown rests on bones. Not for medals
 will I raise this sepulcher of skulls
 but to record how they suffered--my people.
 These skull I snatched from the dogs.

From the dogs, the trees....Study the gardens:
 each apple-tree lapped native blood.
 They slew us for fertilizer, certain
 our bodies nourished sweet fruit. A bargain.

There's no more fertilizer. I gather bones
 for my pyramid. Awful.
 Soon I'll sit higher than the tallest trees.
 I, the king, below me, my people.

Wherever I turn I find foreign money.
 The only familiar souls are the fleet kangaroos.
 In them, ancestors rise. When I die
 we'll meet again in green furrows.

Even now, foreigners race to my country
 to poach on our fields, dig up our gardens.
 I'll play the Customs Man bribed by their gin.
 The worship of kings, don't they know, is a duty.

To them I seem mad. That's nothing new.
 My pyramid grows, and it grows.
 There's a sacred prophecy I pursue:
 a tower will outlast the empire.

Though my people are gone, the faith
 of the fathers and grandfathers survives:
 who hopes for swelled harvests from corpses
 reaps nothing but corpses on corpses. Then, dies.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES NEWS

Raymond Uzwyszyn, Ph.D.

Chair, Library and Archives Committee



2026 has brought welcome new energy to the Library. Nikolas Oktaba, a doctoral candidate in Comparative Literature, has joined the staff as Library Specialist. Mr. Oktaba has quickly taken up his new position working through incoming donations and researchers, advancing our cataloging and bookstore, and now turning his attention to a new initiative: a program of digital exhibitions.

Bringing the Collection Online

Using the Omeka digital exhibition platform, Mr. Oktaba is preparing the Library's first online exhibition, devoted to the library's Shevchenko holdings, with a projected launch this summer. The plan is to sustain a rotating window exhibitions into the collections and membership that, until now, only visitors have been able to browse in person. Themes remain to be determined, and we welcome suggestions: whether a spotlight on publications by NTS members, selections from the rare holdings, or thematic explorations drawn from the Library's depth.

Digital Security

The Library's online catalog had attracted the attention of digital visitors, automated bots—AI-driven agents harvesting information from our holdings. The issue has been addressed through the deployment of a bot detection system, Anubis and our catalog is again serving its local and wider global audiences.

Recent Donations

Recent months have also brought a strong wave of academic donations. Among the notable acquisitions: an offer from the Washington Chapter of books donated by the Ukrainian Language Institute in Kyiv (duplicates also held by the Library of Congress); Pelensky and Lopatynsky collections; facsimiles of Skoropadsky correspondence; and a copy of Drahomanov's *Ukrainski Pisni*. The Library has also received music donations, including CDs from the collection of the composer and conductor Virko Baley.

Storage and Stewardship

A library that receives generously must also think practically about space. The bulk of incoming materials is being directed to our offsite facility in Stamford, Connecticut. The Committee is also exploring partnerships with other Ukrainian-language institutions that have the capacity to house larger collections—an approach that would keep these materials accessible within the broader landscape of Ukrainian scholarship rather than hidden storage. Discussions are ongoing.

Call for Volunteers

Finally, we have established a new subcommittee to assist the Library in reviewing donated books and advising on which materials best align with our mission and collecting priorities. If you have a love of books and a few hours to spare, we would be glad for your help.

ARCHIVES RECEIVE NEW YORK DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE PROGRAM GRANT

Michael Andrec
Archives Consultant

We are very happy to announce that the Society's archives have received a grant from the Documentary Heritage Program, a statewide grant program administered by the New York State Archives to provide financial support to not-for-profit organizations that hold, collect, and make available New York State's historical records. This grant is being used to process the collection of William Shust, a Ukrainian-American actor and lifelong resident of New York's Ukrainian Village.

A graduate of Fordham University with an MFA in Theater in 1954, Shust had an acting career that lasted for over six decades, during which he was actively involved with Broadway and Off-Broadway theater in New York and regional theater across the United States and Canada. Notable productions that he was involved in include Bertolt Brecht's *Arturo Ui* (first production on Broadway, directed by Tony Richardson), *The Owl and the Pussycat* (Broadway, directed by Arthur Storch), Clifford Odets' *The Country Girl* (Broadway, directed by John Houseman), *The Misanthrope* (Theatre East), *Right You Are, Ghosts, Lovers* (Roundabout Theatre), *Julius Caesar* (New York Shakespeare Festival), *Agamemnon, Electra, Trojan Women* (Theatre Marquee), *Look Back in Anger* (41 Street Theatre), *Count Dracula* (Equity Library Theatre), *Hedda Gabler* (The Cubiculo Theatre Company), *The Taming of the Shrew* (Phoenix Theatre), and *The Scarlet Letter* (Gene Frankel Theatre). He received great acclaim in the early 1960s for playing the leading role of Emile in the first-ever production of *The Egg* in the United States — theater critic Henry Hewes named *The Egg* the best play of 1961-1962 on the strength of Shust's performance. He also acted in various films, television programs, and commercials.

Being Ukrainian was an important part of Shust's personal identity as well as his professional work. From 1949 through the 1950s, he had a regular column called "Impressions" in *The Ukrainian Weekly*. His involvement with St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church

included narrating a two-hour radio broadcast of the Ukrainian Christmas liturgy — the first time a full liturgy at the church was ever recorded. Shust frequently performed in Ukrainian productions and at various Ukrainian cultural events, including speaking at the dedication of the Taras Shevchenko Memorial in Washington, DC, in 1964. Taras Shevchenko was also the inspiration for an original television script written by Shust, though it was never produced.

The papers of William Shust that are at the Shevchenko Scientific Society were donated from his estate by Stefa Charczenko, a good friend of both Shust and the Society. The collection consists of materials relating to his professional career, including correspondence with individuals and professional organizations; ephemera files filled with clippings, contracts, photographs, programs, and other materials from productions; scripts for plays, television productions, and other projects; promotional materials, many of which were designed by Shust himself; writings, including the proposed television script about Taras Shevchenko; and other professional records. In addition, there are personal records related to Shust's family, education, involvement in the Ukrainian-American community, as well as other topics, including a collection of theatrical memorabilia related to Robert Bruce Mantell, Edwin Booth, and other actors from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There are also numerous photographs, audiovisual materials, props, realia, and books.

To process this material, DHP grant funds have been used to bring on board Leila Jutton as a part-time project archivist. A graduate of the NYU Tisch School of the Arts and recent graduate of the MLIS program at Queens College, Leila (or Lee, as she is known) already had experience with archival processing as a Library and Archive Assistant at the Leo Baeck Institute at the Center for Jewish History in New York. Lee hit the ground running and has already completed an initial inventory of the materials, created a processing plan

and draft arrangement, and is now hard at work with the long and tedious process of rehousing materials out of acidic folders and envelopes, sleeving photographs, and physically arranging the parts of the collection that have haphazard (or complete lack of) organization.

At the beginning of April, Lee, the Society's Ukrainian Language Archivist Anastasiia Denysenko, and I had the pleasure of meeting with Stefa Charczenko to talk about her recollections of Shust, who was a neighbor of hers in the same apartment building in the Ukrainian Village. She was able to provide some additional information about the collection and her memories of the man, which will be useful to properly describe the materials in the collection. Ms. Charczenko was also delighted to see the items that she had donated and was very glad that they were being preserved and would be made more accessible to anybody with an interest in them.

We hope to have the William Shust Papers fully processed by mid-summer, and we plan to use the remainder of the grant period through the end of September to do outreach and publicity about this collection and the Society's archives in general. Stay tuned for more to come in the late summer and early autumn!



Lee Jutton (left) and Stefa Charczenko look at ephemera from the William Shust papers.



Stefa Charczenko with a massive scrapbook assembled by Shust with photographs, clippings, programs, and other memorabilia from his life and work.

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