

## Celebrating the Soviet Present

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*The Zhdanovshchina Campaign in  
Ukrainian Literature and the Arts*

SERHY YEKELCHYK

PERHAPS THE most neglected period in the Soviet *longue durée*, post-1945 High Stalinism has long been seen as a simple continuation of prewar social structures and cultural paradigms, a time distinguished only by obscurantist ideological campaigns in literature, art, and scholarship. The sacrifices of the war did not lead to liberalization in social and cultural policy. Instead, Stalinism appeared to return in its familiar social and ideological shape. Either because of this or owing to the lack of primary sources on Soviet society and culture, most of the monographs published in the West focus on elite politics of the period.<sup>1</sup> However, the sheer scale of demographic losses, population movements, and labor turnover during the war suggests that postwar Soviet society differed considerably from its prewar self. Recent pioneering studies of phenomena as diverse as the revival of small private enterprise during the late 1940s and the making of the “Great Patriotic War” into a new fundamental myth of the Soviet polity show that the social and cultural strategies of High Stalinism also continued to change.<sup>2</sup>

A closer look at postwar Stalinism reveals that scholars have not been attentive to the complex, multidimensional nature of even its best-known manifestations. Thus, the *Zhdanovshchina*, the postwar cultural-ideological purification

campaign of 1946–48 associated with the name of Central Committee Secretary Andrei Zhdanov, is usually understood as a reaction to the widespread hopes for a freer and more prosperous life after the war, for a more tolerant and liberal cultural climate. Traditional accounts portray the Zhdanovshchina as a return to the prewar strident party line, the reassertion of ideological control over culture, and the purging of literature and the arts of Western influences. The campaign started in August 1946, when the Central Committee condemned two prominent Leningrad journals, *Zvezda* (Star) and *Leningrad*, for publishing ideologically harmful apolitical works, kowtowing to bourgeois culture, and disparaging Soviet values. Zhdanov particularly castigated two famous Leningrad writers—satirist Mikhail Zoshchenko and lyrical poet Anna Akhmatova—for purveying “anti-Soviet” and “individualist” themes in their work. On this occasion, the party ideologue gave two highly publicized speeches defining the role of Soviet literature as the party’s educational medium. In early 1948, Zhdanov turned to denouncing “formalism” in Soviet music, which was to reflect “our victories” instead. Although Zhdanov’s star began to wane at about the same time and he died in August 1948, the metastases of ideological purification subsequently spread to other fields, including biology and economics. Not a part of the Zhdanovshchina in its strict sense, the ideological purge of science was actually promoted by the chief ideologue’s rivals, who sought to undermine Zhdanov’s influence through an attack on his son, Iurii, the liberal supervisor of science in the Central Committee.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, in agreement with the spirit of the Zhdanovshchina proper in literature and the arts, these later campaigns combined anti-Westernism with Russian patriotism. The latter included an attempt to establish Russian scientists’ and inventors’ “priority” in the making of all imaginable discoveries in the modern world. Finally, the ideological attacks on “rootless cosmopolitans” in 1949 added clear anti-Semitic overtones to the new official anti-Westernism.<sup>4</sup>

Although these accounts are certainly true in principle and especially when limiting research to the two capitals, Moscow and Leningrad, a look at the new policy’s refraction in a non-Russian republic provides a very different perspective on the Zhdanovshchina proper, that is, on the ideological purge of literature and the arts during 1946–48. Access to previously classified Soviet archives allows for a reconceptualization of the interaction between ideological pronouncements from Moscow and their interpretation by republican ideologues and intellectuals. This “view from the periphery” further problematizes the traditional narratives of “monolithic” Stalinism. In an attempt to recover neg-

lected dimensions of the Zhdanovshchina, this chapter focuses on the changing patterns of portraying the Ukrainian past and present in literature, drama, opera, and painting during 1946–48.

### *The View from Ukraine*

Although the purge of Leningrad writers in the late summer of 1946 continues to be widely understood as the real inauguration of the Zhdanovshchina, Werner G. Hahn has long suggested that the campaign actually began in late June in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev. That month, the deputy chief of the Administration of Propaganda and Agitation, Petr Fedoseev, arrived to coordinate the first salvos of the campaign.<sup>5</sup> Rather than being anti-Western, though, the Ukrainian Zhdanovshchina from its very beginnings clearly aimed at “nationalism,” particularly in history. During the republican conference on propaganda on 24–26 June, the Ukrainian Communist Party’s secretary for ideology, Kost Lytvyn, announced that “softness” on nationalism could no longer be tolerated in Ukraine, where the ideological climate had been already contaminated by German wartime propaganda, private landholding in the Western provinces, population exchanges with Poland, and the return of POWs and *Ostarbeiter* (Slavs mobilized for slave labor in German industry and households) from Germany. Although all of these phenomena were manifestly recent, Lytvyn and other speakers concentrated almost exclusively on ideological mistakes in representations of the Ukrainian past in the republic’s scholarship, literature, and the arts. In striking contrast to the subsequent denunciations in Leningrad and Moscow, the ideologues did not accuse the intellectuals of succumbing to Western influences or publishing ideologically harmful apolitical works. Instead, the republican functionaries concentrated on denouncing writers, artists, and composers who “escaped from our socialist reality” into subjects from the Ukrainian past. This was said to reflect the influence of the late dean of Ukrainian historians and prominent nationalist leader, Mykhailo Hrushevsky (1866–1934).<sup>6</sup>

In reality, the postwar ideologues were struggling with the complex legacy of Soviet rule in Ukraine. The Bolshevik anti-imperialist commitment to developing non-Russian high cultures during the “nativization” policy of the 1920s had turned the Soviet Union into an “affirmative action” state, which promoted native cadres in their titular republics, encouraged the official use of native languages, and celebrated previously suppressed non-Russian cul-

tures. However, even in the heyday of “Ukrainization” in the republic, the party strongly condemned “bourgeois” patriotic sentiments and identification with great ancestors other than peasant rebels. Beginning in the early 1930s, the Stalinist centralization drive turned against the “excesses” of Soviet nation building in Ukraine and other republics. The next decade saw perennial massive purges of “Ukrainian nationalists” in the republic’s government, scholarship, and culture.<sup>7</sup>

The “Great Retreat” to traditional social and cultural models represented another side of the Stalin Revolution from above. Identified by some Western scholars as a “Big Deal” between the authorities and the cultural tastes of the new Soviet middle class, this transformation involved the state-sponsored rehabilitation of Russian patriotism, national pride, and tsarist heroes.<sup>8</sup> Before and during the war, however, the rehabilitation of Russian patriotism and the “heroic past” went hand in hand with similar processes in the non-Russian republics. In Ukraine, official propaganda exalted the Ukrainian equivalents of canonic Stalinist heroes Aleksandr Nevskii, Ivan the Terrible, and Peter the Great—Prince Danylo of Halych and the Cossack hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky. The official press and the arts taught the population to identify with their great ancestors, the Cossacks, and with nineteenth-century nation builders, while Soviet ideologues attempted to reconcile the Russian and non-Russian patriotic national mythologies within the overarching narrative of the “friendship of peoples.” The maximum extent of this campaign became visible in 1943–44, when Moscow indicated its unhappiness with the growth of non-Russian partiotisms by denouncing the *History of the Kazakh SSR* and Oleksandr Dovzhenko’s novel *Ukraine in Flames*.<sup>9</sup> Soviet authorities found Ukrainian “separatism” in history especially disturbing because Ukrainians could claim a number of the most impressive pages of the Russian “glorious past”: medieval Kievan Rus, the sixteenth-century wars with Poland, and the 1654 union between Muscovy and Cossack Ukraine that created a mighty East European empire. Even well-intentioned Ukrainian historical mythology inevitably competed with Russian myths and thus endangered the very notion of Russian historical nationhood.<sup>10</sup> The incorporation of Western Ukraine and the persistent nationalist insurgency in the western provinces further necessitated the ideological turnabout because the nationalists’ propaganda offered a “reading” of the Ukrainian heroic past suspiciously similar to the wartime Soviet version, albeit without endorsing the friendship of peoples paradigm.<sup>11</sup> The postwar purification campaigns in the republic aimed at the final eradication of the appeal to ethnic patriotism and the grand narrative of the nation



in official discourse. Instead, Soviet Ukrainians were taught to identify with their “shared” Soviet ancestry.

During the plenary meeting of the Ukrainian Central Committee on 15–17 August 1946, First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, Ideological Secretary Lytvyn, and Secretary for Propaganda Ivan Nazarenko demanded that the intellectuals revise the public discourse of self-identification by emphasizing the common socialist present at the expense of a “separate” national past. Nazarenko accused the republic’s literary historians of “nationalist” exaltation of the pre-revolutionary Ukrainian classics. Lytvyn pounced upon Mykola Bazhan’s wartime poem “Danylo of Halych” for referring to the “Ukrainian people” and “Ukrainian army” as already existing in the thirteenth century. He also uncovered blatant idealization of “feudalist” and “bourgeois” Ukrainian culture in the speech that the leading poet Maksym Rylsky gave in 1943 on the occasion of Kiev’s liberation by the Red Army. Oleksa Kundzich’s story “The Ukrainian Hut” was declared guilty of celebrating the traditional peasant dwelling as the primordial cradle of the Ukrainian nation. Most speakers dwelt on various “nationalist mistakes” in portraying the past. However, some, like the party boss in Stalino (Donetsk) Province, Leonid Melnikov, complained that no Ukrainian writer properly celebrated the republic’s industrial growth under Soviet power. “I have not seen anything either,” added Khrushchev. Time and again, the participants denounced the preoccupation with the past as ideologically harmful, but when in the end Bazhan took the floor to apologize for the mistakes of his historical poem, Khrushchev interrupted him: “No, you tell me why writers are opposed to the Donbas, to industrialization.” Then the first secretary closed the proceedings with the appeal “to heat the ground so that our enemies will burn their feet.”<sup>12</sup> From that time on, the critique of nationalism in literature combined in Ukraine with the appeal to glorify the Soviet present.

The Ukrainian ideologues spelled out the campaign’s message at several denunciatory meetings. During the writers’ conference on 27–28 August, Lytvyn frankly defined the ideological turn in terms that did not appear in the official documents of the time:

Why did the comrades make serious mistakes? Because they proceeded from the wrong assumption that the party had changed its policy during the war. To foster popular patriotism, much has been written about Aleksandr Nevskii, Suvorov, Kutuzov, Bohdan Khmelnytsky. Several patriotic manifestos to the Ukrainian people paid great attention to the heroic traditions of our people’s past. Shevchenko’s *Kobzar* was published in a pocket-size format and smug-

gled beyond the frontline [to the occupied territories] together with many leaflets that used Shevchenko's poetry in purely propagandistic aims. Some people wrongly interpreted this to the effect that the liberation of Ukraine was going on under the banner of Shevchenko, under the banner of Kulish. Excuse me for the sharp words, but this is what happened. These comrades decided that all the previous critique [of ethnic patriotism] should be abandoned because the party's policy had changed, because the party had conceded.<sup>13</sup>

The secretary for ideology suggested that all Ukrainian intellectuals, and especially writers, need to "air out their brains" (*provetrivanie mozgov*): "Instead of infatuation with the reactionary romantics of the Zaporozhian Host, which in many respects differed from our times, the past should be interpreted through its connections with the present."<sup>14</sup>

By late August 1947, the purification campaign in Ukraine had spread into historical scholarship proper. On 27 August, the Ukrainian Central Committee, now chaired by Stalin's trusted envoy Lazar Kaganovich,<sup>15</sup> adopted a major resolution on the "political mistakes" of the Institute of History of the republic's Academy of Sciences. The decree announced that scholars "were following Ukrainian nationalists in considering the history of Ukraine as isolated from the history of other peoples [of the Soviet Union]." In addition, the historians allegedly were emphasizing the category of nation over that of class, neglecting the class nature of the prerevolutionary struggle for national liberation and "not consistently advancing the idea that Ukraine could be a free and sovereign state only as part of the USSR."<sup>16</sup> Numerous attendant meetings, newspaper articles, and directives on ideological work in Ukraine hammered out the message of this resolution. Significantly, the Ukrainian equivalent of the principal ideological resolution of the Zhdanovshchina, Moscow's decree on the journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*, also differed from its model by its unusual sensitivity to questions of history. The Ukrainian Central Committee resolution "About the Journal *Vitchyzna*" (Fatherland) denounced the periodical for publishing "nationalistic" articles on the founder of modern Ukrainian literature, Ivan Kotliarevsky, and on the first modern Ukrainian political organization, the Brotherhood of SS. Cyril and Methodius (1845–47). The editors were accused of neglecting Soviet subjects and encouraging their authors to elaborate on the national past.<sup>17</sup>

All in all, from its very inception, the Zhdanovshchina in Ukraine displayed a distinct character. Did the ideological purification in the republic *deviate* from the Moscow/Leningrad model by focusing on representations of the past? Or, to look at the problem differently, perhaps the "Moscow-centric"

understanding of the postwar ideological processes has been one-sided? To answer these questions, I next examine several significant phenomena of Ukrainian cultural life during 1946–48.

### *Shaping the Non-Russian Historical Imagination*

On 26 August 1946, the All-Union Central Committee elaborated the strategic aims of the Zhdanovshchina in a resolution “On the Repertoire of Drama Theaters and Measures Toward Its Improvement.” The decree called for a purge of the theater repertoire, which was “littered” with “apolitical” Soviet plays, works idealizing the prerevolutionary past, and Western plays that “popularized bourgeois morals,” such as Somerset Maugham’s *The Circle* or Arthur Morrison’s *The Murder of Mr. Parker*. The resolution, which was not published at the time but summarized in *Pravda*, categorically demanded staging more Soviet plays on contemporary subjects.<sup>18</sup> Western scholars have interpreted the decree as simply “demanding an end to laxity in the theater and, in particular, an end to the presentation of Western plays in the Moscow repertory houses.”<sup>19</sup> This might well be the way readers in the Soviet capital understood the decree. Nevertheless, *Pravda*’s article also denounced the plays “idealizing the life of tsarist lords and Asian khans” and named five “faulty” productions: four historical dramas from the past of Soviet Asian peoples and a nineteenth-century French comedy, Eugène Scribe’s *Tales of the Queen of Navarra* (1850). Although Soviet Russian playwrights had authored numerous dramas glorifying the lives of tsars, feudal lords, and military leaders, the resolution did not mention any of these works. Nor were they criticized during the ensuing campaign for the “purity” of Soviet theater.<sup>20</sup> In Ukraine, the pronouncements from Moscow were clearly interpreted as being aimed primarily against the glorification of the *non-Russian* past.

The attendant resolution of the Ukrainian Central Committee displayed a peculiar refraction of Moscow’s dictum. The republican ideologues did not dare to criticize Stalin’s pet playwright, Oleksandr Korniiichuk (Aleksandr Korneichuk), author of the best-known Soviet Ukrainian historical drama, *Bohdan Khmelnytsky* (1938). This left for denouncing only a few little-known historical plays such as Oleksandr Kopylenko’s *Why the Stars Do Not Go Out* and Mykhailo Pinchevsky’s *I Live*. The hunt for “corrupting” Western plays did not produce sufficient prey either: of the four named in the decree, two were written by Alexandre Dumas  *fils* and the nineteenth-century Polish playwright Aleksander Fredro, and only two by contemporary “bourgeois”

authors, including one drama reworked by a Soviet writer. Moreover, the republican theater companies seemed to perform relatively well in producing “contemporary” plays, since the powerful Korniiichuk wrote these with exemplary regularity. None of the companies mentioned by name staged less than three *new* plays on Soviet subjects during the 1945–46 season, not to mention the plays already in the repertoire.

In this light, the republican ideologues adopted a strategy different from that deployed in Moscow. They broadened the scope of the critique to include opera, a genre traditionally preoccupied with the past. The Ukrainian Central Committee’s resolution “On the Repertoire of Drama and Opera Theaters of the Ukrainian SSR and Measures Toward Its Improvement” assailed the Ukrainian opera companies for not staging a single new opera on a Soviet topic during the preceding three years. As to the drama companies, they were guilty of giving disproportionate attention to the prerevolutionary Ukrainian classics, including numerous less valuable plays on manners. These works could “only educate the spectator in the spirit of ethnic narrow-mindedness and alienation from urgent contemporary questions.”<sup>21</sup> The Ukrainian authorities’ initiative demonstrated that local elites exercised considerable autonomy in shaping Stalinist ideological campaigns. The “mainstream” Zhdanovshchina would not envelop musical life until the 1948 attack on Vano Muradeli’s opera *The Great Friendship* and the subsequent campaign against “formalism” in Soviet music.

In October 1946, the Kiev Opera Company premiered a new version of Mykola Lysenko’s classic Ukrainian historical opera, *Taras Bulba* (1890). The result of several years of work, the ill-fated premiere came just a month after the decree on the repertoire of drama and opera theaters. The republican authorities immediately shut down the production before any criticism sounded from Moscow. Reviewers announced that *Taras* did not create “an impression of Ukraine suffering under the yoke of the Polish lords,” for in act 1, Bulba and other Cossacks were seen to be drinking too cheerfully in the orchard. The colonel himself looked “inactive,” and the whole opera seemed “unfinished.”<sup>22</sup> Oleksandr Kopylenko’s historical play *Why the Stars Do Not Go Out* also suffered a harsh critique, both as a falsification presenting the heroic Cossacks as passive drunkards, and as a work idealizing the national past and neglecting class struggle within seventeenth-century Ukrainian society.<sup>23</sup>

Despite all this rhetoric and within weeks after the all-union decree, one of Ukraine’s leading theaters premiered Ivan Kocherha’s new grand historical

drama, *Iaroslav the Wise*. Written in the antiquarian genre of the verse play, which apparently resonated well with High Stalinist aesthetic monumentalism, the work portrayed the life of the great statesman of Kievan Rus, Grand Prince Iaroslav the Wise (reign, 1019–54). At its inauguration in September 1946, the drama seemed doomed. As Kocherha would recall two years later at the writers' congress, after the resolution "On the Repertoire of Drama Theaters" appeared some two weeks before the premiere, the management of the Kharkiv Drama Theater was about to cancel the performance.<sup>24</sup> Yet, while highly liable on the charge of fascination with the distant past, the play contained hardly any specifically Ukrainian historical references. Nothing identified the Rus of the text as the predecessor of modern Ukraine rather than that of Russia or even the Soviet Union. Indeed, only the language betrayed the drama as a product of a Ukrainian writer. Ultimately, the strong princely power and the "united Rus" that constituted the drama's principal ideological message seemed to reverberate mightily with High Stalinist ideological convictions. At the very last moment, the republican party authorities reluctantly allowed the premiere to proceed, albeit suggesting some eleventh-hour insertions regarding the "class struggle" in Kievan times.

Premiered in Kharkiv on 17 September 1946, the play was reviewed in Ukrainian newspapers with unprecedented delay: *Literaturna hazeta* (Literary Gazette) published a lengthy positive assessment on 12 December, whereas *Radianske mystetstvo* (Soviet Art) hesitated until 12 March 1947. In the end, amid public attacks on the historical genre as such and the promotion of Soviet subjects, *Iaroslav* won full approval in Moscow. In June 1947, the general public learned that the Kharkiv production of the play earned the company the Stalin Prize, First Class. *Literaturna hazeta* credited the drama with educating the spectators "to be proud of the Fatherland, of the people, of the mighty united state."<sup>25</sup> The fate of *Iaroslav* highlighted the ambiguous nature of the antihistorical campaign in Ukraine. The executive ideologues targeted the works identifying with the "separate" Ukrainian national past, whereas those engaging with the Ukrainians' and Russians' shared past were still welcome. At the same time, local functionaries had considerable authority to interpret the official policy—and often did it more rigidly than their superiors. A curious episode underscored the lack of a single "party line" in the postwar cultural policy in Ukraine: not long before *Iaroslav* the play received the highest Soviet accolade, the Kiev film studios had canceled their plan to shoot *Iaroslav* the movie because of its potentially problematic theme.<sup>26</sup>

### *Celebrating the Present*

Meanwhile, in January 1947, the Ukrainian State Committee for the Arts announced a competition for the best play on a contemporary topic. The competition produced miserable results: the artistic quality of most entries was apparently poor and, in the end, no first prize was awarded.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, a certain Ievhen Blakytyn (apparently a pen name) submitted to the jury a treatise entitled “Is the Ukrainian Nation Capable of Further Existence and of Actively Making Its History? A Reference for Those Studying the History of Ukraine.” Judging from his style and argumentation, Blakytyn was an amateur nonconformist rather than a professional nationalist propagandist. Far from glorifying the Soviet present, he affirmed the nation as a principal agent of history. The author stressed that Ukrainians were not just “Moscow’s eternal appendage,” that his nation has always been and still was capable of independent existence.<sup>28</sup>

Another anonymous writer submitted a three-act farce, *Without an Idea*, mocking the campaign for contemporary topics itself. The plot depicts a theater whose administration is preparing feverishly for the 1 May holiday. The representative of the provincial party committee, with the telling Jewish name of Itsyk Pshenicher, laments the absence of Soviet subjects among “all those things historical or those from the decadent but not yet decaying West.” A patently Ukrainian artistic director, Solopii Artemovych Beviz, seconds Pshenicher: “What are the censors looking for? How could they let in such poison of the capitalist encirclement as *Othello*, *Faust*, *Corneville Bells*, etc.?” The nameless director goes through a pile of plays, mumbling: “The whole bunch of Ukrainian classics . . . mountains of paper written over but not a line about collective farms, about socialism.” Only a bold young actor, Vladyslav Chubar, asks ironically, “Why don’t you simply reorganize our theater into a party school?” Here and there, the text pointedly reminds the reader of postwar realities that were not reflected in the official literature: arrests at the railway station, denunciations, a shortage of sugar, bread rationing, waiting in lines from 5 A.M., burglaries, etc.<sup>29</sup>

In the end, Pshenicher orders that the most “ideologically correct” Russian play, Konstantin Trennev’s *Liubov’ Iarovaia*, be staged on the evening of 1 May. At the very last moment, however, the party representative has second thoughts about the appropriateness of *any* artistic representation of the most glorious present. Instead of allowing the performance of the play, he goes on stage himself to read a speech with the deliberately awkward title “The Leading

Role of Communist Ideas in the Laws of the Development of Contemporary Society.” As the public is leaving and as occurs in classical farce, a secondary comic character, the maintenance manager, Mykyta Dohada, appears on the vacant stage to recite the rhyming moral: “What of the strength of Stalinist ideas? / The theater is empty. There are no people.”<sup>30</sup>

The Ukrainian authorities did not have enough leads to locate the anonymous author who, like “young actor Vladyslav Chubar,” apparently belonged to the new generation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Having grown up during the Ukrainian “Great Retreat,” when local intellectuals were allowed to cultivate Ukrainian patriotism, the author (or authors) wanted to protest the recent devaluation of the national past and cultural heritage in favor of the Soviet present. Submitting an anonymous farce to the Ukrainian Committee for the Arts represented both an original method of communicating this opposition to the authorities and an effective deconstruction of the hegemonic cultural discourse through its “carnivalization.”<sup>31</sup>

The jury awarded second prize to Liubomyr Dmyterko’s heroic drama *General Vatutin*, the only product of the competition to ever see the stage. Significantly, the play celebrated the Soviet war effort, which had recently superseded the revolution and Civil War as the new common heroic past of all Soviet nationalities.<sup>32</sup> Manipulating the “heroic ancestry” of popular self-identification, the authorities urged the Ukrainian intelligentsia to turn to the most immediate Soviet past as a major source of legitimacy. However, like much of Ukrainian literature of the late 1940s, Dmyterko’s play glorified not the Soviet military feat in general, but its Soviet Ukrainian variety. The drama concentrated on portraying only one military leader, Army General Nikolai Vatutin, whose group of armies liberated Ukraine but who was himself fatally wounded in an ambush by Ukrainian nationalist guerillas and died in the hospital in Kiev. (The play did not specify who wounded the general. Also, Dmyterko’s Vatutin refused hospitalization until his troops reached the river Prut in Western Ukraine.)<sup>33</sup> Dmyterko’s success was predetermined in more than one sense. The republican authorities developed a minor cult of Vatutin the “liberator” and, just days before the jury announced its decision, an imposing monument to the general was unveiled on his grave in the center of Kiev. Moreover, the Kharkiv Drama Theater had premiered Dmyterko’s play one month before the announcement. Thus, the members of the jury discovered the identity of the author, the influential secretary of the Writers’ Union, whereas the media reviews indicated the establishment’s positive reaction to his work.<sup>34</sup>

On a related note, the decree of 1946 named opera as a genre where a harmful obsession with the distant past had taken deep roots. Naturally, the Ukrainian ideologues and composers sought a remedy in putting the heroic tales of the war to music. The story of the Young Guard seemed an obvious choice. This underground youth group, which operated behind enemy lines in the Ukrainian mining town of Krasnodon in the Donbas region and was ruthlessly crushed by the Germans and the local police just before the Red Army's return, occupied a prominent place in Soviet patriotic propaganda.<sup>35</sup> The distinguished Moscow writer Aleksandr Fadeev was commissioned to write a novel, *Young Guard*, which won the Stalin Prize, First Class, in 1946. It was dramatized for the stage and later became the subject of an award-winning movie. During 1946–47, the leading Ukrainian composer, Iulii Meitus, cooperated with the poet Andrii Malyshko to produce an opera by the same name. As soon as they completed the libretto and the score in the autumn of 1947, the Kiev Opera began feverish work to stage *Young Guard* on the thirtieth anniversary of the revolution, 7 November 1947. Artistic director Mykhailo Stefanovych publicly designated *Young Guard* as the company's "answer" to the party decree on theatrical repertoire.<sup>36</sup>

On 1 November, the entire Politburo of the Ukrainian party and the republic's government attended a dress rehearsal of the opera. First Secretary Kaganovich and Premier Khrushchev offered several critical suggestions. Kaganovich wanted to hear more Ukrainian folk melodies. In addition, he thought the plot was too tragic and suggested expanding the joyful episode involving a party attended by the young people. He also felt that the finale remained undeveloped. Khrushchev added that the Red Army unit in act 1 was dressed in clean uniforms and therefore did not convey the sense of a retreat. Incredibly, in six days, all necessary changes were made. The industrious Meitus inserted a Ukrainian song into the party scene, thus fulfilling two of Kaganovich's demands at once.<sup>37</sup> The company premiered *Young Guard* on 7 November with moderate success. The reviewers noted the weak finale, the predominance of lyric tunes hardly compatible with the heroic topic, the primitive harmonization, and the improper impression of panic created by the scene of evacuation.<sup>38</sup> Thus, even works based on the most timely topics did not receive unreserved glorification. Aware of the Politburo's superficial criticisms of the plot, local intellectuals used the opportunity to add their more substantial comments on the music itself.<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, during the same month, the Moscow press suddenly turned on



Fadeev for the allegedly inadequate portrayal of the Krasnodon party leadership in his novel.<sup>40</sup> This attack prompted a reexamination of Meitus's opera. On 31 December, the republican Administration of Propaganda and Agitation reported the discovered shortcomings to Khrushchev, who, after Kaganovich's departure for Moscow, had just resumed his duties as first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party. The republic's functionaries concluded that the authors had "proved unable to grasp the error of Fadeev's novel that had recently been exposed in the central press." The portrayal of the young patriots did not display their "organic connection with the Bolshevik Party." Act 1 still created a feeling of panic.<sup>41</sup> Worse yet, the librettist Malyshko failed to saturate his text with the obligatory markers of Soviet public discourse—a mistake verging on a "nationalist deviation":

For some reason Malyshko avoids the words close to the heart of and beloved by every Soviet man: Lenin, Stalin, the party, the Fatherland, the Soviet Union, Soviet Ukraine, Donbas, the *Komsomol* [Communist Youth League], Moscow. These and many other words that specifically characterize the lexicon of the Soviet people and the writings of Soviet writers almost never or only rarely appear in the libretto. . . . [These mistakes] follow and continue the non-Bolshevik nationalist trend that the party has condemned already and which was uncovered in the works of Rylsky, Dovzhenko, etc.<sup>42</sup>

Another round of hasty revisions followed. In act 1, the lines "The district [party] committee left as well / Back at the dawn" disappeared, giving way to a new scene where two party officials, Protsenko and Valko, speak to the people, thus "demonstrating the party's organizing role and finally eliminating the elements of panic." These two characters were given more lines, and the words "Stalin," "Soviet," "Komsomol," and "Donbas" were introduced wherever possible. Developing the finale appeared politically dangerous, however, for its text already "concluded with a tribute to Stalin." Instead, Meitus added further orchestral development of the finale's musical theme.<sup>43</sup>

The second version of the opera was ready in January 1948. The Ukrainian Central Committee's experts apparently wanted to protect themselves if the opera were criticized again: Their internal memo characterized the production as "not delivering the fighting enthusiasm and the spiritual greatness" of young patriots.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, the theater was allowed to proceed with staging the revised version to satisfy the ideological hunger for contemporary opera on a Soviet subject. By 1950, a third redaction became necessary after

Fadeev published a revised variant of his novel. At this point, the head of the Theater Administration of the Ukrainian Committee for the Arts, M. P. Kompaniiets, boasted at a meeting in Moscow that the Kievans forestalled Fadeev himself in highlighting the party role during the previous revisions. In 1951, Meitus received the Stalin Prize, Second Class, for *Young Guard*.<sup>45</sup>

Over the course of the next few years, Meitus's *Young Guard* became the most often-staged Soviet opera on a "contemporary subject." A survey of Soviet opera companies in 1954 revealed that 9 houses presented 87 performances of the opera that year. In contrast, 7 houses presented 74 performances of Tikhon Khrennikov's *In the Storm* and also a mere 24 of Ivan Dzerzhinskii's *And Quiet Flows the Don*. However, even the repertoire favorite proved an unqualified box-office fiasco. The total attendance at the performances of *Young Guard* Union-wide in 1954 added up to only 49,980 people, or an average of 574 at each performance. In the same year, the former official tsarist patriotic opera *Ivan Susanin* enjoyed 126 performances in 15 theaters with an average attendance of 1,018. After all the attacks on the historical genre, Kostiantyn Dankevych's new Ukrainian historical opera, *Bohdan Khmelnytsky* (1951; second version, 1953), was the absolute public favorite in the republic, with 7 companies, 129 performances, and the total of 136,123 spectators—an average attendance of 1,055.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, despite its dismal showing, *Young Guard* remained in the repertoire of the leading Ukrainian opera companies for decades. It was staged in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, China, and North Korea, not to mention numerous opera companies throughout the Soviet Union. *Young Guard*'s production in the Malyi Opera Theater in Leningrad earned the company a Stalin Prize.<sup>47</sup>

Although *Young Guard* continued to be widely performed in Ukraine, one wonders to what degree local theaters followed the unprecedented ideological editing of the score. In 1952, the All-Union Committee for the Arts sent an inspector to the opera house in Stalino, who found that the company had not revised its production of *Young Guard* to reflect the new redactions of the libretto and the score. Moreover, convincingly showing the leading role of the party appeared challenging because the actor Iu. Sabinin, who sang the part of Valko, was seventy-one years old. Nevertheless, the inspector generally approved of the production. No materials in this file indicated any moves from Moscow to ensure that the Stalino company adopted a proper redaction of the opera.<sup>48</sup>

### *Searching for an Acceptable Past*

In late 1946, as the Ukrainian press unveiled a campaign against historical topics, the newspaper of the republican Committee for the Arts, *Radianske mystetstvo*, focused on uncovering the “unhealthy glorification of the past” in contemporary paintings. It denounced Ivan Shulha for expressing in his canvas *The Zaporozhians’ Song* “morbid nostalgia for the past.” Hryhory Svitlytsky’s painting *Native Land* depicting a young woman in traditional peasant dress against the background of a beautiful country landscape prompted the paper to ask, “What does this have in common with our Soviet Ukraine?” Mykhailo Derchus’s series *The Khmelnytsky Uprising* was deemed to be “clearly unfinished”—but not because of its morbid nostalgia: the artist “did not pay appropriate attention” to the town of Pereiaslav Council and historic union with Russia.<sup>49</sup>

All these works had been shown at the Eighth Exhibition of Ukrainian Art in the autumn of 1946. Working together with the Artists’ Union, the republican functionaries set out to ensure that the Ninth Exhibition (scheduled to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution in November 1947) would properly glorify the Soviet present. Before the exhibition’s opening, the Artists’ Union reported that its exposition would manifest a transition from sketches and landscapes to “thematic paintings”: “Our artists have undergone a fundamental change in their attitude toward the struggle to achieve a Soviet composition in their paintings. The overwhelming majority of our artists are now working on thematic paintings saturated with profoundly ideologically significant imagery.”<sup>50</sup> In fact, back in 1946, the republican press had already noted the first indications of this change in the use of Stalinist monumentalism to celebrate the war. At that time, *Radianske mystetstvo* called the public’s attention to the diploma projects of two young graduates of the Kiev Institute of the Arts: Viktor Puzyrkov’s *Unconquerable* and Mykhailo Khmelko’s *Comrades Khrushchev and Vatutin on the Approaches to Kiev*.<sup>51</sup>

The Ninth Exhibition opened on 7 November 1947 to become a triumph of “thematic paintings” and artistic monumentalism. The organizers selected two paintings by the young Khmelko: his diploma project, *Comrades Khrushchev and Vatutin* (2.15 x 3.85 meters), and his new work, *To the Great Russian People!* (3 x 5.15 meters), depicting Stalin’s famous nationalistic toast during the Kremlin reception for generals in 1945. Puzyrkov exhibited *Black Sea Sailors* (2.18 x 3.36 meters), a paean to heroism of the Black Sea Fleet paratroopers.

The critics extolled Khmelko and Puzyrkov, securing for them a place in the canon of High Stalinist art. *To the Great Russian People!* won the Stalin Prize, Second Class, and both artists would collect several Stalin Prizes in the following years. The historical genre, however, also scored an important victory. While no picture celebrating an “exclusive” Ukrainian past even made it to the exhibition, Hryhory Melikhov presented a large painting, *Young Taras Shevchenko Visiting the Artist K. P. Briullov* (2.89 x 2.95 meters) (Photo 3). The canvas portrayed a young peasant lad—the future Ukrainian national bard and professional artist—gazing admiringly at the great Russian painter who would become his teacher at the Imperial Academy of Arts. Artistically accomplished as it appeared at the time, the work also served as a perfect illustration of the myth of the Ukrainian “small brother” being taught and guided by the Russian “big brother.” As the head of the Union of Soviet Ukrainian Artists, Oleksandr Pashchenko, announced, “Melikhov’s canvas is a serious blow to the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists who sought to isolate Ukrainian culture from the wholesome influence of Russian culture.”<sup>52</sup> The painting won the Stalin Prize, Third Class, thus proving that not all non-Russian historical works were doomed under the Zhdanovshchina.<sup>53</sup> The republic’s artists were beginning to sense what would be acceptable according to the new version of the Soviet Ukrainian past and present.

The Ukrainian writers also chose the “true path,” although it had to be indicated to them by the party. In late 1946, the major Ukrainian publisher of literature, *Radianskyi pysmennyk* (Soviet Writer), released the first postwar Ukrainian historical novel, Petro Panch’s *Zaporozhians*. This epic narrative set in seventeenth-century Ukraine soon came under critical fire for “idealizing” the Cossacks. Panch allegedly did not sufficiently stress the tension between rich and poor Cossacks; instead, he portrayed the wealthy Cossack Veryha positively and made one of the characters, the noble Buzhinsky, utter the incriminating words, “Cossacks have always fought for Ukraine, for our faith, for freedom!”<sup>54</sup> Panch’s “nationalist mistakes” were invoked regularly at the ideological conferences during 1947. During one of them in September 1947, the embattled writer took the floor to repent his errors and promise a “party novel about Bohdan Khmelnytsky’s time.” Panch quoted two letters of support received from his readers after *The Zaporozhians* had been dismissed in the press. One reader from Lviv regretted that the witch-hunt would prevent Panch from writing interesting works. Another, a twenty-two-year-old disabled veteran, advised the writer not to bow before the ideological pressure:



Photo 3. Black-and-white reproduction of Hryhorii Melikhov's *Young Taras Shevchenko Visiting the Artist K. P. Briullov* (1947).

“The novels they would like you to write would be of low artistic quality and would find sympathetic readers only in a certain historical period and exclusively among a small group of people.” Up to this point, Panch seemed to be defending himself with evidence of his readers’ support, yet the writer suddenly shouted, “Together with my critics, I will slap these ‘sympathizers’ in the face.”<sup>55</sup>

The press and numerous public meetings condemned this harmful nostalgia for the past so strongly that writing a Ukrainian historical novel appeared tantamount to walking through a rhetorical minefield. In September 1947, Kaganovich and Khrushchev met with a group of 105 leading Ukrainian writ-

ers, who condemned the “nationalist mistakes” of their comrades and pledged loyalty to the party cause. However, the well-known novelist Natan Rybak, who had just completed the first part of an “ideologically correct” historical novel about Ukraine’s incorporation into Russia, decided to test the waters. He said, “I do not know who could have a stake in the disappearance of historical novels. . . . We Soviet writers should not leave [for the émigré nationalists] a topic of such importance as our people’s history.” Rybak also mentioned that he had discussed the idea for the novel with Khrushchev as early as 1940, and that the party leader, presumably, had given him some helpful advice. Kaganovich and Khrushchev, however, made no comments in response, leaving the novelist in uncertainty.<sup>56</sup>

Meanwhile, the novels about wartime heroism, industrial reconstruction, and the revival of agriculture came to constitute the bulk of Ukrainian literary production. In 1947, the young writer Oles Honchar received the Stalin Prize, Second Class, for part one of his war trilogy, *The Standard-Bearers*. In the following year, the same award went to him for the second part of the work, while Ivan Riabokliach received the Stalin Prize, Third Class, for a short novel about the postwar collective farms, *A Golden Thousand*.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, Rybak’s bulky novel *The Pereiaslav Council* was published first in a literary journal and then, in late 1948, separately, in due time bringing the writer the Stalin Prize, Second Class, for 1948.<sup>58</sup> Rybak’s case established the precedent: as long as they celebrated Ukraine’s eternal friendship with Russia, historical novels were welcome—even if they were based on the slippery ground of the glorious Cossack past.

No official document of the time gave the writers such license, just as no resolution admitted the ideologues’ failure to fashion a Soviet Ukrainian national mythology entirely separate from the nationalist myth of origins. Occasionally, the rough notes of a senior ideologue can open an exciting avenue for contextualizing Soviet ideological processes. In the case of the Ukrainian Zhdanovshchina, for instance, a file in the personal archives of the Ukrainian foreign minister and ideological *éminence grise* Dmytro Manuilsky is very revealing.<sup>59</sup> This file combines his drafts of the antinationalist resolutions with his extremely interesting pencil notes on the question of “national pride”—apparently the first draft of some article or speech. The notes show how the person who single-handedly wrote most of the principal republican ideological pronouncements of the time agonized over the definition of “Soviet national pride.” In one paragraph, Manuilsky begins by denouncing the national past but then arrives at recognizing it as one of the pillars of national identity:

*On the pride of history.* When a nation has nothing in the present to be proud of, it appeals to the greatness of its history. (Italian Fascists [were proud] of Ancient Rome's greatness.) Frenchmen [are proud] of their bourgeois revolution. History is a cement that unites the past of the people with their present. History embodies the idea of the people's immortality.<sup>60</sup>

The notes open with a statement that the foreign minister apparently intended to develop: "What is 'national pride'? We are proud of our socialist construction, the Great October Socialist Revolution, the party, Lenin, and Stalin." The title he gave the last section read, "On the National Pride of the USSR's Separate Peoples and That of the Multinational Soviet People in General." Manuilsky's main thesis was that "love for one's country (Ukraine) should be developed on the basis of love for the whole Soviet Union," but he did not work out how to reconcile pride in one's nation and its history with "love" for the Russian-led Soviet Union and Stalinist model of socialism.<sup>61</sup>

Manuilsky's notes remained incomplete, but other publications in the official press of the time, such as I. Martyniuk's article "To Develop and Cultivate Soviet Patriotism" or the editorial "On the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic" in *Bilshovyk Ukrainy* (Bolshevik of Ukraine), confirmed that the Ukrainian ideologues were, indeed, attempting to redefine the Soviet Ukrainian national identity. Both articles stressed that the population of the republic pledged allegiance to Soviet Ukraine as a part of the Soviet Union, and both kept silent about historic traditions and ethnic cultural identity. Criticizing several writers for references to Cossack glory in their works on contemporary subjects, the literary critic Ievhen Iuriev announced, "The idea of our vivifying Soviet patriotism comes not from the Zaporozhian Host." Then Iuriev traced the roots of Soviet identity to revolutionary struggle and the construction of socialism.<sup>62</sup>

### *The Zhdanovshchina Reconsidered*

Were the peculiarities of the Ukrainian Zhdanovshchina indicative of the larger ideological evolution of High Stalinism? On 28 June 1947, the head of the Soviet Writers' Union, Aleksandr Fadeev, gave a highly publicized speech at the meeting of the union's presidium. Fadeev hammered out the thesis that no decisive turn to Soviet subjects had yet occurred in literature. Among the causes of this failing, he named the "vestiges of bourgeois nationalism." In particular, Fadeev attacked the non-Russian literatures for their improper

blackening of tsarist times: “In depicting the historical past, one should show not only tsarism’s colonial deeds. It is much more important now to show those individuals in the nation’s past who understood that their people should follow the lead of Russian culture.”<sup>63</sup> At no point in 1946–48 did a Russian writer suffer for undue infatuation with the tsarist past,<sup>64</sup> but Stalinist ideologues sensed a connection between too much glorifying of the Ukrainian past and too little celebrating of the Soviet present. This connection reflected in reverse form the essence of the postwar Stalinist official Russocentric statism.

As happened elsewhere in the Soviet Union, lesser ideological campaigns continuing the Zhdanovshchina line recurred in Ukraine long after Zhdanov’s death in August 1948.<sup>65</sup> However, local intellectuals soon learned how to appropriate Moscow’s ideological pronouncements to defend and promote their own agendas. For instance, they used the crusade against the (usually Jewish) “rootless cosmopolitans” to dismiss some of the literary scholars who had participated in the earlier attack on Ukrainian patriotism and prerevolutionary classics. The secretary of the Ukrainian Writers’ Union, Liubomyr Dmyterko, publicly denounced the “cosmopolitan” critic Oleksandr Borshchahivsky, who had allegedly “slandered *Bohdan Khmelnytsky* and other plays by O. Korniiichuk.” Iukhym Martych (Finkelshtein) was accused of “stigmatizing Kocherha’s *Iaroslav the Wise* as ‘cloying.’”<sup>66</sup> *Bilshovyk Ukrainy* denounced “a group of antipatriotic theater and literary critics” that included “Borshchahivsky, Gozenpud, Stebun (Katsnelson), Adelheim, Starynkevych, Shamrai, Sanov (Smulson), and others” for maligning the Ukrainian classical heritage — “our pride, our national treasure (*sviatynia*).”<sup>67</sup> No significant attacks on the Ukrainian past and patriotism occurred until July 1951, when *Pravda* accused Volodymyr Sosiura’s short poem “Love Ukraine” (1944) of glorifying “some primordial Ukraine, Ukraine in general,” rather than *Soviet* Ukraine. A comprehensive campaign against “nationalist deviations” followed, repeating the models and even old accusations from 1946–47. Nonetheless, the republican political and artistic elites soon recovered and used the preparations for the 300th anniversary of the Pereiaslav Treaty (1954) to reinstall the Cossack glory as a legitimate part of ethnic mythology.

All in all, the Zhdanovshchina far away from the capitals looked very different than the Moscow-Leningrad version and also appeared to be much less of a success. Intellectuals in the capitals understood the Zhdanovshchina campaign as a crusade against liberalism and Western influences in the arts, but their colleagues in Kiev were taught to eulogize the Soviet present at the expense of the Ukrainian national past. Together, these approaches picture the



Zhdanovshchina as an attempt to redefine the Soviet Union as a society identifying with the Soviet present and Russian past. In this attempt, however, the authorities faced several formidable challenges. As far as the content of ideological messages was concerned, the tension between the grand narratives of the Russian and non-Russian ethnic past was suppressed but unresolved. The production of official discourse did not lend itself to total regimentation, with the republic-level ideologues adjusting the general guidelines to local realities, intellectuals consistently deviating from the politically correct course, and audiences occasionally declining to consume the final product or “reading” it differently. Both real and imaginary nationalist interpretations surfaced regularly, thus underscoring the ultimate impossibility of total ideological control. The identity of the High Stalinist “Soviet people” remained frustratingly unsolidified.

95. Interview by author, 16 April 1995. Ermolenko notes the mobility of the black market as well: "People constantly went to Moscow to buy things" and "were always looking to buy something somewhere that they could then sell for a profit somewhere else."

96. Interview by author, 20 May 1995.

97. "A kilo of bread," Karol informs, "costs as much as a skilled worker earns in a week, and the prices are spiraling upwards" (Karol, *Solik*, 91).

98. Ibid. Karol elaborates: "It is almost as if, in switching from one market to another, we were changing country and entering a world where everything has increased in prices a hundredfold" (321).

99. Ibid., 94–95.

100. Ibid., 263. As it turned out, they made very few such ventures. Karol also remembers that they paid bribes to train conductors to ride on top of the train and that they paid high prices to speculators for theater tickets in Rostov (271–72, 295).

101. Ibid., 359.

102. Ibid., 295.

103. Ibid., 291. A dancer for the Rostov Theater lived by speculating the two tickets granted her for each performance, thereby earning an extra 60 rubles a night, a sizable income at the time (294).

104. "The guards," Karol writes, "pretend not to notice that our greatcoats, not needed at this time of year, literally flutter about on our backs, as the fish which are still alive try to leap out of our pockets" (ibid., 327).

105. Unhappy with the price paid for their fish, Karol observes, "A good Soviet citizen who gives herself to commerce behaves no differently than a bourgeois profiteer of the worst kind" (ibid., 328).

106. Prices are so high on the market, Karol adds, that his wife Klava "prefers to put up with a slight hunger rather than buy food on the black market." He adds about the "authorities," "Preoccupied with their impotence when faced with the problems of supplies, they appear to encourage [the second economy]" (ibid., 91, 314).

## Chapter 12

I thank David Brandenberger, John-Paul Himka, Terry Martin, and the participants of the "Provincial Landscapes" conference for their suggestions and help during the preparation of this essay. My studies and research at the University of Alberta were made possible by two generous fellowships: the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship and the Ivan Lysiak Rudnytsky Memorial Doctoral Fellowship in Ukrainian History and Political Thought.

1. See Timothy Dunmore, *Soviet Politics, 1945–53* (New York, 1984); Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics: The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Moderation, 1946–53* (Ithaca, 1982); and William O. McCagg Jr., *Stalin Embattled, 1943–1948* (Detroit, 1978).

2. On social change, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Postwar Soviet Society: The 'Return to Normalcy,' 1945–1953," in Susan J. Linz, ed., *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* (Princeton, 1985), 129–56. The recent articles on postwar private enterprise and Soviet mythology referred to are Julie Hessler, "A Postwar Perestroika? Toward a History of Private Enterprise in the USSR," *Slavic Review* 57, no. 3 (1998): 516–41; and Amir Weiner, "The Making of a Dominant Myth: The Second World War and the Construction of Political Identities Within the Soviet Polity," *Russian Review* 55, no. 4 (1996): 638–60.

3. During the 1990s, several studies of the postwar ideological campaigns in Soviet science offered a sophisticated interpretation of these processes. For instance, Nikolai Kremontsov and

Alexei Kojevnikov have stressed the lack of total ideological control over science, the complex agendas of scientists in their interactions with the state, and the role of rituals and vocabularies in these campaigns (see Kremontsov, *Stalinist Science* [Princeton, 1997]; Kojevnikov, "Rituals of Stalinist Culture at Work: Science and the Games of Intraparty Democracy circa 1948," *Russian Review* 57, no. 1 [1998]: 25–52; and Kojevnikov, "Dialogues about Knowledge and Power in Totalitarian Political Culture," *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* 30, no. 1 [1999]: 227–47). Although the role of intellectuals in the Zhdanovshchina proper needs rethinking along similar lines, the early purges in culture and the humanities can, as well, offer important keys to the origins of the whole postwar ideological purification and the reshaping of Soviet identities during Stalin's last decade.

4. This summary is based primarily on the following reference works: Gregory L. Freeze, ed., *Russia: A History* (New York, 1997), 338–41; David MacKenzie and Michael W. Curran, *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, 4th ed. (Belmont, 1993), 652–57; Timothy E. O'Connor, "Zhdanov, Andrei Aleksandrovich," in *The Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History* (Gulf Breeze, 1987), 46: 31–33; Jennifer Baines, "Zhdanovism," in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, UK, 1982), 217. Russian historians also tend to see the Zhdanovshchina as occurring exclusively in Moscow and Leningrad (see Iu. S. Aksenov, "Poslevoennyi stalinizm: Udar po intelligentsii," *Kentavr*, no. 1 [1991]: 80–89; and Elena Zubkova, *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957*, trans. and ed. Hugh Ragsdale [Armonk, 1998]). Zubkova discusses the 1950 purges in Estonia and Georgia that, in her opinion, represented "lighter" repercussions of the 1949 purge of the Leningrad leadership—but not the non-Russian dimensions of the Zhdanovshchina. The work of the Russian literary scholar Evgenii Dobrenko, who takes account of the Zhdanovshchina's assault on non-Russian literatures, is a welcome exception to this Russocentric focus (see his "Sumerki kul'tury," *Druzhba narodov*, no. 2 [1991]: 249–71).

5. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics*, 48. Unfortunately, the author did not attempt to follow the course of the Zhdanovshchina campaign in Ukraine or any other non-Russian republic.

6. Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob"iednan' Ukrainy (hereafter cited as TsDAHO), f. 1, op. 70, spr. 436, ark. 10–13 (the worsening ideological climate), 25–35 (Hrushchev'sky), 47–60 (escapism into the past).

7. See George O. Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR, 1923–1934* (Cambridge, UK, 1992); Terry D. Martin, *An Affirmative Action Empire: Ethnicity and the Soviet State, 1923–1938* (Ithaca, forthcoming); and Iu. I. Shapoval, *Ukraina 20–50-kh rokiv: Storinky nenapysanoi istorii* (Kiev, 1993).

8. See Nicholas S. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat: The Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia* (New York, 1946); Vera S. Dunham, *In Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge, UK, 1976); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca, 1992); V. V. Volkov, "Kontsepsiia kul'turnosti, 1935–1938 gg.: Sovetskaia tsivilizatsiia i povsednevnost' stalinskogo vremeni," *Sotsiologicheskii zhurnal*, no. 1–2 (1996): 194–213; and D. L. Brandenberger and A. M. Dubrovsky, "'The People Need a Tsar': The Emergence of National Bolshevism as Stalinist Ideology, 1931–1941," *Europe-Asia Studies* 50, no. 5 (1998): 873–92.

9. The best treatment of the Soviet wartime "great ancestors" campaign in the non-Russian republics and the "friendship of peoples" paradigm remains that by Lowell Tillelt, *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill, 1969), 58–83. On Bohdan Khmelnytsky's cult in Ukraine, see John Basarab, *Pereiaslav 1654: A Historical Study* (Edmonton, 1982), 172–75.

10. See Roman Szporluk, "The Ukraine and Russia," in Robert Conquest, ed., *The Last Empire: Nationality and the Soviet Future* (Stanford, 1986), 151–82.

11. On the challenges that the addition of "nationalistic" West Ukrainians represented to the Soviet nationality policy, see Yaroslav Bilinsky, "The Incorporation of Western Ukraine and Its Impact on Politics and Society in Soviet Ukraine," in Roman Szporluk, ed., *The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on the USSR* (New York, 1975); and Roman Szporluk, "West Ukraine and West Belorussia: Historical Tradition, Social Communication, and Linguistic Assimilation," *Soviet Studies* 31, no. 1 (1979): 76–98. On the nationalist insurgency in postwar Ukraine, see John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 3d ed. (Englewood, 1990); Voldymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit: Zakhidoukrains'ki zemli u 1944–1953 rr. Novi dokumenty i materialy* (Kiev, 1998); and Jeffrey Burds, "Agentura: Soviet Informants' Networks and the Ukrainian Underground in Galicia, 1944–48," *East European Politics and Societies* 11, no. 1 (1997): 89–130.

12. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 729, ark. 10–11 (Nazarenko), 74 (Melnikov and Khrushchev), 138–41 (Lytvyn), 214 (Khrushchev). Interestingly, the editor of the Ukrainian komsomol journal *Dnipro* (Dnepr) in the late 1940s, Mykola Rudenko, later testified that "Melnikov did not know the Ukrainian language at all, understood nothing about literature, and generally lacked culture" (see Rudenko, *Naibil'she dyvo-zhyttia* [Kiev, 1998], 188). From December 1949 to June 1953, Leonid Melnikov served as first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party.

13. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 514, ark. 25–26. *Kobzar* is the principal collection of poems by the Ukrainian national poet and "father of the nation" Taras Shevchenko (1814–61). Panteleimon Kulish was a nineteenth-century Ukrainian "bourgeois-nationalist" writer, author of the first Ukrainian historical novel, *The Black Council* (1857).

14. *Ibid.*, ark. 34.

15. Lazar Kaganovich (1893–1991) earned the epithet of "iron commissar" (*zheleznyi narkom*) as a notoriously heavy-handed people's commissar of railroad transport and heavy industry under Stalin. Kaganovich was a member of the Central Committee from 1923 to 1957, and, in the course of his long career, the Politburo twice dispatched the Ukrainian-born troubleshooter to the republic "to resolve the problems" in the economy and culture. He served as the Ukrainian Communist Party's general secretary in 1925–28 and first secretary in March–December 1947.

16. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 6, spr. 1073, ark. 16–24; here, ark. 16–18, 20. Published in I. F. Kuras, ed., *Natsional'ni vidnosyny v Ukraini u XX st.: Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv* (Kiev, 1994), 291–96.

17. Iu. Iu. Kondufor, ed., *Kul'turne budivnytstvo v Ukraini'kii RSR. Cherven' 1941–1950: Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv* (Kiev, 1989), 266–69. Other Ukrainian ideological resolutions of the time are in *ibid.*, 253–56, 263–66, 271–77, 308–19, 340–48.

18. *Pravda*, 2 September 1946, 2; and *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 1 October 1946, 1.

19. McCagg, *Stalin Embattled*, 251.

20. In fact, in 1947, the most prolific Russian historical playwright, Vladimir Soloviev, was awarded a Stalin Prize for his verse drama about Ivan the Terrible, *The Great Sovereign*. Soloviev's historical plays included *Field Marshal Kutuzov* (1939), *The Great Sovereign* (1943), *Denis Davydov* (1953), and *The Victors Are Judged* (1953).

21. The resolution was published in *Literaturna hazeta*, 12 October 1946, 2; *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 15 October 1946, 1; and *Kul'turne budivnytstvo*, 271–76. The emphasis in the title has been added.

22. Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv-muzei literatury i mystetstva Ukrainy (hereafter cited as TsDAMLM), f. 573, op. 1, spr. 46 (contemporary critical discussion); TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 30, spr. 3653, ark. 165–70 (later comments containing valuable insights into the causes of the 1946 fiasco); and *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 4 December 1946, 3 (dismissive review).
23. *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 8 October 1946, 4.
24. TsDAMLM, f. 590, op. 1, spr. 57, ark. 107–8. Significantly, this passage was edited out of the published version of his speech in *Literaturna hazeta*, 18 December 1948, 3.
25. *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 17 September 1946, 1 (premiere); *Literaturna hazeta*, 12 December 1946, 4; *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 12 March 1947, 2 (reviews); and *Literaturna hazeta*, 12 June 1947, 1 (Stalin Prize), 4 (credit).
26. A. A. Romitsyn, *Ukrains'ke radians'ke kinomystetstvo 1941–1954* (Kiev, 1959), 78.
27. *Literaturna hazeta*, 30 January 1947, 1 (announcement); Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vlady i derzhavnoho upravlinnia Ukrainy (hereafter cited as TsDAVOV), f. 4763, op. 1, spr. 85, ark. 20–22 (the jury's deliberations); and *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 11 February 1948, 1 (decision announced).
28. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4958, ark. 27–31.
29. *Ibid.*, ark. 34–44.
30. *Ibid.*, ark. 45–47.
31. On carnivalization as a strategy of undermining the authoritative social discourses, see M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. H. Iswolsky, 2d ed. (Bloomington, 1984).
32. Weiner, “The Making of a Dominant Myth,” 638–60.
33. See Liubomyr Dmyterko, “General Vatutin,” in his *Vichna druzhba: P'iesy* (Kiev, 1954), 121–230. The collection of secret documents regarding Vatutin's wound and subsequent death has been published in “Porannia i smert' M. F. Vatutina,” *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 11 (1991): 79–88, and no. 12 (1991): 66–73. However, the rumors about Vatutin being a victim of the nationalist ambush had circulated in Ukraine ever since 1943.
34. See *Radians'ka Ukraina*, 27 January 1948, 3 (monument unveiled); and 10 January 1948, 2 (positive review of the play's premiere in Kharkiv). Like other plays, *General Vatutin* was submitted for the competition anonymously.
35. Khrushchev first reported the story to Stalin in September 1943 (see TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 357, ark. 1–6). Although many textbooks of Soviet history inform their undergraduate readers about the Young Guard and Fadeev's novel, the major Western study of the cult of World War II in the Soviet Union surprisingly ignores both the Young Guard itself and the subsequent mythmaking, including the novel, the play, the movie, and the opera *Young Guard* (see Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* [New York, 1994]).
36. TsDAMLM, f. 146, op. 1, spr. 47, ark. 2.
37. *Ibid.*, f. 573, op. 1, spr. 62, ark. 1–3 (Kaganovich and Khrushchev), 25 (Meitus). This was the first time ever that the whole Ukrainian leadership gathered for any opera's dress rehearsal—a fact much stressed at the later meetings of the company's artistic council (see *ibid.*, ark. 1).
38. *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 19 November 1947, 3; and 10 December 1947, 3.
39. Alexei Kojevnikov has shown that Soviet scientists often used the official “rituals” of criticism and self-criticism to advance their own agendas (see his “Rituals of Stalinist Culture at Work”).
40. It was alleged that Fadeev had paid too much attention to the spontaneous enthusiasm of the young patriots and not enough to the leading role of the local party types and planning

from Moscow. Fadeev had to rewrite the book (see Harold Swayze, *Political Control of Literature in the USSR, 1946–1952* [Cambridge, Mass., 1962], 42–43, 46–49).

41. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 694, ark. 2–3.

42. *Ibid.*, ark. 5–6.

43. *Ibid.*, ark. 9–22; and TsDAMLM, f. 573, op. 4, spr. 6, ark. 45–56; and f. 146, op. 1, spr. 44, ark. 19–22.

44. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 70, spr. 694, ark. 7 (second version ready) 27–33; here, 27 (memo).

45. L. Arkhimovych, *Shlaiḱhy rozvytku ukrains'koi radians'koi opery*, 3d ed. (Kiev, 1970), 220; Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva (hereafter cited as RGALI), f. 962, op. 11, spr. 558, ark. 16 (Kompaniets); and *Literaturna hazeta*, 22 March 1951, 2 (Stalin Prize).

46. RGALI, f. 2329, op. 3, d. 111, ll. 1–3.

47. Iu. Malyshev, *Iu. S. Meitus: Ocherḱ tvorchestva* (Moscow, 1962); and L. Poliakova, *"Molodaia gvardiia" Iu. Meitusa* (Moscow, 1954).

48. RGALI, f. 962, op. 11, d. 557, ll. 21–22.

49. *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 17 September 1946, 4 (Shulha); and 22 October 1946, 1 (Svitlytsky, Derehus). This accusation against Derehus's series surfaced again in 1951 (TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 30, spr. 2426, ark. 73).

50. TsDAMLM, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 52, ark. 3–32v.

51. *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 13 August 1946, 4.

52. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 30, spr. 2426, ark. 73.

53. O. Pashchenko, ed., *IX ukrainskaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka: Katalog* (Kiev, 1948), 27, 31, 36; *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 12 November 1947, 3 (exhibition); and *Literaturna hazeta*, 22 April 1948, 1 (Stalin Prizes for 1947). Moreover, in 1950, the famous Tretyakov Gallery pressured the Museum of Ukrainian Art in Kiev to give up Melikhov's work in exchange for a less valuable painting from the Moscow gallery's collection. Kievans defended their property rights with help from the republican Central Committee (see TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 30, spr. 2041, ark. 36–38).

54. *Literaturna hazeta*, 17 April 1947, 2; and M. I. Syrotiuk, *Ukrains'ka istorichna proza za 40 rokiv (1917–1957)* (Kiev, 1958), 257. Compare the original publication: Petro Panch, *Zaporozhtsi* (Kiev, 1946); Ostap Buzhinsky's phrase is on page 23.

55. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4512, ark. 260–68; the quotations are from ark. 267 and 268.

56. *Ibid.*, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4511, ark. 1–88 (Rybak's speech on ark. 41–43).

57. *Literaturna hazeta*, 8 April 1948, 1; and 14 April 1949, 1–2. For a comprehensive survey of contemporary subjects' proliferation in postwar Ukrainian literature, see Ievhen Kyrlyuk, ed., *Istoriia ukrains'koi literatury u vos'my tomakh* (Kiev, 1971), vol. 8.

58. Natan Rybak, *Pereiaslav'ska rada* (Kiev, 1948); and *Literaturna hazeta*, 6 December 1948, 3 (shown on the list of new books); and 9 March 1950, 1 (Stalin Prize).

59. Dmytro Manuilsky (1883–1959) belonged to a small group of well-educated "old Bolsheviks" who survived the Great Purges. But, even within this handful of people, he was probably the only Lenin appointee still enjoying a position of authority after World War II. Manuilsky studied at St. Petersburg University and received a law degree from the Sorbonne (1911). After briefly serving as the Ukrainian Communist Party's general secretary in 1921–22, he moved to Moscow as secretary of the Comintern's Executive Committee. In 1944–50, Manuilsky served as the Ukrainian republic's minister of foreign affairs, deputy premier, and head of the Ukrainian delegation to the United Nations.

60. TsDAVOV, f. 4669, op. 1, spr. 23, ark. 5. Italic here replaces the underlining in the original.

61. *Ibid.*, ark. 5, 7.

62. See I. Martyniuk, "Rozvyvaty i kul'tyvuvaty radians'kyi patriotyzm," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, no. 8 (1947): 11–24; "Do trydtsiatyrichchia Ukrain'skoi Radians'koi Sotsialistychnoi Respubliky," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, no. 12 (1947): 1–9; and *Literaturna hazeta*, 15 January 1948, 3 (Iur'iev).

63. *Literaturna hazeta*, 3 July 1947, 2–4; here, 3.

64. In fact, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, the party visibly promoted further rehabilitation of the tsarist heroes and territorial acquisitions (see Frederick C. Barghoorn, "Stalinism and the Russian Cultural Heritage," *Review of Politics* 14, no. 2 [1952]: 178–203; and Barghoorn, *Soviet Russian Nationalism* [New York, 1956], 231–62). David Brandenberger argues that some of Zhdanov's pronouncements actually questioned the growing cult of tsarist Russia. In 1946, several newspaper articles criticized the references to prerevolutionary Russia in Soviet literary works, but these minor criticisms did not seem to influence mainstream Soviet Russian culture (see Brandenberger, "The 'Short Course' to Modernity: Stalinist History Textbooks, Mass Culture and the Formation of Popular Russian National Identity, 1934–1956" [Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1999], ch. 10).

65. For a survey of post-1947 ideological campaigns in Ukraine, see Yaroslav Bilinsky, *The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine after World War II* (New Brunswick, 1964); L. A. Shevchenko, "Kul'turno-ideolohichni protsesy v Ukraini u 40–50-x rr.," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 7–8 (1992): 39–48; O. V. Zamlyns'ka, "Ideolohichni represii v haluzi kul'tury v Ukraini u 1948–1953 rr.," in V. M. Danylenko, ed., *Ukraina XX st.: Kul'tura, ideolohiia, polityka* (Kiev, 1996), 144–56.

66. *Literaturna hazeta*, 5 March 1949, 2. Also compare *Radians'ke mystetstvo*, 16 February 1949, 4; and *Literaturna hazeta*, 24 February 1949, 1.

67. Iu. Kostiuk, "Vysoka patriotychna rol' radians'koho mystetstva," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, no. 3 (1949): 40–51; here, 40–41 and 43.

### Chapter 13

1. Four works from the 1980s are essential to understand the period: Timothy Dunmore, *Soviet Politics, 1945–1953* (New York, 1984); Dunmore, *The Stalinist Command Economy: The Soviet State Apparatus and Economic Policy, 1945–1953* (New York, 1980); Werner Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics: The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Moderation, 1946–1953* (New York, 1982); and William O. McCagg Jr., *Stalin Embattled, 1943–1948* (Detroit, 1978). Susan J. Linz launched a more rigorous scholarly approach to the period (Linz, ed., *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* [Totowa, N.J., 1986]). More recent historians of Soviet science, including Loren Graham, David Holloway, Paul Josephson, Nikolai Krementsov, and Douglas Weiner, have added tremendously to our knowledge of the importance of professionalization in negotiating policy.

2. Douglas Weiner, *A Little Corner of Freedom: Russian Nature Protection from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Berkeley, 1999). On negotiated decision making, see Jerry Hough, *The Soviet Prefects: The Local Party Organs in Industrial Decision-Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969); and Jerry Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979).

3. Sevastopol's city planner Tamara Alëshina and chief economist Zhilina, in a 1950 report on the five-year plan, noted rapid population increases from year to year: 38,000 (1944), 54,000 (1945), 70,100 (1946), 77,300 (1947), 88,000 (1948), 107,000 (1949), and 110,000 (1950).