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Author(s): George O. Liber

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Adapting to the Stalinist Order: Alexander Dovzhenko's Psychological Journey, 1933–1953

GEORGE O. LIBER

THREE PHASES MARKED THE SOVIET UKRAINIAN film director Alexander Dovzhenko's 20-year relationship with Joseph Stalin and his accommodation to the Stalinist order. During the first phase, when Dovzhenko filmed *Aerograd* between 1933 and 1935, he acclimatised himself to the political mores of the Stalinist era. Because he viewed placing his visions on the screen as his primary mission, he constructed his relationship with Stalin on the basis of illusions. During the second phase, between 1935 and 1939, as Dovzhenko prepared his film *Shchors*, Stalin's charismatic spell on him weakened. By the beginning of 1944, after the general secretary's condemnation of Dovzhenko's *Ukraine in Flames*, the film-maker critically examined his fantasies regarding the party leader. Although he did not abandon all of his illusions, he confronted most of them.

In 1926 film-making became Dovzhenko's passion and vocation. He lived, to paraphrase Max Weber, 'for' and 'off' cinema.¹ Believing that his ability to create coherent images frame by frame gave his life a meaning in the service of the cause of establishing a Ukrainian cinematography, he made the production of film the cornerstone of his life.²

When political pressures intensified by the end of the 1920s, he continued to compose on film. In order to do so, he created 'illusions' and 'preference falsifications' and engaged in 'cognitive dissonance'. These devices became Dovzhenko's preferred mechanisms of adaptation to the regimentation of the new political order.

According to Shelley E. Taylor, illusions consist of perceptions that do not conform completely to reality. They may be pleasing, harmless or merely useful. Unlike delusions, which defy reality and cannot be corrected by reasoning, illusions accommodate reality, but misrepresent events and relationships on behalf of the individual generating these mental images.³ People often need 'to distort reality in order to adjust successfully to it'.⁴

In adapting to the Stalinist system, Dovzhenko also employed extensive 'preference falsifications'. According to the economist Timur Kuran, this presentation of self aims specifically 'at manipulating the perceptions others hold about one's motivations or dispositions'. An individual employing preference falsification consciously creates a false impression by 'living the lie'; he projects an outward image approved by those

in authority.⁵ As the Stalinist system broke down the divisions between private and public life, Soviet citizens—especially prominent public figures—needed to respond to external political demands with acceptable public performances. Psychological adaptation seems the best way to understand these responses.

Dovzhenko's illusions and preference falsifications reflected his desperate need to master his unstable environment at the beginning of the 1930s. In order to create, he had to establish a sense of control, either primary or secondary, in his personal and professional life. Inasmuch as he could not master the world by shaping the physical, social or behaviour realities to 'fit' his perceptions, goals or wishes ('primary control'), he sought to win control by means of an alternative path, labelled 'secondary control', which emerges when one establishes or maintains one's authority through someone else by relinquishing primary control to a great extent.⁶ In choosing 'secondary control', the individual seeks to fit in with the environment.⁷ In short, Dovzhenko sought to establish a climate of predictability for himself by aligning his behaviour with the expectations of Stalin and his inner circle.⁸

In order to create, the film-maker needed to survive. In order to survive, he had to compromise. Having received harsh criticism for *Earth* (1930) and *Ivan* (1932), he feared arrest in the Ukrainian SSR. In order to circumvent this possibility, he moved to Moscow in January 1933.⁹ Although he understood that the authorities in the Soviet capital would closely monitor and limit the expression of his artistic vision, he may have justified these limitations by imagining that they would improve in time. In his mind, he would pay the price of constant negotiation in order to place his narratives, however censored, on the silver screen.

After arriving in Moscow, Dovzhenko wrote a letter to Stalin and asked for his protection.¹⁰ He knew that the party leader, a film enthusiast, had seen his films, certainly *Arsenal* and possibly *Earth* and *Ivan*.¹¹ The film-maker never revealed whether he wrote this letter on his own initiative or whether someone close to Stalin's inner circle suggested that he do so.¹²

Whatever its origins, the letter succeeded. Inasmuch as Dovzhenko joined the Moscow Film Studios (Mosfilm) shortly after he completed it and experienced no immediate political problems, Stalin or members of his inner circle must have intervened favourably on Dovzhenko's behalf.¹³

As an artist forced to create within the constraints of a sociopolitical system based on shifting illusions, Dovzhenko had to extend the artist's natural role as an 'illusionist' to the realms of his personal life, private philosophy and political relationships, and eventually to his own constructs of reality. He established two interlocking labyrinths of illusions within his psyche and bolstered them with preference falsifications. His illusions included both his own relationship with Stalin and the leaders of the Soviet state and his own view of himself as a cultural negotiator.

Phase one

Dovzhenko's major illusions concerned Stalin and his influence on the party leader, illusions which grew stronger after the director met his most important critic for the first time. Shortly after he completed the screenplay for *Aerograd* in April 1934, the

film-maker wrote a letter to Stalin asking permission to read it to him personally.¹⁴ The general secretary responded favourably; he invited Dovzhenko to his Kremlin office.¹⁵ On 14 April 1934 the film-maker spent 70 minutes there.¹⁶ Years later, he enthusiastically recorded his first meeting with the party leader:

The great Stalin received me that day, at the Kremlin like a kind master, introduced me, excited and happy, to Comrades Molotov, Voroshilov, Kirov, listened to my reading, gave his approval, and wished me success in my work. When I [left] him I saw that the world had changed for me. With his paternal solicitude Comrade Stalin had lifted from my shoulders the burden of many years' standing, when I had felt creatively, and therefore politically, inferior, a feeling instilled in me over many years by my environment.¹⁷

After this first meeting Stalin impressed Dovzhenko by taking the film-maker seriously:

Inquiring about the Far East, Comrade Stalin asked me if I could show him on a map where I would build a city if I were a builder, not a film director. I replied that I could. Then he led me to his small office which contained maps on the wall. I showed him the place and explained why I thought that way ... To now, I recall with great pleasure that Joseph Vissarionovich asked me about it.¹⁸

As these passages reveal, Dovzhenko's first meeting with the party leader overwhelmed him emotionally. The film-maker wanted the burden of persecution he experienced in the Ukrainian SSR in the early 1930s lifted; Stalin did so. Dovzhenko wanted recognition and he found it. He wanted respect and he received it. He wanted approval and he won Stalin's blessings. He heard everything he wanted to hear, perhaps more. The general secretary may have asked the film-maker where the future city of Aerograd should be built. Coming from the most powerful man in the Soviet Union, this question may have won Dovzhenko over. As the passage implied, Dovzhenko seems to have imagined that he had won a degree of respect from Stalin not accorded any other Ukrainian intellectual or Soviet film-maker. This turned his head.

In his memoirs, the Ukrainian novelist Yury Smolych, who met Dovzhenko in the early 1920s and who remained his friend over the next 30 years, recounted his reactions to this meeting with Stalin. Until their first encounter, the film-maker perceived the general secretary only as 'a certain symbol'. After Dovzhenko's visit, Stalin ceased being an abstraction. The film-maker now began to view him as a human being, as someone he could communicate with.¹⁹

According to Smolych, Dovzhenko 'evaluated people on how they treated him'²⁰. This human characteristic, the emotional equivalent of Newton's third law of thermodynamics, provides a key to understanding why Dovzhenko enjoyed the company of Stalin, Sergei Kirov, Nikita Khrushchev and Andrei Zhdanov. Initially, they—especially Stalin—treated him cordially.

Initially Dovzhenko feared Stalin, but the Soviet leader's amiability won him over. 'I am afraid of him', the film-maker admitted to Smolych, '... but he also charms me'²¹. Dovzhenko's dependency upon the party chief and his mutual fear of and attraction to Stalin-the-symbol and Stalin-the-man remained throughout the course of their relationship. If first impressions are the most important, then the party leader's

unaffected courtesy 'excited Sashko, enraptured him especially as a person, as someone with a human disposition ...'. But Dovzhenko's fascination with Stalin as a person also 'apparently strengthened his trust in him to a certain extent'.²²

Conforming to the nineteenth-century peasant interpretation of the tsar as a distant but good father, Dovzhenko came to believe, according to Smolych, that Stalin did not know of the problems prevalent in the Soviet state and of the crimes committed in his name. If someone brought such matters to Stalin, surely the party leader would act decisively to resolve them. According to Smolych,

From that time, whenever our conversations began to deal with some problems in the country (especially the various successive disasters during the collectivisation and the political practices in the countryside), or about some immediately incomprehensible efforts of the party or the government, Sashko began to believe that these events happened because Stalin did not know about it. Stalin could not be concerned with absolutely everything, with every detail. 'I need to point this out to Stalin, I need to write to Stalin', Sashko said in these instances.²³

Dovzhenko was not alone. In the first half of the 1930s many Soviet citizens, especially intellectuals, explained events which they did not understand in this manner.²⁴ This justification should not be surprising. Such self-deceptions protected the integrity of an individual's view of the world, which organised information from external sources around a central organising principle: what mattered to the self.²⁵ As Soviet political life became more brutal in the 1930s, survival became the self's most important priority.

Dovzhenko's meetings with Stalin and his belief that he could establish a rapport with the Soviet leader led the film-maker to construct an illusion for himself. He imagined that he had become more than just Stalin's client, that the party leader actually respected him and his opinions. Seduced by this illusion, Dovzhenko seems to have bought into the Stalinist myth—if only for a short period of time, from 1934 to approximately 1937 or 1938.

After his conversations with Stalin and after Dovzhenko received the Order of Lenin in February 1935, on the 15th anniversary of Soviet cinema, the film-maker spoke warmly about the party leader.²⁶ In defending the arrests and purges in Ukraine, Dovzhenko accepted the Stalinist construction of reality. When the poet Mykola Bazhan and the novelist Yury Yanovsky, Dovzhenko's closest friends, claimed that the mass of arrests of the Ukrainian intelligentsia represented a manifestation of Russification and the strangulation of Ukrainian culture, Dovzhenko argued the Stalinist case. According to NKVD informers, the film-maker asserted that smoke did not appear without fire, that the political situation had become very complex, and that the industrialisation of the USSR remained its most important political priority. According to one NKVD report, Dovzhenko gradually convinced Bazhan and Yanovsky of his position.²⁷

Dovzhenko's uncritical attitude toward Stalin in 1935 is somewhat understandable, although not totally justifiable. The film-maker knew of the famine of 1932–33 and of the purges. By 1933 the security organs had arrested many of his friends and colleagues, most prominently Danylo Demutsky, his long-term cameraman.²⁸ Logic dictated that Stalin, as the unchallenged leader of the USSR since 1929, must have

had some responsibility for these events. But fears generated by the Stalinist terror undermined the acceptance of this conclusion.

In addition to this intellectual shortcircuit of cause and effect, Dovzhenko must have been overwhelmingly grateful to the general secretary, appreciative enough not to challenge him. Stalin and his inner circle had saved the young film-maker from arrest and possible execution in Soviet Ukraine and provided him with refuge in Moscow. Stalin-the-symbol then revealed himself in human form to Dovzhenko. In response, the film-maker expressed great enthusiasm for the party leader.

Building on the tsar-father archetype and on the fact that he owed his life to Stalin, Dovzhenko's imagination reinforced the charismatic spell the party leader initially cast over him. Dovzhenko may have justified his public affection for Stalin to himself by claiming that, inasmuch as he could communicate with Stalin, he could bring matters of serious importance to Stalin's attention, matters no one else could. In an emergency, he could inform Stalin of grave problems, the leader would listen, and Dovzhenko would persuade him.

The film-maker's inflation of his own role in the Stalin-Dovzhenko relationship led to the construction of another illusion, which the film-maker held and propagated to his friends and colleagues—that of being a negotiator between the central authorities and Ukrainian culture. With Dovzhenko's unexpected return to the Ukrainian republic in 1935, Ukrainian intellectuals assumed that Stalin had re-evaluated and anointed Dovzhenko (whom they believed the authorities had marked for arrest in 1932 and 1933).

After 1935 Ukrainian intellectuals came to believe that Dovzhenko, who constantly advertised his relationship with Stalin, Khrushchev, and other party leaders, would use the party's faith in him on behalf of Ukrainian interests.²⁹ The film-maker took his role as a cultural negotiator seriously. He defended the concerns of Ukrainians in Western Ukraine and sought to build up Ukrainian cadres at the Kiev Film Studios. He promised his friends that he would ask Khrushchev why instructors at Ukrainian institutions of higher learning taught in Russian. At a public meeting in the spring of 1941 Dovzhenko asserted that henceforth all films produced at the Kiev Studios would employ the Ukrainian language. Claiming that he achieved this breakthrough exclusively as a result of his friendship with Stalin and Khrushchev, he considered this announcement his most significant achievement.³⁰

Because Dovzhenko enjoyed Stalin's and Khrushchev's trust, Yanovsky regarded the film director as the most outstanding figure in Ukrainian culture. Not surprisingly, Dovzhenko also thought so. Like Les Kurbas, Ivan Mykytenko, Hnat Yura, Alexander Korniiichuk and other prominent Ukrainian intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s, he considered himself to be the sole representative of Ukrainian culture.³¹ Inasmuch as he played the role of a cultural ataman (chieftain), 'Sashko', according to Yanovsky, 'could do very much, more than any other person'. But Dovzhenko, according to Yanovsky, typified a 'weak-willed ataman'.³²

These words reflected Yanovsky's own illusions. Had Dovzhenko a stronger will, the writer claimed, he could inform Stalin about the nonsense which appeared in the late 1930s. The film-maker could tell Stalin frankly and the communist party leader would believe him, because he knew that Dovzhenko spoke the truth. 'The fate of Ukrainian culture could be in Dovzhenko's hands', the novelist asserted. 'Everything

could be different'.³³ Yanovsky's illusions reflected the hopes of Soviet intellectuals traumatised by the brutal Stalinist realities of the 1930s. Adhering to his conscious role as an artist, Dovzhenko shared this hope and these illusions.

As an artist, possessing a creative interpretation of the truth, Dovzhenko's imagination often erased the borders between the real and the imagined. For him, the truth—like the process of film-making—lay not in the details but in the overall interpretation. 'We do not need ordinary words, daily motions, probable details', he asserted, 'Just the clean golden truth'.³⁴ In his cinematic biographies of the Red Army leader Mykola Shchors and the botanist Ivan Michurin the film-maker emphasised this version of the truth. In one of his diary entries for 1944 Dovzhenko wrote about Michurin: 'Maybe he was not like this; most likely he was not. I threw out the entire sum of small, private, ordinary truths, and oriented the screenplay toward the single main truth of this person'.³⁵

Dovzhenko's search for the 'single main truth' led him to imagine that he could create a new reality. During the filming of *Aerograd* he admitted that 'Aerograd was not an invention of the artist, but a reality of our days. Even if this city did not exist, it did not mean anything ...'.³⁶ Directing a film advocating the importance of defending the borders of the first socialist state, Dovzhenko came to believe 'that I myself am not at all a director, but a partisan, a hunter, a Chekist, that I should not make films, but reconstruct the country, uncover its riches, and defend our distant borders from the enemies of the working people'.³⁷ Conforming to these illusions, the director ordered naval uniforms for members of his film crew. During the shoots they all marched in columns, singing military songs.³⁸ In Dovzhenko's world, his imagination overpowered reality.

He believed that artists not only presented reality but also interpreted it and created it. Most importantly, artists—in his view—should restructure reality. In a talk before the First All-Union Conference of the Creative Workers of Soviet Cinema in January 1935 he declared:

I dream about an artist who would write a novel. The Politburo would read this novel and issue the following order: 'We decree that beginning tomorrow we will implement this novel in life, exactly, as if it were a screenplay'. And that's how some new White Sea Canal project will be built!³⁹

Dovzhenko's *Aerograd* became a successful socialist realist film. Set in the Soviet Far East, an isolated region often penetrated by the Japanese after their invasion of Manchuria in the 1930s, the film deals with the efforts of the hunter Stepan Glushak, a Bolshevik civil war veteran, and his neighbours to defend their heavily-forested region from Japanese infiltrators and traitorous Old Believers. Not surprisingly, Glushak and his friends vanquish the enemies of the Soviet state, paving the way for the Soviet government to build the modern city of Aerograd, which in turn would secure control of the Soviet Far East.

Before *Aerograd*, Dovzhenko's imaginary world and the real world occupied separate realms. But after this film rehabilitated him politically, he may have imagined that he could use his charm and influence to persuade those in the highest circles to transform his dreams into reality. Not only did Dovzhenko's films create illusions on the screen before millions, but he also became an active member of

many commissions, such as the committee editing the 1937 Soviet Ukrainian constitution and the Kiev City Council, which sought to construct and to reform Stalinist realities.⁴⁰

Phase two

As Dovzhenko coped with the capriciousness of the Stalinist order, his illusions and gratefulness to Stalin were eroded, especially after he started to make a film about a Ukrainian Chapaev, Mykola Oleksandrovych Shchors, at the party leader's suggestion. After 1935 the film-maker could no longer rationalise the inconsistencies between Stalinist proclamations and Soviet realities. He became psychologically uncomfortable and experienced 'cognitive dissonance'.⁴¹ Dovzhenko's psychological discomfort undermined his awe of Stalin and his inner conformity to the Stalinist view of the world. His growing distress fuelled his doubts and generated fears, which he then camouflaged with preference falsifications.

Before 27 February 1935 most Soviet journalists and scholars could not identify Shchors. After *Pravda* published Stalin's remarks from the conclave celebrating the 15th anniversary of Soviet cinematography on 5 March they discovered Shchors and re-evaluated his contributions to the Bolshevik cause. Now he became 'one of the organisers and commanders of the first units of the Red Army in Ukraine'. Together with the help of the 'fraternal Russian people and the heroic units of the Red Army', this Ukrainian Bolshevik liberated Ukraine 'from counter-revolution'.⁴²

Although Shchors did participate in the revolution and civil war, he did not play the central role Stalin assigned to him after February 1935.⁴³ Reviving a secondary figure from the civil war's memory hole, the Stalinist political machine insisted on representing Shchors as a selfless Bolshevik revolutionary hero and exaggerated his accomplishments. Now Dovzhenko had to capture this Stalinist interpretation on film.

The film-maker had good reason to be concerned. Between 27 February 1935, when Stalin first presented his idea to Dovzhenko, and March 1939, when the film finally appeared, the Soviet leader met him several times. With each visit, Stalin became more demanding and less cordial.

At the end of a meeting on 22 May 1935 Stalin mentioned a recently released record of Ukrainian folksongs. 'Have you heard this record?', he asked the film-maker.

'No, I haven't', Dovzhenko replied. 'I don't have a record player'.

An hour after Dovzhenko returned home from the Kremlin, he received a record player, a present from the Soviet leader. In an interview published shortly after this meeting, Dovzhenko claimed that he would keep the record player to the end of his life. 'In what other country would workers and artists, scholars and authors feel such a direct intimacy with their beloved leader and feel our glorious party's and Comrade Stalin's daily concerns?', he asked rhetorically.⁴⁴

But in the company of his closest friends, Dovzhenko claimed that Stalin gave him the record player and the Ukrainian record to remind the film-maker of his nationalist past.⁴⁵ The party leader most probably knew of Dovzhenko's service in Symon Petlyura's Ukrainian nationalist army in 1918–19 and of his arrest and conviction by

the Cheka in 1919.⁴⁶ For Dovzhenko, Stalin's gift represented a warning shot. If the director did not produce a satisfactory film, then trouble would follow.

In seeking to please Stalin with *Shchors*, Dovzhenko experienced serious problems. The film-maker feared that the actors he had selected, especially those in the primary roles, might not satisfy Stalin. After completing half the film with one actor in the title role, the director started anew with another.⁴⁷ Finally, in the autumn of 1937, Dovzhenko chose a third actor, Evgenii Samoilov, to play Shchors.⁴⁸ One NKVD intelligence officer provided a very perceptive analysis of the director's inability to find a good actor to play Shchors: 'I think that Dovzhenko's dissatisfaction with the actors who played Shchors has a more complex reason than the incompatibility of this or that actor. Dovzhenko's creative dissatisfaction with the image of Shchors caused this hypercriticism'.⁴⁹

Perhaps. But Dovzhenko experienced a much greater frustration in the late 1930s. The historical context behind Shchors's image constantly changed. Between 1935 and 1939 Soviet historians rewrote the official history of the revolution and civil war, erasing the contributions of recent purge victims and replacing them with the newly expanded roles played by Lenin and Stalin. Dovzhenko's project became an integral part of this revisionist process; censors arbitrarily altered sequences to conform to the latest changes in the official record.⁵⁰ Most importantly, Dovzhenko had to second-guess the contours of the politically acceptable. This had also been Dovzhenko's problem with *Earth* (1930) and *Ivan* (1932). Over the course of their long-term production the party changed direction and left Dovzhenko, who could not transform his films as quickly as the Politburo could issue decrees, open to attack.

The Stalinist regimentation of the late 1930s forced Dovzhenko to submit every decision and every episode to groups of people 'who knew what Stalin wanted'. These critics, for example, noted that Stalin wished Dovzhenko to show Shchors's staff as better than Chapaev's; claimed that the Soviet leader wanted the film-maker to depict a peasant insurrection in the film; and strongly suggested that Dovzhenko make Shchors the leading representative of the Leninist-Stalinist nationality policy in Soviet Ukraine.⁵¹

In addition to these critics, Dovzhenko experienced more late-night meetings with Stalin, some of which were not as pleasant as the first few. The film-maker later told friends about one frightening incident in Stalin's office, when the Soviet leader refused to speak to Dovzhenko, and when Beria accused him of joining a nationalist conspiracy.⁵²

It is unclear why the film-maker angered Stalin and Beria. But perhaps their fury represented their reaction to Stalin's portrayal in the film, or lack thereof. After the release of Mikhail Romm's *Lenin in October* (1937), which celebrated the Stalin cult on celluloid, all heroes of the Revolution portrayed on film mentioned Stalin's leading role in the revolutionary struggle.⁵³ Perhaps Dovzhenko received orders to include Stalin in his film but did not comply.⁵⁴ Most probably, however, the cultural commissars imagined Stalin's inclusion to be an unspoken assumption and expressed shock that the film-maker did not understand this new political custom. Whatever the reason for the official displeasure, the expectation remained the same; Dovzhenko, however, did not conform.

In his own defence, the film-maker claimed that he could not introduce a scene of

Stalin or characters discussing him without violating the historical or artistic truth.⁵⁵ During the civil war Shchors did not report to Stalin. In Shchors's talks with his own troops, who would not have been able to place Stalin, a member of the party's inner circle since 1912, Dovzhenko could not show his hero equating Stalin with Lenin.

The film-maker also did not include a scene where Shchors allegedly met Lenin. If he had captured this scene on film, he would have had to conform to the custom established by Soviet film-makers in the late 1930s, assigning Stalin at Lenin's side. But according to one of Dovzhenko's colleagues, the film-maker told him: 'I did not want to show this. I therefore only limited myself to Shchors's mentioning his conversation with Lenin'.⁵⁶ Stalin's absence from *Shchors* raised the issue of Dovzhenko's true feelings for the party leader.

Dovzhenko's situation became more precarious after the early 1938 arrest of Ivan Dubovy, Shchors's former deputy, who served as a military consultant for the film and who befriended the film-maker. Before Dubovy's execution on 29 July 1938 he confessed that he killed Shchors in battle 'in order to take his place as commander of the division'.⁵⁷ This Kafka-esque turn of events not only complicated the completion of the film but also placed Dovzhenko in great danger. Before Dubovy's arrest, the director envisioned Shchors dying on the battlefield and passing his command to Dubovy. Now in order to save his own skin, Dovzhenko had to rewrite and refile *Shchors*.⁵⁸

Dubovy became Dovzhenko's central problem. Shchors's deputy could not appear in the film, unless Dovzhenko presented him as 'an enemy of the people'. But the director felt that Dubovy had been unjustly treated and executed and he did not want to do so.⁵⁹

Dovzhenko clearly did not want to portray Dubovy killing Shchors in his film. But if the film-maker did not want to follow the official interpretation, he had to edit Dubovy out of the film. Once he excluded Dubovy, then the cinematic Shchors could live beyond 30 August 1919, the date of the real Shchors's death. In a paradoxical manner, the only way that Dovzhenko could deal honestly with Dubovy was to deny Shchors's death.

Although the film-maker did not have much room to manoeuvre, he sought to deal honestly with other issues beyond Stalin's representation on the screen and Dubovy's relationship with Shchors. Despite the fiction of the film's overall interpretation, that nationally conscious Ukrainians constituted the core supporters of the Bolshevik victory in the Ukrainian provinces, Dovzhenko's use of Ukrainian folklore Ukrainianised the film. Although the film met the guidelines, 'national in form, socialist in content', the Ukrainian songs and dances competed with the revolutionary message of the film.

Although it possessed an unevenly developed plot, *Shchors* conformed to the guidelines set by socialist realism. Dovzhenko's film depicts a dedicated, selfless and zealous revolutionary hero who overcame great odds through his faith in Lenin and the force of his will. As a politically and militarily infallible protagonist, Shchors dominates the film. When the film appeared in 1939 it joined a group of films, such as the Vasiliev brothers' *Chapaev* (1934) and Sergei Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* (1938), which dealt with 'powerful individuals from Russian and Soviet history, all of which were designed to provide precedent and legitimation for Stalin's authority'.⁶⁰

As a result of the conflicts Dovzhenko experienced creating *Shchors*, the film-maker's reaction to the mass arrests of the late 1930s changed from his earlier response. In the company of his closest friends, he now expressed his belief that the arrests of the 1930s had included many innocent people. He had worked closely with Demutsky, Mykola Nademsky (the actor who played the grandfathers in *Zvenyhora* and *Earth*), Stepan Shahaida (the actor who portrayed the hero Glushak in *Aerograd*) and Dubovy. By 1938 the authorities had exiled Demutsky to Central Asia and executed Nademsky, Shahaida and Dubovy. Having known them, Dovzhenko believed them innocent.

His psychological discomfort with Stalinist realities grew. In seeking additional information, Dovzhenko hoped to reduce his psychological misgivings. He began to ask his friends about the arrests of colleagues in Georgia. But the information he gathered only increased his distress with the prevailing Stalinist beliefs.⁶¹

He now began to express his dissatisfaction with the Stalinist order. In private, Dovzhenko claimed that the Soviet Union could not possess so many internal enemies. When he learned that the authorities had freed and rehabilitated some of those arrested, he concluded that the security organs, in reaction to the Stalinist hysteria of the 1930s, had overwhelmingly arrested the innocent. When Dovzhenko heard rumours that security organs tortured prisoners during their interrogations, he began to curse the organs of the NKVD, asserting that sadists and enemies of the Soviet state worked there. The film-maker now contended that local authorities made foolish decisions, could not distinguish between the innocent and the guilty, and sacrificed the innocent without any qualms.⁶²

The change in Dovzhenko's attitude toward the arrests fueled his critical evaluation of the whole Soviet system of education—the schools, the Komsomol, social organisations, the relationship between communists and non-party members, censorship in the arts and press, and the whole tone of Soviet life built on 'hurrah-patriotism' and dogmatism.⁶³ As he entertained doubts and criticisms about the Stalinist system during the last stages of his work on *Shchors*, he continued to mask them with public preference falsifications, highlighted by his speeches and articles praising Stalin.⁶⁴

Despite outside pressures and Dovzhenko's disillusionment with Stalin and the Stalinist order, he completed *Shchors*. The authorities released the film in early 1939 and it achieved great success.⁶⁵ *Shchors* resuscitated Stalin's faith in the film-maker and brought him many rewards. In the spring of 1939 Dovzhenko became a member of the Union of Soviet Writers. In November he received the title, Honoured Artist of the Ukrainian SSR. In December he won election to the Kiev City Council. In the autumn of 1940 the All-Union Committee on Cinematography appointed him the artistic director of the Kiev Film Studios, the third most important position in its hierarchy. In March 1941 he received the Stalin Prize, First Class, for his film.⁶⁶ Most importantly, the authorities allowed the film-maker to return to Ukraine to live and work. Only one prize eluded Dovzhenko—reinstatement in the Communist Party, from which the authorities had expelled him in 1923.⁶⁷

Shchors's triumphant premiere and the film-maker's promotion at the Kiev Film Studios resurrected his illusions, especially the illusion that he had an influence over Stalin and that he remained Soviet Ukraine's primary cultural negotiator.

Phase three

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 Soviet leaders encouraged a limited revival of the non-Russian identities, including the Ukrainian, within the Russocentric Soviet framework that emerged in the late 1930s.⁶⁸ This revival ended quickly, however, as the first major Soviet military victories—at Stalingrad in February 1943 and Kursk in July—motivated Stalin and his men to return to the policy of placing ‘Russia first’. Between 1943 and 1945 these two conflicting policies remained in place. Dovzhenko became one of the most prominent victims of the end of the limited revival of the Ukrainian identity.

In the course of the war, before the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, Dovzhenko began to work on a new screenplay, *Ukraine in Flames*. He completed it at the end of the summer of 1943, just as the Soviet Army prepared to storm Kharkiv. On the night of 28 August Dovzhenko personally read his entire screenplay to Nikita Khrushchev, then the head of the Communist Party of Ukraine. The party boss praised it highly and recommended that Dovzhenko publish it as a separate book in Russian and Ukrainian. ‘Let them read it’, Dovzhenko quoted Khrushchev as saying. ‘Let them realise that it’s not that simple’.⁶⁹

Ukraine in Flames included vignettes of Ukrainians who experienced the war under German occupation and of those who fought the Germans. But in its asides and digressions and its depiction of the brutalities of war, the Nazi take-over and the Soviet response, Dovzhenko’s screenplay criticised the Soviet Union’s treatment of those who had lived under German rule. Each character in the screenplay had a different experience, but generally their encounters with Soviet authorities before and after the German invasion followed a negative pattern.

Two passages in *Ukraine in Flames* became politically controversial. In the first, Captain Vasyl Kravchyna, a Soviet Ukrainian commander, rhetorically asks his soldiers; ‘What are we fighting for? What are we dying for?’. Kravchyna then responds to his own question:

We are fighting for something priceless, for Ukraine ... For the honourable Ukrainian people ... For forty million Ukrainians ... For our people torn to pieces, for our splintered people.⁷⁰

At another point, Kravchyna repeats his question. His response becomes more focused:

For the great peoples of the Soviet Union and for our Ukrainian state from the Subcarpathian Rus to this field of battle ... Remember, [he told his soldiers] whatever fronts we fight on today, wherever Stalin will send us—to the north, to the south, to the west, to the four corners of the earth, we are fighting for Ukraine.⁷¹

In the second passage, the German Colonel Kraus provided a lengthy and negative evaluation of Soviet citizens. Speaking to his son, he asserts:

Well, Ludwig, you should know that, among these people, their Achilles heel is never covered. These people are absolutely without the ability to forgive one another for their differences, even in the name of common and higher interests. They do not possess state instincts. You know, they do not study history. It is amazing. They have been living for twenty-five years with negative slogans, denying God, property, families and friendship! For them, the word nation (*natsiya*) remained only a negative. They do not have any eternal

truths. This is because, among them, there are so many traitors ... There is no reason for us to destroy them all. You know, if we are smart about it, they will exterminate each other.⁷²

These remarks contributed to Dovzhenko's undoing. Censors and the party's ideological guardians could not distinguish where Dovzhenko's imagination started and where it ended. Was the author presenting his own interpretation of the Communist Party, the Soviet Union and the Soviet leadership, or merely portraying an enemy's perspective? Dovzhenko's artistic licence did not extend to such outrageous statements, even if attributed to the enemy, they concluded.

In his screenplay Dovzhenko spoke honestly about problems in the Soviet preparations for war and in the Soviet war effort. He finally brought matters of serious concern to Stalin's attention. But Stalin remained unconvinced of their relevance. Dovzhenko's illusions regarding Stalin's potential interest in such matters now became delusions, which generated serious problems for the film-maker. As Soviet policies toward the non-Russians changed after the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk in mid-1943, Dovzhenko steered his screenplay through the 'proper channels' in Moscow. In the autumn of 1943 he learned that Stalin did not like *Ukraine in Flames* and had prohibited its publication and filming.⁷³

Stalin sought to do more than ban Dovzhenko's screenplay. As an advocate of the primacy of socialist realism and as the most important interpreter of Soviet nationality policies, the Soviet leader must have felt betrayed by Dovzhenko's recent work. Stalin had protected and encouraged the film-maker, but Dovzhenko still nurtured an artistic and a political vision different from the secretary general's. He then invited Dovzhenko to the Kremlin.

Dovzhenko's meeting with Stalin occurred on 30 January 1944; it lasted from 9.05 p.m. until 10.20 p.m.⁷⁴ In addition to Stalin, half of the members and candidate members of the Politburo attended this meeting. In addition to Khrushchev, Stalin invited other leading Ukrainian party, governmental and cultural figures.⁷⁵

After greeting everyone, Stalin explained that he had called this meeting to discuss Dovzhenko's *Ukraine in Flames*. He turned to Dovzhenko and told him that his screenplay could not be published.⁷⁶ He asserted that in his screenplay Dovzhenko had included a number of ideas which attempted 'to revise Leninism' and which came out 'against our party, against Soviet power, against collective farmers, and against our nationality policies'. The screenplay—in short—attacked the Soviet order.⁷⁷

According to Stalin, Dovzhenko expressed serious mistakes of an anti-Leninist character. Most seriously, there were no references to Lenin. Stalin claimed that the film-maker opposed the class struggle, the party's policy of liquidating the kulaks as a class, and collectivisation itself. Dovzhenko, in Stalin's view, did not realise that the Soviet struggle against the Germans also represented a class war, a conflict between the oppressors and the oppressed. He asserted that Dovzhenko criticised the Communist Party's and the Soviet government's preparations for war, and then pointed out that Dovzhenko used the phrase 'thin armour' often, especially in his description of Soviet tanks. The general secretary accused the film-maker of asserting that the Soviet state and people had been unprepared for war. Stalin then criticised Dovzhenko's view of the leaders of the party, the government and the Red Army. The film-maker had characterised them as 'careerists, selfish and stupid people, isolated from the

people', he claimed. In his portrayal of the romance between Olesia Zaporozhets, the daughter of a hardworking collective farmer, and Kravchyna, Dovzhenko violated social proprieties. By describing Olesia asking Kravchyna to sleep with her, according to Stalin, Dovzhenko slandered Ukrainian women.

Most importantly, according to Stalin, Dovzhenko did not hide his Ukrainian nationalism. Stalin then concluded: 'Dovzhenko's screenplay is a platform of a narrow-minded and limited Ukrainian nationalism, which is opposed to the policies of our party and the interests of the Ukrainian and Soviet people'.⁷⁸

After the 30 January 1944 meeting Stalin and his lieutenants isolated Dovzhenko and marginalised his creativity. On 8 February 1944 A.S. Shcherbakov, the chief of ideology, issued an order banning the publication of Dovzhenko's works without special permission of the Central Committee's Agitprop Committee.⁷⁹ By the summer of 1944 the Artistic Council of the All-Union Cinema Committee had expelled Dovzhenko.⁸⁰ By mid-February 1944 the Politburo of the Communist Party of Ukraine had excluded Dovzhenko from the All-Slavic Committee and from the Selection Committee for the Stalin Prizes. Members of the Ukrainian Politburo also removed the film-maker from the editorial board of the journal *Ukraina* as well as from his position as the artistic director of the Kiev Film Studio.⁸¹ To add insult to injury, the authorities demoted Dovzhenko from the rank of director first class to director third class.⁸² Dovzhenko, who had a heart condition, lost access to the Kremlin polyclinic.⁸³ According to the historian Peter Kenez, 'none of the prominent directors during the war were subjected to comparable abuse'.⁸⁴ Dovzhenko became completely isolated; official denunciations heightened this isolation.

Most importantly, Stalin prohibited Dovzhenko from returning to the Ukrainian SSR and exiled the film-maker to Moscow, where his subordinates could monitor the director closely. Although Moscow was the most cosmopolitan city in the Soviet Union, it remained far from the Ukrainian sources of Dovzhenko's creativity. The city and Mosfilm depressed him. Despite his best efforts to maintain an even keel, he experienced uneasiness, depression, defiance and writer's block.

In his account of Dovzhenko's reactions to his 1944 meeting with Stalin, Smolych noted:

The screenplay died. Even worse: not only the screenplay, but also Sashko's good reputation and Stalin's trust in him came to an end. Everyone understood what it meant to lose Stalin's trust in those times. All governmental and party institutions from top to bottom also lost their trust in him ... In the final analysis, he claimed that he was not a writer but a film director above all!—Yes, this is how Sashko cheered himself up then: his job was to mount films. But would they now let him create films?

He said this in anger, but at this moment he did not recognise and did not consider this a serious problem. He was wounded by something else: Stalin! Stalin, in whom he believed so much, wounded him most painfully. And not only because he rebuked him—he abused him sharply, unbearably, brutally. Not only because he ruined Sashko's work—his screenplay. And not only because Sashko considered Stalin's criticism untrue, unjust and offensive. All of this was unpleasant and painful, but ... there was another matter, which wounded Sashko even more.

'The truth is unnecessary! You understand—unnecessary!', said Sashko, and his eyes became moist with tears.⁸⁵

Even after creating false versions of the past and present in his films, Dovzhenko still considered himself a servant of the truth. He fervently believed that *Ukraine in Flames* constituted the most honest account of the disaster that befell Soviet Ukraine, and he wanted to bring this truth to Stalin. In the light of the Soviet Union's disastrous losses in the first two years after the German invasion, he became upset that Stalin and his colleagues displayed such unwillingness to review the experience.

Dovzhenko considered himself, according to NKVD sources, 'unjustly suffering on behalf of the truth'.⁸⁶ If at first Dovzhenko blamed Stalin for his misfortune, the film-maker, employing preference falsification, created a more politically convenient interpretation of why Stalin banned the screenplay.⁸⁷ 'Stalin could not have acted otherwise', the NKVD informants surrounding him reported him saying. 'If he had approved it, he would have admitted that many who had followed his instructions over the last fifteen years acted improperly and brought great unhappiness to the people. So, it could not be expected for Stalin to allow my screenplay to be published'.⁸⁸ But NKVD analysts claimed that even this rationalisation of Stalin's role in this affair constituted a provocative statement.

Judging by his published diary entries, Dovzhenko reacted inconsistently to Stalin's denunciation. Having won the Soviet leadership's favour with *Aerograd* and *Shchors*, he had developed a false sense of security and sets of illusions to support this psychological response to the Stalinist order. Stalin's rejection of *Ukraine in Flames* caught the Ukrainian film-maker by surprise. He became psychologically unstable. His emotional world fluctuated between accommodation and resistance, and all points between.

At times, he admitted that he had made a mistake with *Ukraine in Flames*, but he characterised this mistake as an honest one.⁸⁹ At other moments—in the sanctuary of his diary—he challenged Stalin and his allies to prove him a 'Ukrainian nationalist'. Feeling deeply disturbed by the fate of his fellow Ukrainians, Dovzhenko claimed, did not make him a nationalist. Pride in one's national identity, the film-maker asserted, did not necessarily contradict Marxist-Leninist internationalism.⁹⁰

Of course Dovzhenko confined his protestations to his diary. Here he often whined about himself, generated large amounts of self-pity and defied his persecutors while conforming to their demands. He knew, after all, that he needed to regain their trust in order to create. No other alternative existed. Within a month after Stalin's 1944 denunciation he wrote:

... Enough suffering and repenting of my sins against Stalin. I must get down to business and prove to him with my work that I am a Soviet artist ... and not an odious talent with a 'limited ideology'. I must take myself in hand, [encase] my heart, my will, and my nerves in steel and ... create a scenario and a film worthy of our great role in a great historical age.⁹¹

Inasmuch as Dovzhenko wanted to win back lost political trust, he engaged in extensive preference falsification.

As the gap between what Dovzhenko wanted to say and what he could say widened, his frustrations became all the more acute.⁹² Dovzhenko saw himself as a

creative artist, not someone who completed the party's homework assignments by rote. At the same time, he wanted the public to see his work. His paralysis continued, especially when committees reviewed his projects.⁹³

Only in the privacy of his diary could Dovzhenko express his greatest frustration, the difficulty of creating under a political microscope. Ideas swirled in his head and he desperately tried to capture them on paper, if not on film.

Stalin stood at the centre of Dovzhenko's paralysis. The Ukrainian film-maker understood that many committees would review his work, but Stalin or members of his inner circle would make the final decision. They would examine his work in minute detail. No one, not even those who sought to please Stalin, understood the party leader's hard-to-define, often-changing standards. The nature of the appropriate, and where its boundaries began and ended, grew into a complicated and continuously shifting issue. On 7 February 1948 Dovzhenko wrote: 'I keep thinking that my terrible critic is standing behind my back examining my every letter and comma with his implacable eye for treason and undermining. Instead of writing, I suffer'.⁹⁴

In a radical act of self-preservation, Dovzhenko replaced Stalin with an internal policeman. He engaged in self-censorship and preference falsifications. But in saving himself physically, he undermined his own emotional equilibrium.

From 30 January 1944 until Stalin's death nine years later, Dovzhenko did not enjoy the political trust that had characterised his professional life after the success of *Shchors*.⁹⁵ Between 1944 and 1953 Dovzhenko worked on two documentaries, *The Victory in Right Bank Ukraine and the Expulsion of the German Aggressors from Soviet Ukrainian Territory* (1945) and *Native Land* (1945), as well as two feature films, *Michurin* (1949) and *Goodbye, America* (1951).

The loss of the authorities' trust led to a decline in Dovzhenko's productivity and to the quality of what little he produced. With the exception of *Native Land*, Dovzhenko's post-war films failed to display his unique creative vision on screen. High party officials suspected him of Ukrainian nationalism and of violating the tenets of socialist realism, and many cinema oversight committees carefully monitored his work. This intense micro-management narrowed Dovzhenko's creative options. Constant supervision and second-guessing unnerved the film-maker. Censorship produced self-censorship, which generated even more self-doubt, despair and creative paralysis.

With Stalin's death, Dovzhenko became free of his illusions and preference falsifications concerning the party leader. Although he maintained his illusion of being a cultural negotiator, he no longer held any positions comparable to his previous appointment as the artistic director of the Kiev Film Studios. He lost his authority to negotiate the Ukrainian identity on the screen.

Conclusion

Stalin the patron and Dovzhenko the client established a Byzantine relationship. At times, it appeared as if they played the roles of father and son, at other times, teacher and student. As is the case with such connections, unequal power defined the Stalin-Dovzhenko relationship.

Like all prominent individuals living in this highly volatile and capricious era, Dovzhenko feared for his life. Having experienced Bolshevik imprisonment in 1919,

he expected arrest, imprisonment, exile or execution in 1932 and 1933 after criticisms of *Earth* and *Ivan* appeared in print. He had one of two choices: he might have accepted a fate determined by others or he could seek to exercise what little control was possible.

He chose the second option. Under very trying circumstances, Dovzhenko sought to deal with his turbulent and unpredictable environment by establishing for himself the overarching illusion of control, the illusion that he could manipulate the political circumstances on his own behalf. In the three phases of Dovzhenko's relationship with Stalin—the first during *Aerograd*, the second during *Shchors*, the third after *Ukraine in Flames*—illusions and preference falsifications underpinned the film-maker's strong motivations to maintain some control over his life and work environment.

In the first phase, Dovzhenko feared Stalin but imagined that he could get on the party leader's 'good side'. Stalin's cordiality encouraged Dovzhenko's illusions. In the second phase, he realised his precarious position. In creating *Shchors* with the compromises Stalinist censors demanded, Dovzhenko realised the limit of his illusions. With the arrests of his closest friends, he experienced psychological trauma, which eroded his illusions and engendered preference falsifications to camouflage his doubts about the claims presented by the Stalinist order. In the third phase, Dovzhenko—in response to the war's tragic losses—imagined that Stalin wanted to know the 'truth' as Dovzhenko saw it in his screenplay *Ukraine in Flames*.

After Dovzhenko's January 1944 meeting with Stalin the film-maker feared for his life for the third time. But despite the secretary general's anger, Stalin did not arrest or execute him. Instead, Stalin only removed him from his civic and creative responsibilities. Most importantly, he prohibited Dovzhenko from returning to Ukraine, his creative inspiration.

The film director feared letting Stalin down. But despite this dread, Dovzhenko—at times consciously and at times unconsciously—did disappoint the party leader. Stalin, however, protected the film-maker. In return, Dovzhenko became Stalin's client. He could live, he could create, but he could not reproduce all of his own visions on the screen. Forced to reside in Moscow, he lived in a golden cage, but a cage it remained. His creative interpretations of the truth, his illusions and preference falsifications made life under Stalin's protection bearable.

Stalin's death ended Dovzhenko's illusions about Stalin. Dovzhenko hoped that he would return to Soviet Ukraine and regain his position as a cultural negotiator. But this was not the case. In the last years of his life he celebrated one last illusion, the illusion of Ukraine. Disappointed over not returning to Ukraine, he engaged in an enormous amount of nostalgia and a rewriting of his past. All of his illusions, including those of Stalin, of being a cultural negotiator, and of Ukraine, successfully helped Alexander Dovzhenko to misrepresent Stalinist reality in order to adjust to it.

University of Alabama at Birmingham

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¹ Max Weber, 'Politics as a Vocation', in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated,

edited and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills (New York, Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 84.

² I have paraphrased this passage from Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York, HarperPerennial, 1989), p. 34.

³ *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed. (New York, Random House, 1987), p. 954.

⁴ Shelley E. Taylor, *Positive Illusions: Creative Self-Deception and the Healthy Mind* (New York, Basic Books, 1989), p. xi.

⁵ Timur Kuran, *Private Truths, Public Lies: The Social Consequences of Preference Falsification* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 4.

⁶ John R. Weisz, Fred M. Rothbaum & Thomas C. Blackburn, 'Standing Out and Standing In: The Psychology of Control in America and Japan', *American Psychologist*, September 1984, p. 955. I am grateful to Julie Locher for bringing this article to my attention.

⁷ Fred Rothbaum, John R. Weisz & Samuel S. Snyder, 'Changing the World and Changing the Self: A Two-Process Model of Perceived Control', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42, 1, 1982, p. 11.

⁸ Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, pp. 956–957, point out that predictability and vicariousness are two of the forms of secondary control.

⁹ Dovzhenko's activities in the autumn of 1932 and early 1933 remain unclear. I have tried to fill in his 'blank spots' in George O. Liber, *Alexander Dovzhenko: A Life in Soviet Film* (London, British Film Institute, Forthcoming).

¹⁰ Marco Carynnyk (ed.), 'Alexander Dovzhenko's 1939 Autobiography', *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, 19, 1, Summer 1994, pp. 23–24, cited hereafter as '1939 Autobiography'.

¹¹ At the November 1928 plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party in Moscow, Stalin—according to *Arsenal's* composer, Ihor Belza—complimented Dovzhenko's film as 'a real revolutionary romance'. Ihor Belza, 'Avtor "Arsenalu"', in Yu. I. Solntseva & L.M. Novychenko (eds), *Polum"iane zhyttia: Spohady pro Oleksandra Dovzhenka* (Kiev, Dnipro, 1973), p. 212, cited hereafter as *PZh*. On the possibility that Stalin saw *Ivan* and decided its fate see Hryhorii Zeldovych, *Zemlya i lyudy* (unpublished ms.), Dovzhenko Film Studios Museum (Muzei kinostudii im. O.P. Dovzhenka (MKD)), Kiev, p. 2.

¹² I have been unable to locate this letter. Perhaps it remains in the Stalin Archive at the Archive of the President of the Russian Federation.

¹³ '1939 Autobiography', p. 24; and A. P. Dovzhenko, 'Uchitel' i drug khudozhnika', *Iskusstvo kino*, 1937, 10, p. 15, cited hereafter as 'Uchitel'.

¹⁴ '1939 Autobiography', p. 25; M. V. Kutsenko, *Storinky zhyttia i tvorchosti O. P. Dovzhenka* (Kiev, Dnipro, 1975), p. 94.

¹⁵ Dovzhenko, 'Uchitel' i drug khudozhnika', p. 15, cited hereafter as 'Uchitel'. Dovzhenko's account may have exaggerated how quickly he received an appointment to see Stalin.

¹⁶ 'Posetiteli kremlevskogo kabineta I. V. Stalina: Zhurnaly (tetradi) zapisi lits, prinyatykh pervym gensekom. 1924–1953 gg.', *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, 1995, 3, p. 129.

¹⁷ '1939 Autobiography', p. 25; 'Uchitel', p. 15.

¹⁸ 'Uchitel', p. 15.

¹⁹ Yury Smolych, *Rozpovid' pro nespokii* (Kiev, Radyans'kyi pys'mennyk, 1968), p. 166.

²⁰ Smolych, p. 164.

²¹ Smolych, p. 166.

²² Smolych, pp. 166–167.

²³ Smolych, p. 167.

²⁴ Smolych, p. 167. In the mid-1930s Ilya Ehrenburg, Boris Pasternak and other Soviet intellectuals believed that Stalin did not know of the crimes committed in his name. See Ilya Ehrenburg, *Lyudi, gody, zhizn': Vospominaniya v trekh tomakh*, 2nd revised edition (Moscow, Sovetskii pisatel', 1990), p. 159.

²⁵ Daniel Goleman, *Vital Lies, Simple Truths: The Psychology of Self-Deception* (New York, Simon and Shuster, 1985), pp. 97–98.

²⁶ Vyacheslav Popyk (ed.), 'Pid softamy sekretnykh sluzhb', *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KHD*, 1995, 1–2, pp. 259, 274.

²⁷ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid softamy sekretnykh sluzhb', p. 274.

²⁸ Demutsky's investigators noted his 1932 arrest during his 1935 NKVD interrogation. Central Archive of Civic Organisations of Ukraine (Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'ednan' Ukrainy (TsDAHOU)), Kiev, f. 263, op. 1, spr. 57017, k. 1388, l. 14.

²⁹ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid softamy sekretnykh sluzhb', p. 274.

³⁰ Vyacheslav Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy VChK-DPU-NKVS-NKDB-KDB', *Dnipro*, 1995, 9–10, p. 25; Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy sekretnykh sluzhb', pp. 266–267.

³¹ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy sekretnykh sluzhb,' p. 277.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 277–278.

³⁴ Quoted in Aleksandr Rutkovsky, 'Grad nebesnyi Aleksandra Dovzhenko', *Zerkalo nedeli* (Kiev), 9 December 1995, p. 15; and in Maksym Rylsky, 'Narodnyi mytets', *PZh*, p. 22.

³⁵ Ryl's'kyi, 'Narodnyi mytets', p. 24.

³⁶ Rutkovsky, 'Grad nebesnyi', p. 15.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Kutsenko, pp. 122, 142.

³⁹ 'Vystuplenie A. Dovzhenko', *Pervoe Vsesoyuznoe soveshchanie tvorcheskikh rabotnikov sovetskoi kinematografii*, in E. Zil'ber (ed.), *Za bol'shoe kinoiskusstvo* (Moscow, Kinofotoizdat, 1935), p. 66.

⁴⁰ Kutsenko, pp. 122, 142.

⁴¹ Dovzhenko's psychological response to Stalinism after 1935 follows Leon Festinger's model of 'cognitive dissonance'. See *Extending Psychological Frontiers: Selected Works*, edited by Stanley Schachter and Michael Gazzaniga (New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1991), p. 205.

⁴² I. L. Hoshulyak, *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 1985, 6, cited in Olexsander Fesenko, 'Yak tvoryvysya mif pro "ukrains'koho Chapaeva"', *Literaturna Ukraina*, 17 August 1989, p. 8. The most popular interpretation of Shchors appeared in *Bol'shaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya*, cited hereafter as *BSE*, 2nd edition, vol. 48 (Moscow, 1957), p. 277.

⁴³ 'Nikolai Shchors—legenda i real'nost', *Iskusstvo kino*, 1990, 9, p. 116.

⁴⁴ 'Uchitel', p. 16.

⁴⁵ This passage appeared in the unpublished memoirs of F. Soluyanova, cited in Rutkovsky, p. 15.

⁴⁶ The documents compiled by the Cheka and the NKVD on Dovzhenko were published only recently (unfortunately, not completely) in Ukraine: 'Zaklyuchenie po delu No. 112 na Dovzhenko Aleksandra Petrovicha, 25 let' and 'Sovershenno sekretno. Spravka', in Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy sekretnykh sluzhb', pp. 237, 237–239, 241, 242; and Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy VChK-DPU-NKVS-NKDB-KDB', pp. 21–60.

⁴⁷ '1939 Autobiography', p. 26n.

⁴⁸ The Kiev theatre actor Mykola Makarenko (February–March 1937), the Moscow theatre actor Arkadii Kislyakov (May–summer 1937) and, finally, the Moscow actor Evgenii Samoilov (autumn 1937–1938) played Shchors. Lazar Bodyk, *Dzherela velykoho kino: Spohady pro O.P. Dovzhenka* (Kiev, Radyans'kyi pys'mennyk, 1965), pp. 95–124; Aleksei Mishurin, 'Na s'emkakh "Shchorsa"', in *Dovzhenko v vospomynaniyakh sovremennikov* (Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1982), pp. 103, 107, 108; and O. Mishurin, 'Polum'iane sertse', in M. Kovalenko & O. Mishurin, *Syn zacharovanoi Desny: spohady i statii* (Kiev, Radyans'kyi pys'mennyk, 1984), pp. 148, 170, 196–198.

⁴⁹ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy sekretnykh sluzhb', p. 260.

⁵⁰ Vance Kepley Jr, *In the Service of the State: The Cinema of Alexander Dovzhenko* (Madison, WI, University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), p. 122.

⁵¹ Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva [RGALI]), Moscow, f. 2081, op. 1, d. 941, ll. 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16.

⁵² Jay Leyda, *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*, 3rd edition (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 354.

⁵³ I. Rachuk, 'Esteticheskie vzglyady Aleksandra Dovzhenko', *Baikal*, 1962, 1, p. 115, 116.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Olexsandr Hryshchenko, *Z berehiv zacharovanoi Desny* (Kiev, Molod', 1964), p. 193.

⁵⁷ N. S. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, with an introduction, commentary and notes by Edward Crankshaw (Boston, Little, Brown, 1970), p. 88.

⁵⁸ Ivan Koshelivets', *Oleksandr Dovzhenko: Sproba tvorchoi biohrafii* (Munich, Suchasnist', 1980), pp. 209–210.

⁵⁹ Bodyk, *Dzherela velykoho kino*, p. 107. Shortly before his own death in November 1956 Dovzhenko expressed his pleasure that the party had rehabilitated Dubovy.

⁶⁰ Kepley, pp. 122–123. For an analysis of the evolution of this Soviet russocentric etatism see David Brandenberger, 'The "Short Course" to Modernity: Stalinist History Textbooks, Mass Culture, and the Formation of Popular Russian National Identity, 1934–1956', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1999, chapters 3–6.

⁶¹ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy sekretnykh sluzhb', pp. 261, 263, 274.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 274.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ See A. P. Dovzhenko, 'Stat'i ob I. V. Stalina. Varianty i chernovye nabroski (Oktyabr' 1937–Mart 1953)', RGALI, f. 2081, op. 1, d. 374.

⁶⁵ On the history of Dovzhenko's production of this film see George O. Liber, 'Dovzhenko, Stalin, and the (Re) Creation of *Shchors*', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 21, 3–4, 1997, pp. 271–286.

⁶⁶ Kutsenko, pp. 133–153.

⁶⁷ Dovzhenko became a member of the Communist Party of Ukraine in early 1920 under mysterious circumstances. In the summer of 1923, when he was studying in Germany, the party did not renew his membership. See Liber, *Alexander Dovzhenko*, chapters 2–3.

⁶⁸ Central State Archive of the Higher Organs of Government and Administration of Ukraine (Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi arkhiv orhaniv vlady ta upravlinnia Ukrainy (TsDAOVUU)), Kiev, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 396. Also see Brandenberger, 'The "Short Course" to Modernity', especially chapters 7–9.

⁶⁹ Alexander Dovzhenko, *The Poet as Filmmaker: Selected Writings*, edited, translated with an introduction by Marco Carynnyk (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1973), p. 90, cited hereafter as *Poet as Filmmaker*; Borys Polevoi, 'Nezabutnie', Dovzhenko Memoirs, MKD, File 2, p. 2; Mykola Zhulyns'kyi, 'Pevhal' dushi i svyatisht' bosonoho dytynstva', *Holos Ukrainy*, 14 September 1994, p. 4.

⁷⁰ Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Modern History (Rossiiskii tsentr khraneniya i izucheniya dokumentov noveishei istorii (RTsKhIDNI), f. 17, op. 125, d. 212, ll. 40, 41.

⁷¹ RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 212, l. 43.

⁷² RGALI, f. 2081, op. 1, d. 140, l. 20.

⁷³ *Poet as Filmmaker*, p. 93.

⁷⁴ 'Posetiteli kremlevskogo kabineta I. V. Stalina: Zhurnaly (tetradi), zapisi lits, prinyatykh pervom gensekom 1924–1953 gg.', *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, 1996, 4, p. 67.

⁷⁵ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 282, l. 200 and 'Posetiteli kremlevskogo kabineta I. V. Stalina', p. 67.

⁷⁶ Others may have prepared the remarks that Stalin delivered on 30 January 1944 condemning Dovzhenko. Aleksandr Shcherbakov, the Political Commissar of the Armed Forces and head of the Central Committee's Agitation and Propaganda Committee, or his office may have written them. Compare I. V. Stalin, 'Ob antileninskikh oshibkakh i natsionalisticheskikh izvrashcheniyakh v kino povesti Dovzhenko "Ukraina v ogne"', *Iskusstvo kino*, 1990, 4, pp. 89–95; RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 293, ll. 20–35; and RGALI, f. 2081, op. 1, d. 140. Shcherbakov may have received his information on Dovzhenko's activities from others, possibly Aleksandr Kornichuk, the filmmaker's sworn enemy, and from Ivan Bolshakov, the head of the Main Cinema Administration. On the latter see I. Bolshakov, 'Spohady', *Dnipro*, 1994, 9–10, p. 69.

⁷⁷ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 282, ll. 200–203.

⁷⁸ Stalin, 'Ob antileninskikh oshibkakh', p. 95; and RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 293, l. 35.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1–5. The authorities did not publish a number of Dovzhenko's works already scheduled for publication. Compare, for example, the earlier and later versions of the Ukrainian State Publishing House's plans for 1944, TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 244, ll. 10–14 and TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 27, ll. 151–175.

⁸⁰ G. Aleksandrov, 'Sekretarem TsK VKP (b) tov. Zhdanovu A. A., tov. Malenkovu G. M.', RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 291, l. 108; for a list of the Artistic Council's members see RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 291, l. 111.

⁸¹ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 6, spr. 715, l. 34; Hryshchenko, pp. 196–197.

⁸² M. Kovalenko, 'Idu za Dovzhenkom', Dovzhenko Memoirs, MKD, File 8, p. 52.

⁸³ Ivan Bolshakov, to his credit, opposed this measure. He claimed that an ill Dovzhenko needed uninterrupted medical help. See I. Bolshakov, 'Sekretaryu TsK VKP (b) tov. Shcherbakovu A. S.', RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 291, l. 101.

⁸⁴ Peter Kenez, 'Black and White: The War on Film', in Richard Stites (ed.), *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia* (Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 175.

⁸⁵ Smolych, *Rozpovid' pro nespokii*, pp. 169–170.

⁸⁶ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy VChK-DPU-NKVS-NKDB-KDB', p. 32.

⁸⁷ On the concept of tsar as 'good father' see Michael Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths*, 2nd edition (New York, Random House, 1969).

⁸⁸ Popyk (ed.), 'Pid sofitamy VChK-DPU-NKVS-NKDB-KDB', p. 32.

⁸⁹ Siko Dolidze, 'To, chto dorogo serdtsu', *Literaturnaya Gruzziya*, 1964, 10, p. 89.

⁹⁰ *Poet as Filmmaker*, pp. 113–114, 120–121.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Of the 32 most prominent Soviet film directors included in the collection of memoirs, *Kak ya stal rezhisserom* (Moscow, 1946), Dovzhenko's memoir and filmography do not appear. This was most probably not an oversight.