

## THE STRUGGLE FOR SHEVCHENKO\*

### *Shevchenko in Soviet Interpretation*

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“. . . the Greedy One will never plough  
The earth that lies beneath the sea  
So neither will he put in chains  
The living soul, the living word!”

*Taras Shevchenko*

Soviet rule was brought to the Ukraine early in 1918 “on the tips of Russian bayonets” by the former Colonel of the Russian Gendarmerie, Muraviev. The Russian Bolsheviki, as related by V. Vynnychenko, tore down portraits of Shevchenko from the walls and trampled upon them. They hunted down Ukrainian school-teachers in the villages, tortured and shot them for only being patriotic Ukrainians. But the Bolsheviki soon recognized their great political mistake, and during their third occupation of the Ukraine in 1920 they were compelled to take into consideration the national feelings of the Ukrainian people. The Russian Bolsheviki recognized the remarkable importance of Shevchenko in the Ukraine, the absolutely unsurpassed reverence for the genius of the poet, his influence and wide popularity among the broadest masses of the Ukrainian people. The Bolsheviki attempted to utilize the great power of Shevchenko’s words for their own propaganda aims; Shevchenko was declared a prophet of the socialist revolution. In 1920 the Council of Commissars of the Ukraine even promulgated a law, which declared Shevchenko Day of March 11th to be “forever a day free from work.” The decree was signed by Kh. Rakovs’ky, effective for one year only. It was repealed the following year, and in 1921 work was done not only on Shevchenko Day, but also on the following Sunday which was declared “Sunday in memory of Shevchenko,” and there was no reimbursement for working on this day.<sup>1</sup>

\* From a paper read at the Shevchenko Conference of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Shevchenko Scientific Society in New York on March 14, 1954.

<sup>1</sup> T. H. *Shevchenko v dokumentakh i materiyalakh*, Kiev, 1950, p. 386.

The period of the "New Economic Policy" (NEP) from 1922 to 1928 was most favorable to the development of scientific research on Shevchenko. The main accomplishments of this period were: a scholarly edition of volumes III and IV of the works of Shevchenko with very valuable articles and commentaries, which of themselves constitute an entire encyclopedia of Shevchenko studies; scientific dissertations and works dedicated to Shevchenko's biography, different aspects of his creativeness, his poetics, language, and literary environment. These works were published in the periodicals of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, *Ukrayina*, *Zapysky istorychno-filolohichnoho viddilu* (*Notes of the Historical-Philological Department*), and in special Shevchenko collections. Scientific research was centered in the Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Taras Shevchenko. The following prominent scholars worked on various problems of the study of Shevchenko: S. O. Yefremiv, M. M. Novyts'ky, O. K. Doroshkevych, D. I. Bahaliy, O. Novyts'ky, M. Plevako, P. P. Fylypovych, M. K. Zerov, V. V. Miyakovsky, O. Bahriy, I. Eisenshtok, A. A. Shamray, B. V. Yakubs'ky, B. Navrots'ky, V. P. Petrov, O. Hermayze, P. Rulin, S. Rodzevych, M. Markovs'ky, P. Tykhovs'ky, V. M. Derzhavyn, L. Koshova, O. Synyavs'ky, M. Sulyma, A. D. Lebid', S. Taranushenko, M. Mochuls'ky, H. Khotkevych, A. M. Loboda, V. I. Ryzanov, Ye. A. Rykhlik, M. Mandryka, M. Mohylyans'ky, Ye. Nenadkevych, Borys Warneke, T. Sikyrins'ky, H. Mayfet, A. Lyashchenko, and many others.

The representatives of the official, or so-called "Marxist," trend of studies were, during this period, V. Koryak and A. Richyts'ky. Koryak published a series of newspaper articles, which were published in book form in 1925 (115 pp.) as *The Struggle for Shevchenko* (*Borořba za Shevchenka*). Koryak opposed the scientific studies of Shevchenko and, in their place, proclaimed "the class study of Shevchenko." Koryak's formulation of "the class study of Shevchenko" was to make the poet appear as: "the prophet of the proletariat," "the prophet of the social revolution," "the poet of the peasants," or "the poet of the hoboos." All this was in reality a vulgarization of Shevchenko and a depreciation of his works and ideas. Richyts'ky, in his book *Shevchenko in the Light of the*

*Epoch* (*Shevchenko v svitli epokhy*, 1923), simplifies and schematizes the "living" Shevchenko, treating him as the pre-proletarian poet. This concept remained the officially accepted Soviet "Shevchenkiana" for quite a long time.

A representative of the Communist Party Central Committee came to the Ukraine from Moscow in 1929 to check on the proper execution of the nationalities policy. This inspector opposed the decision of the Ukrainian Peoples Commissariat of Education to make a national park of Shevchenko's burial place and the popularization of Shevchenko's works. He was furious when he heard that 120,000 copies of Shevchenko's *Kobzar'* had been distributed in Ukraine in 1928. M. Skrypnyk retorted ironically to the Moscow inspector: "What a crime!" And when the inspector, continuing his speech, grew indignant that the Commissariat of Education was planning to publish another 200,000 copies of *Kobzar'* in 1929, Skrypnyk again replied: "An even greater crime." The inspector continued: "Shevchenko, that spokesman of the bourgeois renaissance, has been turned into an ideologist of the socialist renaissance," and the Moscow inspector's voice rose to a shout "You are publishing his works in tremendous numbers not only without any abridgement, but even without any appropriate explanation. . ." Now Chubar could not contain himself and retorted: "The tsar always published an abridged *Kobzar'*!" In relating this incident, M. Skrypnyk wrote: "I do not think we need go any further. We have here a man who, like a conqueror, traveled a month and a half over the Ukraine, sniffed some Ukrainian culture, and even saw or heard something about Shevchenko."<sup>2</sup>

This conqueror had not come for nothing! Mass arrests of Ukrainian intelligentsia and peasants started in 1929 in connection with the trial of the members of *Spilka Vyzvolennya Ukraïny* (Society for the Liberation of Ukraine). Scientific studies of Shevchenko were dispensed with and the main cadres destroyed. The Institute of Shevchenko remained intact for a short time. A rabid campaign against the so-called "Yefremov movement" was instituted under the terroristic pressure of a cruel party dictatorship. In 1931 they began to bait O. K. Doroshkevych who was

<sup>2</sup> Skrypnyk, M., *Statti i promovy*, No. 2, Kharkiv, 1931, II, 232-233.

in charge of the Kiev branch of the Institute of Shevchenko. A. Richyts'ky was the official authority on Shevchenko and on studies of Shevchenko until 1933. Richyts'ky saw in the works of Shevchenko "a quite obvious bourgeois-democratic concept of the nation's problems. . . Shevchenko poses the problem of a united national front and the revolutionary struggle of the bourgeoisie for a national state. . . Shevchenko's picture of Washington expresses his program of a revolutionary war for the independence of the Ukraine and for a republic." The younger students of Shevchenko used rivers of ink in their effort to find a "class equivalent" in Shevchenko's heritage.

The famine of 1933, increased persecution of the Ukrainian people, the suicides of Skrypnyk and Khvylovy, the execution of Richyts'ky, and the mass arrests of Ukrainians in and beyond the Ukraine, mark the new stage of the crusade against Ukrainian culture. After 1933 the literary heritage of the great poet came under Party control. A Party concept of Shevchenko was established, binding on everybody. The "Division of Culture and Propaganda of Leninism of the Central Party Committee" (CP/b/U) published its theses in 1934 declaring Shevchenko to be "a bourgeois democrat" and an ideologist of petit-bourgeois peasantry with nationalist and religious remnants. Zatons'ky and Khvylyya became Party authorities in matters of culture, and Ye. Shablovs'ky, in the studies of Shevchenko.

Three books by Shablovs'ky appeared in the period 1933-1935: *Shevchenko ta yoho istorychne znachennya* (*Shevchenko and His Historical Significance*), 280 pp., 1933; *Shevchenko, yoho zhyttya ta tvorchist'* (*Shevchenko, His Life and Works*), 268 pp., 1934; and *Shevchenko i rosiys'ka revolyutsiyina demokratiya* (*Shevchenko and Russian Revolutionary Democracy*), 148 pp., 1935. These publicistic works of Shablovs'ky are all of an identical composition; at the beginning and at the end of each book the author inserts long and numerous quotations from the works of Lenin and Stalin, and sings the praises of the accomplishments of the Bolshevik government. At the same time the author vituperated against "bourgeois Ukrainian nationalists." But in the body of the book, where he analyses the works of Shevchenko, Shablovs'ky vents all

his anger at Russian imperialism. Some quotations will illustrate this: "Millions of people are crushed under the paw of the Russian despot . . . Shevchenko shows the real, rapacious Russia, with her ideological prostitution and unprincipled knavery . . . Shevchenko, in uncontrollable anger shows how, in the name of 'the one mother Russia' . . . thousands and tens of thousands of people are driven, their arms and heads are torn off, they are buried alive, or tortured hideously to death. With jails, chains, whips, and slavery, thus marches the robber policy of the gendarme-state of Russia, against nations as yet untouched by Tsarist 'civilization.' The Russian beast of prey has changed into a tombstone, crushing all shoots of young and creative life. State laws are a torture for the oppressed; state laws are a shameless molestation of fettered slaves. The whole state is a place of torture of peoples. . . Shevchenko's Ukraine is a poor widow, put in chains, thrown on the ground, shivering, with torn hair, no clothes, bent on the hillside. . . Those are the hungry widows, the unsheltered orphans, slaves in handcuffs, tortured serfs, children swollen from hunger . . . they are like living witnesses of the order of oppression. . ."<sup>8</sup>

This was written and published in 1933, at a time when millions of Ukrainian peasants, swollen from hunger, were indeed "living witnesses of the order of oppression." In a new edition of this book in 1934, the words "children swollen from hunger, like living witnesses of the order of oppression" were deleted by the censor. Further on we read such lines: "In his works Shevchenko educated the masses in the spirit of recognizing the right of Ukraine to be an *independent state*." Even in his last book *Shevchenko i rosiys'ka revolyutsiyina demokratsiya*, Shablovs'ky picks out those quotations from Herzen and Chernyshevsky that are directed against the idea of a "one and indivisible Russia" and even against federation with Russia, and those that emphasize the need for the establishment of an independent Ukrainian State, not subordinated to Russia. ("Ukraine should be recognized as a free and independent land," Herzen. "To deny independence to a nation for the only reason that it seems to be expedient for military power and political influence upon other lands, is bad," Chernyshevsky).

<sup>8</sup> Shablovs'ky, Ye.S. *Shevchenko ta yoho istorychne znachennya*, Kharkiv, 1933, pp. 224-226.

Comments of a similar nature were included in Shevchenko's *Kobzar'*, which came out in 1934 edited by Khvylya and Shab-lyov's'ky. The latter was shot as a Ukrainian nationalist in 1935.

The years of the regime of Yezhov (1936-1938) are dead years even for Shevchenkiana in journalism.

The next stage in Soviet studies of Shevchenko comprehend the years immediately before the war, i.e. 1938-1941. The official Soviet concept of Shevchenko changed completely during this period. The top echelon of Soviet rulers in the Ukraine was deposed. Among those liquidated were: Kosior, Zaton's'ky, and even Postyshev, who was blamed for allowing "the Ukrainian nationalists to isolate him from the land with a smokescreen of compliments and kowtowing." The new deputy for Ukraine was Nikita Khrushchev. There was an increased Russification. The Bolsheviks mentioned no more that "Russian great-power chauvinism represents the greatest danger within the boundaries of the USSR." Russian great-power chauvinism won a victory, and from the "greatest danger" it changed into "the general Party line." Old Marxist socialist slogans were filed away in the archives. A new ideology of "Soviet patriotism" was born, tantamount to Russian nationalism. History was being made according to the new recipe, the Russian Tsars and their predatory imperialist policy were vindicated, and the cruelties of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great excused. New political tasks, especially the preparation for war and the capture of Poland, and new ideological precepts of the Bolshevik Party conditioned the new interpretation of Shevchenko.

The Party's central organ *Pravda*, in an editorial on Shevchenko, laid down inflexible rules on the manner in which the works of Shevchenko were to be treated. The basic directive of Moscow was to disarm Shevchenko; not only to disarm him, but more, to turn him into a weapon for the propaganda of the then fashionable "Soviet patriotism." *Pravda* emphasized particularly the imaginary connections of Shevchenko with Russian literature and Russian Revolutionary Democrats. *Pravda's* Party directives were repeated many times in books and articles. Nevertheless during this period Ukrainian scholars succeeded in publishing a complete scholarly edition of the works of Shevchenko in 5 volumes, al-

though with slanted *annotations*. In the flood of tendentious, propaganda literature, there would be occasional works that went beyond the limits of Party directives. (Such were the works of Ryl's'ky, Rosenberg, Bilets'ky, Shakhov's'ky, Levchenko, S. Savchenko.) Byelchikov undertook the deliberate alteration and falsification of Shevchenko. Whereas in his poem "Son" (The Dream), Shevchenko called Tsar Peter I "the hangman of the Ukraine" and "cannibal," Byelchikov ignored this fact and wrote: "Shevchenko understood the progressive activity of Peter I."<sup>4</sup>

An article by Berger is full of lies and insinuations against Shevchenko; views and convictions, against which Shevchenko had struggled all his life, are ascribed to him. Berger wrote that the anti-Muscovite works of Shevchenko, e.g., "Rozryta mohyla," "Chyhyryn," "Velykyi l'okh," and "Subotiv," were all directed against the Polish nobility.<sup>5</sup>

In the studies of Shevchenko, a position of special merit belongs to the valuable work of M. Shaginyan, which came out in two editions (1941 and 1946).<sup>6</sup> Contrary to official Soviet interpretation, Marietta Shaginyan supports the originality of Shevchenko's poetry and its freedom from Russian influences. She proves that it was not the influence of Chernyshevsky upon Shevchenko, but, vice versa, the influence of Shevchenko upon Chernyshevsky. The work of Shaginyan also contains valuable research on problems of Shevchenko's biography and on his poetics.

The war years and the initial post-war period constitute a separate stage in the studies of Shevchenko. Having lost the Ukraine, the Bolsheviks made an about-face in their nationality policy and began to call the Ukrainian nation "great"; they nurtured the national patriotism of the Ukrainians, emphasized Shevchenko's love of the Ukraine, and utilized his poetry in the struggle against the Germans. Tychyna gave priority to Shevchenko's patriotism in his poetic works and to his praise of the glorious ancestors of the

<sup>4</sup> Byelchikov, N. F., *Taras Shevchenko, kritiko-biograficheski ocherk*, Moscow, 1939, p. 110.

<sup>5</sup> Berger, M. N., "Shevchenko-Istoriya," *Naukovy zbirnyk Odes'koho Derzhavnogo Universytetu, Pamyati Shevchenka*, 1939, pp. 171-198.

<sup>6</sup> Shaginyan, Marietta, *Taras Shevchenko*, Moscow, GIZ, 1941; *Taras Shevchenko*, Moscow, 1946.

Ukrainian people. Bulakhovs'ky wrote a dissertation on the language and style of Shevchenko, proving that Shevchenko was "one of the world's most original poets"; O. Bilets'ky declared that "There is no analogy between Shevchenko and foreign poets," and that "Shevchenko and Franko are the two summits of modern Ukrainian literature, which, since their time, has followed the course of *European* development." The scholars O. Doroshkevych and A. Shamray were restored to grace, and they wrote and published valuable articles on the life and works of Shevchenko. Ryls'ky and Bulakhovs'ky published works on Shevchenko's language and poetics in the scientific publications of the Academy of Sciences.

Academician O. Bilets'ky was able, during this time, to make the following significant statement about the international importance of Ukrainian literature: "Conditions which made Ukrainian literature the only refuge and the only spokesman of the national community thought, were obviously bound to make the national meaning of literature more acute. . . . If Russian literature has gained world importance on the strength of its ideas of liberation, then inevitably the literatures of other Slavic people — Ukrainian and Byelorussian — are related to Russian literature and should have assumed, to a greater or lesser extent, the same characteristics and, therefore, share in some measure the position which Russian literature occupies in the world."<sup>7</sup>

Moscow was close on the heels of this reborn Ukrainian scientific study of Shevchenko and halted the fertile and profitable work of Ukrainian scholars with one fell swoop. The deep significance of Stalin's weighty words to the high command of the Red Army in 1945, became meaningful only in 1946. Stalin called the Russian people "the nation that had suffered most," and "the leading force of the Soviet Union." Zhdanov's lecture on the Russian magazines *Zvezda* and *Leningrad* castigated these periodicals for their lack of Russian nationalism and for allegedly "bowing before the rotten bourgeois West." Ten days after this statement of Zhdanov, the Central Committee of the CP(b)U struck Ukrainian liter-

<sup>7</sup> Bilets'ky, O. I., "Mizhnarodnye znachennya ukrayins'koyi literatury," *Literaturna hazeta*, March 28, 1946, Kiev.

ature and Ukrainian literary scholars,<sup>8</sup> accusing them of bourgeois nationalism and of having committed a whole series of political mistakes. They were accused of having failed to show "the great and beneficial influence of Russian literature and culture on the development of Ukrainian literature," and of "exaggerating the influence of Western European literature." The Party procurator in matters of literature, I. Stebun, mercilessly censured the authors of the textbook on the history of Ukrainian literature (1945) and pointed out the manner in which history of Ukrainian literature was to be written.<sup>9</sup> His basic theses were: Ukrainian literature not only remained at all times under the "mighty influence of the advanced literature of the Great Russian people," but even the appearance of Ukrainian literature was the result of the "aid" of the Russians. Stebun attacked Kyryluk most vehemently for the latter's violation of the principle of the well-known "Russian primacy," and for daring to write in the Academy's *Narys istoriyi ukrayins'koyi literatury* that Shevchenko was a more stalwart revolutionary than Belinsky. This statement of Kyryluk, which is based on facts, Stebun called "a tendentious and nationalistic twisting of true facts." Later, in 1949, during the anti-Semitic campaign Stebun-Katsnel'son was liquidated for "bowing before the bourgeois West,"<sup>10</sup> and for a "malicious intent to belittle the great wealth of Ukrainian classical literature."

Not only did the new works on Shevchenko (Kyryluk, Dmyterko, Kovalenko, and others) have nothing in common with real studies on Shevchenko, but they had nothing in common with the preceding journalistic "Shevchenkiana" of Soviet newspapers. These elaborations were produced in the terror and the fear of inevitable accusation of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" and these works contained an endless repetition of stock phrases:

<sup>8</sup> "Pro perekruchennya i pomylky u vysvitleni istoriyi ukrayins'koyi literatury," *Narys istoriyi ukrayins'koyi literatury*, 1945. The following decisions of Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine of August 24, 1946, in *Radyans'ke literaturoznavstvo*, Kn. 7-8, 1947, pp. 3-5.

<sup>9</sup> Stebun, *Illya, Prot y vorozhykh teoriy v ukrayins'komu literaturoznavstvi*, Kiev, pp. 7-34.

<sup>10</sup> "Do kontsa razgromit kosmopolitov-antipatriotov," *Sovetskaya Ukraina, Literaturno-khudozhestvennyy almanakh*, I, 1949, pp. 3-13.

“Shevchenko rose to the intellectual summit of his epoch only because he was aided by foremost leaders of the Russian nation.” “Shevchenko fought for the unification with the Russian nation.” “First, and earliest of all, Shevchenko fought to unite with the Great Russian people.”<sup>11</sup> Contrary to known facts, Dmyterko treated Shevchenko as being in favor of Khmelnytsky’s Treaty of Pereyaslav with Moscow. The methodology of these articles consists of ruthless falsification and endless repetition of hackneyed and monotonous phrases. Falsification of Shevchenko reached complete absurdity.

Shevchenko’s work are themselves the best source for correcting these falsifications. In the poem “Velyky l’okh” (The Great Pit) and in other poetical works Shevchenko is decidedly against Khmelnytsky and the Pereyaslav Treaty with Moscow as well as against uniting the Ukraine with the Muscovite Tsardom. On the violation of the Treaty of Pereyaslav by faithless Moscow, Shevchenko writes in his poem “Subotiv”: “The Muscovites grabbed whatever they saw.” The occupiers took the rich lands of the Ukraine: “Catherine’s bastards swarmed like locusts.” Shevchenko acidly ridiculed the Russian great-power chauvinistic concept of the so-called *vozz’yednannya*, the unification of the Ukraine and Muscovy:

“You see, they say all this  
Was once our very own,  
That they had only hired  
Our land for Tatars’ fodder  
And the Poles. . .”

Shevchenko expressed his unshaken belief that there will be an end to Moscow’s rule, and that from the ruins of this jail of nations:

“Ukraine will rise  
And scatter slavery’s mist,  
The world of Truth will shine  
And then in freedom  
Children of slaves will pray.”

<sup>11</sup> Dmyterko, Ya. D., *Obshchestvenno-politicheskiye i filosofskiyе vzglyady T. G. Shevchenka*, Izd. moskovskovo universiteta, Moscow, 1951, p. 50.

All anti-Russian works of Shevchenko are at present excluded from the collections of his poetry. *Kobzar'* was published again in 1950, but notice was not given that it contained only "selected works." Its external appearance makes one believe that it is a complete collection of Shevchenko's poems. But upon careful examination of this edition, we see that the poems "Velyky l'okh," "Rozryta mohyla," "Subotiv," "Irzhavets'," and many others that were anti-Moscow, are missing. The folly of this contemporary Russian-nationalistic concept of Shevchenko has even been made a subject of disclosure in a Soviet book *T. H. Shevchenko v dokumentakh i materialakh* (*T. H. Shevchenko in Documents and Materials*, 1950). The third part of this book contains an editorial from the newspaper *Komunist* of 1939 and an editorial from *Radyans'ka Ukrayina* of 1949. The two editorials, when collated, reveal the very obvious falsification of Shevchenko. The first article states: "Shevchenko had a boundless love for his native land, for his own Ukraine . . . he dearly loved his people with their heroic past and with their great and glorious future. The best traits of the nation found embodiment in the person of Taras Shevchenko: love of freedom, hatred of servitude, flaming love for the fatherland, and a wish to make life beautiful, . . . the people happy, the land flowering. . . This manly call of the poet-revolutionary went out to all nations enslaved by the nobles and oppressed by the autocratic rule of the Tsarist henchmen. . . The prominent leaders of Russian revolutionary democracy, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, *paid attention* to his voice. Filled with hatred of the oppressors and love for the oppressed, the inspired poetry of Shevchenko was near and dear to all subjected nations of autocratic Russia."

We find something entirely different in the article of 1949: "Great and burning was the love of Taras Shevchenko for the genius of the *Russian people*. From the life-giving source of Russian culture, he avidly absorbed all the best creations of the genius of the Russian nation. Taras Hryhorovych *learned* from Herzen, Dobrolyubov, and Chernyshevsky. . . Leaning on the brotherly aid of his *Russian* friends . . . Shevchenko rose to heights of world culture. Shevchenko *hated all those who bowed before the moribund idealistic art of the West*. Shevchenko demonstrated passion-

ately that nowhere else in the world were there such great creations of genius, as those contributed to the treasury of the world's culture by the *Russian people*." Thus did they remake Shevchenko into a Russian nationalist.

In 1953 O. M. Kravets' wrote in the Academy's periodical *Visnyk*: "Shevchenko condemned the scribblings of Ukrainian bourgeois-nationalist falsifiers of the national life and customs." Then comes part of a quotation from Shevchenko which is supposed to apply to "Ukrainian nationalists": "Such scribblers are harmful, contemptible, and without conscience." The quotation carries a footnote, indicating the source with volume and page (Vol. III, p. 128, of the 3-Vol. work of Shevchenko of 1949). We look to the appropriate page, find the quotation in its context, and discover that Shevchenko applied the epithet of harmful scribblers to the Russian ethnographers-falsifiers, Zheleznov and Nebolsin. This kind of abuse of Shevchenko violates all bounds of decency. All these facts attest to the unchecked exuberance of Muscovite chauvinism and to the enormity of the oppression of Ukrainian culture under conditions of the present Moscow rule in the Ukraine.

Soviet editions of Shevchenko are replete with tendentious annotations and commentaries. The purpose of these comments is to stifle the mighty voice of Shevchenko, to thwart the poet's ideas, and to counterfeit his thoughts. Shevchenko had a great reverence for George Washington. The Ukrainian poet had visions of the time when the Ukraine would have her own Washington, free herself of Russian rule, and begin life in liberty in an independent Ukrainian republic:

"When shall we have our Washington  
With new and righteous laws?  
We surely will, some day!"

These lines of Shevchenko cause the Soviet rulers no end of pain. In order to mitigate, to some extent at least, the magic appeal of this statement of Shevchenko for the contemporary Ukrainian reader, who dreams about his own Washington as a fighter and liberator from Russia now more than ever, Bolshevik propagandists attempt to blacken and slander by devious means the name

of the Father of the United States, George Washington. Thus in the 1949 and 1950 editions of Shevchenko's works we find the following footnote to the name "Washington": "Washington, an American statesman of the 18th century, owner of great estates, headed the fight for independence from England; first President of the USA. In his activity he was hostile to the French revolution and favored economic concessions to England."<sup>12</sup> Up until 1948 this footnote looked very different: "Washington, a fighter for the liberation of North America from the rule of England, first President of the USA."<sup>13</sup>

The changes in the text of this footnote were obviously dictated by the intensification of anti-American propaganda in the USSR.

Like a mirror, the history of Soviet interpretation of the literary heritage of the great Ukrainian poet T. H. Shevchenko reflects the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations during the past 35 years. Whereas in 1929, the Ukrainian communists Skrypynyk and Chubar could still laugh in the face of the Moscow inspector from the Central Committee of VKP(b), now this inspector from Moscow had unlimited power in the Ukraine. On the orders of such inspectors, the *Kobzar'* of Shevchenko is now being published with "abridgements" and with "appropriate explanations." During the course of these thirty-five years Moscow has been unfaltering and deliberate in its falsification and mockery of Shevchenko. M. Hlobenko says: "In place of the whole idealistic and artistic wealth of the great poet, they leave a handful of filtered quotations and nauseatingly repetitive formulas."<sup>14</sup> Lately, Soviet agitators have managed to do even without these filtered quotations.

Does this propaganda achieve its ends? Yu. Boyko believes that "the enemy has gained much ground . . . the reader approaches the works of the author filled to the brim with suggestive propaganda, and under pressure of this suggestion, Shevchenko's living

<sup>12</sup> Shevchenko, T. H., *Povna zbirka tvoriv v 3-kh tomakh*, I, Kiev, 1949, 631.

<sup>13</sup> Shevchenko, T. H., *Povna zbirka tvoriv v 5-kh tomakh*, II, Kiev, 1939, 385.

<sup>14</sup> Hlobenko, Mykola, "Shevchenko v sovets'komu literaturoznavstvi," *Zapysky naukovooho Tovarystva im. Shevchenka*, Vol. 161; *Zbirnyk filolohichnoyi sektsiyi*, Vol. 24, New York-Paris, 1953, pp. 199-200.

word does not carry any more the clarity, with which it would influence a fresh reader."<sup>15</sup>

In our opinion, this suggestive propaganda has the reverse influence upon the contemporary Soviet reader. The falsehood of this exaggerated propaganda is so obvious that even a reader of very limited education will see through it, and it will produce in him only disgust and hatred of the falsifiers of the poet's great works. Every line of Shevchenko's immortal poetry rectifies the falsehood of contemporary Bolshevik falsification of his works.

The greedy enemy:

“ . . . will never plough  
The earth that lies beneath the sea  
So neither will he put in chains  
The living soul, *the Living Word!*”

<sup>15</sup> Boyko, Yu., *Shevchenko i Moskva*, Munich, 1952, p. 5.