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Literary Politics and Literary Debates in Ukraine 1971–81

Myroslav Shkandrij

Toward the end of the sixties it was becoming clear that the relatively liberal party attitude toward literature which had characterized the decade was undergoing substantial modification.¹ The debate over Oles Honchar's *Sobor*, which appeared in January 1968,² was the first indication that stricter control of literature would be exercised in the future and less room allowed for nonconformist views.³ The book's central idea, the seemingly innocuous affirmation of cultural continuity—especially with the Cossack past—was considered by some party officials symptomatic of everything ideologically “harmful, hostile to our reality.”⁴

Honchar, nevertheless, remained the titular head of the Ukrainian Writers' Union until 1971, when he was replaced by another respected writer, Iurii Smolych. However, throughout this period it was the newly-promoted deputy head of the Union, Vasyl Kozachenko, who acted as the party's guardian of literary affairs and set the tone in literary debates.⁵ At the Sixth Plenum of the Board of the Union of Writers of Ukraine in 1970, Kozachenko drew up a list of works which had deviated from the “correct ideological positions.” Among the works criticized were Volodymyr Drozd's *Katastrofa*,⁶ for its “overly morose atmosphere, full of helplessness, hopelessness”; Ivan Chendei's *Bereznevyi snih*,⁷ for its “one-sided portrayal of the darker side of life in today's village of Zakarpattia, involuntarily deforming the true picture of collective farm reality”; Volodymyr Maniak's *Evrika*,⁸ for “mocking the civic-patriotic ritual of life in a factory collective,” for statements about “the levelling of the individual in our society,” for “preaching dubious forms of behaviour,” and for sympathizing with characters whose personalities are split, who are incorrigible and spiritually impoverished”; Roman Andriashyk's *Poltva*,⁹ whose book, Kozachenko claimed, portrayed events in Galicia after the

First World War in a manner different from that generally accepted in Marxist historiography, characterizing it as a work of "dubious historical value."¹⁰ These comments by Kozachenko, the highest-ranking party figure in the Ukrainian Writers' Union and clearly the mouthpiece of party policy, were the signal for a concerted campaign against the books mentioned. In the years following the Sixth Plenum, the repeated and regular condemnation of these texts took on something of a ritualistic form and served as a warning to other writers.¹¹ To take only *Poltva* as an example, the book was again denounced at a special meeting of the Kiev writers' organization on 6 January 1971, lambasted several times in 1972, and attacked again in 1973 and 1974.¹²

At the same time as Kozachenko was setting stricter guidelines for writers in the Union, the campaign against Ivan Dziuba was drawing to a close. At first it had been demanded that Dziuba be stripped of his membership in the Writers' Union. Resistance to this step had been sufficient within the leadership of the Union to force a compromise: Dziuba remained a member but was compelled to sign a declaration, printed in *Literaturna Ukraina* on 6 January 1970, in which he renounced all links with "Ukrainian nationalism."¹³

The crushing of the movement for reform—Ivan Dziuba was a symbol of this movement—coincided with tougher official pronouncements concerning the national question. At the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), which met in Moscow from 30 March to 9 April 1971, Brezhnev asserted that the nationality issue had been resolved once and for all: a "single Soviet people" (*edinyi sovetskii narod*) had finally taken shape as a "historically new international community of people." The implication was that this was a transitional stage on the path to a single Soviet nation with Russian as a standard language. Ukrainian writers listening to this announcement must have reflected sadly upon the failure of the struggles of the preceding decade. Ever since 1961, when at the Twenty-second CPSU Congress Khrushchev stated that all Soviet nations and nationalities were "ever growing closer together" in a process of rapprochement (*sblizhenie*) which would lead eventually to a merger (*sliianie*), they had fought this policy, with its ominous implications for the Ukrainian language, literature and national identity. Now they had suffered another setback. After two brief "thaws" in the post-Stalin period in 1957–61 and 1966–68, were they once again to suffer a pogrom of Ukrainian culture?

The answer was not long in coming. At a meeting in Moscow on 30 December 1971, the Politburo decided to launch a concerted campaign against the dissident movement and *samvydav* publications.¹⁴ Two weeks later, the arrests of hundreds of members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia began. The repercussions were felt in literary policy almost immediately.

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On 21 January 1973, a resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU, "On Literary-Artistic Criticism,"¹⁵ demanded that critics be far more active in "implementing the party line in the area of artistic creativity." This resolution was the signal for renewed attacks upon "deviations" that had developed in previous years and a wide-ranging reassessment of much of the literature of the sixties.

Two other events at this time were important in shaping literary policy and creating the atmosphere in which writers were to work. The first was the fall of Petro Shelest, first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, who was demoted and transferred to Moscow in May 1972. The second was Kozachenko's election as first secretary of the Ukrainian Writers' Union on 23 March 1973. His term of office, which lasted until 10 January 1979, was particularly repressive and marked by a continual search for ideological mistakes in the works of writers, and weaknesses in their world-view.

In April 1973 Shelest's book, *Ukraino nasha radianska*,¹⁶ was attacked for a number of "ideological errors," "biased evaluations" of historical events and other "blunders" which were caused reportedly by his "local nationalism" and "national narrow-mindedness."¹⁷ Critics were particularly indignant at Shelest's "idealization" of Ukraine's past and the way he dwelled on the country's distinctiveness, a violation of the "friendship of peoples" concept which demands that Ukraine's history be viewed as inseparable from—and usually subordinate to—Russian history.¹⁸

The distortions ascribed to Shelest, particularly his alleged glorification of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, were the alarm-signal for historical fiction. Similar distortions were immediately detected in works by Ivan Bilyk, Roman Ivanychuk, Iu. Kolisnychenko, S. Plachynda, R. Fedoriv and Ia. Stupak and the offending books removed from circulation.¹⁹ Shelest had, in fact, complained publicly that "in our present-day historical and artistic literature, in motion pictures and the fine arts, the progressive role and significance of the Zaporozhian Sich, this glorious page in the heroic chronicle of the struggle of the Ukrainian people, have not been adequately depicted,"²⁰ and encouraged Ukrainian writers and artists to remedy the situation. After 1972, of course, the policy changed: the authorities criticized the portrayal of Ukrainian Cossack history in too glowing a light and discussion of the highly-sensitive problem of Ukrainian-Russian relations became dangerous for Ukrainian writers.

Several literary critics were at the same time criticized for twisting the party line. Among them were O. I. Karpenko for a study of Gogol, on the grounds that the latter figure was not to be taken seriously, since he idealized Cossack history;²¹ V. Zarembo for a biography of the poet and folklorist, *Ivan Manzhuza*;²² I. Iliencko for another biography, *Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko*;²³ and M. Kytsenko for a study of Cossack legends

and myths. *Voprosy istorii* attacked the last-named author for stressing only the negative aspects of the settlement of Ukrainian lands by Russians and for using the old term "foreign rabble" to refer to them.²⁴

A good example of this almost pathological sensitivity toward the issue of Russian colonialism is the attack on Borys Kharchuk's "Dva dni"²⁵ by the critic H. Konovalov, who accused the author of openly besmirching "what we hold most sacred" in the following passage:

In the hand-mill of any occupation—whether great-power Russian or great-power Polish—the snow-white ear of wheat was not produced, the flour was invariably black. The black flour of betrayal. And the invaders fed on it and continue to feed on it, grow, fat and vulgar, until the sword of new Bohuns flashes above their heads.²⁶

Konovalov was affronted by the fact that Kharchuk wrote "with undisguised fury... about the reunification" of Ukraine and Russia in 1654. An insult to this cornerstone of Soviet nationalities policy—the ideas of "two brotherly peoples," of the essential identity of their cultures and destinies, and of their desire to live within one state structure—is detected by the reviewer in the following paragraph:

The sturdy beeches, tall oaks were green with spreading branches at the bottom and were drying up at the top. They had seen enough of winged dragoons, grey-coated guardsmen, heard all sorts of cannons from various sides and also the different languages of tribes that became people and attempted to seize for themselves, to place under their liberating guardianship, the land from which those beeches and oaks grow.²⁷

The reviewer also takes offence at the following monologue by the lawyer, Huslysty, who has agreed to defend his former teacher, a Communist, and peasants at a trial in prewar Poland:

Every political trial, even the smallest, is historical. And it begins on that first, distant day, when the first conquerors set foot on our soil. The judges will change, so will the accused, but the trial will continue until the last conqueror lies dead. Justice—is freedom.... The oppression of one person is the oppression of an entire people. To deprive even one person of the right to think and to take away his freedom is to rob the intelligence and freedom of an entire society.²⁸

On the basis of this passage the critic accused Kharchuk of "abstract humanism" and an "trans-social and trans-historical approach" to life.²⁹ A fierce barrage of attacks was mounted against Kharchuk at the end of 1973 and the early months of 1974.³⁰ Eventually he admitted his mistakes and attacked "the camp of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism abroad" for "kicking up a storm" about his case.³¹

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It was not only historical writing that was put on the carpet during Kozachenko's term of office. The party expressed profound dissatisfaction with the entire critical establishment for complacency and lack of vigilance. *Radianska Ukraina* had set the tone in 1972 by declaring that "the state of affairs in Ukrainian criticism does not fulfill demands made by the party." In the same article, it chided *Literaturna Ukraina* and *Vitchyzna* for the poverty of their literary criticism, denounced "subjectivism" in assessing literary affairs and criticized the eighth volume of the *History of Ukrainian Literature*.³² Although it has since been suggested that sections of this history—one of the many scholarly achievements of the sixties—be rewritten, no revised editions have as yet appeared and the proposal seems to have been dropped.³³

Once the party had given the signal, ideological experts within the Writers' Union began to sift through the literature of the last decade. The names of arrested oppositionists, such as Ie. Sverstiuk, I. Svitlychny and M. Osadchy, simply disappeared from literary affairs: their names have not appeared in print since 1971. Other authors were told to mend their ways, and individual works by them were faulted. Vitalii Korotych's *Perevtilennia* was found lacking because of poems dealing with such "trans-class categories as conscience, good and evil in general,"³⁴ Iryna Zhylenko's *Avtoportret u chervonomu* for a "narrow-minded view of the world,"³⁵ D. Mishchenko's *V mori zatyshku nemaie* for "deheroization,"³⁶ and various works of Ievhen Hutsalo for glorifying "the modern, 'intellectual' . . . philistine,"³⁷ for using "the stream of consciousness technique . . . modelled on Western examples,"³⁸ for "portraying parodies of the Soviet people," while failing to show the role of the party and Komsomol organizations in the life of the collective farm," and a host of other sins.³⁹

Kozachenko used his election as first secretary of the Ukrainian Writers' Union at the Fourth Plenum of the Board, on 23 March 1973, to launch a tirade against writers who had fallen under the influence of "bourgeois nationalism." Among writers singled out were Oles Berdnyk, Ivan Bilyk, Roman Andriiashyk and the two translators, M. Lukash and Hryhorii Kochur.⁴⁰ He accused the latter of subscribing to the views of the neo-classicist poet and scholar Mykola Zerov, who disappeared during the purges and whose views on literature and cultural policy have always been considered a dangerous form of "bourgeois nationalism": Zerov demanded a knowledge of the best in European literature and encouraged the study of the classical heritage. The translations from the European classics by Kochur and Lukash were criticized precisely for their sophistication. It was charged that under the pretext of enriching the language they were introducing archaisms and were attempting "to squeeze the living language out of literature, especially where it was naturally and logically related to

Russian." If, asserted the critics, such tendencies continue, "we would have a dead literary language, a Ukrainian Latin." It is, of course, an axiom of linguistic policy that, wherever parallelisms exist, the use of the Russian word is both more natural and logical. "Besides all this," concluded the critics, "such a vocabulary repels the reader by its intentional refinement, its strained 'intellectualism' and, above all, clouds the essence of the matter. . . . In short, in literary criticism as in everything else we require 'a maximum of Marxism—a maximum of the popular and simple'."⁴¹

The critics also attacked the introduction of religious themes in literature. Mykola Rudenko's *Vsesvit u tobi*, (1968) and M. Medunytisia's story "Voskovi olivtsi" were condemned on this ground by L. Sanov, as was Oles Berdnyk's *Zorianyi korsar* (1971).⁴² These charges were followed by disciplinary action against selected writers. Several were thrown out of the Writers' Union—among them O. Berdnyk, H. Kochur and M. Lukash—while the work of others was placed on the index and removed from public libraries.⁴³

This kind of pressure achieved its goal of intimidating writers, some of whom ceased writing while others attempted to bend toward the new party line. A good example of the latter is Ievhen Hutsalo, one of the most talented prose writers of the preceding decade. Capitulating to party demands, he produced together with Rostyslav Sambuk, a "made-to-order" work of propagandistic journalism, "Stepova Rodyna".⁴⁴ The book was evidently an attempt to give Caesar his due. It was a response to Kozachenko's demands at the Fourth Plenum in March 1973, which had stated that the party required not intimate personal lyrics but songs which could be useful in inspiring collective farm brigades and factory workers; that in prose, priority be given to journalistic sketches; and that the new emphasis in party propaganda was upon Soviet multinationalism, upon the "mutual links" and "mutual interaction" of Soviet peoples and their literatures.⁴⁵ Hutsalo and Sambuk responded to the new turn in the party line by producing a report on the village of Sursko-Mykhailivka, in which they proudly asserted the co-existence of a variety of nationalities that worked together cheerfully and co-operatively. This kind of literary exercise, written in a style that was a radical departure from that used in other works by the writers, was, as one might expect, an artistic failure. The two authors, consequently, were criticized for writing in an "exceedingly colourless and . . . unnatural" manner.⁴⁶ A similar metamorphosis was attempted by other writers of stature, in an attempt to adapt to the demands of party authorities.⁴⁷ Needless to say, they were invariably poorly received by both critics and reading public.

In 1974 the literary authorities began to correct some alleged mistaken evaluations of the classics of Ukrainian literature. They suggested that Ivan Franko was being idealized by some literary critics who found that

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his views on literary criticism were more sensitive and far less dogmatic than those of N. Dobroliubov and A. Chernyshevsky. The authorities interpreted this as a veiled attack on dogmatism in contemporary literary criticism, and reminded the offending author that "the great socialists, Chernyshevsky and Dobroliubov, were the highest achievement of the leading literary-critical thought of their time" and that "Ivan Franko was a convinced representative of that school during a later period."⁴⁸ They also criticized a tendency to overestimate the work of Panteleimon Kulish and his impact upon Ukrainian intellectual history.⁴⁹ Certain critics, they declared, in praising and popularizing the work of VAPLITE,⁵⁰ were rehabilitating the organization itself,⁵¹ and certain authors, in juxtaposing the 1920s in the history of Soviet literature with the 1930s, were "whitewashing VAPLITE and blackening VUSPP, representing Khvyliovism as a 'constructive' current in Soviet literature."⁵² Clearly, in all three cases the guardians of orthodoxy were particularly worried by the possible appearance of a competing literary theory or programme for a "new direction" in criticism. Such a course would obviously begin with a reappraisal of the classics of Ukrainian literary criticism.

In spite of the threats and cajolery, the situation in creative literature and literary criticism remained far from satisfactory from the party's point of view. There were repeated attacks on the incompetence and indolence of critics: of 114 critics in the Writers' Union, "only 10-15 worked actively in literature," complained Zahrebelny in 1978. The rest maintained a watchful restraint or simply kept silent. As for literature itself, Zahrebelny characterized it as "one-dimensional":

All the features of a novel are there, heroes, conflict, *sujet*, plot, *dénouement*, dialogues, scenery, comment by the author, information, everything just as it should be, and yet everything is dead, unnatural, repetitive, a fake and not the original unique creation.⁵³

The opening up of this kind of discussion is not new to Soviet literature; the same complaints, often couched in exactly the same language have been voiced periodically since the twenties. At the basis of the discussion is the problem of defining literature and socialist realism. If the party insists on reducing all literature to propaganda, on viewing it as part of the campaign of psychological warfare with the West, or the manufacturing of socialist realist "archetypes" which presents members of the *nomenklatura* in a suitable light, then there will be a continual conflict between the party's demands upon writers and the concept of literature which, whether they admit to it or not, is held by the vast majority of writers in the Soviet Union. For the party demands that writers portray life as it ought to be and describe the situation as the government would like to see it develop. In other words, there is a tendency to start with an ideal image and to fit

the reality to it. When the standard images are distorted, the propaganda experts are quick to detect this and the process of browbeating the writers, of demanding that they "rebuild" themselves begins.

Writers in the Soviet Union have, on the other hand, consistently demonstrated that they adhere to a different definition of literature and see the social role of literature in terms that conflict with the party line. The last major assault on the party's reduction of literature to an illustration of official resolutions was mounted during the de-Stalinization period. It became clear that the new generation of critics—Ivan Svitlychny, Ivan Dziuba, Ievhen Sverstiuk, Ivan Boychak and others—did not consider this kind of caressing of the readers by repeating stock situations and wish-fulfillment images as literature at all. They argued, in the tradition of the critical realists of the nineteenth century, that literature should play a leading role in social criticism, that it should be exploring new and uncharted territories and that it could only achieve the stature of greatness if it was completely honest, and able to dig beneath the everyday surface phenomena of life to the deeper problems that lay beneath.

It was this new concept of literature that the party was determined to crush in the campaign that began around 1968. It is, however, clear that this campaign shattered the dreams for a new world and a new literature that many, perhaps most of the new generation, cherished at the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, and that it clipped the wings of the vast majority of talented writers who came upon the scene during the years of hope that followed Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth CPSU Congress. As a result, not only did the creative work of individual writers suffer, but entire genres began to atrophy.

On 10 January 1979, Kozachenko was removed from the leadership of the Writers' Union and replaced by Pavlo Zahrebelny. Dissatisfaction with Kozachenko's regime must have reached a very high level at this time because many writers seem to have simply retreated into a shell. When, for example, Zahrebelny sent out a questionnaire concerning the crisis in the novel, only 10 persons out of 150 even bothered to write back.⁵⁴ As a consequence, the new head initiated a campaign against the state of Ukrainian literary affairs; it was suddenly discovered that there was a crisis in sector after sector: publishing, the novel, drama, theatre, the novella, literary theory, the ethics of criticism. The voicing of these complaints began an officially-sanctioned "literary discussion" in order to air some of the grievances that had accumulated in the previous six years.

At the same time a resolution of the CPSU, "On the Further Improvement of Ideological, Political-Educational Work," issued on 26 April 1979, also drew attention to the unsatisfactory nature of much that had passed for literature or criticism and to the discontent of an increasingly sophisticated readership, thus further encouraging the flow of complaints.

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Borys Oliynyk spoke of the "necessity of creating a moral-ethical creative atmosphere" that would be conducive to the production of quality literature, and thus implied that such an atmosphere had not existed in the past.⁵⁵ The Soviet press scolded writers for "fearing to put before the general public topical problems of our social life."⁵⁶ It admitted that nothing at all was known about the reader; no attempt had been made to study the sociology of taste. Only the fact that thousands of copies of books highly acclaimed by the party remained unsold indicated the passive resistance of the reader to some works. The authorities fiercely attacked the critics and reminded them that their inertia was creating a vacuum which could lead to the loss of the youth. Zahrebelny complained that the critics specializing in foreign literature seemed to enjoy reading Kafka and Vonnegut so much that they had not found time to say a word about Ukrainian literature.⁵⁷

Various aspects of the relationship between the writer and publisher were discussed at this time as younger writers complained of having their work vetted and changed arbitrarily by publishers, or that it took an average of four to five years to get a book into print. But the most significant problem, which has been alluded to recently several times—albeit in somewhat muffled tones—was the "difficulty with paper."⁵⁸ It is an unspoken fact that since 1972 the number of titles and the volume of Ukrainian books published in the republic has fallen, while the corresponding figure for Russian books has jumped significantly. The "difficulty with paper" obviously affects Ukrainian publications alone and is part of party policy. By the end of the decade the ratio of Russian to Ukrainian titles produced in the republic was approaching three to one (see Table 1). Ironically the number of Ukrainian titles produced at this time fell behind the number that had been produced in the mid-twenties, before the Ukrainianization policy began in earnest.⁵⁹

The "difficulty with paper" phenomenon is not new. Nervous publishers do not always find it easy to reject a work that is written by a famous writer, or one in which specific ideological errors cannot be detected. Sometimes the party line on a certain author, or a certain described event, may be unclear or in process of change. Rather than take a risk, a careful editor will often invoke the old standby: there is no paper. It has been claimed by at least one Soviet literary historian⁶⁰ that, during the period we are examining, up to 80 per cent of submitted manuscripts were denied publication on the grounds of a paper shortage. Ukrainian book publishing has been deteriorating steadily since the sixties. A quick glance at UNESCO statistics shows that in 1979, of the ten largest Slavic-speaking peoples, Ukrainian occupied seventh place according to the number of book titles published. This number was only slightly more than that produced by the Slovenes, a nation of under two millions (see Table 2).

TABLE 1 Books Published in Ukraine 1970-9

| | Total no. of titles published in Ukraine | No. of titles published in per cent | |
|------|--|--|------------|
| | | In Ukrainian | In Russian |
| 1970 | 8,133 | 38.2 | 37.6 |
| 1971 | 8,068 | 38.5 | 57.2 |
| 1972 | 9,407 | 36.9 | 58.4 |
| 1973 | 7,686 | 38.8 | 57.4 |
| 1974 | 8,814 | 32.8 | 63.1 |
| 1975 | 8,731 | 30.4 | 65.2 |
| 1976 | 9,110 | 27.4 | 68.6 |
| 1977 | 8,430 | 28.1 | 67.9 |
| 1978 | 8,259 | 27.7 | 68.2 |
| 1979 | 9,032 | 26.7 | 69.6 |

SOURCE: *Pechat SSSR v 1970 godu* (Moscow 1971).

The effect of Soviet cultural policy on Ukrainian book production can be grasped by making a comparison with the number of titles published with the number of language speakers among the ten largest Slavic-language groups. It becomes immediately clear that the two Slavic nations within the Soviet Union, the Ukrainians and Belorussians, fare very poorly as compared to the Southern and Western Slavs (see Table 3). Since 1970 the situation has deteriorated still further. For an estimated population of 36.4 million Ukrainian language speakers⁶¹ in 1979, the 2,414 titles produced in Ukraine in that year constitute only 66.3 titles per million speakers.

The discussion in the press, which began in the late 1970s and is still continuing, contains many candid statements about the problems facing Ukrainian literature. On the question of Ukrainian drama, for instance, press items pointed out that for a population of some 50 millions, there were only three or four dramatists,⁶² that the years 1976-9 had not produced a single play of any merit,⁶³ that the Ukrainian plays accounted for only a quarter of the republic's repertoire in 1978, that the majority of the plays which had runs of over 100 performances were pre-revolutionary classics and that much of the contemporary production was "trash."⁶⁴ The press also noted that the last tragedy to have appeared was O. Levada's *Faust i smert* in 1960, that satire was no longer being produced, and that theatres were afraid of putting on comedies or political plays with any contemporary themes.⁶⁵ Pondering the reasons for this deplorable state of affairs, one critic ingenuously suggested that it had something to do with the "timidity of some authors and theatres toward making use of the sharp

TABLE 2 Slavic-Language Book Titles, 1964-78

| Language | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Russian | 56,391 | 57,521 | 54,968 | 56,225 | 57,522 | 57,072 | 60,240 | 65,055 | 61,239 | 61,856 | | 60,259 | 66,126 | 66,180 | |
| Polish | 7,457 | 7,238 | 8,136 | 8,721 | 8,437 | 8,571 | 9,271 | 9,462 | 9,799 | 9,562 | 8,857 | 9,543 | 10,503 | 10,563 | 10,900 |
| Serbo-Croat | 5,492 | 5,516 | 5,507 | 6,187 | 6,474 | 5,728 | 5,402 | 6,541 | 6,448 | 6,353 | 8,220 | 7,492 | 5,939 | 7,042 | 7,102 |
| Czech ^a | 4,159 | 4,692 | 4,577 | 4,383 | 4,528 | | 5,067 | 5,230 | 5,735 | 5,318 | 5,498 | 6,520 | 6,144 | 5,895 | 6,042 |
| Bulgarian | | 3,236 | 3,021 | 3,301 | 3,117 | 3,144 | 3,368 | 3,640 | 3,433 | 3,565 | 3,422 | 3,201 | 3,204 | 3,496 | 3,671 |
| Ukrainian | 3,173 | 3,003 | 3,026 | 2,855 | 2,950 | 3,061 | 3,112 | 3,113 | 3,414 | 2,989 | 2,893 | 2,651 | 2,494 | 2,367 | 2,287 |
| Slovak ^a | 1,773 | 3,119 | 2,611 | 2,470 | 2,446 | | 2,804 | 2,623 | 2,842 | 2,232 | 3,311 | 2,875 | 2,495 | 2,829 | 2,739 |
| Slovenian | 985 | 985 | 945 | 1,236 | 1,139 | 1,152 | 1,089 | 1,365 | 1,463 | 1,515 | 2,444 | 1,773 | 1,594 | 1,630 | 1,838 |
| Macedonian | 403 | 425 | 387 | 596 | 574 | 532 | 618 | 748 | 652 | 726 | 789 | 760 | 559 | 490 | 480 |
| Belorussian | 339 | 299 | 336 | 344 | 453 | 425 | 430 | 423 | 405 | 467 | 439 | 476 | 476 | 393 | 373 |

SOURCE: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook (Paris 1964-).

^a A small number of bilingual Czech-Slovak editions have been excluded.

TABLE 3 Number of titles published compared to number of language speakers in 1970⁶³

| Language | Speakers (millions) | Titles | Titles per million speakers |
|-------------|---------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| Russian | 141.0 | 60,240 | 427.2 |
| Ukrainian | 35.0 | 3,112 | 88.9 |
| Polish | 32.0 | 9,271 | 289.4 |
| Serbo-Croat | 15.1 | 5,271 | 357.7 |
| Czech | 9.5 | 5,067 | 533.3 |
| Bulgarian | 7.6 | 3,368 | 443.1 |
| Belorussian | 7.3 | 430 | 58.9 |
| Slovak | 4.0 | 2,804 | 701.0 |
| Slovenian | 1.8 | 1,089 | 605.0 |
| Macedonian | 1.0 | 618 | 618.0 |

SOURCE: B. Struminsky, "Sotsiolingvistychna pozytsiia ukrainstva v slovianskii hrupi mov," *Ukrainska knyha* 7, no. 4 (1977): 86.

weapon of satire and humour" because they were constantly glancing over their shoulder out of fear that "someone would misunderstand them or take offence, or perhaps even recognize himself and take the laughter as directed at his institution or person."⁶⁶

Perhaps the two most interesting aspects of the officially encouraged "literary discussion" of 1980-1 were the parallel debates on style and ethics. The first saw a number of critics discuss the merits of various stylistic tendencies. Some conservative writers and critics expressed a deep suspicion of new "isms," of structural complexity and stylistic innovation. They were challenged by younger authors who defended experimental prose, psychologism and the "mythological-folkloric" trend.⁶⁷ The discussion evidently ended in a compromise, with calls for the recognition of the merits of each approach.

The second aspect of the "literary discussion," the debate on ethics, was much more bitter. The barbs in this debate were aimed at the all-powerful hack who passes off his personal prejudices as critical judgments. Generally, the discussants charged, such a critic applies a crude sociological analysis to a work of art, assuming for some reason that the writer's method is exactly the same as his. If his method does not work, however, he asserts that the book is a poor one and unworthy of serious consideration. The debate raised some much deeper problems about the nature of socialist realism and the kind of critical approaches that could be taken toward a work. It quickly became clear that there was no agreement about the question of critical method and the discussion again ended on a conciliatory note.⁶⁸

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This most recent "literary discussion" is considered to have begun with H. Shtol's article in *Literaturna Ukraina* on 2 December 1980 and V. Maniak's item in the same newspaper on 5 December 1980. It ended inconclusively with a series of articles in *Literaturna Ukraina* on 3 April 1981. The attempt to stage this kind of open critique of literary problems may be part of a conciliatory policy toward the Ukrainian intelligentsia by the party. Possibly the havoc wreaked by the arrests and the hounding of writers during Kozachenko's period in office evoked a strong reaction within the literary and artistic intelligentsia, and the party, in turn, decided to ease some of the restrictions in literary and cultural policy. The removal of Vitalii Vinohradsky as editor of *Literaturna Ukraina* in March 1980 and the nomination of Lina Kostenko for the Shevchenko State Prize in Literature in December 1980 may be part of such a policy of relaxation. Lina Kostenko was a leading figure among the literary generation of the sixties and had been silent for over a decade. Recently, three books by her appeared in print: *Nad berehamy vichnoi riky* (1977), *Marusia Churai* (1979) and *Nepovtornist* (1980). A very favourable review of the acclaimed *Marusia Churai* appeared under Mykola Bazhan's name in *Literaturna Ukraina* on 4 March 1980, perhaps signalling a change in attitude toward the poetess on the part of the authorities. To these signs of improvement in the literary climate might be added the publication of L. Kyselov's talented and rather bold second abridged collection of poetry *Ostannia pisnia* (1979), which was heavily censored in 1970, and the appearance of V. Symonenko's collection *Lebedi materynstva* (1981).⁶⁹

On the other hand, this may signify nothing more than the party's flirtation with public opinion, a correcting and smoothing over of its own mistakes. The party's control of literary affairs seems to be total, and no substantial deviation from its policy of provincializing Ukrainian literature can be detected. Quite the contrary; D. Pavlychko may have been removed from his position as editor-in-chief of *Vsesvit*, an important publication that translates foreign authors into Ukrainian, precisely because of the above-average standards of this journal. His successor, Vitalii Korotych, has stated that he intends to change the journal's format to that of the *American Reader's Digest*. In addition, the unrelenting attacks on any expressions of Ukrainian patriotism have continued with R. Bratun's removal as chairman of the Lviv branch of the Writer's Union for his speech at the funeral of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, a young composer, who, it is generally assumed, was murdered by the KGB in May 1979. It should also be stated that this "discussion" is but a pale reflection of the two preceding "thaws" which covered the same ground in more outspoken terms.

It may also be that the party authorities are concerned about the attitudes of the younger generation of writers and critics, whose tastes and attitudes differ from those of the old guard and who draw their inspiration

from the best of the sixties, and not from the turgid products often served up as models today. Considerable stress has recently been placed upon the need to "educate" these younger members of the intelligentsia and a number of special schools and seminars have been organized to accelerate this grooming process.

Whether such a policy of relaxation is indeed being attempted, and what its effects will be, remain to be seen. The results of the policy of the seventies, however, are evident: it succeeded in suppressing nonconformist attitudes and disciplining the intelligentsia. Perhaps V. Shcherbytsky pronounced the best epitaph on the decade when he reviewed its achievements at the Eighth Conference of the Ukrainian Writers' Union in April 1981:

There was a time when the Ukrainian Writers' Union and the party organizations conducted unavoidable educational work with individual literary figures who had committed mistakes. And today their talent honestly serves the people!⁷⁰

It remains to be seen whether the "educational work" currently being conducted on the next generation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia will succeed in eradicating similar nonconformist tendencies.

Notes

1. For critical surveys of Ukrainian literature during this period, see G. S. N. Luckyj, "The Ukrainian Literary Scene Today," *Slavic Review* 31 (December 1972): 863-9, and "Ukrainian Literature," in G. S. N. Luckyj, ed., *Discordant Voices: The Non-Russian Soviet Literatures, 1953-1973* (Oakville 1975); I. Koshelivets, *Suchasna literatura v URSR* (New York 1964); "Pieciolatki literatury ukraińskiej," *Kultura* (September, 1971): 64-74; and "Literatura 1978," *Suchasnist*, no. 3 (1979): 145-58; Ia. Pelenski, "Recent Ukrainian Writing," *Survey*, no. 4 (1966): 102-12; A. de Vicenz, "Recent Ukrainian Writing," *Survey*, no. 1 (1963): 143-50. For anthologies of the literature of the "thaw" in Ukraine, see I. Koshelivets, ed., *Panorama nainovishoi literatury v URSR: poeziia, proza, krytyka*, 2d ed., rev. and enl. (Munich 1974); B. Kravtsiv, *Shistdesiat poetiv shistdesiatykh rokiv: antolohiia ukrainskoi poezii* (New York 1967); and *Soviet Literature*, no. 5 (1973), which is devoted entirely to Ukrainian literature.
2. The novel first appeared in the journal *Vitchyzna* (January 1968). Both Dnipro (Kiev 1968) and Radianskyi pysmennyk (Kiev 1968) publishers put the novel out in book form. The first volume of the planned *Collected Works* of Honchar appeared in 1978 with a list of contents of subsequent volumes; *Sobor*, however, is not among them.

3. The literature on *Sobor* is substantial. For the more important articles on this book, see Ie. Sverstiuk, *Sobor u ryshtovanni* (Paris-Baltimore 1970); "Lyst tvorchoi molodi Dnipropetrovska," *Suchasnist*, no. 2 (1969): 75-85; *Ukrainskyi visnyk* (Paris-Baltimore 1970), 1: 39-50.
4. The words belong to the head of the ideological section of the Dnipropetrovsk oblast committee of the party, and are quoted in *Molod Dnipropetrovska v borotbi proty rusyfikatsii* (New York 1971), 10.
5. Kozachenko was well-trusted in party circles. He was elected a candidate member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine at its Twenty-third Congress (1966), and a member of the Central Committee at the party's Twenty-fourth (1971) and Twenty-fifth (1976) congresses. He also served as a deputy to both the USSR and the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. He was the author of an attack on Ivan Svitlychny four months before the latter's arrest ("Tobi, narode!" in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 27 April 1965), and seems to have been assigned the task of reproving those writers who had signed the famed appeal by 139 citizens of Kiev protesting the trials then taking place (see his article in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 21 May 1968). The case of the appeal is documented in M. Browne, ed., *Ferment in the Ukraine* (London 1971), 23, 24, 197.
6. *Katastrofa* appeared in *Vitchyzna*, no. 2 (1968). It was reprinted in *Suchasnist*, no. 1-3 (1969).
7. *Bereznevyi snih*, published in Kiev in 1968, was criticized in an article entitled "Diisnist i pozytsiia pismennyka" which appeared in *Zakarpatska pravda*, 18 July 1969. According to a report in *Ukrainskyi visnyk* 1-2, 215-16, the author was expelled from the party and from leadership of the writers' organization of Zakarpattia.
8. This first appeared in the journal *Dnipro*, no. 2 (1967).
9. The book first appeared in the journal *Prapor*, no. 8 and 9 (1969); it was reprinted in *Suchasnist*, no. 2-5 (1971). Part three of *Poltva* never appeared, although its publication was promised in *Prapor*, no. 8 (1969).
10. V. Kozachenko's speech at the Sixth Plenum of the Ukrainian Writers' Union was reprinted in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 20 November 1970, under the title "Budivnyk komunizmu—heroi suchasnoi literatury."
11. See V. Svoboda, "Partiine kerivnytstvo literaturoiu v Ukraini: persha polovyna simdesiatykh rokiv," *Vitrazh*, no. 10-11 (1980), which contains much interesting information on the literary scandals of this period and to which this paper is indebted.
12. For attacks on *Poltva*, see B. Dudykevych in *Radianska Ukraina*, 8 December 1970 (his article was reprinted in *Suchasnist*, no. 2 (1971): 8-12); and "Vsuperech istorychnii pravdi," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 12 January 1971; and I. Doroshenko, "A z pozytsii realizmu? Shche pro roman R. Andriiashyka *Poltva*," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 26 January 1961.
13. I. Dziuba, "Zaiava do prezidii SPU," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 6 January 1970.
14. The Politburo meeting is mentioned in *Ukrainskyi visnyk* 7-8, 124-5.
15. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, 28 January 1972.

16. P. Iu. Shelest, *Ukraino, nasha radianska* (Kiev 1970).
17. "Pro seriozni nedoliky ta pomylyky odnei knyhy," *Komunist Ukrainy*, no. 4 (1973): 77-82.
18. For a discussion of Shelest's book and the implications of his fall for Ukrainian historians, see L. Tillet, "Ukrainian Nationalism and the Fall of Shelest," *Slavic Review*, no. 4 (1973): 752-68.
19. I. Bilyk was attacked for *Mech Areia* (Kiev 1972); R. Ivanychuk for *Malvy* (Kiev 1968); Iu. Kolisnychenko and S. Plachynda for *Neopalyma kupyna* (Kiev 1968); Ia. Stupak for "Hordynia," *Vitchyzna*, no. 12 (1966). See also M. Z. Shamota's attacks in "Za konkretno-istorychne vidobrazhennia zhyttia v literaturi," *Komunist Ukrainy* (May 1973).
20. Shelest, *Ukraino nasha radianska*, 22.
21. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, 20 July 1973.
22. V. Zaremba's *Ivan Manzhura* (Kiev 1972). The author was attacked for underemphasizing the class struggle and for ignoring the evils of hetman rule. One reviewer wrote: "What purpose does Zaremba's lack of objectivity serve? Is its aim to show that the misfortunes and troubles suffered by Ukraine were brought by others, rather than its own feudal Ukrainian lords?" *Raduga*, no. 6 (1973); translated by *Digest of Soviet Ukrainian Press*, no. 12 (1973): 15-17.
23. I. Iliencko, *Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko* (Kiev 1973).
24. M. Kytchenko's *Khortytsia v heroitsi i lehendakh*, 2d ed. (Dnipropetrovsk 1972) was attacked in E. I. Druzhinina's "Po povodu odnoi brochury," *Voprosy istorii*, no. 11 (1972): 203-5.
25. B. Kharchuk, "Dva dni" appeared in his *Materynska liubov* (Kiev 1972).
26. H. Konovalov, "Antyistorychni vpravy B. Kharchuka," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 18 December 1973.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. For attacks on Kharchuk, see *Literaturna Ukraina*, 18 September 1973; 7 December 1973; 18 December 1973; 28 December 1973; 1 March 1974; and 22 March 1974. The whole Kharchuk episode is analysed in *Svoboda*, "Partiine kerivnytstvo."
31. "Vidpovid panakhydnykam," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 28 June 1974.
32. For the attacks, see *Radianska Ukraina*, 29 January 1972. The eighth volume of *Istoriia ukrainskoi literatury* was published by the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR (Kiev 1972).
33. The suggestion was made by L. Novychenko concerning the eighth volume (*Literaturna Ukraina*, 4 February 1972) and by O. Kylymnyk concerning the sixth volume, which deals with the 1920s and 1930s (*Literaturna Ukraina*, 29 January 1974).
34. *Perevtilennia* (Kiev 1972) was attacked by Iu. Zbanatsky in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 8 February 1972.
35. *Avtoportret u chervonomu* (Kiev 1971) was also attacked by Zbanatsky (ibid.)

36. Mishchenko's book (Kiev 1970) was criticized by P. Zahrebelny in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 20 May 1971.
37. This was an attack on "Dvoie na sviati kokhannia," *Vitchyzna*, no. 6 (1973) by the critic L. Sanov in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 7 August 1973.
38. An attack on the same work by M. Shamota in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 19 April 1974.
39. An attack on "Teche richka" and *Berezhanski portrety* (Kiev 1975) by M. Lohvynenko in *Radianska Ukraina*, 27 July 1975. He was also attacked by Iu. Zbanatsky for *Mertva zona* (Kiev 1967) in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 3 March 1972; and by B. Chaly in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 7 December 1973.
40. *Literaturna Ukraina*, 27 March 1973.
41. These comments were made by M. Shamota in "Pytannia suchasnoho literaturoznavstva," *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 3 (1974): 52.
42. For L. Sanov's comments, see *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 16 (1974): 23-6; and for comments on Berdnyk, see M. Lohvynenko's attack in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 11 August 1972. Berdnyk was also attacked in *Literaturna Ukraina* on 21 April 1972 for "preachings filled with Biblical, Buddhist and Yogic dogmas, as well as maxims of various charlatans. . . ." and again in *Literaturna Ukraina* on 27 March and 15 May 1973.
43. See *Ukrainskyi visnyk* 7-8, 123-4.
44. Appeared in *Vitchyzna*, no. 12 (1975).
45. For information on recent trends in nationality policy and how this affects literature, see Luckyj, "Socialist in Content and National In Form," in his *Discordant Voices: The Non-Russian Soviet Literatures*, 1-12.
46. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, 12 December 1975.
47. See, for example, V. Drozd's "Liudy na zemli" in *Vitchyzna*, no. 7 (1975). The phenomenon is a familiar one in the political arena: Ivan Dziuba bought his freedom by putting his name to *Hrani krystala*, (Kiev 1975) which purported to refute his powerful *Internationalism or Russification?* (New York 1974).
48. See M. Z. Shamota, "Pytannia suchasnoho literaturoznavstva," *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 3 (1974): 45-6. A second attack on the idealization of Franko appeared in P. Io. Kolesnyk, "Literaturoznavchi aberatsii," *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 5 (1974): 57-9.
49. See Kolesnyk, "Literaturoznavchi aberatsii," 55-6.
50. VAPLITE (Vilna Akademiia proletarskoi literatury—Free Academy of Proletarian Literature) was an organization formed in the mid-twenties by Mykola Khvylioviy and other prominent revolutionary writers and acted as the main competitor and opposition to the party-sponsored VUSPP. VAPLITE was accused of "bourgeois nationalism" and a "Western-European orientation."
51. Kolesnyk, "Literaturoznavchi aberatsii," 56.
52. Shamota, "Pytannia suchasnoho literaturoznavstva," 55.
53. P. Zahrebelny, "Obrii romanu," *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 7 (1978): 24.

54. Ibid., 9.
55. See *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 9 (1979): 81.
56. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, 22 June 1979.
57. See P. Zahrebelny's speech in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 9 April 1981, and Novychenko's in *ibid.*, 14 April 1981.
58. See Zahrebelny's speech in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 9 April 1981.
59. See V. Sukhyno-Khomenko, "Piatyrichka ukrainskoi radianskoi knyzhky," *Krytyka*, no. 10-11 (1929): 11.
60. G. Svirski, *A History of Post-War Soviet Writing* (Ann Arbor 1981), 345.
61. *Naselenie SSSR po dannym vsesoiuznoi perepisi naseleniia 1979 goda* (Moscow 1980), 28.
62. See V. Boyko in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 26 January 1979.
63. O. Kolomiiets, "Ukrainska dramaturhiia sohodni," *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 11 (1979): 6.
64. Among the twenty-two most popular plays of 1978 were classics by H. Kvitka-Osnovianenko, I. Karpenko-Kary, I. Kotliarevsky and M. Starytsky, as well as plays based on works by Gogol and Shevchenko. (*Ibid.*, 10.)
65. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, 17 March 1981.
66. See "Buty hidnym svoho poklykannia," *ibid.*, 20 April 1979.
67. Contributors to this discussion include: P. Zahrebelny and O. Levada in *ibid.*, 11 April 1980; V. Maniak in *ibid.*, 5 December 1980; A. Pohribny, in *ibid.*, 6 January 1981; V. Dobriansky in *ibid.*, 13 January 1981; V. Iavorisky in *Dnipro*, no. 1 (1980): 146-9; K. Lomazova in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 3 February 1981; A. Kolisnychenko in *ibid.*, 20 March 1981; V. Koval in *ibid.*, 16 January 1981; "Po kolu chy po spirali?" in *ibid.*, 24 March 1981; and Iu. Vynnychuk, "Ryfy styliu," *ibid.*, 3 April 1981.
68. Among contributors were H. Shtol in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 2 December 1980; M. Slavynsky in *ibid.*, 16 December 1980; M. Slaboshpytsky in *ibid.*, 3 April 1981; and Iu. Burliai's "Literaturna krytyka, ii metod," *Radianske literaturoznavstvo*, no. 6 (1980): 62-73.
69. I am indebted here and in the comments that follow to Professor Jaroslav Rozumny of the University of Manitoba who was kind enough to read and comment on this paper.
70. *Literaturna Ukraina*, 9 April 1981.