

# Slavic 218

## Ukrainian Literature and Culture

### Ukrainian Poetry in the Early 20th Century. Selected Translations

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**Pavlo Tyčyna** (1891–1967)

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#### HARPS RINGING, HARPS RINGING

Harps ringing, harps ringing—  
golden ringing, loud resounding, through the groves  
sing out your strings,  
glad news echoing:  
The fragrant spring's  
on the wing,  
Flowering, dew-pearling,  
painting every thing.

Thoughts flying, thoughts flying—  
like a sea with white sails crowding, brim with  
tender tones of blue,  
flying thoughts that swirl:  
Storms will come,  
lightnings run!  
Laughter be, weeping be  
dews of mother-of-pearl...

I arise, cast my eyes—  
rills all round like bells ajangle, larks pour down  
in notes of gold  
waterfalls that sing:  
The fragrant spring's  
on the wing,  
Flowering, dew-pearling,  
painting every thing.

Love of mine, heart of mine—  
should you wander on the meadows all in sadness caught  
or with joy awhirl:  
Spare but one  
glance, O come!  
Laughter be, weeping be  
dews of mother-of-pearl.

1914

#### ENHARMONIQUES

#### The Sun

Birds of paradise somewhere feed on  
Greens and fruit of vine.  
Lakes where vistas of light translucent...!  
Vespertine.

Scythemen reap to break of sunrise.  
Flower of flame—the sun!  
Sigh awakening breasts of maidens:  
Son... My son...

#### Wind

Bird—a river—greening legumes—  
Sunflower-turning rhythms.  
Day runs by with laughter ringing,  
Overjoyed and brimming.

Over ryefields, honey-seekers  
Dip their golden beakers.  
Day runs by with laughter ringing,  
Overjoyed and brimming.

#### Rain

The serpents writhe in someone's hand  
Within the waters... Dreams. In deeps.  
The millet's blown and strewn in heaps—  
And sparrows dart in slanting bands.

“Be off!” the river hastens pace.  
“Lie down!” cry pinks and yarrow.  
And trailing petticoats of lace  
A cloud drops on the meadow.

#### Fog

Over swampland like spun milk fog goes...  
Meditative, the raven.  
Lost in thought is the jackdaw.  
They have plucked out eyes. Whose? God knows.

Eastward, Wrath comes with swords as the sun rose!  
Plunges sudden the raven.  
Darting up goes the jackdaw.  
They have plucked out eyes. Whose? God knows.  
1918

## PASTELS

## I

Runs by a bunny.  
 Stops to see—  
 The dawnlight!  
 And plays gleefully.  
 The daisies open up their eyes.  
 Sunrise-perfumes touch the skies.  
 Cocks embroider the cloak of night  
 With fiery threads of vocal light.  
 Sunrise.  
 Runs by a bunny.

## II

It has supped on hearty wine—  
 The robust day.  
 “Meadows, strew your flower blooms!”  
 “Coming,” calls the Day.  
 “O flocks, feed on pastures!”  
 “Seek your love,” calls lusty Day.  
 “Sing your lullabies, wheat-ears!”  
 calls Day.  
 It has supped on hearty wine—  
 The robust day.

## III

Trills like flutes rang on horizons  
 Where the sun had gone to rest.  
 On tip-toe  
 Came quiet evening.  
 Stars came out, twinkling,  
 The mist crept over the meadows  
 And, finger on lip, lay down to  
 Sleep.  
 Trills like flutes rang on horizons  
 Where the sun had gone to rest.

## IV

Oh, wrap me up well. Oh, wrap me—  
 I'm old, I'm night.  
 And ailing fast.  
 To sleep my black road ran  
 Since time began.  
 Make a bed of mint for me;  
 Let poplars rustle, lull with song.  
 Oh, wrap me up well. Oh, wrap me—  
 I'm old, I'm night.  
 And ailing fast.  
 1917

## SUNNY CLARINETS

Not Zeus, nor Pan, nor Spirit-Dove  
 Am I, but sunny clarinets.  
 Within the dance's rhythm I move,  
 In music that each Sphere begets.

A shifting dream my fancies mark.  
 About me are sweet notes' demands,  
 The chiton of the pregnant dark,  
 The pressure of good tidings' hands.

I wake—and I am you anon:  
 Above and under me, I dream  
 Worlds are ablaze and worlds rush on  
 In Melody's unceasing stream.

I watch and springtime fills my path:  
 Each planet-sphere its chord begets.  
 I recognize you are not Wrath  
 But just the sunny clarinets.  
 1918

## THE PLOUGH

Wind.  
 Not wind—but a storm!  
 It beats and breaks, from the earth whirls away...  
 Behind black clouds yonder  
 (with lightning! with thunder!)  
 behind black clouds yonder are millions on millions  
 of muscular hands

It rolls. It cuts in the clay  
 (whether city, or highway, or land)  
 it ploughs earth and sand.  
 But on earth are people, beasts, and orchards,  
 but on earth are gods and churches:  
 “O pass over, pass over us, judges!  
 Pardon!”  
 And there were those who retired  
 into caves and lakes and forests.  
 “What kind of power do you flourish?”  
 they enquired.  
 And none of them, no one rejoiced or sang.  
 (His fiery steed the wind drove,  
 His fiery steed  
 in the night—)  
 And only their dying and wide staring eyes  
 reflected the beauty of dawning day!  
 Eyes!  
 1919

## ON THE SQUARE

In front of the church on the square,  
 The great revolution is on.  
 “Hey, shepherd!” cries shatter the air.  
 “For leader, you've enough brawn.”

“For liberty we will give battle!  
 Mount up, boys! Up and away!”  
 All's clamour and bustle and rattle,  
 banners sweep out bright and gay...

In front of the church on the square,  
 sorrowing mothers cry:  
 “Shine, light the way,” is their prayer,  
 “silver moon up in the sky!”

The dust settles down on the square,  
 silence, hushed and tight...  
 Twilight.  
 Night.  
 1918

## OUT OF MY LOVE I WEPT

Out of my love I wept in misery.  
 (Above the woods, the clouds are like a wall!)  
 That weeping stood and parted her and me—  
 (As with a marble wall...)

And all my entreaties up to heaven falter.  
 (And then return with ringing laughter!)  
 The leaves flit slowly down upon the altar—  
 (With curly-burly laughter...)

Somewhere the heavy snowfall has been spattered.  
 (Above the woods, the clouds are like a wall!)  
 The tender enemies have all been shattered—  
 (As with a marble wall...)

Lonely am I, and lonely sure are you.  
 (The Spring!—the dawn!—the cherry!)  
 Your tender soul has shed its petals too—  
 (An early tree of cherry...)  
 1917

## THE GROVES ARE RUSTLING

The groves are rustling—  
 And I listen.  
 The clouds rush onward—  
 And I feel delight.  
 I feel delight—and wonder  
 Why my spirit knows  
 Such happiness.

The tolling of the bell—  
 Is heard far off.  
 It sweeps my thoughts—  
 Above the fields.  
 Above the fields—in ebb and tide  
 Bathing me  
 Like a swallow.

I walk and walk—  
 In deep emotion.  
 Waiting for someone—  
 As I sing.  
 As I sing—and as I love  
 Under the gentle whispers of the grasses  
 Caressing me.

The grove dreams fancies—  
 Above the stream.  
 The horizon's edge—  
 Appears like gold.  
 Like gold of rolling sheen  
 The river is ablaze and trebles  
 Like a melody.  
 1913

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**Mykola Voronyj** (1871–1938)

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## TO THE SEA

To thee goes my salute, O vast blue sea!  
 Unplumbed, unmeasured in immensity,  
 To thee, vast power, I make salaam!  
 Mu humble gaze at thee can never tire,  
 And awed by thee, my prayers must still aspire  
 I'll sing thee a majestic psalm.

Potent and matchless, not by cloud nor thunder  
 Canst thou be daunted or be rent asunder.  
 Thou art thyself thy own high law.  
 Enticing and luxurious thou dost prove;  
 In thee are found the dreams and joys of love  
 And slumberings in pleasant awe.

I came to thee, exhausted and far spent,  
 Yet not a stranger but a friend I went,  
 Akin to thee and glad in this.  
 And now my spirit merges in thy own,  
 In azure space I rock on waves unknown  
 And gently sink in thy abyss.

As thou art vast, unstaidd, mysterious,  
 Alluring yet a rebel boisterous,  
 So must the poet's soul contend.  
 Therefore that soul to thee a friend remains;  
 Unable to be held by bonds and chains  
 It leaps like thee in freedom without end.

## A PALIMPSEST

When paper from the abbey cell was stripped,  
 The monks would scour off some manuscript  
 To write an anthem or a chant's assertion,  
 And labelled "palimpsest" the newer version.  
 And strange! Time passed—and from the works of John  
 Old Aristophanes appeared anon.  
 Darling, my soul is like that palimpsest.  
 Three years have passed by since your image blest  
 And gentle smile and voice that you employ  
 Were written on my soul with moving joy.  
 Though time has rudely traced its script above,  
 Your face once more emerges—and my love!

## A LEGEND

A lad fell in love with a maiden, did he,  
 And nothing on earth was more precious than she.  
 Alas! Was more precious than she.

He swore and he vowed that he loved her more dearly  
 Than sunlight and moonlight and stars shining clearly.  
 Alas! Than the stars shining clearly.

"You only I love. I will die at your sign...  
 For you I will give that old mother of mine!...  
 Alas! That old mother of mine!"

But his sweetheart was sinful, her soul was unclean,  
Her mind was a snake's, full of malice and mean.  
Alas! Full of malice and mean.

Then slyly she smiled, and she spoke to deceive:  
"That you love me, my lad, I must fail to believe.  
Alas! I must fail to believe."

"If truly you love, if good faith is your part,  
Then bring me, I pray, your dear mother's live heart.  
Alas! Your dear mother's live heart."

The youth was confused: for three nights and three days  
He ate not nor slept but went round in a craze.  
Alas! He went round in a craze.

At midnight there happened a crime all unblest:  
A son plucked his mother's live heart from her breast.  
Alas! Her live heart from her breast.

To his darling he rushed with that heart through the night,  
Impelled in his craze by a horrible fright.  
Alas! By a horrible fright.

Scarce feeling his legs, he went racing pell-mell,  
Then suddenly tripped, on the threshold he fell.  
Alas! On the threshold he fell.

And the mother's poor heart, all bedabbled with blood,  
Then uttered these words in a pitiful mood.  
Alas! In a pitiful mood.

For the last time, that moment, these words did it blurt:  
"My dear one, you've fallen ... and are you not hurt?  
Alas, dear! And are you not hurt?"

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## Oleksander Oles' (O. Kandyba, 1878–1944)

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### ASTERS

At midnight, in the garden, asters brown  
Each washed herself in dew, put on her crown,  
And waited for the rosy morn to break  
And spread out rainbow raiment for her sake.

The asters in their drowziness were dreaming  
Of silken grasses and of sunshine gleaming,—  
A fairy region would their fancies bring  
Of fadeless flowers in eternal spring.

Thus in the garden did the asters stay  
And their September dreaming longed for May...  
But cold rain every morning on them swept  
And there behind a bush a chill wind wept...

Around them, a vast prison, spread the plain,  
They saw their hopes to live were all in vain;  
They bound their heads and died.... As if to flout,  
The sun above their corpses then blazed out!

### SORROW AND JOY

Sorrow and joy have kissed each other...  
Laughter and tears are strung like pearls.  
Morning and night together smother—  
In vain my hand their folds unfurls.

My joy and sorrow still embrace;  
One seeks to fly, and one says No...  
Their struggle never shifts its base,  
Which is prevailing does not show.

### TWO TINY CLOUDS

Two tiny clouds together strayed  
One morning at the dawn;  
They met, and stopped, and clasped their hands  
Above the thirsty lawn.

There they would gladly have remained  
And passed their lives together  
But wicked winds already laughed  
And sought to change the weather.

The two bright cloudlets silently  
Began to weep and frown,  
And from aloft their silvery tears  
Forthwith fell thickly down.

The grasses gladly caught them up  
Amid the misty shrouds  
And played as if with shiny stones  
With tears of tiny clouds.

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Drunken with blood, intensely and with joy,  
The foeman arrogantly sleeps at night...  
Quietly drag your ploughshares from the sheds  
And in the gullies forge them into swords!

Your brothers groan in cursed dungeon-deeps  
And seek in vain to break their iron bars...  
Quietly drag your ploughshares from the sheds  
And in the gullies forge them into swords!

Mothers deprived of sons, and wives of husbands,  
Are weeping now and cursing bitterly...  
Quietly drag your ploughshares from the sheds  
And in the gullies forge them into swords!

Our standards flutter, youth is in the fray,  
And streams of foemen's blood are shed in battle...  
Quietly drag your ploughshares from the sheds  
And with all boldness forge them into swords!

\* \* \* \*

How glorious: to see a reborn nation!  
But yesterday the tears of serfdom fell,  
Icons were silent in our ruins' ashes  
And the old steeple tolled a funeral knell.

When suddenly a zealous might emerging  
Snatched up all life and filled it full of power—  
Lo, in men's hands are sudden banners waving;  
We raise a hymn of triumph in that hour.

So sleeps an eagle—when his swift eye opens,  
He sees the light and beauty of the sky.  
Then in the golden morn, in boundless freedom,  
He spurns the cliff and, screaming, soars on high.

Thus does the sea at times dream through the night,  
Then beats its waves like wings on shoreland's shelf,  
And strangely plays with pearls and coloured shells  
And draws creation's glances to itself.

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## Mykola Zerov (1890–1937)

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### ARISTARCHUS

In the world's capital, in learning's mart,  
Museums, porticoes and paths apart,  
The offspring of the Alexandrine masters  
Still buzzed and swarmed, those bards and poetasters,  
Aped every phrase of literary modes,  
And wove their sovereigns wreaths of worthless odes;  
Daily they wrangled on—made peace, contended...  
But in one nook their ceaseless clamor ended,  
Silenced to impotence: the lonely study  
Where learned Aristarchus, sane and ruddy,  
Turned to the future, by no folly vexed,  
Immersed himself in the Homeric text.

### TO A BUILDER

He will yet come, not architect, but poet,  
New scion of old builders, bold of standing,  
With marble white on staircase and on landing  
He will adorn each slope, with grace to show it.

He'll break with architectural common fare,  
The shameful heritage of styleless years,  
He will soar up on wings above the spheres  
And set free captive Beauty from the snare.

The hilly garden and the distant sand  
Spondylic brick and glass and concrete stand,  
Spreading new backgrounds of creative ways;

With fires of night they'll bloom in pearl-like splendour  
And say: No ancient village do we render  
But the grand capital of future days.

### THE LAESTRYGONS

*Odyssey* X. 77-134

This, King, is the wild land of Laestrygons  
And the exhausted slaves who herd their sheep.  
What path implacable across the deep  
Brought you to these grim folk with hearts of bronze?

You answer "Polyphemus." Neptune's child.  
But fire he knew—and these devour men raw,  
Their fierce ferocity defies all law,  
And hospitality they have defiled.

Do not depart. Nay, hide here in the cliff.  
At night I shall direct your mighty skiff  
To find the land of those who live by bread.

I shall remain, though pain my misery mocks—  
I shall in fancy seek my native rocks  
And like a sea-mew fly where you have sped.

## VERGIL

A Mantuan peasant, easy-paced and brown,  
From childhood cradled in a village realm,  
He praised the staff, the plough, the copper helm,  
And rose to heights of unsurpassed renown.

For through the fire and smoke of martial hate  
He saw a better age and sang a psalm  
How Caesar's eagle would at last bring calm  
In the mild yoke of the immortal state.

That age has passed—To Rome and Caesar's deeds,  
Through history's hand, lo, dusty death succeeds  
Where crowns and ghosts of all the ages sleep.

Yet Vergil lives. His epic's loud narration  
Still fills our dreams with Dido's lamentation,  
The sound of arms and triremes in the deep.

## DANTE

On a strange gulf, borne without oar or rudder,  
We sailed there, I and Vergil, the Enchanter.  
Like bronze he seemed. The river's liquid canter drew us to  
distant lilies, without shudder.

The water-lilies were beyond all number,  
And dawn was breaking on those golden billows,  
My glance was sinking in those shining pillows,  
My hearing, as I listened, seemed to slumber.

My guide said that those flowers, through magic years,  
Away from earth, our distant vale of tears,  
Had grown here, scattered by the Lord's own hand.

Distant from quarrels and all earthly troubles,  
They are lulled and dream, those everlasting doubles  
Of poems that an unborn Petrarch planned.

**Mykola Bažan** (1904–1983)

## THE BLOOD OF CAPTIVE WOMEN

The tethered, shaggy horse stamps with his hoof.  
Deep down in hollowed barrels unawares  
Boils the sweet milk of the lascivious mares.  
The offshoots void their scent—wild, salty-proof.

The horsemen sleep. Not even death could wake them.  
Unmoving on the ground their bodies drowse.  
The heavy patterns of the tree-top boughs  
Like muscles on a lion's belly strake them.

Downward inclines the brushwood of the fire;  
The smoke, cord-straight, supports the heavenly vault.  
Tearing their dirtied garments where they halt,  
The full breasts bend their buds of outraged ire.

With lavish moisture, fertile sweat indeed,  
Ukrainian captive women's bodies flow;  
Their mouths are bruised; tomorrow starts to grow  
In maidens' wombs the caustic Mongol seed.

And the years grow, the eternal after-grasses;  
In quivered hearts, the tale has smouldered out;  
But the old blood, for centuries, past doubt,  
Their issue, in his veins, still darkly passes.

We love those words, as heavy as thick smoke  
Of threatening pyres that gave the Tartar light;  
We cultivate the blood's dim appetite;  
And the expanse of steppeland, vast and bright,  
We welcome with the hearts of simple folk.

## HOFFMANN'S NIGHT

Into a dark abyss, down steps worn-down, rough-carven,  
Down slippery inclines, down heavy, risky stairs,  
Down rough-hewn steps, into the filthiest of lairs,  
A fat-paunched basement, a most dingy tavern,  
A den without a signboard or a name,  
Refuge of crazy burghers, hungry tramps,  
Of dreamers, cabmen, dames of evil fame,  
Pursuing sinful inspiration, in he stamps...  
Half-buried in the earth, its entrance gapes beneath—  
A drunkard's sour-breathed mouth, where, like bad teeth,  
Stick candles pouring yellow grease from every wick  
Upon the table set with mugs heavy and thick  
As if great fists, round, swollen, far from feeble,  
Like hefty apples—fruit of good and evil,  
They stand upon the tables, bulging, knotted,  
Tin mugs with liquor, smeared with dirt and spotted.  
The tables creak and sway and dully shine,  
Fingered and fouled and stained with fat and wine  
By animals befuddled and besotted.  
Four-smelling tallow hisses on the handles  
And necks of candlesticks with melting candles.  
The secret rites of thoughtful drinking bouts  
And pompous banquets here are carried out,  
Each drunkard a philosopher, fanatic—  
Serapio's brother—lunatic, frenetic.

Drinking and laughing, Amadeus spends  
 Here countless nights among his bosom friends,  
 Poet of caustic words and crazy escapades  
 King of these solemnly insane assemblies  
 Which somewhat to a funeral bear resemblance,  
 And before which, indeed, description fades.  
 Her now he sits, a Mephistopheles half-sized,  
 And over dark, ungodly feasts presides,  
 Oblivious, not caring in the least  
 About his wife's shoes, or the official ranks and orders,  
 Swallowing rancid smoke, wine and saliva, wordless,  
 Arching his eyebrow, sharp as a bare nerve,  
 Bending in wicked silence, full of verve,  
 Like a predacious cat, his lean, lascivious spine.  
 And so he sits—a giant cat, insidious and sly,  
 A fancy-tortured maniac escorted  
 By poets, roisterers, with grimaces contorted,  
 Both sanctimonious and devilish at once,  
 A sage and wizard, harlequin and dunce;  
 It's he—the huge cat, kindest Pussy Murr,  
 Arching his back, showing his claws—for sure!—  
 Here, in this tavern blind where smoke-wreaths drift,  
 At home, at magistrates, at the dull *Kammergericht*.  
 A theater of monstrosities, drunk cripples  
 Here opens for the dreamer while he tipsles  
 And in contempt the dented eyebrow bends,  
 And through his gums, unleashed, his sharp tongue sends:  
 “No, I'm not drunk—I'm generous as one doomed.  
 Hey, bring us candles! Light the fire! Away with gloom!  
 Wine! Bring us sugar, spirit, lemon-peel,  
 And here's to poetry! Let's drink until we reel.  
 Come, light the spirit in a grand auto-da-fé—  
 Let it flare up—in lieu of Christian souls.  
 Scream, crazy oracles, between the walls  
 Of Berlin's barmy, blasphemous café!”

Hot foams the sparkling punch, and blue flames quiver, gay.  
 Like living tongues, they leap into the air,  
 Above the gleaming cauldron's mouth they play.  
 “Punch for our Theodore, gentlemen!” declare  
 His tipsy colleagues. “Truth and inspiration  
 Are to be found in wine alone, sirs, since creation!”  
 And lie the fires lit by the Holy Inquisition  
 Glows the cold sheen of wine, hot, fiery, scalding;  
 “Now, colleagues, let's drink from this buxom cauldron  
 The infernal fluid, though it bring us to perdition!”

The poison-cups boil hot, the liquor steams,  
 Like poking fingers rise the bright blue flames,  
 And over them, besotted, drunk to madness,  
 Whirl spectres in the darkness—smoky shadows,  
 Blurred images arise in his sick fancy,  
 Like red lamps—wine flushed face, reeling, dancing;  
 The noble rapiers of blue candleflames point up:  
 A carnival of ghosts born from the midnight cup!  
 In awful silence words like lightning flash  
 From caved-in mouths: like blades the lips they slash.  
 And words roll off the cliffs of phrases into madness  
 Like chunks of rock into a precipice;  
 Flames rise in pillars and like serpents hiss,  
 The tables shake and groan as if in sadness.  
 “Ha, cunning soul, once more I've snatched from death  
 A stormy night lit up by wine and inspiration.  
 I heave it non my back, catching my breath—  
 A cross of shame, a black sign of damnation,  
 And mercilessly, till the break of day,

My own dead corpse, my own poor lifeless clay  
 Necrophilewise, I maim and torture, full of evil,  
 In shame, disgust, insanity and fever.  
 And now I order to the ghost of words:  
 From the abyss of consciousness in herds,  
 From the black pits of human minds crawl out  
 Like spiders, in a slimy, hairy crowd,  
 Bearing within your bodies' poison dread,  
 Through crack of crippled thought out of my head,  
 That, poet, hypocrite, blasphemer, leper,  
 Your corpses I might put on frightened paper  
 And that my wizened skull might swell and split  
 And stick vile fancy-tentacles from its black pit,  
 And then, gripped in my fingers, with a shriek,  
 My pen should pounce upon the glossy, tear-damped sheet  
 And in the creaky manuscript entomb  
 Heinous visions born of inner gloom.  
 Wine, brothers! Pour me out a glass of wine!  
 Let foaming cauldrons boil again and gleam!  
 Let wine-springs gush, and let their amber stream  
 Thick, crystal-clear, pour forth in spray sublime!  
 Come, Inspiration, visit me this night,  
 I yearn for your seductive, foul delight!”  
 His angry heart tosses upon its chain,  
 Accursed roamer, tearing forth again.  
 And from an old friend's hands a glass he takes  
 And with the foaming wine his thirst he slakes.  
 His partners shout, and he stands listening,  
 Mad Amadeus, with his wine-glass glistening.  
 But, crab-like, with its poisoned stranglehold,  
 Weariness grabs the drinkers' bare, sore throats.  
 Exhausted with the wine and words, he now makes bold  
 To finish the Satanic feast with one last toast.  
 The tar-soaked shag he crumples in his cold  
 Damp palm with concentration. While still fumes  
 The fiery liquor in the cauldrons seething hot,  
 And round the table settles silent gloom,  
 A sleepy servant-girl in careless hands has brought  
 New pouchfuls of tobacco, greasy, curly.  
 From porcelain pipes tobacco-wreaths come whirling;  
 Long pipe-stems growl in mouths already hoarse.  
 O best-beloved time when without words  
 Float drowsy dreams and thoughts dim, jumbled, glide!  
 With pipes pressed in their lips like clarinets,  
 Sucking the luscious juice in viscous jets,  
 The poets sit there, thoughtful, pacified.  
 O music of long pipes, tobacco-melodies,  
 Blue pirouettes of upward-flying wreaths!  
 “Now, inspiration, thoughts, death, chatter—disappear!  
 Kind German devil—he won't make them quake with fear!  
 Where are the notes, Herr Hoffmann? Where are Haydn's  
 concertos?  
 Maestro to the clavicord!” For certain  
 He'll play them something perfect. His pale fingers long to grip  
 The melody, to give it warmth, to shake alive the old musician!  
 And he stands up, and smoke—a flag-like strip  
 Spread by the faithful wind, curls at the feet of the magician.  
 He puts his hairy right hand on the white  
 Jaws of the keyboard, tamed to do his will.  
 The clock strikes twelve, though. Closer, closer, still  
 Its two black fingers press as if a rite  
 Of swearing-in they were to carry on this night  
 For a new member of Serapio's fraternity,  
 Those fingers dipped in sacred Time 'neath Silence's dark  
 hood.  
 And then says he:

“Gentlemen, time to leave! Ho, there! Where are our cloaks?  
 Friends, let us not be overly romantic!  
 It's raining in the street!” Again the shower soaks  
 And scrapes like pens on paper, grim, pedantic;  
 The rain is decorating old Berlin  
 In Gothic letters, in a cassock of black rain.  
 Who is it tearing through the prickly drops down the dark lane,  
 Through bushes thick, to fear not giving in?  
 'Tis Chancellor Hoffmann hopping over puddles  
 In a delirious half-sleep, with wine and shag befuddled.  
 The street behind him like a gamut, long and even  
 Floats, whirls and fades away, no traces leaving  
 In Amadeus' confused besotted brain  
 The flat squares are all overgrown with rain,  
 Mobile yet immobile, bush after soaking bush  
 Over the drunkard, artiste, madman—goes Swoosh-Swoosh!  
 Ah, colonnades of thin-stemmed, streaking rain,  
 Ah, rain, chimeric all in slots and arrows!  
 Swing and splash up again, swing and play havoc  
 On that triangular old housefront so well known,  
 That house with his true wife and his hot-water-bottle,  
 His nightcap and his cotton dressing gown,  
 The big stove and the smell, so pleasant, floating  
 Over the copper censer with half-sour incense;  
 “Amalia! Are you sleeping? Come, have sense!  
 Open the door! Did you not hear the triple knock?”  
 “Off with these shoes, now! Don't bring any mud in!”  
 The door is opened and upstairs he clambers, thudding.  
 She puts his shoes beside the stove to dry  
 While Amadeus, musing, chuckles on the sly,  
 And from the stove's glazed tiles smile, rosy-faced  
 Young knights and maidens, chubby, azure-laced  
 And a fat swain coloured in cinnabar and white,  
 (Glazed tiles—the Dutch stonemason's sole delight!)  
 Clasping his worthy sweetheart tight  
 Also smiles courteously; dreamy quiet,  
 The hot Dutch stove with flowers, birds and bows  
 Like a well-fed young wench, stands, never cooling.  
 The oily glaze melts, the fat satellites in rows  
 Shine bright with cochineal, lapis-lazuli.  
 The floors creak stolidly, and doors squeal everywhere.  
 Hoffmann takes refuge in his room—his old abode  
 Where on an old pot-bellied secretaire  
 Wait his winged pen, his inkwell, deep and broad.  
 1929



## TESTAMENT

When I die, then make my grave  
High on an ancient mound,  
In my own beloved Ukraine,  
In steppeland without bound :  
Whence one may see wide-skirted wheatland,  
Dniπρο's steep-cliffed shore,  
There whence one may hear the blustering  
River wildly roar.

Till from Ukraine to the blue sea  
It bears in fierce endeavour  
The blood of foemen—then I'll leave  
Wheatland and hills forever:  
Leave all behind, soar up until  
Before the throne of God  
I'll make my prayer. For till that hour  
I shall know naught of God.

Make my grave there—and arise,  
'Sundering your chains,  
Bless your freedom with the blood  
Of foemen's evil veins!  
Then in that great family,  
A family new and free,  
Do not forget, with good intent  
Speak quietly of me.

To My Fellow Countrymen, in Ukraine And Not in Ukraine, Living, Dead and as yet Unborn  
My Friendly Epistle  
If a man say, I love God, and hateth his neighbor, he is a liar. I John IV, 20

Dusk is falling, dawn is breaking,  
And God's day is ending,  
Once again a weary people  
And all things are resting.  
Only I, like one accursed,  
Night and day stand weeping  
At the many-peopled crossroads,  
And yet no one sees me.  
Deaf, they do not hearken,  
They are trading with their fetters,  
Using truth to bargain,  
And they all neglect the Lord,—  
In heavy yokes they harness  
People; thus they plow disaster ...  
And they sow disaster ...  
But what shoots spring up? You'll see  
What the harvest yields them!  
Shake your wits awake, you brutes,  
You demented children!  
Look upon your native country,  
On this peaceful Eden;  
Love with overflowing heart  
This expanse of ruin!  
Break your chains, and live as brothers!  
Do not try to seek,  
Do not ask in foreign lands  
For what can never be  
Even in heaven, let alone  
In a foreign region ...  
In one's own house,—one's own truth,  
One's own might and freedom.  
There is no other Ukraina,  
No second Dnipro in the world,  
Yet you strike out for foreign regions,  
To seek, indeed, the blessed good,  
The holy good, and freedom, freedom,  
Fraternal brotherhood. . . . You found  
And carried from that foreign region,  
And to Ukraine brought, homeward-bound,  
The mighty power of mighty words,  
And nothing more than that. . . . You scream, too,  
That God, creating you, did not mean you

To worship untruth, then, once more,  
You bow down as you bowed before,  
And once again the very skin you  
Tear from your sightless, peasant brothers,  
Then, to regard the sun of truth  
In places not unknown, you shove off  
To German lands. If only you'd  
Take all your miserable possessions,  
The goods your ancestors have stolen,  
Then with its holy heights, the Dniπρο  
Would remain bereft, an orphan.  
Ah, if it could be that you would not return,  
That you'd give up the ghost in the place you were reared,  
The children would weep not, nor mother's tears burn,  
And God would not hear your blaspheming and sneers,  
The sun pour no warmth out upon the foul dunghill,  
Over a land that is free, broad and true,  
Then folk would not realize what kind of eagles  
You are, and would not shake their heads over you.  
Find your wits! Be human beings,  
For evil is impending,  
Very soon the shackled people  
Will their chains be rending;  
Judgment will come, and then shall speak  
The mountains and the Dniπρο,  
And in a hundred rivers, blood  
Will flow to the blue ocean,  
Your children's blood . . . and there will be  
No one to help you . . . Brother  
Will by his brother be renounced,  
The child by its own mother.

And like a cloud, dark smoke will cover  
 The bright sun before you,  
 For endless ages your own sons  
 Will curse you and abhor you.  
 Wash your faces ! God's fair image  
 Do not foul with filth!  
 Do not deceive your children that  
 They live upon this earth  
 Simply that they should rule as lords—  
 For an unlearned eye  
 Will deeply search their very souls,  
 Deeply, thoroughly . . .  
 For whose skin you're wearing, helpless  
 Mites will realize,  
 They will judge you,—and the unlearned  
 Will deceive the wise.  
 Had you but learned the way you ought,  
 Then wisdom also would be yours ;  
 But thus to heaven you would climb :  
 " We are not we, I am not I!  
 I have seen all, all things I know :  
 There is no hell, there is no heaven,  
 Not even God, but only I and  
 The stocky German, clever-clever,  
 And no one else beside. . . ." " Good, brother!  
 But who, then, are you? "  
     " We don't know—  
 Let the German speak ! "  
 That's the way you learn in your  
 Foreign land, indeed!  
 The German would say: " You are Mongols ".  
 "Mongols, that is plain! "  
 Yes, the naked grandchildren  
 Of golden Tamburlaine!  
 The German would say: "You are Slavs ".  
 " Slavs, yes, Slavs indeed!"  
 Of great and glorious ancestors  
 The unworthy seed!  
 And so you read Kollar, too,  
 With all your might and main,  
 Safarik as well, and Hanka,

Full-tilt you push away  
Into the Slavophils, all tongues  
Of the Slavonic race  
You know full well, but of your own  
Nothing! " There'll come a day  
When we can parley in our own  
When the German teaches,  
And, what is more, our history  
Explains to us and preaches,  
Then we will set about it all! "  
You've made a good beginning,  
Following the German precepts  
You have started speaking  
So that the German cannot grasp  
The sense, the mighty teacher,  
Not to mention simple people.  
And uproar! And the screeching :  
" Harmony and power too,  
Nothing less than music!  
As for history! Of a free  
Nation 'tis the epic . . .  
Can't compare with those poor Romans!  
Their Bruti—good-for-nothings !  
But oh, our Cocleses and Bruti—  
Glorious, unforgotten!  
Freedom herself grew up with us,  
And in the Dnipro bathed,  
She had mountains for her pillow,  
And for her quilt—the plains ! "  
It was in blood she bathed herself,  
She took her sleep on piles  
Of the corpses of free Cossacks,  
Corpses all despoiled.  
Only look well, only read  
That glory through once more,  
From the first word to the last,  
Read; do not ignore  
Even the least apostrophe,  
Not one comma even,  
Search out the meaning of it all,  
Then ask yourself the question :  
" Who are we? Whose sons? Of what sires?

By whom and why enchained ? "  
And then, indeed, you'll see for what  
Are your Bruti famed :  
Toadies, slaves, the filth of Moscow,  
Warsaw's garbage—are your lords,  
Illustrious hetmans ! Why so proud  
And swaggering, then do you boast, you  
Sons of Ukraine and her misfortune?  
That well you know to wear the yoke,  
More than your fathers did of yore?  
They are flaying you.—cease your boasts—  
From them, at times, the fat they'd thaw.  
You boast, perhaps, the Brotherhood  
Defended the faith of old?  
Because they boiled their dumplings in  
Sinope, Trebizond?  
It is true, they ate their fill,  
But now your stomach's dainty,  
And in the Sich, the clever German  
Plants his beds of 'taties;  
And you buy, and with good relish  
Eat what he has grown,  
And you praise the Zaporozhya.  
But whose blood was it flowed  
Into that soil and soaked it through  
So that potatoes flourish?  
While it's good for kitchen-gardens  
You're the last to worry!  
And you boast because we once  
Brought Poland to destruction . . .  
It is true, yes, Poland fell,  
But in her fall she crushed you.  
Thus, then, your fathers spilled their blood  
For Moscow and for Warsaw,  
And to you, their sons, they have  
Bequeathed their chains, their glory.  
Ukraina struggled on,  
Fighting to the limit:  
She is crucified by those  
Worse-than-Poles, her children.

In place of beer, they draw the righteous  
Blood from out her sides,  
Wishing, so they say, to enlighten  
The maternal eyes  
With contemporary lights,  
To lead her as the times  
Demand it, in the Germans' wake  
(She crippled, speechless, blind).  
Good, so be it! Lead, explain!  
Let the poor old mother  
Learn how children such as these  
New ones she must care for.  
Show her, then, and do not haggle  
Your instruction's price.  
A mother's good reward will come :  
From your greedy eyes  
The scales will fall away, and you  
Will then behold the glory,  
The living glory of your grandsires,  
And fathers skilled in knavery.  
Do not fool yourselves, my brothers,  
Study, read and learn  
Thoroughly the foreign things—  
But do not shun your own :  
For he who forgets his mother,  
He by God is smitten,  
His children shun him, in their homes  
They will not permit him.  
Strangers drive him from their doors;  
For this evil one  
Nowhere in the boundless earth  
Is a joyful home.  
I weep salt tears when I recall  
Those unforgotten actions  
Of our forefathers, those grave deeds!  
If I could but forget them,  
Half my course of joyful years  
I'd surrender gladly . . .  
Such indeed, then, is our glory,  
Ukraina's glory! , . .  
Thus too, you should read it through  
That you'd do more than dream,  
While slumbering, of injustices,  
So that you would see

High gravemounds open up before  
Your eyes, that then you might  
Ask the martyrs when and why  
And who was crucified.  
Come, my brothers, and embrace  
Each your humblest brother,  
Make our mother smile again,  
Our poor, tear-stained mother!  
With hands that are firm and strong  
She will bless her children,  
Embrace her helpless little ones,  
And with free lips, she'll kiss them.  
And those bygone times will be  
Forgotten with their shame,  
And that glory will revive,  
The glory of Ukraine,  
And a clear light, not a twilight,  
Will shine forth anew . . .  
Brothers, then, embrace each other,  
I entreat and pray you!



## І мертвим, і живим, і ненарожденним землякам моїм в Україні і не в Україні моє дружнєє посланіє

Аще кто речет, яко люблю бога, а брата своего ненавидит, ложь  
есть. Соборно[е] послание Иоанна. Глава 4, с.20

І смеркає, і світає,  
 День божий минає,  
 І знову люд потомлений  
 І все спочиває.  
 Тільки я, мов окаянний,  
 І день і ніч плачу  
 На розпуттях велелюдних,  
 І ніхто не бачить,  
 І не бачить, і не знає  
 Оглухли, не чують;  
 Кайданами міняються,  
 Правдою торгують.  
 І господа зневажають,  
 Людей запрягають  
 В тяжкі ярма. Орють лихо,  
 Лихом засівають,  
 А що вродить? побачите,  
 Які будуть жнива!  
 Схаменіться, недолюди,  
 Діти юродиві!  
 Подивіться на рай тихий,  
 На свою країну,  
 Полюбіте щирим серцем  
 Велику руїну,  
 Розкуйтеся, братайтеся!  
 У чужому краю  
 Не шукайте, не питайте  
 Того, що немає  
 І на небі, а не тільки  
 На чужому полі.  
 В своїй хаті своя й правда,  
 І сила, і воля.

Нема на світі України,  
 Немає другого Дніпра,  
 А ви претесея на чужину  
 Шукати доброго добра,  
 Добра святого. Волі! волі!  
 Братерства братнього! Найшли,  
 Несли, несли з чужого поля

І в Україну принесли  
Великих слов велику силу  
Та й більш нічого. Кричите,  
Що бог вас створив не на те,  
Щоб ви неправді поклонились!..  
І хилитесь, як і хилились!  
І знову шкуру дерете  
З братів незрящих, гречкосіїв,  
І сонця-правди дозрівать  
В німецькі землі, не чужії,  
Претесья знову!.. Якби взяли  
І всю мізерію з собою,  
Дідами крадене добро,  
Тойді оставсь би сиротою,  
З святими горами Дніпро!

Ох, якби те сталось, щоб ви не вертались,  
Щоб там і здихали, де ви поросли!  
Не плакали б діти, мати б не ридала,  
Не чули б у бога вашої хули.  
І сонце не гріло б смердячого гною  
На чистій, широкій, на вольній землі.  
І люди б не знали, що ви за орли,  
І не покивали б на вас головою.  
Схаменіться! будьте люди,  
Бо лихо вам буде.  
Розкуються незабаром  
Заковані люде,  
Настане суд, заговорять  
І Дніпро, і гори!  
І потече сторіками  
Кров у синє море  
Дітей ваших... і не буде  
Кому помагати.  
Одцурається брат брата  
І дитини мати.  
І дим хмарою заступе  
Сонце перед вами,  
І навіки прокленетесь  
Своїми синами!  
Умийтесь! образ божій  
Багном не скверніте.  
Не дуріте дітей ваших,  
Що вони на світі  
На те тільки, щоб панувать...  
Бо невчене око

Загляне їм в саму душу  
Глибоко! глибоко!  
Дознаються небожата,  
Чия на вас шкура,  
Та й засядуть, і премудрих  
Немудрі одурять!

Якби ви вчилися так, як треба,  
То й мудрість би була своя.  
А то залізите на небо:  
«І ми не ми, і я не я,  
І все те бачив, і все знаю,  
Нема ні пекла, ані раю,  
Немає й бога, тільки я!  
Та куций німець узловатий,  
А більш нікого!..» – «Добре, брате,  
Що ж ти таке?»  
«Нехай скаже  
Німець. Ми не знаєм».  
Отак-то ви навчаєтесь  
У чужому краю!  
Німець скаже: «Ви моголи».  
«Моголи! моголи!»  
Золотого Тамерлана  
Онучата голі.  
Німець скаже: «Ви слав'яне».  
«Слав'яне! слав'яне!»  
Славних прадідів великих  
Правнуки погані!  
І Коллара читаєте  
З усієї сили,  
І Шафарика, і Ганка,  
І в слав'янофіли  
Так і претесь... І всі мови  
Слав'янського люду –  
Всі знаєте. А свої  
Дас[т]ьбі... Колись будем  
І по-своєму глаголять,  
Як німець покаже  
Та до того й історію  
Нашу нам розкаже, –  
Отойді ми заходимось!..  
Добре заходились  
По німецькому показу  
І заговорили  
Так, що й німець не второпа,

Учитель великий,  
А не те щоб прості люде.  
А гвалту! а крику!  
«І гармонія, і сила,  
Музика, та й годі.  
А історія!.. поема  
Вольного народа!  
Що ті римляне убогі!  
Чортзна-що – не Брути!  
У нас Брути! і Коклекси!  
Славні, незабуті!  
У нас воля виростала,  
Дніпром умивалась,  
У голови гори слала,  
Степом укривалась!»  
Кров'ю вона умивалась,  
А спала на купах,  
На козацьких вольних трупах,  
Окрадених трупах!  
Подивиться лишень добре,  
Прочитайте знову  
Тую славу. Та читайте  
Од слова до слова,  
Не минайте ані титли,  
Ніже тії коми,  
Все розберіть... та й спитайте  
Тойді себе: що ми?..  
Чиї сини? яких батьків?  
Ким? за що закуті?..  
То й побачите, що ось що  
Ваші славні Брути:  
Раби, подножки, грязь Москви,  
Варшавське сміття – ваші пани,  
Ясновельможнії гетьмани.  
Чого ж ви чванитеся, ви!  
Сини сердешної України!  
Що добре ходите в ярмі,  
Ще лучше, як батьки ходили.  
Не чваньтесь, з вас деруть ремінь,  
А з їх, бувало, й лій топили.  
Може, чванитеся, що братство  
Віру заступило,  
Що Синопом, Трапезондом  
Галушки варило.  
Правда!.. правда, наїдалися.  
А вам тепер вадить.

І на Січі мудрий німець  
Картопельку садить,  
А ви її купуєте,  
Їсте на здоров'я  
Та славите Запорожжя.  
А чиєю кров'ю  
Ота земля напоєна,  
Що картопля родить, –  
Вам байдуже. Аби добра  
Була для городу!  
А чванитесь, що ми Польщу  
Колись завалили!..  
Правда ваша: Польща впала,  
Та й вас роздавила!

Так от як кров свою лили  
Батьки за Москву і Варшаву,  
І вам, синам, передали  
Свої кайдани, свою славу!

Доборолась Україна  
До самого краю.  
Гірше ляха свої діти  
Її розпинають  
Заміс[т]ь пива праведную  
Кров із ребер точать.  
Просвітити, кажуть, хочуть  
Материні очі  
Современними огнями.  
Повести за віком,  
За німцями, недоріку,  
Сліпую каліку.  
Добре, ведіть, показуйте,  
Нехай стара мати  
Навчається, як дітей тих  
Нових доглядати.  
Показуйте!.. за науку,  
Не турбуйтеся, буде  
Материна добра плата.  
Розпадеться луда  
На очах ваших неситих,  
Побачите славу,  
Живу славу дідів своїх  
І батьків лукавих.  
Не дуріте самі себе,  
Учітесь, читайте,

І чужому научайтесь,  
Й свого не цурайтесь.  
Бо хто матір забуває,  
Того бог карає,  
Того діти цураються,  
В хату не пускають.  
Чужі люди проганяють,  
І немає злomu  
На всій землі безконечній  
Веселого дому.  
Я ридаю, як згадаю  
Діла незабуті  
Дідів наших. Тіжкі діла!  
Якби їх забути,  
Я оддав би веселого  
Віку половину.  
Отака-то наша слава,  
Слава України.  
Отак і ви прочитай[те],  
Щоб не сонним снились  
Всі неправди, щоб розкрились  
Високі могили  
Перед вашими очима,  
Щоб ви розпитали  
Мучеників, кого, коли,  
За що розпинали!  
Обніміте ж, брати мої,  
Найменшого брата –  
Нехай мати усміхнеться,  
Заплакана мати.  
Благословіть дітей своїх  
Твердими руками  
І діточок поцілує  
Вольними устами.  
І забудеться срамотня  
Давня година,  
І оживе добра слава,  
Слава України,  
І світ ясний, невечерній  
Тихо засіяє...  
Обніміться ж, брати мої,  
Молю вас, благаю!

\*\*\*

Думи мої, думи мої,  
Лихо мені з вами!  
Нащо стали на папері  
Сумними рядами?..  
Чом вас вітер не розвіяв  
В степу, як пилину?  
Чом вас лихо не приспало,  
Як своєю дитину?..

Бо вас лихо на світ на сміх породило,  
Поливали сльози... чом не затопили,  
Не винесли в море, не розмили в полі?..  
Не питали б люде, що в мене болить,  
Не питали б, за що проклинаю долю,  
Чого нуджу світом? «Нічого робить»,—  
Не сказали б на сміх...

Квіти мої, діти!  
Нащо ж вас кохав я, нащо доглядав?  
Чи заплаче серце одно на всім світі,  
Як я з вами плакав?.. Може, і вгадав...  
Може, знайдеться дівоче  
Серце, карі очі,  
Що заплачуть на  
Степ і степ, ревуть пороги,  
І могили — гори,—  
Там родилась, гарцювала  
Козацькая воля;  
Там шляхтою, татарами  
Засідала поле,  
Засівала трупом поле,  
Поки не остило...  
Лягла спочить... А тим часом  
Виросла могила,  
А над нею орел чорний  
Сторожем літає,  
І про неї добрим людям  
Кобзарі співають,  
Все співають, як діялось,  
Сліпі небораки,—  
Бо дотепні... А я... а я  
Тільки вмю плакати,  
Тільки сльози за Україну...  
А слова — немає...

А за лихо... Та цур йому!  
Хто його не знає!  
А надто той, що дивиться  
На людей душою,—  
Пекло йому на сім світі,  
А на тім...  
Журбою  
Не накличу собі долі,  
Коли так не маю.  
Нехай злидні живуть три дні  
Я їх заховаю,  
Заховаю змію люту  
Коло свого серця,  
Щоб вороги не бачили,  
Як лихо сміється...  
Нехай думка, як той ворон,  
Літає та кряче,  
А серденько соловейком  
Щебече та плаче  
Нишком — люди не побачать,  
То й не засміються...  
Не втирайте ж мої сльози,  
Нехай собі ллються,  
Чуже поле поливають  
Щодня і щоночі,  
Поки, поки... не засиплють  
Чужим піском очі...  
Отаке-то... А що робить?  
Журба не поможе.  
Хто ж сироті завидує —  
Карай того, боже!

Думи мої, думи мої,  
Квіти мої, діти!  
Виростав вас, доглядав вас,—  
Де ж мені вас діти?  
В Україну ідіть, діти!  
В нашу Україну,  
Попідтинню, сиротами,

А я — тут загину.  
Там знайдете щире серце  
І слово ласкаве,  
Там знайдете щирю правду,  
А ще, може, й славу...



Привітай же, моя ненько,  
Моя Україно,  
Моїх діток нерозумних,  
Як свою дитину.

O my thoughts, my heartfelt thoughts,  
 I am troubled for you I  
 Why have you ranged yourselves on paper  
 In your ranks of sorrow?  
 Why did the wind not scatter you,  
 Like dust-motes, in the steppe?  
 Why did ill-fate not overlie  
 You, her babes, while she slept?  
 For ill-fate but bore you to mock and beclown you;  
 You were watered by tears—why did they not drown you?  
 Sweep you down to the sea? Wash you into the plain?  
 For no one would ask, then, what caused me to suffer,  
 Nor why I curse fortune, nor why I remain  
 In this world . . . For they would not have sneered : " He has  
 nothing

To do! " in their scorn. . . .

O my flowers, my children!  
 For what have I loved you and watched over you?  
 Is there one heart in the world to weep with you  
 As I have wept? Maybe my guess will come true !  
 Perhaps there will be found a girl's  
 Pure heart, dark eyes to pour  
 Tears for these, my heartfelt thoughts,—  
 I ask nothing more. . . .  
 One tear from those dark eyes—and I  
 Am lord of lords in glory!  
 O my thoughts, my heartfelt thoughts,  
 I am troubled for you!  
 For a girl with hazel eyes,  
 A maiden with dark brows,  
 The heart was rent—and smiled again,  
 Pouring forth its words ;  
 Poured them forth, as best it could,  
 For the night's dark shade,  
 For the cherry-orchard green  
 For a young girl's favour.  
 For the steppes and for the gravemounds,  
 There in Ukraina,  
 The heart swooned, and did not wish  
 To sing here among strangers. Did not wish, far in this forest,  
 In the snow to gather  
 The Cossack host to council here,  
 With their staves and banners. . . .  
 Let the souls of Cossacks hover  
 There in Ukraina :  
 From end to end, there, it is broad

And joyful like that freedom  
 Which has long since passed away;  
 Broad as a sea, the Dnipro,  
 Steppe and steppe, the rapids roar,  
 And gravemounds high as mountains.  
 There was born the Cossack freedom,  
 There she galloped round,  
 With Tartars and with Polish lords  
 She strewed the plain about  
 Till it could take no more ; with corpses  
 All the plain she strewed.  
 Freedom lay down to take her rest;  
 Meanwhile the gravemound grew,  
 And high above it, as a warder,  
 Hovers the Black Eagle,  
 And minstrels come and sing about  
 The gravemound to the people.  
 They sing of all that came to pass,  
 Blind wretches, for they keep  
 Their wits awake. . . . And I? ... And I  
 Know only how to weep,  
 Only tears for Ukraina,——  
 Words there now are none——  
 And for ill-fate, well, let it lie!  
 To whom is it unknown?  
 Hard it is for one who gazes  
 With his soul on people,  
 Hell is his, here, in this world,  
 But in the next. . . .

By grieving

I'll not conjure for myself  
 A fate which is not mine;  
 Let miseries' throng abide for long, Them I'll deeply hide,  
 The fierce serpent I shall hide  
 Near my very heart,  
 That enemies may never see  
 How ill-fate mocks and laughs . . .  
 Then let thought, like to a crow,  
 Fly and caw indeed,  
 But the heart, like a nightingale,  
 Warbles sweet songs and weeps  
 In secret; people will not see,  
 Will not, then, mock me so ...  
 Do not wipe my tears away,  
 Let them freely flow,  
 Let them soak this foreign field,

Water it day and night,  
Until at last the priests with foreign  
Sand shall close my eyes . . .  
Thus it is! And what to do?  
Sorrow brings no aid.  
Who envies the poor orphan, then,  
Take vengeance on him, Lord.  
O my thoughts, my heartfelt thought  
My children, O my flowers,  
I have reared, watched over you,—  
Where to send you now?  
Go then to Ukraine, my children,  
To Ukraine, so dear,  
Wander on like homeless orphans,  
I shall perish here.  
There a true heart you will find,  
A word of kindness for you,  
There, sincerity and truth,  
And even, maybe, glory. . . .  
Bid them welcome, then, my mother,  
My Ukraine, and smile  
On these my children, still unwise,  
As on thy own true child.

Думи мої, думи мої,  
Лихо мені з вами!  
Нащо стали на папері  
Сумними рядами?..  
Чом вас вітер не розвіяв  
В степу, як пилину?  
Чом вас лихо не приспало,  
Як свою дитину?..

Бо вас лихо на світ на сміх породило,  
Поливали сльози... чом не затопили,  
Не винесли в море, не розмили в полі?..  
Не питали б люде, що в мене болить,  
Не питали б, за що проклинаю долю,  
Чого нуджу світом? «Нічого робить»,—  
Не сказали б на сміх...

Квіти мої, діти!  
Нащо ж вас кохав я, нащо доглядав?  
Чи заплаче серце одно на всім світі,  
Як я з вами плакав?.. Може, і вгадав...  
Може, знайдеться дівоче  
Серце, карі очі,  
Що заплачуть на сі думи,—  
Я більше не хочу.  
Одну сльозу з очей карих —  
І пан над панами!  
Думи мої, думи мої,  
Лихо мені з вами!

За карії оченята,  
За чорнії брови  
Серце рвалося, сміялось,  
Виливало мову,  
Виливало, як уміло,  
За темнії ночі,  
За вишневий сад зелений,  
За ласки дівочі...  
За степи та за могили,  
Що на Україні,  
Серце мліло, не хотіло  
Співать на чужині...  
Не хотілось в снігу, в лісі,  
Козацьку громаду  
З булавами, з бунчугами  
Збирать на пораду.

Нехай душі козацькії  
В Україні витають —  
Там широко, там весело  
Од краю до краю...  
Як та воля, що минулась,  
Дніпр широкий — море,  
Степ і степ, ревуть пороги,  
І могили — гори, —  
Там родилась, гарцювала  
Козацькая воля;  
Там шляхтою, татарами  
Засідала поле,  
Засівала трупом поле,  
Поки не остило...  
Лягла спочить... А тим часом  
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А над нею орел чорний  
Сторожем літає,  
І про неї добрим людям  
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Все співають, як діялось,  
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На людей душою, —  
Пекло йому на сім світі,  
А на тім...  
Журбою  
Не накличу собі долі,  
Коли так не маю.  
Нехай злидні живуть три дні  
Я їх заховаю,  
Заховаю змію люту  
Коло свого серця,  
Щоб вороги не бачили,  
Як лихо сміється...  
Нехай думка, як той ворон,  
Літає та кряче,  
А серденько соловейком  
Щебече та плаче  
Нишком — люди не побачать,

То й не засміються...  
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Нехай собі ллються,  
Чуже поле поливають  
Щодня і щоночі,  
Поки, поки... не засиплють  
Чужим піском очі...  
Отаке-то... А що робить?  
Журба не pomoже.  
Хто ж сироті завидує —  
Карай того, боже!

Думи мої, думи мої,  
Квіти мої, діти!  
Виростав вас, доглядав вас,—  
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В Україну ідіть, діти!  
В нашу Україну,  
Попідтинню, сиротами,

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І слово ласкаве,  
Там знайдете щирю правду,  
А ще, може, й славу...

Привітай же, моя ненько,  
Моя Україно,  
Моїх діток нерозумних,  
Як свою дитину.