

**KULISH'S THE PEOPLE'S MALAKHII AND GIRAUDOUX'S THE
MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT : A COMPARISON.**

by

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presented to the Faculty of Graduate
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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba
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MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

Mykola Kulish debuted as a playwright during a time of great experimentation in the Ukrainian Arts. With the talent of Les' Kurbas, the theatrical director of the Berezil' Theatre, Kulish combined modern Western trends in drama and theatre with Ukrainian literary traditions. It was with his drama Narodnyi Malakhii (The People's Malakhii, 1927) that this change was markedly evident. The play concentrates on the importance of reforming society in terms of humanistic principles, which Soviet society lacked. Because of this, the Communist Party in Kharkiv fiercely attacked the play for promoting "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism".

The play La Folle de Chaillot (The Madwoman of Chaillot, 1943), written by the French dramatist Jean Giraudoux shows humanity being threatened from outside forces bent on destruction. Although Kulish focuses on reforming society and Giraudoux hopes to prevent change - especially when it comes to French language and culture, the two plays focus on similar issues and themes. Both show Western modernist influences, but at the same time, the native literary and dramatic traditions are evident.

This dissertation is a comparative analysis of The People's Malakhii, and The Madwoman of Chaillot in terms of four areas: theme, plot, structure and style. As a background, modernist Western and Ukrainian dramatic and theatrical trends will be discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the leading Ukrainian dramatists of this century, Mykola Kulish, is again being studied and appreciated in his native land. It is only with the opening of Ukrainian society in the late 1980s, that Kulish's plays are once again being performed and interpreted without ideological interference - a privilege long enjoyed by literary critics in the West.

The main aim of this thesis is to do a comparative analysis of Kulish's play The People's Malakhii, with that of the French dramatist, Jean Giraudoux's play, The Madwoman of Chaillot. Emphasis will be placed upon similarities and differences in theme, plot, structure and style. As a background to this, leading Western and Ukrainian dramatic and theatrical movements of the early twentieth century will be discussed.

The primary reference sources of this dissertation will be Kulish's Narodnyi Malakhii, (Mykola Kulish v dvokh tomakh, compiled in 1990 by Les' Taniuk), and Maurice Valency's English translation of Jean Giraudoux's La Folle de Chaillot (Jean Giraudoux: Four Plays [Volume I], 1958). Reference to other dramas by Kulish, will be from the same source.

This study will be divided into three chapters, with the final chapter being divided into four sub-chapters, along with a bibliography.

The first chapter will discuss the modernist movements in Western drama and theatre during the first decades of the twentieth century. The first part of the chapter will deal specifically with drama; the second half, will look at theatre, examining its nature, function, and elements revitalizing it by way of theory, experimentation and practice.

The second chapter will deal with innovations in Ukrainian theatre and drama from the late nineteenth to the early part of the twentieth century. It will focus on the works of three dramatists who modernized Ukrainian drama: Lesia Ukrainka, Volodymyr Vynnychenko and Mykola Kulish. With reference to the works of these authors, the juxtaposition of Western and Ukrainian literary movements and traditions will be shown.

The third chapter is devoted to the critical analysis of Kulish's The People's Malakhii, and Giraudoux's The Madwoman of Chaillet. This chapter concentrates on four aspects of these works: theme, plot, structure and style. Comparisons on these two plays have been touched upon in Valerii Revutsky's article entitled "The Prophetic Madman: The People's Malakhii - a Play by Mykola Kulish" (Canadian Slavonic Papers. 1 (1956), p. 45-58), and George Shevelov's (Iurii Sherekh) "Don Kikhoty promizh nas

("Narodnyi Malakhii Zhana Zhirodu" Druha Cherha, Suchasnist', 1978). This study will further develop and add to the above articles, in terms of the broader comparisons between the two plays. It should be noted, that most of the sources used here are from Western critics, since many of the Soviet sources were filled with Marxist-Leninist ideology and methodology - while only the more recent publications (after the fall of the Soviet Union) avoid this. The background and social environment of the two authors will be analysed, in order to show that these factors played a significant role in determining the story and the themes of The People's Malakhii and The Madwoman of Chaillot.

Following the concluding chapter, there will be a bibliography of primary and secondary sources used in this study.

CHAPTER ONE

Modernist Movements and Issues in Western Drama and Theatre

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Western Europe was the scene of several modernist movements including: cubism, dada, expressionism, futurism and surrealism. Some of these movements remain powerful even to the present day. Although these trends might have had some dissimilarities with one another, one thing which is certain, they were united in their rejection of the past, and in their attempt to find new modes of expression and perception. It was in the area of drama and theatre, that the western European public gained greater familiarity with the new trends in literature.

(i) Drama

During the nineteenth century, dramatists treated problems and themes in terms of "realist means". This movement reached its peak in the 1890s with realism-naturalism.¹ However, realism-naturalism began to be discredited, when this literary movement which attempted to reduce all truth to what was scientifically known, was criticized for its emphasis on external appearance. This led to anti-realist trends which converged into the literary movement known as symbolism. The symbolist movement was

launched in 1885 in France, with a manifesto written by Jean Moreas, and had as its members such writers as Stéphane Mallarmé, Paul Valéry, Claude Debussy and others.² It was Stéphane Mallarmé who eventually became the acknowledged leader of the symbolists. He saw drama as a "sacred and mysterious rite which, through dream, reverie, allusion, and musicality, evokes the hidden spiritual meaning of existence".³ This in fact, was what symbolists were concerned with - dreams, visions, and mythological tales, with lyricism as their favorite form of expression. Between the years 1890 to 1915, realism-naturalism and symbolism were accepted as dramatic movements. They gained acceptance as part of the mainstream drama of that time. However, at the same time, other trends were coming into existence, which came to be known collectively as modernism.

Many dramatists were unhappy with the movements of the past; they were found to be too restrictive, and needed to be re-examined. As a result, modernism as a movement was born. Modernism itself was comprised of many literary and artistic trends including: futurism, cubism, expressionism, dada (dadaism), and surrealism, along with long forgotten movements such as rayonnism, orphism and suprematism. After the theories of S. Freud and C. Jung became known, some of these movements (especially dada and surrealism) concentrated on the unconscious. Multiple focus and unity through theme or motif also came into being.

Through all these new approaches, artists in all fields were able to find new modes of expression and perception.

Of all the new movements, expressionism had one of the greatest influence on theatre and drama in Western Europe. At the beginning of this century, expressionism was used as a term to describe the style of painting by such artists as Van Gogh, Matisse and Gauguin.⁴ These artists were not concerned with reality as it appeared, but with the subject's inner nature. This was achieved by portraying the subject in a distorted, caricatured, exaggerated form, or altered in some way, in order to stress the emotional experience in its most intense and concentrated form.

In drama, the expressionist movement pursued the same objectives. The characters and scenes were presented in a stylized, distorted form, with the intent of producing emotional shock. Expressionism opposed realism-naturalism, since it glorified science and technology and placed a high emphasis on external appearance. As well, expressionists felt hostility towards symbolism, because it avoided dealing with contemporary social problems. According to Oscar Brockett and Robert Findlay,

"The expressionists believed that fundamental truth is to be found within humanity - its spirit, soul, desires, visions - and that external reality should be shaped to make it possible for the human spirit to realize its highest aspirations."⁵

In dramatic expressionism, several dominant themes are observed - some of which can be found in other modernist movements. However, the central theme is, "the alienation of man from other men in society but with the whole meaningless environment represented primarily by the big city and the machine."⁶ This alienation led to a "spiritual crisis", which man was left with at the end of the century. Because of this alienation, man sought the return of the primitive man and nature, or man would retreat into total subjectivity. Expressionists hoped to resolve alienation through love; yet in many of the expressionist dramas, love failed and man again became alienated, and as a result, was forced to make the best of the situation.⁷

According to Romana Bahrij Pikulyk, the characters in expressionist dramas can be referred to as "type" characters, rather than the typical characters based on nineteenth century psychology and individualism.⁸ These "type" characters are not one-dimensional, nor are they deprived of depth or complexity. A "type" character is not instantly recognizable, but instead he/she obtains their meaning from the context of the play.

It was in Germany that expressionist drama was truly launched, and it was there that it had its greatest impact. However, to say that expressionism was solely a German affair would be untrue. In England, it was observed to a certain extent in the works of Stephen Spender and Wystan Auden. Expressionism could also be seen in the later works

of the Irish dramatist Sean O'Casey. Expressionism was not just a European phenomenon, but affected American drama with such dramatists as Elmer Rice, Thornton Wilder and Tennessee Williams. Expressionist drama could also be observed to an extent in the works of Bertold Brecht and his *epic theatre*. In Germany, expressionist dramas were written by dramatists like Georg Kaiser, Ernst Toller, Karl Sternheim, Fritz von Unruh and others. Although there were some variations in their outlook on expressionism, these dramatists were united in their opposition to realism-naturalism. The growth of expressionism in Germany could be attributed to the end of World War I, and the economic and political situation which resulted. Germany faced catastrophic inflation, unemployment, the shame of military defeat, and the open advocacy of socialism. The expressionist playwrights therefore saw an opportunity to expose the German public to expressionist thinking.

Two German playwrights who had put their mark on expressionism as a dramatic style were Georg Kaiser and Ernst Toller, whose works were famous for their constructivist techniques. The characters portrayed in their dramas lacked individuality, and were reduced to what Williams and Wickham refer to as "abstract personalities" (a "type" character) existing as "symbols rather than people".⁹ This is evident in Kaiser's play Gas I (1918), where the list of characters includes: the Engineer, the Gentleman in White, First Gentleman in Black, the Girl,

the Billionaire's Son, etc.. In this drama, the workers of a factory owned by the Billionaire's Son refine a particular gas, which happens to be the only source of energy for the industrial world. However, tragedy strikes when the gas explodes, killing and injuring thousands. The Billionaire's Son, fearing that if he rebuilds, the unstable gas would once again explode, wants to convert the plant into a commune. Yet, the workers rally around the chief engineer, who demands that the plant be rebuilt. The message which Kaiser relays is that the workers who devote their energy and time refining the gas, are killed by this very gas, by way of an explosion - a metaphor representing, "the idea of a creative force which used for material ends, leads to spiritual disaster".¹⁰ This drama is an excellent representative of the expressionist theme of "spiritual crisis". This theme appears in Toller's play Man and Masses (1920), where the same "spiritual crisis" is repeated along with "type" characters. In it, the character referred to as *Woman*, hopes for a bloodless revolution, however, she is opposed by the *Nameless One*, who is only interested in overthrowing capitalism - for him, only the *Masses* matter, not the individual. The *Nameless One* soon agitates rebellion among the *Masses*, however, the rebellion fails, and *Woman* is jailed, but is given the opportunity to escape, but declines, for it would mean killing her guard. What is evident not only in Toller's and Kaiser's plays, but in expressionist plays in general, is the theme of

struggle. Whether it be industrialism ruining humanity, by making man a slave to a machine, as in Kaiser's Gas I, or the struggle for idealism as in Toller's Man and Masses.

Expressionism in Germany did not prevail for an extensive period of time, but during the time it did, expressionism left an indelible mark on drama. With revolution rampant throughout Germany following World War I, optimism was high, and for a time, the expressionist vision seemed possible to attain. According to statistics provided by Brockett and Findlay, expressionism reached its peak in 1919, this can be seen in the number of expressionist periodicals being published; in 1917, there were ten expressionist periodicals; in 1919, the total had risen to forty-four, then three years later in 1922, the number had fallen to eight.¹¹ One reason for the decline was political and economic repercussions of Germany's World War I defeat, especially the harshness of the terms of the Versailles Treaty imposed on the new Weimar Republic. Because of this, the postwar optimism which had prevailed, soon dissipated, to be replaced with bitterness and pessimism. As a result, by 1924 expressionism as a dramatic style was no longer a major force in German artistic and literary life.

Expressionism was stronger in Germany than in any other Western European country. Yet, as was mentioned earlier, it was not exclusively a German phenomenon. It did appear in England and Ireland through the works of such dramatists

as Stephen Spender, W. H. Auden and Sean O'Casey respectively. However, these artists only experimented with expressionism, and did not align themselves with it. After all, these expressionist dramas were written in the 1930s, and by then, expressionism had lost its appeal.¹²

Futurism evolved as a movement around the same time as expressionism. It was brought into existence by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, an Italian poet, through his manifesto which he published in 1909.¹³ Similarly to the expressionists, the futurists too, rejected the past and hoped to transform society. Whereas expressionism was mainly a German movement, futurism was mainly an Italian one. The futurists dreaded the past for a different reason than the expressionists - many of them came from Southern Italy, which was industrially backward, and was known mainly for its artistic past. As a result, the futurists glorified the machine age and called for the destruction of libraries and museums. The futurists' militant stand on various issues often resulted in violence, whether it was on a podium on a street corner, or on the stage of a theatre. To a futurist, a wine rack or even an object such as a urinal was "more" attractive or beautiful than say, a masterpiece sculpture. According to Peter Demetz,

"To their European counterparts, the Italian Futurists appeared, above all, as partisans of the new grand industrial cities, and as the prophets of new technologies."¹⁴

Futurism lost much of its following with the horrors of World War I. Yet, by the 1920s and 1930s much of the futurist's prestige was again restored. After the 1930s futurism declined, but was resurrected in the 1960s during the political turmoil which engulfed many of the Western European nations.

As far as drama was concerned, the Italian futurists published a series of manifestos insisting on change. Two of these were entitled, "The Variety Show" (1913), and "The Futurist Synthetic Theatre" (1915). The former endorsed music halls and circuses as models for the drama of the future. These dramas would involve the interaction of both the characters in the drama and the audience. The latter manifesto rejected traditional drama - instead a drama should be compressed to only a few minutes involving few words, few movements and various situations. In order to promote their views, futurist dramatists published the "sintesi" a group of seventy-six short plays. These short plays or "sintesi" differed from one another in subject matter, yet one thing which they shared was that each wanted to show a particular condition, sensation, situation or mood. The intent of every futurist drama was to shock. This is evident in one particular play written by Francesco Canguillo, entitled Detonation (1915). What the audience saw, was the curtain rise and a desert road appear; then suddenly a gunshot, and then the curtain falls. Brockett

and Findlay best describe the futurist drama in the following way:

"In almost every instance, clear story, logical progression and psychological characterization are minimized or ignored."¹⁵

The successor or "heir" to the futurist movement was dada or dadaism. This movement was formed in Zurich, Switzerland inside a cabaret. The founders of dada ranged from a cabaret singer to a medical doctor. This group of artists and writers escaped to Switzerland in order to find refuge from World War I. The spokesperson for this group was a Romanian poet named Tristan Tzara, who also published the periodical Dada between the years 1917 and 1920.¹⁶ According to Tzara, dada, "intended to make of poetry a manner of life much more than accessory manifestation of intelligence and will", while art was, "one of the forms, common to all men, of that poetic activity whose deep roots become one with the primitive structure of affective life."¹⁷ Dada was concerned with provoking the public into opposing anything that set limits to expressing one's ideas. In dada dramas, there was inconsistency as regards to characterization. In fact, the idea of character is ridiculed as in Tzara's play The Gas Heart (1923), where the actors impersonated body parts and spoke in disconnected dialogue. Later, Tzara moved to Paris where he collaborated with another dadaist named André Breton, to

found the journal Littérature (1920). It was here, where dada was eventually succeeded by surrealism.¹⁸ As a literary movement, dada was all but over by 1922.

Surrealism and dada were similar as far as abandoning rational, moral and aesthetic considerations. However, this is the only thing the two had in common. Dada condemned anything that set limits, whereas surrealism had a positive intention in creating a true vision of life by releasing the unconscious. Surrealism resembled expressionism in its focus on the human being, yet surrealism looked inward, while expressionism looked outward in the search for transformation and fulfillment. With the surrealist's emphasis on the subconscious or unconscious, the influence of Freudian concepts is evident. In fact, the spokesperson for the surrealists André Breton, who had earlier been a follower of dada, was a medical student who had an interest in Freudian psychology. Breton defined surrealism as, "pure psychic automatism by which is intended to express, verbally in writing, or by other means, the real process of thought."¹⁹

As far as drama was concerned, surrealism did not make much impact. One reason for this, was Breton's condemnation of drama and theatre, which he considered to be a decadent bourgeois form that catered to commercial instincts. As a result of this stand, two surrealist dramatists named Antonin Artaud and Roger Vitrac were thrown out of the movement. Those plays written by Artaud used

violent imagery and discontinuous action, while Roger Vitrac wrote vaudevillesque plays which brutally attacked conformity. This is exemplified in his play Victor or Children in Power (1918), where a seven foot child spoke and acted as an adult.

Surrealist drama was not only a French phenomenon, but a Spanish one as well. The most important Spanish dramatist was Federico Garcia Lorca. His major surrealist plays were written during the existence of the Spanish Republic in the 1930s. One of his best plays entitled, Blood Wedding (1933), combines both realist and surrealist elements. It involves a girl, who after her fiancé marries another woman, agrees to marry another man. On the day she is to wed, her former fiancé carries her away. Because of this, her new husband wants to kill her former fiancé. The play then takes on surrealist elements, with the presence of woodcutters and the moon, who discuss the fight of the two men as the two battle to the death. The two fighters representing opposing elemental forces, show the surrealist theme of opposition.

(ii) Theatre

By the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the new generation of designers, directors and playwrights saw their predecessors as somehow misrepresenting or misguiding the theatre's true purpose.

They re-examined the nature of theatre, its function, and elements, and attempted to revitalize it through theory and practice. In nearly every European country, there was an attempt to define what is the "art of theatre". Two of the most important twentieth century theorists, Adolphe Appia and Gordon Craig would lay the theoretical foundations which others would build upon.

Adolphe Appia, a native-born Swiss, became interested in theatre through Richard Wagner's operas. However, Appia was dissappointed when he went to Wagner's Bayreuth Theatre to view his operas, for he considered them to be totally misguided. Appia saw the problem, as being the inequality between the three dimensional actor and the two dimensional stage. He discussed how to rectify this problem in his two volumes entitled, Musical and Theatrical Production. Here, he critically analyzed Wagner's musical dramas, and suggested an approach which would produce the appropriate visual effects in the theatre. Appia found the following discrepancies:

"There was a shocking incongruity between the expressive or ideal character of the scene, which was a pictorial representation of a specific place. Moreover, there was a conflict between the painted three dimensions of the setting and the actual three dimensions of the actor, a conflict which produced ridiculous effects when the actor was forced to play near the painted scenery."²⁰

In order to produce a successful musical drama, Appia suggested a "hierarchy of expression". At the top of this "hierarchy" is music, which gives soul to the drama. Next, the setting expresses space but not time. While time and space are expressed by the actor. It is by submitting his voice and body to the music, that the actor serves as a medium through which the drama acquires substance. By way of his movement, the time patterns of the music are translated into the space patterns of the setting. Also light, like music can express the soul of the drama, by giving life to the inanimate setting by way of changing colour patterns, i.e., shadow and highlight.

Music remained the essence of the dramatic art for Appia. Yet, he was also involved in designing settings for nonmusical dramas. It was after his association with Emile Jacques Dalcroze that he shifted from musical-drama-composer, to the actor-artist. After Wagner, Dalcroze had the greatest influence on Appia. As a teacher at the Geneva Conservatory, Dalcroze was increasingly concerned with his student's inability to master rhythm, as a result, he developed a system known as "eurythmics", which involved the body responding to the rhythms of musical compositions. It was "eurythmics" that Appia was seeking in order to train the performer in musical drama. In Hellerau, Germany, at the Dalcroze's theatrical school, Appia and Dalcroze collaborated on the staging of Gluck's popular opera Orpheus and Eurydice. The sets for this play were among the most

abstract of that time, with little detail except for a formal arrangement of steps, platforms and draperies. The beauty and quality of Appia's design which showed abstract constructions and classical simplicity, would influence designers of nonmusical drama throughout Western European theatre, particularly in the classics. After Dalcroze's theatre school closed, the close association between the two men ceased. Still, Dalcroze's influence had a permanent impact on Appia's life. His ideas concerning the "hierarchy of expression" and three dimensionality remained unshaken, but his views on how different elements in the theatre were fused together, were slightly altered. From now on, there would be greater emphasis on movement and rhythm. In his own words, "our body is the expression of space and time in space", and, "movement brings about the meeting of Space and Time."²¹

The other important theorist of twentieth century drama was Gordon Craig. His association with the English theatre went as far back as his early youth. His acting career was later exchanged for set designing, and to a devotion in seeking a new art of the theatre. Craig, like Appia, saw theatre as an independent art, but unlike Appia, he did not accept the "hierarchy of expression"; instead he saw the artist using all of the elements in order to produce a successful drama. He also rejected Wagner's view of the theatre as a union of all the arts, saying,

"The art of the theatre is neither acting

nor the play, it is not scene nor dance, but it consists of all the elements of which these things are composed: action, which is the very spirit of acting; words which are the body of the play; line and colour, which are the very heart of the scene; rhythm, which is the very essence of the dance."²²

For Craig, the director was to be the artist in the theatre. The director had to be trained in every aspect of theatre in order to properly express a drama. He could write the words, compose the music, design the costumes and settings, work the lighting etc., - but realistically he could not do all of them. In the end though, all of the participants in the theatre would be subordinate to the director.

Craig was most concerned with design, since he felt theatre was more visual than anything else. He believed that people go to see a play rather than hear a play. Craig was concerned more with volume rather than space. He had a preference for strong vertical and horizontal lines; with a particular emphasis on parallelism. Like Appia, Craig saw light as an important ingredient for special effects, however, where Appia thought in terms of light and shadow, Craig placed special emphasis on colour, in order to bring out the dramatic quality of a scene. He also saw the importance of using various textures, for example, heavy woven fabrics and metals, which were not normally used for scenery.

An important contribution to theatre was the mobile set conceived by Craig. Craig experimented with screens, which were to create settings by means not visible to the audience. These screens were neutral in colour, but could be altered by different intensities of light. There were, unfortunately, problems in changing from one screen to another during production. Although Craig did have some setbacks, he did continue experimenting with screens way into the 1920s. His and Appia's experiments and theories, though controversial at the time, would prevail after World War I, and even to some extent to the present day.

At the beginning of this century, several groups, including the Munich Art Theatre practiced the theories layed out by Appia and Craig. Its spokesperson Georg Fuchs was himself a famous theoretical writer, whose works ranked with those of Appia and Craig. Fuchs argued that the auditorium design of the theatre was still in the past. Instead, he wanted to remove any class distinctions (which were represented by the galleries or boxes), and achieve a "communal experience" - similar to what Richard Wagner achieved in his Bayreuth Theatre. He was also in favour of a less elaborate stage, backed by two dimensional scenery, an arrangement which focused attention on stylized acting. As far as the actor was concerned, Fuchs placed the actor in front of the setting, rather than within it. He believed that, "the written drama is no more than a scene", and the core of the drama is "rhythmic movement of the body

in space".²³ For Fuchs, rhythm was what fused all the elements of the performance together.

Another individual from the Munich Art Theatre was Max Reinhardt, the famous Viennese director. While Appia, Craig and Fuchs are primarily remembered for their ideas, Reinhardt is remembered for implementing their ideas. As a director, he controlled every aspect of the production, strove for technical perfection, and worked very closely with set designers who had strong creative imaginations. His greatest contribution to theatre was his realization that in theatre there was no single approach in staging a play. He was aware that his predecessors had staged all plays in the same fashion. Although there had been experimentation in the theatre in the nineteenth century, each director ended up adopting a specific approach, which he then applied to all plays he directed. Reinhardt was the first director to proclaim, that each play represented a new problem, which had to have its own unique solution. Reinhardt felt that it was essential to determine the approach most appropriate for a specific audience. For Reinhardt, theatre was neither political nor ideological, instead it was a place which helped the audience forget their personal problems and worries. Because of this, Reinhardt wanted to establish a psychological relationship between the actors and the audience. Frequently this meant redoing the spatial arrangement for which the play was originally written. During his production of The Miracle,

a pantomime about the medieval legend of a nun whose place is taken by the Virgin Mary, he transformed the Olympia Hall in London into the interior of a cathedral, thereby giving the audience a sense of participating in a religious ritual.²⁴

Reinhardt's success as a director can be credited to his working methods. He would assign a particular individual to head each of the departments in his theatre; who in turn, would be subordinate to him. They would meet regularly in order to ensure that the theatre's work was in accordance to Reinhardt's wishes. Although he delegated authority, he was still in complete charge. His care for detail and the integration of all elements into a single whole was what made Reinhardt a success. In conjunction with his work in the theatre, he also maintained an acting school, where students were trained in speech and voice, dance, movement and characterization. Looking back at Reinhardt's approaches to theatrical production, one would have to say that they were extremely successful, especially in familiarizing the audiences to stylistic approaches that were previously looked upon as unacceptable.

In the theatre, expressionism was given prominence through the works of Georg Kaiser and Ernst Toller. These two playwrights embraced the techniques of the constructivists. The term "constructivism" as applied to theatre, described an artistic director's concept of play production, which saw a stage, as a "machine for

actors".²⁵ The actors who were to use this "machine" were urged to study biomechanics, in order to become as efficient and reliable as a machine, and to ensure an automatic and emotional response from the audience. Constructivism had its greatest influence on German expressionist theatre, just as World War I was coming to a close. With the despair and uncertainty in Germany after the war, many expressionists saw this period as a chance to expose German society to their view. In fact, the first expressionist film was made in Germany entitled, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919), based on the story Frankenstein by Mary Shelly. Kaiser and Toller's productions were successful because they used the constructivist techniques of mass movement, biomechanics and other special effects, which until then, the public had not witnessed on stage. These two playwrights worked with Max Reinhardt and other designers and directors like Leopold Jessner and Erwin Piscator. The great theatrical spectacles which were achieved by these individuals, inspired guests from other countries to imitate these expressionist/constructivist techniques in their own studios.

Leopold Jessner, was considered one of the greatest expressionist directors of his time. His productions interpreted German and English classics to reflect the turmoil during the years following World War I. Jessner's productions are remembered for their tremendous intensity of

emotion and idea. He saw the stage as a sculpture or a cubic space, rather than an animate scene. He and his designers used abstract constructions of different levels to represent political, emotional or social relationships. In order to have as great an impact as possible on the audience, Jessner would often extend the playing space into the seating area, by building a platform over the orchestra pit. On this platform soliloquies were frequently spoken directly to the audience. Jessner's use of steps and levels became so well known, that this kind of arrangement became known as *Jessnertreppen* or *Jessner steps*.²⁶ The *Jessnertreppen* suggested varying levels of reality or symbolized dominance and repression. In his production of The Marquis of Keith (1900), Jessner created a two level stage: on the bottom level was a room where some middle class characters lived; while on the top level was a white wall where panels would open to allow in distorted or grotesque caricatures of the middle class characters from below.

Although expressionism was mainly a German phenomenon, English theatrical director Peter Godfrey, the founder of the Gate Theatre, became interested in expressionist drama, at a time when expressionism had no outlet in England. One of his first productions, Kaiser's From Morn to Midnight (1912) received such a positive response that he had to move this production from the Gate Theatre to the larger West End

Theatre. Eventually Godfrey presented plays by such dramatists as Capek, Hauptmann, Ibsen, Strinberg, Rice and Toller. Although not all these plays were expressionist - expressionism remained Godfrey's preference. For the majority of his productions, the stage was surrounded by black drapes in front of which stood set pieces painted in non-realist colours. Godfrey paid special attention to lighting and rhythmical effects. Later Godfrey moved the Gate Theatre to a larger building where, although there was not a large seating area, he built a large stage and raised it only a few inches from the auditorium floor, thereby giving the theatre a more intimate atmosphere.

The German playwright Bertold Brecht, began to write for the theatre in 1918, but he did not want to align himself with any particular movement, but instead tried to create his own style, which he would later describe as *epic theatre*. At first he wrote in the expressionist style, however, he was not comfortable with this style, in part due to the chaos in Germany after the World War I. In the 1920s Brecht became increasingly influenced by the Marxist view of man and society. During this time, he achieved fame with his drama The Threepenny Opera (1928), in which he experimented with contemporary music. The play was an ironic commentary on the greed and corruption of European society of the day. During this period, Brecht began to mold his theory of theatre. He believed that, "man and society are not fixed and unalterable, but constantly

changing and capable of being bettered through the exercise of reason based on objective observation."²⁷ Brecht considered the audience in the traditional theatre to be enveloped with illusion by making the drama, "have the effect of being narrated rather than of taking place for the first time; it should seem to be a sequence of events which has occurred in the past and is merely being described now".²⁸ He saw the *epic theatre* as one in which the audience would play an active and vital role. Brecht wanted to keep the spectator critical and objective. He did not want the audience to become emotionally involved with any particular character (this was in contrast to expressionism, where each character served as a particular symbol). In order to avoid this, each *epic drama* was to be composed of many short episodes interrupted by songs and speeches addressed directly to the audience. Signs and placards would be used to show the time and place, often telling ahead of time what would occur in the upcoming episode. These short interruptions or breaks intended to allow the individual spectator to contemplate and reassess what he/she had just seen.

Unlike Richard Wagner's productions, where the mechanics of production were hidden, Brecht wanted to expose the new stage technology. He would place the lighting instruments in a way where they could be seen by the spectator; place the musicians on stage with the actors; and change the scenery in full view of the

audience. Brecht believed that the purpose of scenery was to locate or describe the action taking place and not to give the illusion of a real place. He also rejected another of Wagner's concepts known as the "unified production", a concept which Craig also embraced, where music, lighting, scenery, actors, costumes etc., were to interact together. Instead, Brecht wanted each of these elements to function independently. Brecht saw each element as having the following roles: scenery is solely functional, with the purpose of interpreting the subject matter; lighting is used only to make the actor along with the setting visible, and not to imitate nature or create a particular mood; costumes are designed for the same purpose as lighting, that is, to make the actor visible; while the actor, instead of living his/her role, only interprets it presenting his/her character in terms of the character's inner feelings. Whereas the unified production removed the audience from their everyday world, Brecht's *epic theatre* sought to make the spectator more objective and aware of the society around him/her.

Italian futurist theatrical productions were very often compressed to only a few minutes. Man was to be reduced to an individual psychological unit. Each character's role was defined in terms of a particular name, for example: Marito, Moglie, Poeta Filosofo, Pazzo, etc.²⁹ The function of these characters was to demonstrate the futurist oppositions of:

old and young; woman and man; sane and insane; critic and artist, etc. In the end, the actor was only a component of the total scene, and very often the actual props such as furniture, became more important than the actor. In Filippo Martinetti's They are Coming (1915), the furniture plays a greater role than the actors; while Buzzi's Dramma di luci, different lights serve as characters. In the majority of futurist plays, the stage is the place of action; time is indefinite; nonverbal sound along with symbolic lighting are common; and several media are combined.

After the decline of futurism at the end of World War I, it was once again revived in the 1920s with greater experimentation. Two of the more important post-war futurists were Fortunato Depero and Enrico Prampolini. Depero had had an interest in kinetic sculpture which he carried over to theatrical designs which underwent changes during a performance. In order to achieve some sort of unity between the performer and the scenery, Depero would distort the human shape into mechanical, floral or geometrical form. The other post-futurist Prampolini referred to his stage as, "a centre of spiritual attraction for the new religion of the future." He proposed such things as: replacing painted scenery with stage architecture which moved; replacing actors with vibration and luminous forms (which would be produced by electric currents and coloured gases). His most well known piece of

work was for his Théâtre de la Pantimime Futuriste in Paris, in which he showed a series of dance-dramas, some of which combined abstract shapes and geometric marionettes with human actors, while in others, human actors were completely absent.³⁰

Surrealism gained popularity in the theatre through Jean Cocteau. Many of the plays he performed dealt with classical mythology. One of his greatest productions was Orpheus (1926), where he redid the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, by the use of a modern setting, but added an element of magic, along with suspending a replica of the glacier "Heurtebise" in mid-air. In the death scene of Euridice, Cocteau had a woman portray death, who enters the scene by way of a mirror. Another of Cocteau's plays was The Wedding on the Eiffel Tower (1921). It was performed by the Ballets Suedois, and directed by Rolf de Maré. This particular play became the focus of new theatrical experimentation in Paris. The stage showed a view of Paris, as seen through the girders of the Eiffel Tower, which was designed by Irene Lagut, while all the actors' costumes were created by Jean Hugo. The entire cast which included a hunter, a lion, an ostrich, a bathing beauty and a wedding party; all emerged from a giant replica of a camera when the shutter was clicked. The play was narrated by two actors dressed as phonographs. Maré also directed a surrealist ballet called Relâche (No Performance, performed in 1924). The background scene was

designed by dadaist Francis Picabia, while the music was composed by Satie. The production showed dancers who smoked continuously; a fireman who poured water from one bucket to another; while two other actors portrayed Adam and Eve. On the stage were round metal discs which reflected bright light into the eyes of the audience. Relâche was also the first live production to include film clips.

The first two decades of this century was a period of new ideas, which gave rise to numerous artistic movements in drama and theatre. Although many of these modernist movements have since ceased to exist, nonetheless have inspired innovations which continue to the present day. Some movements such as expressionism hoped to restructure society by way of confronting the social problems of the day, while other movements like futurism or dadaism rebelled against the political and social institutions. However what they shared in common was a rejection of the past. Expressionism believed that the external environment could be reshaped in order for the human spirit to realize its greatest aspirations; futurism rejected society, and hoped to transform it by embracing the industrial machine age; dada was concerned about provoking society in opposing anything or anyone, which set limits to expressing one's thoughts or ideas; while surrealism resembled expressionism in so far as focusing on the human being, but concentrated on the subconscious or the unconscious. These trends changed the way drama could be expressed. While directors

and dramatists like Craig, Appia, Fuchs, Reinhardt and others, changed the way these movements could be expressed on stage. This generation of designers, directors and playwrights saw their predecessors as somehow misrepresenting or misguiding the theatre's true purpose. They re-examined the nature of theatre, its function, and elements, and introduced theories and ideas which would forever change theatre as an art form.

ENDNOTES

- 1 There have been three literary waves in the nineteenth century. The first wave was realism-naturalism; the second was symbolism; and the third was modernism.
- 2 Oscar G. Brockett, and Robert Findlay, Century of Innovation, 2nd ed., (Boston, London, Toronto, Tokyo, Singapore: Allyn and Bacon, 1991), p. 67.
- 3 Brockett and Findlay, p. 27.
- 4 Brockett and Findlay, p. 27.
- 5 Brockett and Findlay, p. 149.
- 6 Romana Bahrij Pikulyk, "The Expressionist Experiment in Berezil': Kurbas and Kulish". Canadian Slavonic Papers vol. 14, 2 (1972), p. 327.
- 7 Some literary experts, have divided expressionist dramatists into two categories: the mystics and activists. The mystics on the one hand, show humans as struggling to liberate the spirit from the restraints of material existence; while the activists on the other hand, express their hope in destroying materialism and everything which represents an individual society.
- 8 Bahrij Pikulyk, p. 328.

- 9 Glad Wickham, and Glynne Williams, A History of the Theatre, (Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 230.
- 10 Wickham and Williams, p. 230.
- 11 Brockett and Findlay, p. 152.
- 12 Just as expressionism was in decline in Europe, it was gaining in popularity in the United States with Eugene O'Neil in his plays: The Great God Brown (1926), and The Hairy Ape (1922); along with Elmer Rice and his play The Adding Machine (1923).
- 13 Brockett and Findlay, p. 159.
- 14 Peter Demetz, Italian Futurism and German Literary Avant-Garde, (London: University of London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1987), p. 2.
- 15 Brockett and Findlay, p. 159.
- 16 The unusual name "dada" was said to have been chosen from a dictionary, however, others claim, that it is suppose to be French baby talk for a wooden horse.
- 17 J. H. Matthews, Theatre in Dada and Surrealism, (Syracuse: University of Syracuse, 1974), p. 17.

- 18 Dada was not only an unusual movement in drama, but also as far as art was concerned. In Cologne, three dadaists named Max Ernst, Hans Arp and Joannes Theodor Baargeld arranged a gallery displaying bizarre dadaist art, including, a skull emerging from a pool of blood-red liquid from which a hand projected, and a wooden sculpture which had a hatchet attached to a chain in order for passer-bys to hack at it.
- 19 Brockett and Findlay, p. 165.
- 20 Barnard Hewitt, History of the Theatre from 1800 to the Present Day, (New York: Random House, 1970), P. 81.
- 21 Brockett and Findlay, p. 116.
- 22 Brockett and Findlay, p. 118.
- 23 Virlana Tkacz, "The Birth of a Director: The Early Development of Les Kurbas and his First Season with the Young Theatre", Journal of Ukrainian Studies, vol. 12, 1 (Summer 1987), p. 26.
- 24 Brockett and Findlay, p. 125.
- 25 Wickham and Williams, p. 230.
- 26 Brockett and Findlay, p. 158.

27 Hewitt, p. 150.

28 Hewitt, p. 150.

29 R. S. Gordon, "The Italian Futurist Theatre: A Reappraisal." The Modern Language Review, vol. 85, 20(April, 1990), p. 356.

30 Brockett and Findlay, p. 162.

CHAPTER TWO

Modernist Movements and Issues in Ukrainian

Drama and Theatre

As in Western Europe, drama and theatre played an important role in the cultural and social life of Ukraine during the first decades of this century. Dramatists such as Lesia Ukrainka, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Mykola Kulish and others would develop their own unique styles, while at the same time absorbing the artistic developments in Western Europe. These dramatists brought a change to the theatre, by presenting new forms of drama which the Ukrainian public had not yet been exposed to.

Prior to discussing these dramatists and their works, one should review the situation which existed at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century in Ukraine, as far as language and theatre are concerned. In Central and Eastern Ukraine which was then under Russian rule, artistic expression was severely restricted; while in Western Ukraine, then under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, there was a greater degree of freedom, and greater availability to the newest theatrical and literary trends sweeping across Europe. The bleak situation in Central and Eastern Ukraine was due to oppressive decrees or "ukase", i.e. the Valuievs'kyi ukase (1863), and the Ems'kyi ukase (1876), which severely restricted or even banned the use of

the Ukrainian language.¹ In 1883, the tsarist governor in Kyiv, Drentlen, banned the performance of all Ukrainian theatres on his territory for ten years.² This resulted in the closure of Ukrainian language theatre. It was during this period, that the *ethnographic (pobutovyi) theatre* flourished. Like Ukraine, Germany for example had restrictions on performing or printing political plays, but in contrast, no restrictions on the use of the German language existed.

Ethnographic theatre dealt with popular themes of everyday life. Unfortunately, the plays performed by this theatre could not be compared to the modern plays, especially in terms of handling themes with psychological complexity. Yet, in the words of Iosyp Hirniak,

"The pobutovyi theatre probably saved its people from complete catastrophe during one of their bleakest hours. For twenty years it offered them their only consolation and leadership."³

Ethnographic theatre faced several problems, such as restrictions on the use of Ukrainian language, and the limitations of themes. At the time, the leader of the Ukrainian theatre was Mykola Sadovs'kyi, the veteran actor of one of the most famous ethnographic troupes in Ukraine, *Teatr Koryfeiv*. With the help of the playwrights Ivan Karpenko-Karyi and Mykhailo Staryts'kyi, Sadovs'kyi managed to include in his repertoire one or two dramas based on Ukrainian history. With this limited theme, the talent of

the actors impressed the leading Moscow and St. Petersburg critics.

By the 1890's, the direction of European drama and theatre was quickly changing. Dramatists such as Hauptmann, Ibsen, and Maeterlinck were introducing the public to new styles of drama. Because of this, a new style of theatre was emerging in Ukraine, even with the severe restriction placed on artistic expression. The Ukrainian intelligentsia demanded new ideas in drama and theatre. The breakthrough appeared to be the 1905 Russian Revolution, which loosened the censorship in the theatre and press, this resulted in the Russian Academy acknowledging the existence of a separate Ukrainian language. Ukrainian works from Western Ukraine, which were forbidden, began to make their way to Central and Eastern Ukraine, although in limited numbers. With the lifting of restrictions on artistic expression, the demise of the *ethnographic theatre* was soon at hand. The appearance of dramas by Lesia Ukrainka and Volodymyr Vynnychenko as early as the 1890s, sealed the fate of the *ethnographic theatre*. Eventually Sadovs'kyi would include the works of Ukrainka, Vynnychenko and others as part of his repertoire.

Lesia Ukrainka began her literary career through her lyrical poems; however, it was in her dramatic genre, that she achieved her greatest fame. Mykola Zerov said this of Ukrainka's writing,

"The play of images in Lesia Ukrainka's writings often resembles a tournament of words, a persistent struggle between two antagonists, each defending his thesis to the end with all the means at his command."⁴

This is reminiscent of Greek dramas where one finds dramatic writing, but this was not her only influence. Ukrainka had a great knowledge of the ancient tales of Egypt, Greece, Rome, Arabia and Medieval Spain. She also enjoyed Western European drama and theatre. During her time with the Kyiv literary circle, she recommended that such Shakespearian works as Othello, King Lear, Richard III and Hamlet be translated into Ukrainian. She also enjoyed Schiller, whom she described as the "true embodiment of true artistry".⁵

Two of Ukrainka's dramas which were based on Greek plays, were Kassandra (1907) and Orgiia (Orgy, 1913). The drama Kassandra which is set during the period of the Trojan wars, emphasized "philosophical problems, particularly the dichotomy of truth versus fiction."⁶ It is the dialogue between the characters Helen and Kassandra which serves as the philosophical climax of the drama.

The character Kassandra is a prophetess, whose gift of prophesy leads to her tragedy. When Helen, the mistress of Kassandra's brother Paris arrives, Kassandra foresees the dark misfortune which will unravel. Kassandra reveals to Polyxena, her sister, what awaits them: firstly, Polyxena

will not marry Achilles, and secondly, Andromache will lose her husband. These two premonitions do come true, leaving Cassandra devastated. Because of this gift of prophesy, Cassandra is blamed for every disaster which follows. Her brother Helelnus, who himself is a seer of the future, differs with Cassandra, in that, he falsifies his premonitions in order to serve his own needs. In the end, Cassandra's prophesies are all fulfilled, including her prophesy of the destruction of Troj. Cassandra eventually triumphs over her brother Helenus, but remains despised, because of the truth she voices. What Ukrainka conveys, is two themes: the philosophical problem of truth which is exemplified through Cassandra's warnings, and the concept of good versus evil.

In Orgy, Ukrainka again turns to Greek antiquity, but this time she focuses on the theme of the subjugation of one nation by another, recalling the enslavement of her own nation. In the case of Orgy, it is the Greeks who are subjugated by the Romans. The drama condemns those individuals who abandon their own nation, and freely accept and serve their subjugators. The defender of Greek culture is a Greek artist Anteus, who is deeply troubled by his student Khilon, who rejects his teaching, and instead enters a Roman school, in order to improve his career opportunities. Another Greek, Phaeton the sculptor, sells off his artistic treasures to the Roman, Maecenas. Yet Khilon and Phaeton are not the only people who forsake their

nation - Nerissa, Anteus's wife, is completely indifferent to her people's fate. She wants to improve her status in society, as well, and one way to do this, is to attend a banquet - orgy arranged by Maecenas, the founder of a Roman school. Nerissa, despite her husband's pleas, attends this orgy along with Anteus. There, Nerissa dances for Maecenas, who is greatly impressed with Nerissa's beauty. Offended, Anteus throws his lyre at Nerissa, instantly killing her and then takes his own life. It is in this drama, where *Ukrainka* focuses on individuals such as Khilon and Phaedon, who seek greater status. They are representative of those Ukrainian artists and writers, who rejected their native language and culture, for that of another.

In her drama entitled Kaminnyi hospodar (The Stone Host, 1912), she turned to the Spanish legend of Don Juan. Although there had been numerous versions written on the character of Don Juan by such writers as Molière, Byron, Hoffmann and Pushkin, *Ukrainka's Stone Host* introduces a number of new elements, creates new episodes, and alters the configuration of certain characters (in earlier versions, Don Gonzago is portrayed as the father of Donna Anna, instead of her husband). As in other versions, *Ukrainka's* Don Juan is a gallant "knight of freedom", who has lost his charm and fascination for women. He is an anarchist, and within him exists two worlds: the world of desire and the world of reality. The philosophy which he

adheres to is his own version of life, in which he is free and not accountable to anyone. The laws, norms, ethics and traditions of the land are a hindrance to him - a hindrance which suppresses individual freedom.⁷ It is this ideology which serves as the conflict in this play, i.e., the conflict between the ideologies of Don Juan and the Commander Don Gonzago. Don Gonzago serves the people of his country, while Don Juan only serves himself. It is Don Juan's views which attract Don Gonzago's wife Donna Anna, to him. Yet, even Don Juan's concept of freedom, i.e. anarchy, differs from Donna Anna's version, where freedom can only be obtained by having power. In the end, Ukrainka destroys Donna Anna and Don Juan, and along with them, their philosophies.

Ukrainka's Lisova Pisnia (The Forest Song, 1911), dealt specifically with a Ukrainian theme. She began writing this drama in prose, but reworked it into verse. According to W. Smyrniw,

"Lesia Ukrainka stated that Lisova Pisnia emerged from a nostalgia for the Volynian forests where during her childhood she had often yearned to catch a glimpse of the spirits and nymphs who were said to inhabit those forests."⁸

In The Forest Song, Ukrainka focuses on Ukrainian mythology and folklore, a topic which she had always loved. The central character is a nymph named Mavka, who falls in love with a human being, Lukash, a flute player. She becomes

enchanted with the song Lukash plays, resulting in Mavka obtaining a human soul, and leaving her forest home. However, Mavka's innocence does not prepare her for the real world. Her greatest obstacle is Lukash's mother, who prefers a peasant girl, Kalyna, as a daughter-in-law rather than Mavka. Eventually Kalyna comes between Mavka and Lukash, leading to Mavka's demise.

According to Constantine Bida, what one sees in The Forest Song, is the theme of "fairies fall in love with men and enter the real world; where they suffer and eventually perish".⁹ Yet Erwin Wedel sees the theme as one of man striving for a higher calling, which involves overcoming "monotony and dullness and the common place".¹⁰ Mavka is a tragic figure who in the end transforms earthly desires into eternal pure love. *Ukrainka* successfully parallels Mavka's love to that of nature and the seasons of the year. *Ukrainka* shows how eternal values such as love, beauty and happiness remain constant, just as in nature itself; for when winter and autumn ends, spring once again arrives, and the cycle begins anew.

Lesia *Ukrainka* rejected the traditional themes which were prevalent at the time throughout Ukrainian dramas. These were predominantly of the realistic-naturalistic style. She wanted to bring Ukrainian drama in line with the European neo-romanticism which was dominant at the beginning of this century. Her poetic drama signalled a new style in Ukrainian dramatic writing.

Volodymyr Vynnychenko was one of the most interesting individuals in the early part of twentieth century Ukrainian history. He became famous through his writings of fiction, and as a politician.¹¹ He was the only Ukrainian playwright whose plays were successfully performed in the theatres of Western Europe for an extensive period of time. After Vynnychenko left Ukraine, he was greatly admired as a dramatist, especially in Germany. His play Brekhnia (The Lie, 1910) was performed with great popularity in such cities as Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna, Zurich and Amsterdam.¹² His plays involved great psychological emotion - with a favourite theme being, "the cynical egoist, who in order to be totally honest with himself, finds himself ready to commit any crime so long as his actions are in harmony with his feelings, convictions, and will."¹³ He chose this type of theme, because Vynnychenko himself, was a philosopher, who wrote about such topics as human nature, happiness and morality.

Vynnychenko's style as a dramatist has been debated. Critics have argued as to which literary movement Vynnychenko belongs. Many have linked him with realism or late realism. According to Dmytro Chyzhevskyj,

"Vynnychenko was related to certain Russian symbolists with extremely idiosyncratic views of morality; his style however, remained Realistic, on the whole."¹⁴

Yet, because of his innovations in his novels and dramas, one would have to include him in the modernist group of writers. Many of the settings in his dramas involved realistic recreations of daily life in Ukrainian cities. Very often, one would see the "new morality" which Vynnychenko would propagate, or as he would refer to it as "honesty with oneself"¹⁵ This "new morality" can be seen in his plays Bazar (The Bazaar, 1910), Chorna pantera i bilyi vedmid' (The Black Panther and the White Bear, 1911) and Dysharmoniiia (Disharmony, 1906). Vynnychenko's beliefs are also evident in his novels, which always contain interesting plots. George S. Luckyj describes the style in his novels, in the following way,

"His artistic style is fragmentary, energetic, vivid in its originality, although not always refined, but rather flamboyant and unfinished.

This is typically impressionistic style."¹⁶

Vynnychenko's drama The Bazaar centres around a group of revolutionaries who plot to free some of their comrades from a prison. However, even among this group, one finds disharmony and tension. The players include the group's leader, Tsinnist' Markovych, Leonid, Leonid's wife Oksana, Trokhym, another revolutionary Mykhailo, and finally Marusia, who serves as the central figure. Marusia is a very attractive woman, and because of this: Leonid leaves his wife; Tsinnist' Markovych wants her to use her beauty, in order to agitate the workers, and distract the

authorities; while Trokhym becomes extremely jealous, because he cannot have her, so he is willing to ruin the group's plot of freeing the other revolutionaries from the prison. Marusia understands that these men are infatuated with her beauty and not her talents, and in order to prove the latter, she blunders the plot, deceiving Leonid and Trokhym and as a result loses her own life. In fact, Vynnychenko is not referring to male chauvinism, as Marusia perceives it - for the group had other capable members to perform the same function as Marusia, but, Tsinnist' Markovych chose Marusia, believing she was as capable as any of the other revolutionaries, only her weapon was her beauty, which she should have saved and used.

The central theme of The Bazaar is psychological, and this can be detected in the title of this drama. Life is a bazaar or market, where one should sell the best one possesses. In the case of Marusia, Vynnychenko points out that, she could not handle for example, a hand-grenade, but, because of her beauty, she could attract her audience's attention.

In Vynnychenko's Prorok (The Prophet, 1930), one is reminded of Ukrainka's Kassandra, and the internal struggle one faces, when one possesses an extraordinary gift. The protagonist Amar, claims that he has been sent by God. He appears to have been given mystical powers, including the power to give sight to the blind, and move heavy boulders without touching them. One sceptic, Kate, a daughter of

an American millionaire, becomes so enthralled with Amar's miraculous powers, that she is converted, and invites him and his group of followers to the United States, where she will use her wealth to support this new religion. Unlike Ukrainka's Cassandra, who questions her gift of prophesy, Amar truly believes he is God's messenger. As time progresses, his following continues to grow, and as a result, his faith might become the state religion. However, as Amar becomes more powerful, he "oversteps" the boundary of being God's messenger, and attempts to become God himself, as a result Amar becomes spiritually crippled. This is evident when Amar blesses a group of striking workers, and soon after, blesses the police who ask permission to shoot at the striking workers. Amar's spiritual decline is noticed by his inner circle. As a result, Kate, and two other followers Randzhit and Rait, plot to remove Amar, in order to save the religion, and keep its followers, which by this time has multiplied several times over. In the end, Amar must chose either the faith of the people, or his own life and his truth. He chooses the people's faith, over his own life. With the help of a mechanical device, he ascends the heavens, at which point a bolt of lightening strikes him, and he disappears. This event is witnessed by many of his followers, including many sceptics, who after witnessing this spectacle, become believers, believing that God has taken Amar directly to heaven.

In The Prophet, Vynnychenko discusses the theme of sacrifice - the willingness to sacrifice oneself for the sake of others, and Amar sacrifices himself, in order to save the faith of his followers. Amar sincerely hopes to save the world through *amarianstvo* or universal love.¹⁷ However, he cannot see what his religion has done to his closest followers, i.e., Kate, Randzhit and Rait. After considering the fate of his believers, he chooses his followers. After all, Amar wants to save the faith of his followers, which is the only truth worth saving.

According to Les' Taniuk, Vynnychenko introduces in The Prophet something completely different from his other works, i.e., a combination of "rational and irrational" serving "to create an active and changeable unity".¹⁸ There is this shifting back and forth, from a realistic style, to a mystical-romantic style, all of which are successfully intertwined.

The greatest of Ukrainian dramatists of the 1920s and 1930s was Mykola Kulish, a member, and later head of literary organization *VAPLITE* (Vil'na Akademiia Proletars'koi Literatry). Unfortunately, Kulish's career was cut short, because his plays were considered too dangerous for the Soviet totalitarian state. Yet, between his theatrical debut in 1924, and his exile to the Solovetski Islands in the Arctic in 1934, he wrote several plays (13 of which survived; 2 of which were lost; and 1 which remains unfinished¹⁹: 27 (first version 1924,

second version 1929); Kommuna v stepakh (Commune in the Steppes, first version 1925, second version 1931); Otak zahynuv Huska (That's How Huska Perished, first version 1925; second version - 1933); Khulii Khuryna (1926); Zona (The Zone, 1926 - it was reworked and renamed Zakut (The Recess, 1929); Narodnyi Malakhii (The People's Malakhii, 1927); Legenda pro Lenina (Legend About Lenin) and Kolonii (Colonies) (both written in 1927); Myna Myzailo (1928); Patetychna Sonata (Sonata Pathetique, 1929); Vichnii bunt (The Eternal Rebellion, 1932); Proshchai selo (Farewell, My Village, 1922, reworked and renamed Povorot Marka (The Return of Marko, 1934)); Maklena Grasa (1933); Dialohy (Dialogues, lost); Taki (Such People, lost); Pid Vahonom - terytoriia (Territory Under The Car, 1934); and his film script entitled Paryzhkom, which remains unfinished.

Kulish debuted as a playwright in 1924. His career began to blossom during the time when the modernist trends were creeping into the Ukrainian arts. The emergence of this new Ukrainian avant-garde in drama and theatre was due to a great extent to Mykola Kulish, and especially to the theatrical director of the Berezil' Theatre, Les' Kurbas. Kurbas was born in Sambir, Western Ukraine, the son of actors who were members of the Rus'ka Besida, the leading theatrical troupe in Western Ukraine. In 1907 his parents sent him to study at the University of Vienna, where he was enrolled in classes of German and Slavic literatures. While

in Vienna, he was exposed to the writings of Gordon Craig and Georg Fuchs, and the works of the director Max Reinhardt, which "planted the seeds", which would enable Kurbas to become the innovative director of his era.

According to Virlana Tkacz:

"Les' Kurbas was enchanted by the new world of European Theatre revealed to him in Vienna. According to his university roommate, he read the newest plays, theatre books and journals, and spent almost every night in the theatre. Although Kurbas was still dreaming of a career as an actor, he was actually acquiring the theatrical base for his growth as a director."²⁰

In the years that followed, Kurbas joined various Ukrainian troupes, but at the same time, was not satisfied with the state of Ukrainian theatre; he wanted to rejuvenate it, and explore new ideas - ideas like the ones he had been exposed to in Vienna. In spite of his interests in Western European avant-garde, Kurbas was at the same time very aware of Ukrainian literary tradition - as in his staging of Vynnychenko's The Black Panther and the White Bear, and his Bazaar, with his newly formed theatrical group *Molodyi Teatr (Young Theatre)* in Kyiv.

In the spring of 1922, Kurbas and his group of actors drafted a statute for a new theatrical organization named Berezil' (Berezil' or Berezen' meaning the month of March).²¹ Kurbas hoped that Berezil' would fulfil certain aspirations: as an organization that would unite all

theatre artists; it would produce plays, but develop theatre research, conduct experiments and study all related arts. It would be a universal Ukrainian theatre which was to create the new revolutionary theatre, a type of laboratory which would develop new forms of expression.

Expressionism, was the modernist trend which Kurbas found most intriguing. Yet, it must be stressed, that expressionism came to Berezil' directly from Germany and not via Russia, as some may assume, since Meyerhold was also experimenting with expressionism/constructivism in Moscow. Kurbas had even singled out Paul Cézanne as having, "the greatest influence" on him.²² Since Kurbas had studied in Vienna for a considerable period of time, he was familiar with the new movements. Along with Cézanne, Kurbas was also influenced by Craig, Appia, Fuchs, Reinhardt and Dalcroze. In fact, Kurbas's success in directing and acting is often contributed to his method of "transformation" (or *peretvorennia*), which was based on Dalcroze's "eurythmics". According to Hirniak,

"*Peretvorennia* is an artistic theatrical method whereby the director and the actor strive as deeply as possible to reveal a certain reality. This was the name given by the Berezil' system to the artistic sign, the theatrical "symbol" which reveals the essence of a phenomenon and helps us to perceive its existential content. This method is familiar to painters and writers. There are vivid examples of *peretvorennia* in political and ethnographic caricatures. An economical artistic means,

it is used to expose and decipher the most varied and psychological and social phenomena."²³

He created classes in acrobatics, plastics, rhythmic, ballet, juggling and voice, similar to what Dalcroze had accomplished at his school. At the same time, he wanted each actor to be a thinking artist, who would use gestures, movements and voice, in order to create an image which had a specific form and structure.

Mykola Kulish began his relationship with Berezhil', when Kurbas staged his play Commune in the Steppes in 1925. At that point in time, Kulish was still under the influence of the realism which was concentrated in Ukrainian ethnographic theatre. The theme of the play, along with its strong dramatic conflict, impressed Kurbas.

Unlike Kurbas, who had been educated in drama and theatre, Kulish was born of poor Ukrainian peasants, whose father was a farm labourer. He came from the southern Ukrainian town of Chaplynka, Kherson region, which was under Russian rule.²⁴ Although living under difficult conditions, he exhibited a great literary talent during his early school years. While preparing to attend university in 1914, he was mobilized into the Russian army, where he served until joining the Communist Party. However, after seeing the reality of the Communist Party, he became disillusioned with it, and chose to return to his love of drama. His writing talent led him to *VAPLITE*, the Ukrainian literary organization which was headed by Mykola

Khvyl'ovyi, and who Kulish would later replace. It was through *VAPLITE* and Berezil's move from Kyiv to Kharkiv, that Kulish and Kurbas formed a close bond. After Berezil' produced Commune in the Steppes, Kulish would change as a dramatist in terms of his literary style. From hence forth Kulish would become Berezil's permanent dramatist, a position he would keep, right until the end of his career.

His first plays 97 and Commune in the Steppes focused on the Ukrainian famine of 1921-22. Both plays showed the difficulties in building a Communist society, and how this famine was used by the Communists to propagandize their objectives, i.e., blaming the famine on foreign conspirators. He then turned to a satirical comedy That's How Huska Perished, which turned away from the famine, to how the revolution affected a "petty-bourgeois" family, the Huskas. The play includes: the patriarch of the Huska family, Savatii Huska, his wife, their seven daughters, their former nanny, and Pierre Kyrpatenko, a member of the Revolutionary Social Party. Each of them recall how life was before the revolution. They hope for the immediate defeat of the Bolsheviks, and an end to the revolution. The revolution which they hope will soon end, only continues, and ends up engulfing the family. Hoping to run away from the revolution and the CHEKA secret police, the Huskas and Pierre Kyrpatenko flee to a deserted island. It is here, that they hope to renew their struggle against the revolution. However, their paranoia results into a comical

mishap. Seeing two fisherman on the island, the Huskas mistake them for CHEKA agents, resulting in them giving themselves up to the fishermen. The fishermen are bewildered, causing one to say, "It's absolutely shameful to look at you's! You are not people but micro-organisms!"²⁵ This is reminiscent of a vaudeville play. Kulish successfully surrounds Savatii Huska with such characters as, his seven stupid daughters, and one bachelor, Kyrpatenko, in order to achieve a series of comical situations.

One of Kulish's greatest works, Sonata Pathetique, was written near the end of his career. By this time, Kulish had radically changed his literary style, and had grown tremendously as a dramatist. In this play he combines expressionism with Ukrainian theatrical traditions, along with traits of romanticism. The play itself is structured on various political levels: the national Ukrainian, who is dreaming of an independent Ukraine, of which there are two types: the younger generation, which is represented by Maryna Stupai-Stupanenko, who strives for an independent state; and the older generation which is represented by her father, Ivan Stupai-Stupanenko, who dreams of the Romantic Ukraine of the seventeenth century Cossacks; the Ukrainian National Communist, who is represented by Il'ko Iuha, the poet, who strives for humanistic reforms; the Bolshevik Ukrainian, represented by Luka, the professional revolutionary, who is working for a world-revolution,

i.e., the Russian version; and finally, the pro-Russian Empire camp represented by Major General Perotskii, who believes in the unity of the tsarist Russian empire; and the younger generation represented by his son Andrei, who favours a relaxed constitutional monarchy, which includes Ukraine, as an integral part of it.²⁶

The inhabitants of the house, along with the floor on which they live, are symbolic of the current political and social conditions of Ukraine: the basement of the building is inhabited by Ovrarn and his wife Nastia, who are representatives of the lower class; the main floor is inhabited by Ivan Stupai-Stupanenko and his daughter Maryna; the upper floor is inhabited by Major General Perotskii and his sons, Zhorzh and Andrei; while the prostitute Zin'ka lives in the attic, and who Zhorzh frequently visits. It is this structure of levels which reminds one of *vertep* theatre of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²⁷ Here, Kulish combines Ukrainian tradition with expressionism. The expressionist director Leopold Jessner in his production of The Marquis of Keith, used a similar idea to the *vertep*. While he used only two levels in his production, Kulish had several levels, making it even more visually striking on stage.

The character Il'ko Iuha is not only the main protagonist, but also serves as the play's narrator, often being referred to as "I". Il'ko the tragic hero, is a poet, which is symbolic, since Kulish chose a poet, and

not a worker like Ovrarn, or a professional revolutionary like Luka, to be the hero of the play, thereby exemplifying his hope for a more humanistic order.

According to M. Dyky,

"The poet is like a prophet of old, who can foretell the future, a seer among his people. Subconsciously or consciously, Kulish wants to show here, the belief that it was the poets, especially Shevchenko, who had previously, particularly in the nineteenth century, sowed the seeds of national revolution which was now coming into fruition."²⁸

However, his romantic view, and his dislike of violence will not prevent his downfall. It is his downfall, which represents Kulish's bleak vision of the revolution and its victors.

Unlike Kulish's That's How Huska Perished, where the inhabitants refuse to take part in the revolution, the characters in Sonata Pathetique are all actively involved in the struggle, and in fact aid in deciding the development of events. In the end, all the participants are consumed by the revolution. Il'ko has turned over Maryna to the enemy Luka, and the Russian based Ukrainian Communists. Now that Maryna is arrested, she is deprived of her piano, and her playing of Beethoven's *Sonata Pathetique*. Kulish has shown that Maryna has lost everything which matters to her, and that Ukraine's future will suffer the same fate as Maryna. With Kulish ending his

play with the Moscow based Communists being victorious, he foretells the terror which is about to occur in his homeland. As Maryna is being led away, Il'ko once again hears the Sonata, suggesting, that Maryna's ideals have not been completely destroyed, nor have Ukraine's.

In Kulish's Myna Mazailo, the theme of the struggle between the Ukrainian movement and Russian chauvanism is relayed through light-hearted comedy. Kulish centres his play around a Russianized Ukrainian, Myna Mazailo, who is unable to speak a word of Russian, but is totally fluent in Ukrainian. Mazailo's mind-set is of a Ukrainian who looks back to the days when the Russian authorities banned the Ukrainian language. He believes that in order to attain some sort of stature in society, he must learn the Russian language by way of a Russian tutor, and change his Ukrainian surname into a Russian one. Opposing him is his very Ukrainian conscious son Mokii, who is a member of the Komsomol. Mokii shuns his father's behaviour, and instead tries to promote the use of the Ukrainian language, and awaken others, particularly Ulia (a girl who is in love with him), that she is Ukrainian and not a Little Russian (malorus'ka). Meanwhile, Mazailo struggles to learn Russian, with very little success. He continually pronounces the Russian "g" as a Ukrainian "h", and pronounces Russian words with a pronounced Ukrainian accent. With the help of his Russified aunt, T'otia Motia, he has his surname changed from Mazailo to Mazienin, during a

very comical scene where everyone participates in trying to find a "suitable" Russian surname. In the end, Mazailo receives his new surname, but loses his position in the town because of his "bourgeois" activities.

In Myna Mazailo, Kulish specifically focuses on the theme of the Ukrainian language, and its struggle against Russian chauvinism. Kulish's use of one family, the Mazailos with their different ideas and ideologies, is representative of how Ukrainian society as a whole was reacting to the Ukrainianization process in the 1920s. His use of the light-hearted comedy, shows the ignorance of Myna Mazailo, his wife, daughter and T'otia Motia. T'otia Motia has become totally russified, and refers to the Russian language as, "the beautiful Muscovy language".²⁹ She even makes reference to Bulgakov's Dni Turbinykh (Days of the Turbins).³⁰ She mourns for the Russian soldier Al'osha, and refers to the Ukrainian soldiers in the play as "Fat, wild men"³¹ T'otia Motia and for that matter Myna Mazailo, are not isolated cases in Ukrainian society. Such individuals lost their national consciousness. These people believed, that the only way to achieve advancement in society, was to denounce their own nation, and accept the will of another. By centering around the idea of a surname change, Kulish brings the nationality question into the open,

"Mazailo, a petty official in a Soviet institution, and his wife and daughter suffer

because of their name which, in their opinion, is vulgar and unmelodious. A suggested name change from a Ukrainian to a Russian form raises the national issue in a personal human form."³²

The subject of his final play, Maklena Grasa, was taken from a note in a Polish news story about the country's economic crisis, and an old Polish man who had been seeking someone to kill him for money, so that his family would inherit a huge monetary sum from his life insurance.³³ Unlike Kulish's two previous dramas which dealt with the "national theme", Maklena Grasa turns to the theme of the World Depression. The play centres around the character Maklena the daughter of the ill and jobless Grasa. Because of her father's ill health, she has taken upon herself the role of the provider for her father and her younger sister. The drama takes place in Poland during a time when strikes and bankruptcies wrack the Polish economy. Times are difficult for all, especially for the Grasa family. In order to keep her family from starving, she is seen gathering food that dogs have left on the streets. Her family has no money left to pay the rent, and as a result, has been given an ultimatum by the landlord Zarems'kyi - to pay up, or be evicted.

At the same time, the broker Pan Zbrozhek, who had been making thousands of dollars due to others' misfortunes, is himself racked with financial disaster. He learns that the bank which holds his money has gone bankrupt, and now

has become penniless. Yet, he recalls his huge insurance policy, which his wife and daughter would receive upon his death. He concocts a plan whereby he will pay someone to kill him, so that his family will have financial security. Learning of the Grases' dilemma, Zbrozhek offers Grasa to undertake his murder. Grasa refuses, but Maklena believing that this act would pay for the rent, and somehow improve her family's life, accepts Zbrozhek's proposition. On the day the two meet, Zbrozhek places the money he promised Maklena next to himself, and hands her a pistol. It is only after he is killed, that Maklena can retrieve the money. After the murder is committed, she realizes that all the money that Zbrozhek had promised her is not there. In the end, the greed which consumed him in life, consumes him in death.

After writing plays which resounded the "national theme", the Soviet critics began to ostracize Kulish as showing "anti-socialist" and "pro-nationalist" tendencies. As a result Maklena Grasa would not focus on this theme, in spite of the fact that the "national themes" which Kulish had so successfully exposed Ukrainian society to, still remained deep in his consciousness. Instead Maklena Grasa displayed a shift to realism, but still the party censors condemned it for "deviating" away from socialist thought. Not being allowed to relate to problems facing Ukraine, Kulish turned towards problems being faced in other lands. In this particular case it was the economic situation in a

neighbouring country; concentrating on the theme of man's greed, and the theme of the world depression of the 1930s.

With the demise of the *ethnographic theatre*, Ukrainian drama and theatre would change as an art form forever. However, *ethnographic theatre* must not be looked upon in a negative light, in the sense that it kept Ukrainian language and culture alive during the oppressive tsarist period prior to the 1905 Revolution. The appearance of dramas by Lesia Ukrainka and Volodymyr Vynnychenko placed Ukrainian literature along a new course. Ukrainka's dramatic poems which often dealt with foreign cultures at different historical periods were nonetheless very relevant to the Ukrainian nation at the time. By doing this she was able to draw parallels between her nation's problems, and the problems in the history of other nations. By rejecting the realistic-naturalistic style, she was able to bring European neo-romanticism to Ukrainian literature. As for Vynnychenko, he had been linked with realism, but because of his innovations he must be included with the modernist group of writers. His philosophical focus on life is always evident in his dramas; which are frequently, though not always centered around life in Ukrainian cities. Yet, even greater change came with the Berezil' theatrical director Les' Kurbas, and the dramatist Mykola Kulish. The two combined new European trends with Ukrainian literary traditions, resulting in a new Ukrainian theatre drama. Because of his close relationship with Kurbas, Kulish

abandoned the traditional realist ethnographic style, to the modernist expressionist style. In the words of Romana Bahrij Pikulyk, "Kurbas gained an indispensable dramatist for his theatre, and Kulish gained from Kurbas the vast knowledge of theatre and drama that the latter possessed."³⁴ The tremendous development in Ukrainian drama and theatre since the time of Ukrainka or Vynnychenko would be cut short due to the Stalinist purges of the thirties. The damage was so great, not only physically, but mentally, that, it would take a generation before it could begin to recover, and continue to develop. This was contrary to what was occurring in the West, where drama and theatre was able to freely evolve.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The Valuievs'kyi ukase (June 8, 1863), was a decree given by the Russian Interior Minister, Piotr Valuiev, in which it stated that, the Ukrainian language (or as the Russians referred to it as, Little Russian or maloruskii iazyk) "never existed, doesn't exist, nor will it ever exist". His decree banned the publication of books in Ukrainian, be they educational or religious.
The Ems ukase (June 18, 1876) was a decree signed by Tsar Alexander II in the German city of Ems. The decree forbid the printing of the Ukrainian language in any form except in the original orthographic system. It also banned the import of Ukrainian publications from abroad. Even the name "Ukraine" was forbidden - replacing it with "Little Russia" instead. In fact, the real author of the Ems ukase was the deputy superintendent of the Kyiv school district, Mykhailo Iuzefovych.

- 2 Wolodymyr Slez, "Les' Kurbas and the Actors of the Berezil' Artistic Association in Kiev", Theatre History Studies, vol. 8, 1988, p. 137.

- 3 Yosyp Hirniak, "Birth and Death of the Modern Ukrainian Theatre", Soviet Theatres 1917-1941 (Research Program on the USSR, New York, 1954) p. 251.

- 4 Constantine Bida, Lesya Ukrainka: Life and Work, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1968), p. 44-45.

- 5 Bida, p. 45.

- 6 Erwin Wedel, "Toward a modern Ukrainian drama: innovative concepts and devices in Lesia Ukrainka's dramatic art", Slavic Drama: The Question of Innovation (Slavic Drama Symposium: University of

Ottawa: 2-4 May 1991). p. 118.

- 7 Jaroslav Rozumnyj, "Ukrains'kist' Don Zhuana v 'Kaminnomu hospodari' Lesi Ukrainky", Suchasnist', 12 (1991), p.28.
- 8 Walter Smyrniw, "Man and Superman in Gerhardt Hauptmann's Die Versunkene Glocke and Lesia Ukrainka's Lisova Pisnia", Germano-Slavica, vol. 4, 2 (Fall, 1982), p. 63.
- 9 Bida, p. 74.
- 10 Wedel, p. 120.
- 11 Volodymyr Vynnychenko played a leading role in the Ukrainian Revolution, and in the formation of the Central Rada, of the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR). From 1918-1919, he served as the chairman of the Directory of UNR, and even served as the head of state for a brief period.
- 12 Leonid Rudnytzky, "The Disinherited Dramatist", Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the US, vol. 41-42, (1984-85), p. 361.
- 13 Orest Subtelny, Ukraine: A History (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University Toronto Press, 1988), p. 305.
- 14 Dmytro Chyzhevs'kyj, A History of Ukrainian Literature, (Littleton: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1975), p. 618.

- 15 Vynnychenko's "honesty with oneself" or "bud' chesnyi iz soboiu", referred to the need to remove any disharmony between such things as morality and immorality which might be committed by his heroes in his works - since heroes were driven by sheer egoism.
- 16 George S. N. Luckyj, Ukrainian Literature in the Twentieth Century: A Reader's Guide. (Toronto Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1992), p. 20.
- 17 Les' Taniuk, "Towards the Problem of Ukrainian 'prophetic drama'", Slavic Drama: The Question of Innovation (Slavic Drama Symposium: University of Ottawa: 2-4 May 1991). p. 127.
- 18 Taniuk, p.128.
- 19 Marco Carynnyk, "A Poet of the Theatre", Journal of Ukrainian Graduate Studies, vol. 1, 1 (1976), p. 80.
- 20 Virlana Tkacz, "The Birth of a Director: The Early Development of Les' Kurbas and His First Season With the Young Theatre", Journal of Ukrainian Studies, 22 (Summer 1987), p. 28.
- 21 According to Iosyp Hirniak in Soviet Theatres, 1917-1941 (edited by Martha Bradshaw, p. 280), he discusses why the name *Berezil'* was chosen:
 During the time when the Communist critics began to criticize Kurbas and *Berezil'*, Kurbas had this to say about the name of the theatrical troupe:

"Why *Berezil'*?.... When *Berezil'* was founded, we were all very young, very romantically

disposed toward the Revolution, which for us had great poetic glamour; if we were to choose a name for the theatre at the present time, we would not name the theatre as we did, but name it for Marx. Symbolically this name [Berezil'] sounds awkward to some people who are not used to it, but it is beautiful to us. At that time we were reading poetry written by the Norwegian poet Bjornson. There was a competition among the bourgeois writers as to their favorite month and the reason for their choice. Bjornson chose March, the month of disruption - hence the name".

- 22 Paul Cézanne, a French impressionist (now considered an expressionist) painter of the late nineteenth century, was one of the first cubists, who introduced objects in his paintings which could be seen from different eye-points. It was Cezanne, who Kurbas credited as, "having the greatest influence on me personally." ("Shliakhy Berezolia", VAPLITE 3 (1927), p. 159).
- 23 Wolodymyr Slez, "Les' Kurbas and the Modern Ukrainian Theatre", The Ukrainian Review, vol. XXXVII, 1 (Spring 1989), p. 29.
- 24 Mykola Kulish, Mykola Kulish: Tvory v dvokh tomakh. Comp. and ed. by Les' Taniuk, (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1990), p. 354.
- 25 Kulish, p. 249.
- 26 Luba M. Dyky, "Some Aspects of the 'Sonata Pathetique' by Mykola Kulish", Pt. I, Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the US, 11, i-ii(1968), p. 115.

27 The *vertep* or Ukrainian puppet theatre dates back to the sixteenth century, and reached its greatest popularity in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The Nativity scene is most often depicted in the *vertep*. Among some of the characters depicted are: angels, shepherds, the three wise men, Satan, a Pole, a Jew, a peasant couple and others. The *vertep* is also the name given to the two-storey stage which is in the form of a building, where the puppet show is performed. Usually the religious part of the performance takes place on the upper level, while the secular one takes place on the lower level.

Many students from the Kyivan-Mohyla Academy contributed significantly to the development of the *vertep*, which became known for its theatrical excellence. By the mid-nineteenth century, the *vertep* somewhat declined in popularity, but was retained during the Christmas season by Christmas carolers dressed up as *vertep* characters, or in displaying a miniature *vertep* in one's home.

28 Luba M. Dyky, "Some Aspects of the 'Sonata Pathetique' by Mykola Kulish", Pt. II, Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the US, 12, i-ii (1969-1972), p. 166.

29 Kulish, p. 142.

30 Kulish, p. 142.

31 Kulish's reference to Bulgakov's Dni Turbinykh (Days of the Turbins), was intentional. Bulgakov's play had been staged in Moscow with the blessing of the Soviet administration, in part due to the negative Ukrainian connotations which was found throughout the drama. In response, Kulish wrote the Patetychna Sonata (The Sonata Pathetique).

Bulgakov portrayed the Ukrainian leaders and cause as inferior to those of the Russian family, the Turbins, who were portrayed as being sophisticated and cultured. In the end, the Turbins, who are in effect Russian nationalists, succumb to the idea of Soviet power, for at least the Russian Empire would remain intact, albeit under a new name. In The Sonata Pathetique, Kulish rebuts Bulgakov, by showing a sophisticated and cultured Ukrainian family, the Stupai-Stupanekos, and shows the downfall of the imperialist attitude of the Russian General Perotskii, who cannot imagine the concept of a separate Ukrainian state.

32 Hirniak, p. 318

33 Hirniak, p. 327.

34 Romana Bahrij Pikulyk, "The Expressionist Experiment in Berezil': Kurbas and Kulish." Canadian Slavonic Papers, vol.14, 2 (1972), p. 324.

CHAPTER THREE

The People's Malakhii and The Madwoman of Chaillot

The People's Malakhii marked a change in Kulish as a dramatist. Iosyp Hirniak, as an actor in the Berezil' Theatre, recalls when Kulish had presented a draft of the drama to Kurbas,

"The entire acting ensemble and the artistic director of Berezil' were impressed with the astonishing growth of the dramatist and with his radically changed literary style. In such a short period of close association with the theatre, only a person with great talent and of unusual flexibility could have comprehended and adopted its creative methods, which were the results of ten years of intensive work and experimentation. The National Malakhii showed that the new theatre at last had a playwright. For the dramatist who had only a year ago had thought that he would never be able to rid himself of the Karpenko-Kary tradition, such a step forward with the Kurbas theatre was indeed a reassuring experience."¹

The People's Malakhii was so impressive that soon after it was performed in 1929, an important literary discussion on drama took place, in which it took up a significant part of the discussion.

When Kurbas staged the long awaited drama, it was greeted with great emotion. However, prior to its staging, there was great debate, particularly among the party circles in Kharkiv:

"Rarely has a play aroused such a storm of arguments and discussions, such fiery defenders and attackers as did the premiere of The National Malakhii. The house was packed to the rafters at each daily performance. The audience, which represented all strata of society, participated in the play with great emotion."²

The drama had such an impact on the public, that passages from the play became everyday sayings on the streets of Kharkiv. Even the term *Malakhiiianstvo* or *Malakhiiianism* came into existence; it joined such oppositional movements as Khvyl'ovism and Shumskyism.³ Because of its popularity and controversial theme, The People's Malakhii was omitted from Berezhil's repertoire in the 1929-1930 season, due to pressures by the party censors. In the end, Kulish and Kurbas were both condemned in the literary party papers, for promoting "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" in The People's Malakhii. As a result of the relentless attacks made by the Party critics, Kulish was forced to condemn himself for writing the play.

The drama's main character, Malakhii Stakanchyk, a former postman, goes through a profound change, where he reassesses his life, and the fate of his fellow Ukrainians. He believes that he has been chosen for a specific mission on this earth, that is, to bring about human and social reform and universal love to Ukrainian society. He will leave his family, and journey from his simple village to the then Soviet Ukrainian capital of Kharkiv, where he will try

to bring about the necessary reforms needed to transform society. Instead of meeting with success, he finds only apathy and hostility to his ideas whether it be from the Council of People's Commissars, or from the ordinary factory worker.

As in The People's Malakhii, the idea of "universal love" dominates in the drama, The Madwoman of Chaillot, (1943), written by the French dramatist Jean Giraudoux some fifteen years after the debut of Kulish's play. As in The People's Malakhii, the theme of the struggle for greater humanity is recalled. In fact, certain situations in The Madwoman of Chaillot are reminiscent of The People's Malakhii. In this play, a heroine, who under the "cloak of madness" battles against the evils of the establishment which is threatening a way of life which has remained unchanged for generations. By these two characters, Kulish and Giraudoux are able to convey their message of hope for change in society and mankind as a whole.

(i) Theme

Kulish's The People's Malakhii is a drama about hope - a hope that mankind can be reformed, replacing the opportunism of the communist functionaries with "universal love". It is this "universal love", which reverberates throughout the drama, and serves as its main theme. The messenger of "universal love" is Malakhii Stakanchyk, who

believes, that by way of his reforms, society will be irrevocably transformed. Kulish further developed the theme of "universal love" to one of struggling to find the supreme truth - or a "utopian truth". However his aspirations are in conflict with the reality of a totalitarian society. As a result of living under such a system, there has been an increase in the moral and material degeneration of society:

"Не про голубі реформи, а про форми жіночих ніг думають і мріють...."

"They do not think about the "sky-blue" reforms, but think and dream about the shapes of women's legs"⁴

Yet even as everything collapses around him, he continues to proclaim the need for "universal love".

"Запалюйте огнища універсального кохання на вулицях ваших городів, грійте потомлених."

"Light bonfire of universal love in the streets of our cities so that it may warm all those who are tired."⁵

In the end, Kulish leaves his hero alone and uncompromised. He has left his family and all worldly possessions, in order to search for the eternal truth - the "sky-blue distance". Because of his decision, he loses his family

and friends, and gains the hostility of the people whom he wants to help.

The theme of "universal love", is part of a greater theme of man wanting a better life. This is shown by ridiculing the present state of society, through the various individuals Malakhii encounters. Coming from a small village in Ukraine, it would appear that the decisions made in the capital would not have a very great affect on daily life. This is far from the truth. Life under socialism has not shown any improvement on the daily life of the common person, and as a result many have become very cynical. Malakhii's daughter's god-father, *Kum*, best exemplifies this individual.⁶ He is a pessimistic person who laughs at the idea of reforming society as set by Malakhii. For Kum, it is useless to try to change a system, which he believes cannot be changed. Malakhii is here to challenge this notion. After receiving a note that his letter (concerning the reformation of society) was received by the Council of People's Commissars, Malakhii believes that with his help, change can truly be achieved. After leaving the village for his mission of reforming humanity, he sees that society is very much indifferent to change. The Council of People's Commissars who are communist functionaries can care less about the citizens of Ukraine, but more for their own material and social benefits. Yet, it is the scene with the factory workers which illustrates society's apathy and indifference. When

Malakhii speaks of improving the lives of the workers, they see him as a hostile and subversive force, resulting in Malakhii fleeing the factory.

The theme of "man wanting a better life", according to Malakhii, depends on the implementation of his reforms. The most important of which, is the reformation of mankind. This would lead to the "sky-blue distance", or the ideal or or utopian society. This theme is not only attached with the character of Malakhii, but other characters as well. Olia the nurse, hopes that her former lover will one day return to her. She has already avoided falling under Madame Apolinaro's clutches, and had been humiliated by the crude comments of the Doctor's Assistant. However, her spirits and hopes are lifted by Malakhii ensuring her that her lover will return, only to find herself in the end working at the brothel run by Madame Apolinaro. This is also repeated in the case of Ahapiia, the female pilgrim. She seeks fulfilment by paying a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. By doing this, she hopes to obtain an inner peace during her final years, only to also end up in the brothel.

This theme of "man wanting a better life", is consistent with expressionist dramas. Stakanchyk's fate at the end of the drama is reminiscent of Sinclair's Jimmie Higgins, who also goes insane at the end of the play. Stakanchyk, like many of Kaiser's characters, is thrown out of his daily routine, by a significant event, which forever changes that character's life, i.e., the

revolution; in the case of Kaiser's Gas, the Billionaire's Son's life is interrupted by the factory explosion.

A sub-theme found in The People's Malakhii is the moral rebirth of man. Kulish ridicules Marxist principles on which Soviet society are built upon.⁷

Малахій: Так! Ви!... Де б сказати їй,
що не до гробу тепер єрусалимського
нам треба йти, а до Ленінового
Мавзолею, до нового Єрусалиму
плюс до нової Мекки до Москви...

Malakhii: Yes! You!... You should
have told her that we should
go not to the sepulchre in
Jerusalem, but to Lenin's
mausoleum - the new Jerusalem
and new Mecca - to Moscow...⁸

Малахій: ...скоро, скоро, прийде час
коло весь світ заспіва Москві:
святися новий Ієрусалиме слава
- бо революції на тобі возсія

Malakhii:soon, soon, soon, the time
will come when the whole world
will sing of Moscow: 'Hallowed be
the New Jerusalem for upon thee
is shining the glory of the Revolu-
tion.'⁹

Under Soviet Marxist dogma, society lacked any spiritual guide-lines. It could not replace the strong moral and spiritual foundation of Christianity. Although Malakhii preached about his strong belief in "Marxism", his "Marxism" had nothing in common with actual Marxism. He in fact,

rejected Marx's theory of class struggle, replacing it with the struggle of perfecting the moral character of each individual. What he preached was very reminiscent of Christian rather than Marxist values, such as love for one's neighbour, and compassion for one another. Marko Stech notes, that Malakhii,

"shares Christ's philosophy of love and the need for self-perfection, embarks on a lonely journey to save the world, calls himself the shepherd of all Humanity, and, like Christ, he is misunderstood and victimized.¹⁰

Malakhii who shows parallels to Christ, refers to himself as the "Shepherd of all humanity". Like Christ, Malakhii rejects all temptations. In Malakhii's case, it is the rejection of the temptations of the establishment. He rejects the calls of his family to abandon his mission, and instead live a quiet and unassuming life. While Christ criticized the scribes and pharisees, Malakhii criticizes the unfaithfulness to Marxist principles, as exhibited by the People's Commissars. After he is deceived by them, and is sent to the mental asylum, he believes that only he is a true follower of the principles of the Revolution, all others are only hypocrites.

The theme of moral rebirth is further exemplified by the names given to Malakhii's daughters: Vira (Faith), Nadiia (Hope) and Liubov (Love). These are the pillars on

which his reforms are built upon. He no longer worries about petty disputes, which at one time would engulf him. In one instance, Malakhii took a neighbour to court for three years, for damages to his rooster:

Кум: Отут - то й воно! Убить кілком,
щоб око вискочило, щоб розтривожився
він Може Бог дасть, почне
позиватись за курку, як колись до
війни позивавсь він три роки за півня.

Kum: Oh, here it is! He was so stunned,
that his eye nearly popped out - he
became so very agitated. Maybe God
willing, he will take someone to court
for a chicken, like before the war, when
for three years he sued a neighbour
in court for damages to a rooster."¹¹

Now when someone is accused of killing one of Malakhii's chickens, and his family and friend encourage him to go to the militia, Malakhii shrugs off the suggestion,

Малахій: Зворушили мене, розхвилювали...
Та не можу, доню, не можу, куме,
зостатися, бо сто крат дужче
зворушений і потрясений я
од революції.

Malakhii: You moved me, you agitated me...
But, I cannot stay my daughter,
I cannot help it my dear Kum,
for the Revolution has shaken
me one hundred times over.¹²

Another sub-theme is the tragedy of Liubunia. According to Shevelov, Liubunia,

"is poetry about patriarchal life, she is the embodiment of true mankind - a person who is a fixed part of society."¹³

Although she is part of the patriarchal order of the time, she is the only person who is able to free herself from any confinements. Throughout the drama, one finds various confinements, whether it be the walls of the mental hospital, the walls of the *Hammer and Sickle Factory*, or the confinements represented by the Communist system. Motivated by her love for her father, Liubunia transcends all barriers - especially her father's rejection. She escapes by choosing to commit suicide. According to Bahrij-Pikulyk, she is, "the only one in the play who will not accept any kind of illusion, and she is physically destroyed."¹⁴

A sub-theme which is present to a lesser extent is the national and language question. In fact, one of the three points to Malakhii's reforms, involves the "Ukrainianization" of society,

"Про реформу української мови з погляду
повного соціалізму, а не так, як
на телеграфі, що за слово уночі
правлять, як за дві слові - у ночі.

"For the reform of the Ukrainian language in terms of socialism, and not in terms of the telegraph, where at night, one is charged for one word, the same price as for two words - at night."¹⁵

Here, Malakhii wants to raise the status and the consciousness of the Ukrainian language. No longer should it be thought of as some sort of provincial language, but as a scholarly, and literary-sound one. He wants to rid the "Little Russian" mentality from the Ukrainian psyche, and instead awaken the Ukrainian national self-identity.

As in The People's Malakhii, the theme of "universal love" dominates in The Madwoman of Chaillot. The Countess Aurelia is the protectress of this "universal love". The enemies of "universal love" are the financiers, who represent greed, and only care about making money, at the expense of others. The Madwoman on the other hand, is concerned about preserving a way of life which she fears, is quickly disappearing. She is not concerned about herself, but about the entire community of Chaillot, which she herself is part of. Therefore, she must destroy these men, in order that her people will not be corrupted by the financiers' values. For her values are wholesome and nonjudgemental, and every person is unique in their own way.

Another theme found in the Madwoman of Chaillot, is the universal theme of "good versus evil" - the good represented by the Madwoman of Chaillot, and the residents of Chaillot, while the evil is represented by the financiers. This gives the drama, a kind of "fairy-tale" like quality. As in all fairy-tales, good always triumphs over evil.

Countess: They've evaporated, Irma. They
were wicked. Wickedness evaporates.¹⁶

With the triumph of good over evil, the Chaillot district has gone through a transformation:

Irma: Life is beautiful again.
The Ragpicker: Countess - the pigeons!
The pigeons are flying!

Flower Girl: They don't have to walk any
more.
The Ragpicker: They're flying.... The air
is like crystal. And young
grass is sprouting on the
pavements.¹⁷

A lesser theme presented in this drama, concerns the excesses found in a capitalistic society. This is evident in the dialogue between the countess and the Ragpicker in the First Act. Each refers to the businessmen as "pimps", who carefully organize and control all aspects of ordinary life. This in turn leads to the sub-theme of "the mechanization of society". These individuals will stop at

nothing in order to extract the oil beneath the city of Paris. The destruction of the ordinary person, along with one's history and culture are of no importance. Giraudoux believed that this process was underway in French society. He saw progress in a technological society as doing more harm than good. While society is being mechanized, it is destroying one's identity - one's heritage, which is the link between one's present and one's past. Robert Cohen saw this particular process, as the thing that most motivated Giraudoux in writing The Madwoman of Chaillot,

"It is no longer merely Prussianism which concerns him, it is the oppression of technological progress, either American, German or Russian; the oppression of a technocracy which seeks to devalue individuality, artistry, history and culture and to insist upon, in their places, efficiency, sterility, neatness and uniformity. What terrified Giraudoux about this particular war, which was being battled about France's head, was that it led only "to the thought that peace will be no more than a horrible adjustment between a mutilated white race and a triumphant mechanical civilization". It was this thought above all which generated The Madwoman, as can be seen in several illustrations."¹⁸

One other sub-theme which has been suggested, is the German-French theme. Giraudoux had a long attachment with Germany, since he studied there as a student. Following World War I, Giraudoux hoped for a French-German

rapprochement, but was deeply stunned when his country was invaded by the German army in 1940. According to Robert Cohen, in an earlier version of The Madwoman of Chaillot, the flower girl is said to have exclaimed, "The armistice must have been signed", just as the financiers disappeared into the trapdoor inside the Countess's residence.¹⁹

Perhaps, in this statement Giraudoux was predicting the defeat of Germany, which he did not live to see. One interesting note concerning this particular sub-theme, concerns the name of the mysterious former lover of the Countess Aurelia, Adolphe Bertaut. By using the German name Adolphe, Giraudoux might be making a reference to Adolf Hitler. Giraudoux describes Bertaut as having a "hairlip", and in fact at the time, it was rumoured that Hitler had one, and for that reason wore a moustache.²⁰

In both, The People's Malakhii and The Madwoman of Chaillot, "universal love" serves as the main theme. In both dramas, the protagonists are "put under a cloak of madness", in order to show the evils in society. Both to a lesser extent touch on the "national" theme. In The People's Malakhii, it is the raising of the status of the Ukrainian language in all aspects of society. In The Madwoman of Chaillot, Giraudoux touches upon the theme of preserving traditional French culture and life. Both dramas also touch on the "morality" theme. Kulish focuses on the moral rebirth of man, by ridiculing Marxist principles which Soviet society was to be built on. Giraudoux on the

other hand, denounces the greed of the financiers for only caring about their own monetary gain, at the expense of ruining the lives of others. For Giraudoux, the mechanization of society and the excesses of capitalism, are what fuelled the greed of the businessmen. He believed it was these factors, which would erode away at the French heritage which he was so very proud of.

The main difference in themes, concerns the theme of "man aspiring for a better life". This is very much in evidence in The People's Malakhii. Though, in The Madwoman of Chaillot Giraudoux focuses not on changing society, but on leaving it as is. He uses the people of the district of Chaillot as an example. These individuals were perfectly content with their lives prior to the arrival of the financial leaders. Now with their arrival, there is great apprehension as to the fate of a way of life which has not changed in decades.

(ii) Plot

The People's Malakhii centres around the character of Malakhii Stakanchyk, a former postman who fearing the revolution sweeping across his country, walls himself in a closet for a self-imposed exile of two years. During his "self imposed exile", he had immersed himself with various Marxist books, which led him to believe that

his mission on earth was to reform mankind with humanistic principles. After receiving a reply from the Council of People's Commissars on his various projects for reform, Malakhii Stakanchyk decides to leave his family in order to bring about his reform to Ukrainian society. He will not listen to any member of his family, nor to Kum, who desperately tries to prevent him from leaving the village. He begins his mission by going to the Council of People's Commissars, where he presents his three points of reform:

- "1. Про негайну реформу людини і в першу чергу українського роду, бо в стані дядьків та перекладачів на тім світі зайців будем пасти.
2. про реформу української мови з погляду повного соціалізму, а не так, як на телеграфі, що за слово уночі правлять, як за дві слові - уночі.
3. додаток: схема перебудови України з центром у Києві, бо Харків здається мені на контору."

1. For the immediate reform of man, - a Ukrainian in the first place, - for if we remain peasants and translators, we will fall behind the others.
2. For the reform of the Ukrainian language in terms of the entire socialism, and not in terms of the telegraph, where at night one is charged for one word, the same price as for two words - at night.
3. In addition: in the scheme of rebuilding Ukraine with the capital in Kyiv, because Kharkiv seems to me to be more like an office.²¹

The Second Act begins with Malakhii going to see the People's Commissars. With him are a group of citizens whom he accuses of trying to lure a girl into joining a brothel and becoming a prostitute. He uses this group of people as

evidence that mankind needs immediate reform. During this time, he meets an old female pilgrim named Ahapiia, who is attempting to make her way to Jerusalem. However, Malakhii, who has educated himself in Marxist theories, tries to persuade her that she should not bother going to the Holy Land, but instead, go to the "new Jerusalem" - Moscow, and pay a pilgrimage to Lenin's mausoleum. He also encounters his daughter Liubunia, and Kum who unsuccessfully try to convince him to return home with them. Unfortunately, the People's Commissars completely misunderstand Malakhii. They take him for a mad lunatic, and under the guise that the vice chairman of the council is to meet Malakhii at his country home, he is sent instead to Subarova Dacha, a mental institute in Kharkiv.

In the Third Act, Malakhii has become a patient at Subarova Dacha, where he continues his mission of attempting to reform humanity. In fact, he finds support among the other patients in the hospital. Unfortunately, during his stay at the hospital, he begins to show signs of mental instability. It is at this point, that he proclaims himself the "Narodnyi Malakhii" (the People's Malakhii), who has been chosen to reform mankind, and lead it to the "sky-blue distance". This is reinforced when he sees a vision of himself as the "Narodnyi Malakhii":

"По черзі до нього підходять: дідок у дармовисі,
колишній воєнний в галіфе, дама, Агапія, санітар,
божевільні. Він накриває кожного голубим покривалом,
повчає, переконує, потім робить магічний рух рукою,

і тобі з під голубою покривала виходять оновлена людина, страшено ввічлива, надзвичайно добра, ангелоподібна. Далі ці люди, багато людей і він на чолі їх, з червоними маками та з жовтими нагідками йдуть у голубу даль."

"In turn they approach him: an old man in a cloak, a former soldier in riding breeches, a lady, Ahapiia, the wardsman and the patients. He places over them a sky-blue cover, begins preaching, teaching and finally makes magical movements with his hand - then from underneath the sky-blue covers, emerges a reborn human being, very understanding, extraordinarily good, angel-like. Then these people, many people, and he at the forefront, holding poppies, and yellow marigolds in their hands, heading towards the sky-blue distance."²²

As a result of this vision, Malakhii promises the patients of the hospital, that he will fulfil their needs. He even promises Olia the nurse, that the lover who had betrayed her, will soon return to her. In order to continue his mission, he subsequently escapes, and ends up at the *Hammer and Sickle Factory* inside Kharkiv. In the meantime, Liubunia and Kum have arrived at Subarova Dacha, where they learn of his escape.

The Fourth Act opens with Malakhii preaching about his planned reforms to the workers of the *Hammer and Sickle Factory*. Unlike the receptive audience at the Subarova Dacha, the factory workers are quite hostile towards him. As with the Council of People's Commissars, the factory workers also view him as a lunatic. For the factory

workers, there is no room for Malakhii's "sky-blue" vision, they have their own needs. As Marko Stech

Remarks:

"The society, as represented by the workers, has its own aspiration, which clashes with Malakhii's "sky-blue dreams", and proves to be much stronger and more attractive to most people than the search for the truth and quest for self-perfection. This aspiration is the idea of social and technological progress."²³

While speaking, Malakhii is jeered, and his ideas are looked upon as "suspicious" or even "counter-revolutionary". Seeing that the workers are becoming increasingly angry by his presence, Malakhii flees the factory.

The final scene of the drama opens in a brothel. Present at the brothel are: Olia the nurse, Liubunia the daughter and Ahapiia the old female pilgrim. Soon after, Malakhii appears. After seeing her father, Liubunia rejoices, believing that her father will finally return home with her. Sadly, by this point, Malakhii has grown increasingly insane, he no longer can distinguish between reality and fantasy. He does not even acknowledge Liubunia as his daughter, which leads to her committing suicide. Malakhii is left alone in the end, insane and uttering statements such as:

"Я - всевітній пастух"

"I am the universal shepherd".²⁴

While Kulish lived under a totalitarian system, which was reflected in the themes and story lines in his dramas, Jean Giraudoux grew up in a democratic system, which was undergoing deep social and economic changes. He was born in 1882 in Bellac, a small town in France.²⁵ His father was the local tax collector, and his brother, a town physician. Being a brilliant student, Giraudoux gained admission to the École Normale Supérieure, where he planned a teaching career. While there, he specialized in German literature, where upon graduation was awarded a scholarship to continue his studies in Munich. After his return to France, he entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was assigned to the Press Bureau. He soon rose up the ranks, becoming Minister of Propaganda in the Daladier cabinet, a post he would hold until the German occupation of France. Yet throughout this time, he maintained his great love of writing, especially creating a style which was original and provocative. Besides admiring such French writers as Nerval, Racine and La Fontaine, he was also impressed by the German Romantics, particularly Novalis. Above all, Giraudoux saw himself as a moral writer. It was his stand on the morality in French society which resulted in him writing The Madwoman of Chaillot.

The Madwoman of Chaillot centres around the character the Countess Aurelia, known as the Madwoman of Chaillot - an eccentric matriarchal figure whose mission is to defend the common people of her district from the financial establishment. The play opens in the Café Chez Francis, located in the Chaillot district of Paris. Present at one of the tables are the President and Baron, who represent the financial world of Paris. They are later joined by the Prospector and the Broker. The men discuss the idea of forming a cartel, for the purpose of extracting oil, which they believe exists underneath the city of Paris. Yet, in order to obtain the oil, Paris would have to be destroyed. Throughout the meeting, one becomes acquainted with the neighbourhood's inhabitants, including such characters as: the Ragpicker, the Deaf-Mute, the Street Singer and the Flower Girl. As the meeting proceeds, there are constant interruptions by the residents of Chaillot, for instance: the Street Singer sings; the Pedlar tries to sell his goods; the Flower Girl sells her flowers; the jugglers juggle coloured pins, pins of fire, and pins of diamonds; the Deaf-Mute tries speaking in sign language; and a poor man tries to invest his life savings with the Broker. For the businessmen, these people are oddities, who are looked down upon as being inferior. Therefore, destroying their homes will be of no great loss.

It is during this same scene, that the Countess Aurelia, the Madwoman of Chaillot is brought into the drama. She is described as:

".... dressed in the grand fashion of 1885, a tofetta skirt with an immense train - which she has gathered up by means of a clothes-pin - ancient button shoes, and a hat in the style of Marie Antoinette. She wears a lorgnette on a chain, and an enormous cameo pin at her throat."²⁶

At first she is unaware of the financiers' plans, but she eventually learns what is about to occur through a young man named Pierre, who is being blackmailed into doing terrorist acts on behalf of the cartel. When the Prospector sees Pierre speaking to the Madwoman, he tries to forcibly remove him from the premises. The Madwoman befriends him, because he bears a striking resemblance to her former lover, Adolphe Bertaut, a man who had left her years ago for another woman, but whom she constantly yearns for. As a result of her intervention, Pierre is saved from the clutches of the financiers. Now that she is aware of their plot, the Countess Aurelia takes upon herself the mission of saving the city of Paris, and protect the common people's way of life.

In the Second Act, the Countess Aurelia calls upon the Sewerman, where she inquires about a trapdoor in her dwelling, which leads to some mysterious passage. She learns from him, that once one enters the secret passage,

one will not see the light of day again. This gives her an idea for disposing of Paris's financiers for good. She has one of her faithful followers, Irma, summon her closest friends who are also known as "madwoman", i.e.: the Countess Constance, known as the Madwoman of Passy; the Countess Gabrielle, known as the Madwoman of St. Sulpice; and the Countess Josephine, known as the Madwoman of Concorde. After she assembles her acquaintances together, she unveils her plan. She will invite the financial leaders to her home, on the pretence that there is oil underneath her dwelling, at which time they will enter the trapdoor leading to the mysterious passage, and vanish forever from the earth. However, the Countess Josephine, warns the others, that in order to give legitimacy to the financiers' punishment, a trial should be held, to judge these individuals on their guilt or innocence, even if it means holding a trial with the real defendants not present. The Countess Aurelia agrees to this, and chooses the Ragpicker to stand in for the accused. At the end of the trial, a guilty verdict is rendered, with a pronouncement of a death sentence. Immediately afterwards, the business leaders are invited to the Madwoman's dwelling. Believing that the oil is located underneath the Madwoman's home, the business leaders quickly arrive, holding various documents for her to sign which will give them total control of her estate, and commit her to an asylum. However, she decides to have some fun with them prior to

disposing of them. She pretends that she is quite feeble and deaf, in order to see how these men will treat her. The financial leaders also give her a 24 karat gold brick, which they later steal back from her. During this entire period, these men pretend to be working for the Madwoman's best interests. After putting up with their insincerities, the Countess Aurelia points to the door leading to the abyss. The financiers quickly go through the door, disappearing forever. Soon afterwards, the members of the press enter, followed by three women representing the powerful pressure groups. They too go through the door, never to be seen again. Now with their demise, and the destruction of their philosophy of greed, a bright new future begins for the people of Chaillot.

"Waiter: Countess, everything's changed. Now you can breathe again. Now you can see.

Pierre: The air is pure! The sky is clear!

Irma: Life is beautiful again."²⁷

By taking justice into her own hands, the Madwoman of Chaillot prevents the destruction of her people's habitat, and unique way of life.

In both The People's Malakhii, and The Madwoman of Chaillot, the main protagonists are portrayed as unusual and somewhat eccentric. This is also the way they are perceived by those they come in contact with, especially people in higher authority, who see them as being mentally

unstable. One obvious thing the two characters share in common, is the mission which they take upon themselves, for the benefit of others. Malakhii Stakanchyk believes that he must change Ukrainian society, especially mankind's treatment of one another. This would be accomplished with his own proposed reforms, which he hopes will soon be implemented. In the case of the Countess Aurelia - the Madwoman of Chaillot, she becomes responsible for destroying the plans of the financial leaders in order to save her community. Yet the outcomes of their missions are quite different. Malakhii Stakanchyk does not get to fulfil his reforms. As a result, he and his family's lives are ruined. He eventually begins to believe that he is the chosen messenger. At this point he can neither tell reality from fantasy. In the end, the system which he tried to reform, remains intact. While the Madwoman is able to defeat the forces of evil. She masterminds a plot to dispose of Paris's financial establishment, which is successful - leaving a bright future for her people, and their children.

Both Malakhii and the Madwoman challenge the existing systems, yet only the Madwoman is successful. This is in great part due to the overwhelming support that the Madwoman is given by the people of the Chaillot district. She is a matriarchal figure who draws great admiration and support from her people. She is a natural leader who will defend her people's interests. One especially devoted

follower is Irma, the waitress at the Café Chez Francis, who freely follows and obeys the Madwoman's every wish. She defends the Madwoman's honour in front of the financiers, who heap insults at the Countess. She is also responsible for bringing the four madwoman together in order to discuss the future of Paris. On the other hand, Malakhii, does not have this same support from the masses, nor for that matter, from his own family and friends, as seen with his daughter Liubunia and Kum, when they try to convince him to abandon his goal, and return home with them. When he tries to convey his views to the workers of the *Hammer and Sickle Factory*, he is insulted and driven away. Ironically, these are the very people whom his reforms are meant to help. Yet they see him as a threat, believing him to be an agitator, while others see him as a lunatic. His only base of support is the patients at the Subarova Dacha, and from an old female pilgrim named Ahapiia. Ahapiia's own mission of paying a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, mirrors Malakhii's own quest of reforming humanity. In the final scene of the drama, the two are once again reunited, with Malakhii playing a dissonant "sky-blue" symphony on his flute, while Ahapiia lights a candle. In the end, neither of them fulfil their missions.

In The People's Malakhii, the plot is first set in a small Ukrainian village, then it is moved to the then Soviet Ukrainian capital of Kharkiv. It is evident that

Malakhii feels that the officials in Kharkiv are "out of touch" with the rest of the country. So too in The Madwoman of Chaillot, which takes place in the Chaillot district of Paris, an area which is misunderstood, and now threatened, by a group of individuals who know nothing about its uniqueness, but who are only concerned about profiting from the area's resources.

A scene common to both plays involves characters speaking about some bizarre or distorted situation. An example in The People's Malakhii, is the opening scene of Act 3, where one finds an odd conversation between Olia the nurse, and the doctor's assistant. The doctor's assistant tells Olia that, he knows about her affair with an individual named Kyriulha, who had just abandoned her. The doctor's assistant then proceeds to seduce Olia. What is interesting about this particular scene, is that these so-called "sane" people (i.e., Olia and the doctor's assistant), are brought into a situation where they are surrounded by mentally ill patients. Yet their conversation differs little from the people they are supposed to be taking care of. In The Madwoman of Chaillot, one can see this in the Second Act, where a conversation transpires between the Countesses Aurelia, Gabrielle and Constance, which centres around Countess Constance's now deceased dog named Dickie. The Countess Constance still believes he is very much alive, and accompanies her wherever she goes. Those who are near to

her, including the Countess Aurelia, go along with this charade in order to please her.

One important difference between the two protagonists, concerns their objectives. It is true that both Malakhii and the Madwoman are striving against the establishments in their respective societies, however, while one is trying to reform society, the other is trying to preserve the status quo. Malakhii is trying to reform not only Ukrainian society, but mankind as a whole. After all, Malakhii can be said to be modelled after the Old Testament prophet Malachi, who prophesied the coming of the Messiah.²⁸ So to Malakhii prophesies the great changes which would occur, if his reforms are implemented. He is critical of the Communist authorities who have shown complete unfaithfulness to the "ideals" of the Revolution. Only he can bring about a truly transformed society, therefore he proclaims himself the "People's Malakhii". As for the Madwoman of Chaillot, she does not want to reform French society, but to preserve a way of life which has existed for decades, and is now being threatened. She reminisces about a time when she was young and beautiful, and lived in a society which appreciated and promoted French culture. A time which she fears, is coming to an end.

(iii) Structure

Living under a totalitarian regime led Kulish to write about an individual who wanted to challenge the system by reforming it, so that the individual mattered, and not just the "collective masses". Also, the social and economic conditions in Ukraine were instrumental in the creation of The People's Malakhii. During this period, the process of Ukrainianization was underway, in spite of such obstacles as the russified Ukrainian. This was a period of the rebirth in literature and the arts. Although the *language issue* did not play as great a role in this particular play, it would in his proceeding plays, especially Myna Mazailo and Sonata Pathetique.

What the dramatist and his main protagonist share in common, is that both came from a small town in Ukraine, away from the big industrial cities. Both Kulish and Malakhii Stakanchyk would soon experience life in the big cities, and witness how Ukrainian society functioned under the communist government officials, who had lost touch with the people. Malakhii's journey is a journey in which he encounters different segments of Ukrainian society - a society which has suffered economically, physically and morally from a system which claims to "work on behalf of the people". Although Kulish concentrates on a different social group in each act of The People's Malakhii, they are all linked by their encounter with Malakhii, as he journeys to bring greater humanity to society.

The People's Malakhii is divided into five acts, all of which take place within a short time span. The drama opens up in a small village in Ukraine some time during the 1920s, during the time of Lenin's New Economic Plan (the NEP).²⁹ The other four acts take place in the then Soviet Ukrainian capital of Kharkiv. What is successfully contrasted between the First Act and the other acts, is the way of life in a rural setting, to that in an urban one, along with a contrast between the communist functionaries with the ordinary citizen. Malakhii Stakanchyk, the former village postman, unites the entire drama. He is converted from a simple individual, to a self-proclaimed "reformer of mankind". His increasing mental instability signals his mission's demise, along with any hope of transforming society as long as a totalitarian system remains intact.

The First Act of The People's Malakhii begins with Malakhii's wife and older daughter giving the background on what led to his transformation, i.e., walling himself in a room and reading Marxist material during the span of the revolution. One learns from them that he is planning to leave them, in order to preach his newly discovered ideology, and his proposals to transform humanity. In this same act, Kulish points out the unsatisfactory economic conditions under communism. He does this by contrasting the characters of Malakhii and Kum. Malakhii's main concern is to obtain his "sky-blue distance", which is due to his national re-awakening, while Kum is content in remaining a

"little Russian", so long as his essential needs are looked after. Yet, it appears that even Kum has become disillusioned, to a point that he no longer cares. It is for this reason that he is sceptical about Malakhii implementing his reforms. The dreadful state of the economy, and the products produced in the Soviet factories, serve as a conversation between Malakhii and Kum:

Кум: Чому жінка купила радянського гребінця, нарочито з найкращого сорту, і хоч би сама чесалася, а то ж
 Нінонька, дитя неповнинне, ще й волоссячко, як льон. То чому я питаю з гребінця зразу аж три зубці випало, і це теж факт
 Малахій: Три зубці? Далі!
 Кум: Чому никти гнилі, а панчохи на третій день рвуться, чом у бані не так чисто як колись було? У лікаря не докличешся, хоч тричі помирай?

Kum: My wife purposely bought a Soviet comb - supposedly the top quality one - and was going to comb her hair but it..... Nina, a small child, whose pretty hair is like cotton. Therefore, why, I am asking did three teeth come out at one time, and this is also a fact?

Malakhii: Three teeth? Go on.

Kum: Why are the threads rotten and stockings come apart after three days of wear. - why are the steam baths not as clean as they used to be? And why is it, that when you call for a doctor, you wait so long, that you could die three times over before he will arrive.³⁰

What is also made clear in the First Act, is that as far as Malakhii and his quest to reform mankind is concerned, he stands alone. He finds no support within his family, nor in his village. This is the start of the conflict between Malakhii and the rest of society. This is a foreshadow of what kind of reception Malakhii will experience throughout the drama.

In the Second Act, Kulish introduces the conflict between the Soviet Ukrainian government, and the Ukrainian people. This is exemplified through the Council of People's Commissars, who are shown as being distant from the people they are suppose to serve. When Malakhii presents them with his proposed reforms, he is looked upon as being a lunatic, and is sent away to a mental asylum. He begins his implementation of reforming humanity, by befriending a young woman named Olia, from a group of people trying to force her into prostitution. Olia is particularly badgered by Madame Apolinara, who wants to force her to work for her brothel. Thanks to Malakhii's intervention, Olia is spared from falling into Madame Apolinara's clutches. However, this is only a temporary relief, for by the end of the play Olia becomes a prostitute.

In another scene of Act 2, Kum and Liubunia have caught up with Malakhii, where they try to convince him to return home with them. It is evident that Liubunia loves her father unconditionally. However, she does not

understand her father's "sky-blue distance", and for that matter, why he left his family for a mission which no one seems to comprehend.

With the old female pilgrim, Ahapiia, Malakhii finds some common ground. She mirrors Malakhii's own mission, and serves as a subplot in the drama. Her quest is to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Yet, Malakhii who now "follows" Marxism, rebukes her decision by telling her that she should go to the new Jerusalem - - Moscow, and pay a pilgrimage to Lenin's mausoleum.

Малахій: О люди, люди! - скаже голова
і додасть вельми ввічливо не до
Єрусалему тепер треба йти, а до
нової мети,

Агапія: До якої ж, голубе?

Малахій: До якої? До вищезначеної,
великої, номер 666006003, голубої
мети... Тоді вернеться громадянка
назад, на своє село, і йдучи,
проповідуватиме слово нове й
благокрасне.

Malakhii: O people, people! - the
head official will tell you
with great politeness:
don't go to Jerusalem, instead,
you have a new goal.

Ahapiia: To which sky-blue destination?

Malakhii: To which? To the above
mentioned great sky-blue
destination, no. 666006003.
Then citizen, when you
return to your village, you
will be able to go and preach
the new and blessed word.³¹

At the same time Kulish contrasts Malakhii and Ahapiia, by showing what their objectives are: Ahapiia has a set goal of going to Jerusalem, while Malakhii does not have a specific goal, which he describes simply as number "666006003". This sets the tone for the rest of The People's Malakhii, i.e., Malakhii's failure to attain his "sky-blue distance".

By the Third Act, Olia, the woman who was befriended by Malakhii against Madame Apolinara, reappears, this time as a nurse at the Subaruva Dacha. With the character Olia, Kulish creates yet another sub-plot. Once again she is involved in a confrontation, this time with the Doctor's assistant, who confronts her about an affair that Olia had in the past. Hearing this, Malakhii comforts her, by reassuring her that her former lover will soon return to her. Feeling comforted by the thought, she reciprocates the favour by allowing Malakhii to escape over the walls of the institution. Malakhii and Olia, have much in common. They are both tragic figures, whose fates parallel one another. Malakhii finds rejection and hostility by the people he hopes to help. The same is true for Olia, whether it be by the villagers who try to drive her into prostitution, or by the Doctor's assistant, with his lurid comments. Both characters are doomed in the end.

While Malakhii is in Subaruva Dacha, he does find a friendly reception by the other patients. Malakhii is not mentally ill, but by placing him in a mental

institution, Kulish foreshadows his mental disintegration, culminating in Malakhii proclaiming himself, the "People's Malakhii". From hence forth, he believes that he has been specifically chosen to reform humanity. By the Forth Act, while in the *Hammer and Sickle Factory*, he displays yet further mental instability. The conflict between himself and society is further exemplified, by the workers rejecting his reforms. However, there is another conflict introduced between Malakhii and the factory workers. It is a conflict between two visions.³²

Malakhii is concerned with the rights and respect of the individual person. As for the factory workers, individual interests are not important, what is important is the interests of the workers as a whole. The factory workers faithfully follow the party line, so long as they have food and a "roof over their heads", they will continue to support the system. Therefore Malakhii represents a threat to them. His proposed reforms threatens to destabilize a life style which they are accustomed to.

In the final act, Kulish successfully brings the conflicts to a climax, and a completion. The final scene takes place in a brothel, indicating the bleak outcome for all the play's characters. Malakhii's struggle with society has come to an end. At this point, he has gone insane. His mission to reform society has completely failed. His idealist-utopian view of society has been in complete

confrontation with the real situation and mind-set of his country's people.

Olia the nurse is now employed as a prostitute. After being encouraged by Malakhii, that her former lover will return to her, she is completely devastated, as a result, she falls prey to Madame Apolinara's and her prostitution ring. So too does Malakhii's daughter Liubunia. Liubunia or "liubov", means "love", and that is what her function is. Bahrij-Pikulyk refers to her as, "a force of love".³³ Her love is a love of a daughter for her father. So when he rejects this sincere love, and choses instead his "sky-blue" vision, she commits suicide. It is Liubunia's love which remains a constant force throughout the drama.

The female pilgrim Ahapiia also ends up in the brothel. Her plight which has mirrored Malakhii's own, has also ended in failure. Both she and Malakhii are the last two individuals scene on stage: she holding a lit candle, while he mutters more proclamations of his mission.

Giraudoux was brought up under a completely different system than that of Kulish. His people had a different history and culture from that of Kulish's. Giraudoux projected some of his own personal views upon his protagonist, the Countess Aurelia - the Madwoman of Chaillot. The Countess wanted to preserve a way of life which was now threatened. This is how Giraudoux also felt. He perceived that rural France, the place of his birth

represented the true France. Therefore, it was important to preserve the French traditions of his past - and it is upon this idea of "preservation" that The Madwoman of Chaillot is built.

The Madwoman of Chaillot is divided into two acts, and similar to The People's Malakhii, it spans a short period of time. It opens in the Café Chez Francis, on the Place de l'Alma in the Chaillot district of Paris, which is located between the Champs Élysées and the Seine, and across the river from the Eiffel Tower. What Giraudoux immediately contrasts are the differences in the life styles of the people of Chaillot, and the financial cartel which plans on destroying Paris. The financiers are portrayed as greedy and money hungry. In one particular scene involving the Broker, the President and the Little Man who has come to invest his life's savings, one sees the businessman's callousness and feeling of superiority over the ordinary person:

Broker: Who is this man? What
is this money?

Little Man: It's my life's savings.
Every cent. I put it
all in your hands

Broker: Can't you see we're busy?

Little Man: But I beg you.... It's
my only chance.... Please
don't turn me away.

Broker: Oh, all right [He sweeps the
money into his pocket]. Well?

Little Man: I thought - perhaps you'd
give me a little receipt...

The President: My dear man, people

like us don't give
 receipts for money. We
 take them.³⁴

When one learns of the financiers' plan of extracting oil from beneath Paris, the conflict between the business world and the ordinary person of Chaillot is firmly established. It becomes a basic conflict of good versus evil.

It is with the introduction of the Countess Aurelia - the Madwoman of Chaillot, that Giraudoux firmly establishes the good and evil camps. She is the only person who can challenge the financiers, and defeat them. She is a representative of old France, where French culture and language meant everything. She is an opponent of change, who wishes to preserve the "status quo". The businessmen represent a threat to the traditional culture and way of life of the people of Chaillot:

The President: Baron, the first thing we have to do is to get rid of these people! Good heavens, look at them! Every size, shape, colour and period of history imaginable. It's utter anarchy.³⁵

The President: My dear sir, wherever the poor are happy, and the servants are proud, and the mad are respected, our power is at an end. Look at that! That waiter! That Madwoman!

That flower girl! Do I get that sort of service? And suppose that I - President of twelve corporations and ten times a millionaire - were to stick gladiolus in my button-hole and start yelling.³⁶

In the First Act, Giraudoux introduces a sub-plot with the character of Pierre, a young man who has already fallen prey to the financiers, in particular, with the Prospector. Learning that Pierre had forged his father's signature to a note, the Prospector sees this as an opportunity to blackmail him in delivering a bomb to the City Architect, who has so far refused to give the Prospector a permit to drill for oil. However Pierre reneges on his agreement, and so the Prospector wants to get even with him. The Madwoman quickly befriends him because he reminds her of Adolphe Bertaut, her former lover. Pierre is soon introduced to the waitress, Irma, of the Cafe St. Francis - the Madwoman's faithful follower. In the last scene of this act, Irma and Pierre show an attraction to one another, but do not express their feelings. It is only after the demise of the financiers, in the Second Act, that the two are brought together. It is actually the Madwoman who unites them, in hope to see this relationship succeed, unlike her relationship with Adolphe Bertaut.

By bringing back Adolphe Bertaut through the person of Pierre, the Madwoman is able to link the past with the present. This is Giraudoux's intention throughout the entire drama. He plays to the audience's nostalgia for the past, and its sense of duty to preserve French culture. At the time this play was written, the Chaillot district was quite extensively "Americanized".³⁷ To this day, many French still see anything American as a threat to their culture.

With Adolphe Bertaut, Giraudoux adds yet another subplot. Although he is not physically present in the play, he nonetheless, exists in the mind of the Countess Aurelia, through the person of Pierre. Pierre complies with the Madwoman, by accepting the role of Adolphe Bertaut. It is by way of the conversations between the two, that one learns of the Madwoman's relationship with her former lover. The conversations serve as a catharsis for the Countess, in order for her to leave Adolphe Bertaut in the past, and be able to go on with her life. This is achieved in the Second Act, following the financiers' demise. At this time she knows that the business leaders are no longer a threat to her, and now she is strong enough to bid farewell to Adolphe Bertaut:

Pierre: I need your pity, Aurelia.
I need your love. Don't
forget me....

Countess: Farewell, Adolphe Bertaut.
Farewell. Let go my hand,

and give it to little Pierre.
 [Pierre lets go her hand,
 and after a moment takes it
 again. The Countess opens
 her eyes]. Pierre? Ah, it's
 you. Has he gone?

Pierre: Yes Countess.³⁸

In order to give legitimacy for the destruction of the financial leadership, Giraudoux adds the trial scene to the plot. It is this scene which leads to the play's climax. The verdict of "guilty", seals the fate of the businessmen.

Countess: And the verdict?
 All: Guilty!
 Josephine: Guilty as charged.
 Countess: Then I have full authority
 to carry out the sentence?
 All: Yes!
 Countess: I can do what I like with
 with them?
 All: Yes!
 Countess: I have the right to
 exterminate them?
 All: Yes.³⁹

From hence forth, not only is the fates of the businessmen sealed, but the fate of the drama as well. It becomes clear what will transpire next. The financial leaders will be destroyed, and the residents of Chaillot lives will never again be threatened.

In both The People's Malakhii, and The Madwoman of Chaillot, the plots are structured around the main protagonists, whose own plights affect the plights of the

other characters. This is more true with The People's Malakhii, where Malakhii Stakanchyk meets individuals from different backgrounds, and leaves a different impression on each of them. These individuals (for example, Liubunia, Olia and Ahapiia) are then left to battle their own inner conflict. In The Madwoman of Chaillot, the people of Chaillot are all mobilized against one specific cause, i.e.: the destruction of the cartel. One is aware right from the beginning who are the Madwoman's friends, and who are her enemies. This is not the case in The People's Malakhii. It is only when the plot develops, that one becomes aware of the good and the evil. According to George Shevelov:

"In Kulish's work (The People's Malakhii) the hero does not know who are his friends, and who are his enemies - he goes out with his reforms - to the Soviet People's Council of Commissars, he pushes away from himself his true followers (Liubunia), and leads them to their destruction, while bringing defeat upon himself."⁴⁰

This major difference between the two plays, leads the two story lines to develop in opposite directions. The Madwoman and her devout followers will be successful, while Malakhii who lacks support for his mission, and who is overcome by his need to reform society, to such an extent, that he even shuns his own daughter, resulting in his destruction, and the destruction of others.

The People's Malakhii involves a greater diversity in terms of scenes, situations and characters. Kulish takes his hero from a village scene, to the then Soviet Ukrainian capital of Kharkiv, where he enters a mental hospital, a factory and a brothel. In The Madwoman of Chaillot, the drama takes place entirely in the Chaillot district of Paris, either at the Café Chez Francis, or at the Madwoman's residence. As far as the characters are concerned, the majority of them lack any real distinction from one another, but are "lumped" into two camps: the "good" and the "evil". By grouping them into these two camps, one gets a "fairy-tale" like quality and structure not found in The People's Malakhii.

(iv) Style

The People's Malakhii and The Madwoman of Chaillot, were written from the stand-point of their creators' life's experience, their nation's literary traditions, along with the influence of other literary styles of the day. Although the two dramatists shared little in common, in the case of these two particular dramas, they shared some similarities, including some aspects of style.

It was Kulish's own disillusionment with the Communist system, which served as his inspiration in writing the drama, and in developing the character of Malakhii Stakanchyk. By way of this one character, Kulish was able

to criticize Marxist doctrine, which Soviet society was based upon. Because of this, Kulish was severely criticized, and even censored, and for this reason he portrayed Malakhii as being insane, in order to be allowed to stage the play. According to Iosyp Hirniak,

"In order to prevent any accusations of ideological heresy, of breaking away from the general policies of the 'proletariat rule', the playwright endowed his hero with the qualities of an abnormal, sick person."⁴¹

In some ways, Malakhii's plight resembled Kulish's, in that, as a young man, Kulish was an enthusiastic supporter of the Communist Party, believing that it had the best interests of the Ukrainian people in mind, but soon after, he witnessed the results of the new socialist society which was emerging under Communism.

As a genre, The People's Malakhii is a tragic comedy. According to Revutsky, "Kulish himself described his play as being tragic (trahediine)".⁴² It is indeed tragic - the tragedy of a man who aspires to change society, and ends up destroying himself, and all those around him. At the same time, Kulish adds a comedic flavour to the drama. This is especially present in the main character, Malakhii, whose naivety towards the communist officials and towards society's attitudes about change is both comedic and tragic.

Although Kulish became interested with the new European movements, he did not abandon his Ukrainian literary

traditions. This is true in the case of The People's Malakhii, where one finds a combination of Western European and Ukrainian literary trends. As far as the modernist trends are concerned, the expressionist element is present throughout the drama.⁴³ One important feature, the "type" character, is present in the names of Malakhii's daughters: Vira (Faith), Nadiia (Hope) and Liubunia/Liubov (Love). Kulish revolved the various characters around the main protagonist, so that everything, and everyone interacts. He also introduced the expressionist device of music and rhythm to the drama. This is shown in the First Act, where there is a mixture of religious songs and laments.⁴⁴ This is repeated in Act III, when Malakhii hears a background sound of religious songs and the *International*.⁴⁵ In the last scene of the play, Malakhii is shown playing a dissonant piece on his flute, after hearing that his daughter Liubunia committed suicide.⁴⁶ One other expressionist device introduced by Kulish was the film clip. This was a new element in theatre, but was first introduced to the Ukrainian audience by Berezhil's director Les' Kurbas, in his performance of Upton Sinclair's Jimmie Higgins. Kulish's film sequence was used to show Malakhii's vision of the "sky-blue distance" during his stay at Subarova dacha.⁴⁷

Besides expressionism, Malakhii used elements of the *Ukrainian Ethnographic Theatre*. He set the play in a traditional Ukrainian village, however his style was much superior to any of the earlier Ukrainian realist dramas.

The characters and story line of The People's Malakhii were much more complex than anything which had been performed for Ukrainian audiences in the past.

There are also examples of symbolism found in The People's Malakhii. Virlana Tkacz makes a comparison of the similarities found with the symbolist works of Pavlo Tychyna, to that found in The People's Malakhii, especially concerning Tychyna's use of poetic imagery.⁴⁸ One example provided by her, concerns the colour "blue" used in The People's Malakhii, and Tychyna's Chystyla maty kartopliu (Mother Cleaned the Potatoes). The father in this poem, like Malakhii is absorbed with his "holubaia dal'" (sky-blue distance), creates a "hrizno synia-tysha" (a threatening blue silence as he enters his house).⁴⁹ Iurii Kobylets'kyi corroborates Tychyna's influence on Kulish, by referring to Kulish's letters to his colleague Ivan Dniprovs'kyi,

"Та й сам автор згадує в листі
І. Дніпровського, що в шуканнях
революційних форми мистецтва він
"прислухається до Тичини" ".

"The author recalls in the letters to I.
Dniprovs'kyi, that Tychyna would 'lend an
ear ' to him, when he was in search of the
revolutionary artistic form."⁵⁰

Kulish incorporates such figures of speech as metaphors, personification and imagery to enhance the overall drama. In the Third Act, which takes place in the

asylum, one finds such examples, for instance, one of the patient says,

Третій:Думка була весілля
справляти, коли гульк - і
молода, і мати весільна на
баштані посохли.

Third Patient: The thought was like
a wedding feast, and the
the bride and her mother
during the wedding nuptial
withered away in the garden."⁵¹

An example of a simile occurs in the same act,
where one of the patients makes a comparison with Olia's
sexual gland, with that of a rose,

Четвертий: У неї прекрасна й
запашна, як троянда,
полова залоза - я
бачив....

Patient Four: She (Olia) has a sexual
gland beautiful and fragrant
like a rose - I saw it...⁵²

While, an example of personification takes place between
Olia and the Doctor's Assistant,

Санітер: Про морозиво пташка
розповіла, бо на дереві
сиділа і все чисто бачила.

Doctor's Assistant: The bird talked about

the frost, because she was sitting on the tree, and was able to see everything clearly.⁵³

Kulish also focuses on religious and cosmic terms, in order to give a sense of mysticism, since the character Malakhii exhibits a kind of mystical quality. This is displayed at the beginning of the play, when the choir is assembled in Malakhii's home, and he compares the disintegration of society, in terms of religious and cosmic examples,

Малахій: Чуєте грім? Огонь і грім на
квітчастих степах українських...
- Кришиться, дивіться, пада розбите
небо, он сорок мучеників сторч
головою, Христос і Магомет, Адам
і Апокаліпсис раком летять....
І сузір'я Рака й Козерога в пух
і прах....

Malakhii: Do you hear the thunder? Fire
and thunder on the flowered Ukrain-
ian steppe. The crumbling sky is
falling. The forty martyrs are falling
upside down. Christ and Mohammed, and
Adam the Apocalypse are flying on all
fours.... And the constellations of
Cancer and Capricorn are destroyed...⁵⁴

In the final scene of the play, this same chaotic vision is repeated, showing that the solution to society's problems, is no closer than it was at the beginning. Malakhii is left

alone, he has lost his daughter, and finds solace by means of playing his flute.

Giraudoux, like Kulish used his main protagonist, to convey a particular stand. Also like Kulish, he developed a particular style, by combining French literary tradition, and other literary styles of his time. Having studied in Germany, it would not be surprising that he would come in contact with the various trends influencing German literature and drama. It was German romanticism which captivated him as a student.⁵⁵ Believing that French writers had suppressed poetic expression in the past, at a time when it should have shown greater creativeness, Giraudoux perceived German Romanticism as uncovering a "new world" with vast ideas. In his The Madwoman of Chaillot, one sees this "new world", a world of fantasy, resembling a fairy tale, where good triumphs over evil. As John H. Reilly relates,

"...The Madwoman of Chaillot illustrates the writer's sense of fantasy better than any other major play, for its fairy tale atmosphere allows the imagination to soar. The dramatist uses the unexpected and enjoyable twists and turns of his mind to full advantage."⁵⁶

As a genre, The Madwoman of Chaillot is a drama with comedic and tragic elements. By way of a fairy-tale, Giraudoux was able to combine the two, to successfully convey his warning about France's future. By introducing

such characters as the Ragpicker, the Flowergirl or the Sewerman, he contributes to the fantasy-like atmosphere and introduces the expressionist element of the "type character". Uniting them, is the Countess Aurelia - the Madwoman of Chaillot, the eccentric woman, dressed in a fashion from the 1880s, who possesses a true understanding of the real values of living.

Giraudoux's style, has been described in the following manner:

"His ideas take the form of complicated conceits, and his vocabulary is often startling in its adoption of anarchisms, colloquialisms, technical jargon, and odd juxtapositions; he is constantly striving, perhaps not always consciously, to give new meaning to language by taking outworn and faded images, and reviving their meaning by the use of unusual antithesis, prolonged imagery and figurative verbal tricks."⁵⁷

Antithesis and contrasting play a large role in The Madwoman of Chaillot, whether it be good and evil, real and ideal or youth and maturity.⁵⁸ These are all apparent throughout the play, indicating Giraudoux's polarized vision of society. Robert Cohen describes Giraudoux's dramas, as being dialectical, since dialectical dramas exhibit polarization.⁵⁹ He divides society between the good people of the Chaillot district, and the evil business and financial leaders. He accomplishes this contrast between the groups, by embellishing the dialogues between the

characters, which is marked with humour, irony and fantasy. This is exemplified in the last scene of the play, where there is joyful elation that the financiers have disappeared,

First Voice: Countess, we thank you. We are
the friends of flowers.

Second Voice: From now on, every plant in Paris
will be watered....

Third voice: And the sewers will be fragrant with
Jasmine!⁶⁰

The imagery of the drama is one of a people at war. The financiers are the "invaders", and their attempt of overtaking the city of Paris, and in particular the district of Chaillot, is compared to an "invasion". The actions of the financiers are so horrendous, that they are considered to be of a different race,

The Ragpicker: The people are not the same.
The people are different. There's
been an invasion. An infiltration
from another planet. The world is
not beautiful any more. It's not
happy ."⁶¹

Giraudoux then uses a metaphor to describe how the financier's corruption affects all aspects of life.

Irma: They're all connected like the parts
of a machine.

Countess: So much the better. We shall drive
the whole machine into a ditch.⁶²

In the end, the businessmen, the interest groups, the media etc., follow one another in near robotic fashion into the bottomless pit, ringing true, that they are "connected like the parts of a machine". This scene is reminiscent of an army or in this case, an "invading" army going into retreat and defeat.

Giraudoux's emphasis on sentiment reflects his love of romanticism. His use of metaphors and symbols also show the symbolist influence in his works. The play is full of symbols, for example, the mention of the French President Clemenceau and the American President Woodrow Wilson, or of the Madwoman's former lover Adolphe Bertaut (which some critics believe makes reference to Adolf Hitler), establishes the time frame of the play. Giraudoux never mentions the time period when The Madwoman of Chaillot is taking place, only describing it as "a little before noon in the Spring of next year".⁶³ Or in his description of the bankers, prospectors, etc., as "pimps", reflects Giraudoux's opinion of how corrupt he viewed the French establishment, and also showed his concern that the French cultural traditions were on the verge of disappearing. He therefore has the corrupt elements of society enter the bottomless pit of the Madwoman's residence, to symbolize society's condemnation of them.

The Madwoman of Chaillot, and The People's Malakhii showed the unique styles of their individual creators. With

The People's Malakhii, Kulish combined Ukrainian literary and theatrical traditions with symbolist and modern Western European trends. Giraudoux too combined his native literary and theatrical traditions, but was influenced by German Romanticism, which he viewed as showing greater creativeness than that of French Romanticism. Although the two dramatists show different influences, in terms of genre, both are similar, i.e., tragic comedies. While Kulish used a satirical atmosphere to convey his tragic comedy, Giraudoux's was based on a fairy-tale. Yet, in both cases the dramatists enriched the language of their dramas by adding colloquial jargon, and various figures of speech.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Yosyp Hirniak, "Birth and Death of the Modern Ukrainian Theatre", Soviet Theatres 1917-1941 (Research Program on the USSR, New York, 1954), p. 310.

- 2 Hirniak, p. 313.

- 3 Z. Hurevych. "Pro Narodnoho Malakhiia." Krytyka 5 (1928), p. 45.

- 4 Mykola Kulish, Mykola Kulish: Tvory v dvokh tomakh. Comp and ed. by Les' Taniuk, (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1990), p. 68.

- 5 Kulish, p. 81.

- 6 The word *Kum* in Ukrainian can either mean: a friend; or a godfather. In the case of Kulish's The People's Malakhii it is the latter, more specifically, he is the god-father of Malakhii's daughter Liubunia.
 The word *Kum* is a specific term used to denote the relationship between the god-father and the father of the child (i.e. Kum and Malakhii) - a term which does not have an equivalent form in the English language.
 It should be noted, that due to a lack of an English word for *Kum*, the term *Kum* will be used throughout this dissertation.

- 7 This expressionist influence should not be surprising, since the Berezil' Theatre had often staged expressionist plays, including those of Kaiser's.

- 8 Kulish, p. 31.
- 9 Kulish, p. 32.
- 10 Marko R. Stech, The Dramaturgy of Mykola Kulish: The Disintegration of a Dream of a New Life, diss., University of Toronto, 1991, p. 98.
- 11 Kulish, p. 16.
- 12 Kulish, p. 26.
- 13 George Shevelov (Iurii Sherekh), "Shosta Symphoniia Mykoly Kulisha, Ne Dlia Ditei, (New York: Proloh, 1964), p. 72.
- 14 Romana Bahrij-Pikulyk, "The Expressionist Experiment in Berezil': Kurbas and Kulish.", Canadian Slavonic Papers, vol. 14, 2 (1972), p. 341.
- 15 Kulish, p. 29-30
- 16 Jean Giraudoux, Jean Giraudoux: Four Plays (Volume 1). Trans. Maurice Valency, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1958), p. 69.
- 17 Giraudoux, p. 70.
- 18 Robert Cohen, "Some Political Implications of *The Madwoman of Chaillot*", Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature, vol. 9, 2 (1968), p. 217.

- 19 Cohen, p. 215.
- 20 Cohen, p. 215.
- 21 Kulish, p. 19-20.
- 22 Kulish, p. 53.
- 23 Stech, p. 93.
- 24 Kulish, p. 83
- 25 Giraudoux, p. xi.
- 26 Giraudoux, p. 16.
- 27 Giraudoux, p. 70.
- 28 Stech, p. 97.
- 29 The NEP was initiated by Lenin on March 21, 1921, during the Tenth Party Congress, in order to save the Soviet economy from total collapse. Seeing the unpopularity of his Soviet economic policies, he temporarily retreated from them, in order to appease the peasantry, by providing it with various incentives in order to increase the food production. In exchange for a moderate tax, the peasantry was allowed to sell the surplus grain at the market rate. The policy of forced collectivization was temporarily abandoned, specifically affected Ukraine, since much of the Ukrainian land had been redistributed to the peasants under the Central Rada in 1918.

- 30 Kulish, p. 20.
- 31 Kulish, p. 41.
- 32 Stech, p.93.
- 33 Bahrij Pikulyk, p. 339.
- 34 Giraudoux, p. 10.
- 35 Giraudoux, p. 17.
- 36 Giraudoux, p. 18.
- 37 According to Laurent Le Sage in, "Giraudoux and Big Business: An Element of Reminiscence in 'La Folle de Chaillot'" (French Review, vol. XXXI, 4 (1958), p. 278.):

"In those pre-war years the Latin Quarter had gone completely "Yankee", and the new hero of the Boul' Mich, where the American style was *de ri-geur*, was the business tycoon. The youth of the "Schools", impeccable in their "High-life attire and with their hair plastered down, all dreamed of fortunes amassed through financial manipulations.

38 Giraudoux, p. 63.

39 Giraudoux, p. 59.

40 George Shevelov (Iurii Sherekh), "Don-Kikhoty promizh nas ("Narodnyi Malakhii" Zhana Zhirodu), Druha Cherha, (Suchasnist' 1978), p.77.

41 Hirniak, p. 311.

42 Valerian Revutsky, "The Prophetic MadMan", Canadian Slavonic Papers, 1 (1956), p. 49.

43 There is a "thin line" distinguishing expressionism from surrealism. According to a definition given by Brocket and Findlay in Century of Innovation: A History of European and American Theatre and Drama Since the Late Nineteenth Century. (Allyn and Bacon, 1991, p.165).

"Surrealism resembled expressionism in locating its primary point of reference within the human being, although for the surrealists the unconscious was the key, whereas for the expressionists the human spirit (vague and undefined) was the focus. Surrealism looked inward (to a freed subconscious mind) whereas expression looked outward (to a reshaped nonmaterialistic society) in the search for transformation and fulfilment."

44 Kulish, p. 24-25.

45 Kulish, p. 53.

- 46 Kulish, p. 83.
- 47 Kulish, p. 53.
- 48 Virlana Tkacz, "The Golden Dissonance: Pavlo Tychyna's Poetic Imagery in Mykola Kulish's *Narodnyi Malakhii*". Ukrainian Graduate Studies. vol. 2, 2 (Fall 1977), p. 4.
- 49 Tkacz, p. 6.
- 50 Iurii Kobylets'kyi, "Revoliutsiieiu narodzhenyi" foreward to Mykola Kulish: piesy, lysty, ed. S.S. Zinchuk (Kyiv, 1969) p. 7, n. 1.
- 51 Kulish, p. 55
- 52 Kulish, p. 53.
- 53 Kulish, p. 50.
- 54 Kulish, p. 25.
- 55 Laurent Le Sage, "Jean Giraudoux, and the German Romantic Ideal", Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, vol. xxxvi, 3 (1952) p. 4.
- 56 John H. Reilly, Jean Giraudoux, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978), p. 127.

- 57 Alvin I. Dust, "Keat's 'Well Wrought Urn' Cracked in Chaillot by the Giraudoux-Valency 'Madwoman'", Ariel: A Review of International English Literature, vol. 16, 1 (1985), p. 60.
- 58 Since an English translation of The Madwoman of Chaillot was used instead of the French version, some of the literary style may be lost in the interpretation .
- 59 Dialectical dramas are more "action packed", while mimetic dramas rely on the "epic sweep". Dialectical dramas are not narrative, and therefore the dramatist can create opposing forces which can "duel to the end", thereby allowing the audience to make their own moral conclusions. (see Robert Cohen, Giraudoux: Three Faces of Destiny [Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1968], p. 138).
- 60 Giraudoux, p. 70-71.
- 61 Giraudoux, p. 32.
- 62 Giraudoux, p. 34.
- 63 Giraudoux, p. 3.

CONCLUSION

The first half of the twentieth century was a scene of several modernist movements in drama and theatre, including: cubism, dada, expressionism, futurism and surrealism. Although some were just a passing fad, others have inspired innovations which remain to the present day. These new movements changed the way in which drama could be expressed on paper and performed on stage. Of these new trends, expressionism had one of the greatest influences on Western European theatre and drama - more so in Germany than any where else. It believed that the fundamental truth was found within one's soul, and that the external reality could be remoulded so that the human spirit could triumph over any obstacles.

However, these new theatrical and dramatic trends did not remain exclusively Western European, for they soon crept into Eastern Europe, including Ukraine. They were introduced to Ukrainian theatre, by way of Les' Kurbas, the director of the Berezil' Theatre, who as a student in Vienna was exposed to the writings of Gordon Craig and George Fuchs, and the works of the director Max Reinhardt, which led him to become one of the most innovative directors in Ukrainian theatrical history. His new ideas "caught the eye" of the Ukrainian dramatist Mykola Kulish, who became so impressed with his work, that he became Kurbas's

permanent dramatist for the Berezil' Theatre, and as a result adopted modernist innovations to his work.

Prior to Kulish's involvement with the Berezil' Theatre, he was still under the influence of realism. However, Kulish and his predecessors Lesia Ukrainka and Volodymyr Vynnychenko wanted to diversify Ukrainian theatre and drama, which for years was dominated by the *Ethnographic Theatre*. In the case of Kulish, it was his drama The People's Malakhii, that marked a growth and change in his style as a dramatist. It was with this play, that these new modernist movements including a combination of symbolism and Ukrainian literary tradition could be observed.

In France around the same period, another dramatist named Jean Giraudoux was experimenting with different literary and dramatic styles and trends. He was most influenced by German Romanticism, which he believed showed greater creativeness than French Romanticism. As a result of studying in Germany, he developed a fondness for its literature and culture. Yet, his true love remained his French heritage, which he fiercely defended. This "love" of heritage resonates throughout his drama The Madwoman of Chaillot.

Kulish and Giraudoux came from different backgrounds: Kulish grew up in poverty, and lived under a totalitarian system; while Giraudoux grew up in a middle class surrounding and lived under a democratic system. Yet,

The People's Malakhii and The Madwoman of Chaillot deal with similar themes, and share similar situations. Both men developed their dramas on the basis of the evils which were engulfing their respective nations. For Kulish, it was totalitarian Communism, while for Giraudoux, it was the "big business" establishment. In The People's Malakhii, it is the character Malakhii Stakanchyk, a former postman who tries to bring about reform and "universal love" to Ukrainian society; while in Giraudoux's The Madwoman of Chaillot, it is an eccentric woman, the Countess Aurelia, known as the Madwoman of Chaillot, who tries to sustain "universal love" by destroying the financial cartel who plan on destroying the city of Paris for their own financial gain.

The plays are structured around the main protagonists, whose plights affect the plights of the other characters. This is more true with The People's Malakhii where Malakhii Stakanchyk comes across individuals with different backgrounds, and then leaves each of them with a different impression. With The Madwoman of Chaillot, the people are mobilized against a specific cause, i.e., the destruction of the financial leaders. This is not the case in The People's Malakhii. It is only as the plot develops, that one becomes aware of the "good versus evil" scenario. This major difference between the two plays leads the two story lines to develop in different directions.

The theme of "universal love" serves as the main theme for both plays. Both plays also touch on the "morality" theme. Kulish focuses on the moral rebirth of man, by ridiculing Marxist principles, which Soviet society were to be built on. As for Giraudoux, he denounces the greed of the financiers, who worry only about themselves, at the expense of ruining other people's lives. To a lesser extent, both make reference to the "national" theme. In The People's Malakhii, it is the raising of the status of the Ukrainian language in all aspects of Ukrainian society; while in The Madwoman of Chaillot, it is the condemnation of the mechanization of society, and the excesses of capitalism, which Giraudoux sees as the factors that will erode away at French society and its heritage.

Where the two differ, are in terms of the theme of "man aspiring to a better life". This is clear in The People's Malakhii, where Malakhii Stakanchyk wants to implement a set of reforms which will bring change to Ukrainian society, and to mankind as a whole. While in The Madwoman of Chaillot, the Countess Aurelia does not want to change society, for she is happy with the "status quo". It is only the arrival of the financial leaders which threatens the Countess's and her people's way of life.

The People's Malakhii had "broken new ground" in terms of Ukrainian theatre and drama. It found acceptance with the Ukrainian audiences, who were able to relate to many of

the situations portrayed in the play. It had such an affect on Ukrainian society, that one would hear phrases from the play on the streets of Kharkiv. In fact, the term *malakhiianstvo* or *malakhiianism* soon became an everyday terms. As for The Madwoman of Chaillot, it too echoed the mood of much of the French audience. Yet, unlike The People's Malakhii it did not mark a change in its creator's literary or dramatic style, or introduce to its audience something completely unique. It did however show Giraudoux's brilliance, by presenting the social seriousness of its plot in a comical and fantasy-like atmosphere.

TABLE 1
Transliteration Table

А а	a	Н н	n
Б б	b	О о	o
В в	v	П п	p
Г г	h	Р р	r
Г г	g	С с	s
Д д	d	Т т	t
Е е	e	У у	u
Є є	ie	Ф ф	f
Ж ж	zh	Х х	kh
З з	z	Ц ц	ts
И и	y	Ч ч	ch
І і	i	Ш ш	sh
Ї ї	i	Щ щ	shch
Й й	i	Ю ю	iu
К к	k	Я я	ia
Л л	l	Ь ь	' (miakyi znak = soft sign)
М м	m		

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