

## **‘Inner’ Emigration: Emigrating Without Crossing Borders**

**Tatiana Neshumova**

It so happened that, in the last decade, I devoted my time to biographical reconstruction and to collecting, publishing and commenting on poetry, prose and letters of the authors, who were not well known in their lifetime and were practically crossed out of the history of literature. Studying their lives and putting together the shattered puzzle of their biographies, I compile books that make their human experience available to the readers, restoring it in the history and saving their works from getting washed away like sandcastles.

Examples include Varvara Malakhieva-Mirovich, Dmitrii Usov, and Evgenii Arkhipov, just to name a few.

Each of their lives were divided into two halves: before and after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Common to all of these litterateurs was the experience of “inner emigration,” although each had a different experience and became “inner emigrants” in their own way.

When a country undergoes a social revolution or an abrupt change of political regime (as was the case with France in the end of the 18th century, Russia in 1917, and Germany in early 1930s), people confront the ultimate question: can they remain in their motherland?

The decision to escape emanates from complete hopelessness and the realization of that there will be no future under the new government, yet it is not made immediately because people tend to hope for the best and deceive themselves.

Often, circumstances make the departure or emigration impossible, and the person stays to live in a country which has norms of life blatantly contradicting the new government's slogans, morals, principles and ideas.

Active demonstration of these differences might result in deprivation of a person’s freedom or even life. Under such circumstances people withdraw themselves from active participation in real life in favor of transferring their most meaningful and significant being, their inner world, to the private sphere and solitary life — that is inner emigration, passive confrontation with the state system caused by the inner disagreement with the ruling ideology beside their inability to express that disagreement publicly.

Dmitrii Usov.

One of the first criminal cases during the Big Terror was the case of a "Russian fascist cell" --- also known as "the case of the slovarniks (dictionary people)." In the beginning of 1935, soon after the murder of Kirov, 140 people were arrested, all of them either Germans or Philologist-Germanists. They were accused, in particular, of an attempt to introduce fascism into the Big German-Russian Dictionary. The first edition of the first volume of the dictionary was destroyed and the second volume, which was prepared for print, was not published. After four years they would begin to imprison anti-fascists who commented on Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, and in fact those anti-fascists would not be released from the camps even after the beginning of the war with Hitler, but in 1935 they were arresting those who knew German. The Editor-in Chief of the Dictionary, Elizaveta Meier, and Usov's best friend, the classical scholar Aleksandr Chelpanov, were executed. Dmitry Usov himself received 5 years in the camps, while the philosopher Gustav Shpet was exiled.

Usov's poems were not published in the USSR and his name was not forgotten only because he appeared in Nadezhda Mandelstam's memoir [PHOTO OF USOV - 1942] "Bearded, gasping and feral, and, like Ossip Mandelstam, feared nothing and was afraid of everything. Usov was dying in a Tashkent Hospital and summoned me to say good-bye, though I was too late. May he forgive me this sin --- after all, I brightened his last days with Mandelstam's poetry, which he loved immensely. <...> He was involved in the case of the "Slovarniks" --- a case during which many were expected to be executed but many of whom were pardoned through the intercession of Romain Rolland. During the war some slovarniks were released from the prison after five year confinement and ended up living in Central Asia where their wives were exiled. These people in their mid-forties were dying one after another from heart disease they had developed in the camps. My friend Usov was among them. Each such case -- Hermitage Process (ermitazhniki), Historian's Process (istoriki), Dictionary Process (slovarniki) -- was a grain of the national consciousness, an intellect and spiritual strength, which was systematically destroyed."

In 2004, I got an offer to write an article about Usov for "Mandelstam Encyclopedia." When I began my search in Moscow archives the first document I got my hands on was his "autobiography." It was written right before his arrest in 1935. I took this as a symbolic occurrence. We know from the memoirs of Mikhail Lozinsky, famous translator of "Divina Commedia" that, preparing for arrest, Usov had all the most necessary things wrapped in a bundle of cloth, so he could take those to the prison with him. This "autobiography" was in Usov's bundle.

By having compiled this list of printed works, it was as if he had thrown a message in a bottle. I felt like the message was addressed to me personally and I had to be the one involved with it. It was easy to work, because I knew immediately which directions to take. So it happened that I had the chance to work in St. Petersburg and Moscow archives, both State and family. People who conduct archival research know that when you are immersed in a topic, page after page miraculously opens in front of your eyes.

Usov had few biographical connections to Mandelstam, and the article was supposed to be very short. Usov wrote about Mandelstam (evidently based on his own words) for the Dictionary of Modern Writers. The first volume came out in 1928. For the time it was an absolutely unique publication, unpenetrated by Soviet ideology: the editors did not make any assessment or attach any label (such as "bourgeois" or "fellow traveler," etc.), but rather told about the lives and publications of the authors in a dry, factual tone. Experts on Mandelstam's life like Anna Akhmatova considered Usov's entry very accurate and important biographical evidence. Usov loved Mandelstam immensely. In 1932, when answering a literary questionnaire sent to him by his friend, Yevgenii Yakovlevich Arkhipov, he wrote of Mandelstam: "You cannot help loving the one from whom you learned and from whom you continue to learn. Mandelstam is a counterpoint of the old writing and he is more alive than most of the living authors." For Usov, the modern collision of living and dead culture is exceptionally important.

People of his generation painfully chose a degree of involvement in the modern, totally Soviet culture, which was completely alien to them because their minds were shaped before the Revolution. Usov graduated from Moscow University in 1918, having begun his studies there in 1914. His was the last generation formed before the Revolution. [PHOTO 1914]

Dmitrii Usov was very musical. He played piano and published home-made magazines, participated in plays at summer houses, and published poems and tales for children. His world was saturated with culture. In letters to his teacher, Sergei Durylin (one of the contributors to "Lirika" almanac, where Boris Pasternak made his debut), Usov wrote that while swimming in the river, he and his friends depicted "The Game of Waves" by Byoklin. Usov's stepfather was a professor of Moscow University, and as a child Usov lived in Germany for several years with his parents.

German became his second native tongue. His first publications were articles about Skryabin, Novalis and Annensky in the Moscow German newspaper, "Moskauer Deutsche Zeitung." He even wrote poetry in German. For example, his most

private and passionate poem, dedicated to Cherubina de Gabriak, was written in German. He translated Rilke, Heine, Goethe and Hoffman from German into Russian and Pushkin, Baratynskii, Sologub, Akhmatova, Mandelstam and Blok into German with equal ease. His contemporaries praised those translations for their exactness. In one of his own poems he proved the principle possibility of artistic translation, having “translated from Russian into Russian” the second stanza of a poem into the fourth (the meaning of the second stanza of that poem is repeated in the fourth stanza, yet the fourth stanza sounds totally different). Usov as a poet was leaning towards Acmeist school of Russian poetry.

Usov translated not only from German but also from French: he translated two novels by Emile Zola and Gustave Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale* jointly with Andrei Fedorov. In 1927 he participated in a translators' contest and won first prize for his translation of the first chapter of Nicolas Boileau's *L'art poétique*. I did not manage to find that translation, of which only eight lines remain. By accident I only found those eight lines when I opened one of Usov's family albums. These lines began with the following words: "Write, without hurry, without thinking about the deadlines." It was 2011. By then, I had been working on Usov for seven years. While working on a document, sometimes a message is conveyed as if it were addressed to you.

As to Mandelstam's connections, when Usov was arrested in February of 1935, Mandelstam was already in Voronezh exile. In the summer of 1935 Mandelstam released a radio broadcast on Goethe's youth. In it, Mandelstam included the whole of Usov's translation of Goethe's poem, "Sah' ein Knab ein Röslein stehn" ("Mal'chik rozu uvidel"). It was as if an exiled Mandelstam sent his regards to an arrested Usov. I don't know whether Usov received that greeting, but it was sent.

If one were to put together a short, comprehensive biography of Usov after the Revolution, it would be like this: in 1918 he left cold, starving Moscow for Astrakhan; in 1919 Astrakhan University was founded and Usov immediately started translating and delivering lectures on different themes for revolutionary sailors. In one letter to his friend Arkhipov, Usov retells this incident: “I was asked by the Medical Institute to deliver a lecture to the public entitled ‘Reflection of Syphilis in Fine Literature’ ... Can you imagine my icy look and wordless response?” He published articles about literature in *Voenmor* magazine, [PHOTO] where one of the chief editors was famous Larisa Reisner, as well as in *Sarrabis*. [PHOTO O DANTE] In his free time, he translated Rainer Maria Rilke and compiled the first anthology of his poetry in translation in Russia, which was neither published nor preserved. In 1921, Usov wrote a crown of sonnets entitled

"My Favorite Poets" (where "poets" refers more broadly to "writers"): Andersen-Mörike-Eggar Poe-Hoffman-Dante-Rilke-Lawrence Stern-Henri de Régnier-Francis Jammes-Vladimir Solovyov-Innokenty Annensky-Rabelais-Cherubina de Gabriak-Shakespeare. During the horrible years of Civil War, these 15 sonnets were a symbol of irrecoverable happiness in the world of one's beloved books, where there was no room for the catastrophes of current events, as well as of aposiopesis, of the inner contradiction to the horror and darkness of daily life, of faithfulness to yesterday, and of escaping into the intimate interiority of one's self.

In 1923 Usov returned to Moscow and began to work at the State Academy of Fine Arts (GAKHN). GAKHN was the most exciting place in 1920s Moscow. Here, the best intellectual minds of the capital convened.

The Academy was created at the instigation of the artist Vassily Kandinsky and art scholar A. G. Gabrichevsky in 1921. Gustav Shpet was its vice-president. Also employed there were the famous philologists B. I. Yarho, M. O. Gershenzon, L. P. Grossman, philosophers A. F. Losev, P. A. Florensky, the translator S. V. Shervinsky and the artists K. Yuon and V. A. Favorsky.

Usov worked at the Translation Department and the Department of Russian Literature. He was also a secretary [PHOTO USOV IN GAKHN] and was responsible for recording the speeches and discussions at the GAKHN scholarly sessions. These proceedings written in his beautiful handwriting have all been preserved in the archive [PHOTO OF USOV'S LETTER, sample of his handwriting]. When I was preparing this book, I felt that it was important to publish everything Usov wrote. The part entitled, "Usov's Work in GAKHN," shows the incredible wealth of intellectual life at GAKHN. Nevertheless, it was not the Moscow of Usov's youth. Usov's feelings about Soviet Moscow were conveyed in his 1924 poem, "Moscow Spring," which was written in the seventh year of the Soviet regime.

[MOSCOW SPRING]

Young scholars who were not satisfied with the heavily censored GAKHN publications began issuing a typewritten journal, *Hermes*, with the circulation of 12 copies. Only four issues were released. Usov published his translation of Rilke's play "Everyday Life" in this journal. Here is Usov's portrait, drawn by one of the journal's participants, Lev Gornung [PHOTO].

I would like to mention one very characteristic episode. In 1927, Maximilian Voloshin, an older poet and a prominent figure of the Silver Age, came to Moscow from Crimea. Gornung and Usov agreed to take notes at Voloshin's literary

reading. After that reading, they got together, compared their notes and compiled a record of every story told by Voloshin. That record was not destroyed. It contained the exciting story about Voloshin's dispute with Nikolai Gumilev over Cherubina de Gabriak. This episode became very important for me personally: I realized I am also living in history, and if I don't make any personal effort to record the present, much of it could be lost. This realization has prompted me to always take my camcorder when I go to literary evenings and other important events. Today is becoming history right in front of our eyes. In my archive, there are records of major poets who are unfortunately already gone, such as Elena Schwartz and Vsevolod Nekrasov, as well as of different protest events in Moscow. It was my hero, Usov, who taught me to resist time in that way.

Moscow in the 1920s was overpopulated. The Usovs lived in Novodevichii Convent. [PHOTO: The monastery was turned into apartments, as Moscow had a shortage of housing. Poet and prose writer Boris Sadovsky lived in the basement of the monastery church. He was the one who kept Marina Tsvetaeva's archive: before evacuation, Tsvetaeva left her manuscripts with him.]

In 1929 there were purges in GAKHN. Such purges occurred practically everywhere: any people who were ideologically incompatible with the Soviet regime were fired. In GAKHN such individuals were a majority, so in 1930 the Academy was closed.

Usov devoted all his time to translation and linguistics, namely, he participated in the creation of the German-Russian Dictionary (he was responsible for the phraseology section). The first volume of the Dictionary came out in 1934. It was declared "a fascist dictionary." In 1935, a criminal case of the so-called German Fascist Organization in the USSR was opened. Many translators and scholars of German literature and language suffered, including Dmitrii Usov. Today it may seem like there could be nothing controversial or political about literary translation, yet this is not the case. When in the 1930s discussions arose about the accuracy of this or that poet-translator's rendition of Heine, the translators who were allegedly less faithful to the original were labeled "saboteurs." In other words, a lexical mistake could threaten one's life. The first arrests of the "slovarniks" (Dictionary editors) began in 1935, which were connected to the events of December, 1934, and the murder of Kirov, which was followed by Kamenev's arrest in January. It was a large-scale campaign aiming at the unmasking of various "enemies." GPU exposed the mythic "fascist conspiracy," with Nikolai Sergeevich Trubetskoy, the famous linguist who emigrated right after the revolution, allegedly as its head. These peaceful cabinet scholars were charged with horrible crimes.

GPU accused them of creating a Russian fascist organization and of excluding the Communist phraseology customary of the 1930s from the dictionary. Usov's verdict was five years of labor camps. He was released in 1940. It's a miracle Usov was not arrested for the second time. Maybe what saved him was that after he was released he moved in with his wife Alisa Gugovna Usova [PHOTO OF USOVA; in 1937 she was exiled from Moscow to Kyrgyzstan as a wife of the enemy of the people. After her husband's death she continued to teach his courses of German and French and the theory of translation at the University of Tashkent. She was friends with Nadezhda Mandelstam and Anna Akmatova when they lived in Tashkent.] After the camp, Usov moved joined her. He was now very far from the capitals. As we know, being away from Moscow and Leningrad saved many people in the Stalin era. [PHOTO 7, 8, 9. Newspaper "Perekovka" [Reforging] published in Belbaltlag (Belomoro-Baltiiskii Camp). The title, "Former camp prisoners and now citizen of the USSR are grateful to the country that re-forged them and brought them back to life 9photo 8). In the whole pile of all issues of this newspaper I found only one tiny article by Usov. The topic seems impossible in such a publication. It is a review of M.Loizinsky's translation of a comedy by John Fletcher, an English playwright of the time of Shakespeare (photo 9). This article is a testimony of Usov's being true to himself even in the camp conditions.]

Usov managed to find a job at the University of Tashkent where he taught his beloved German language. But his name was not included in the books published after his arrest. Translations were published anonymously or under pseudonyms: either "Dmitrievsky" or "Dimitrievsky" (and they are still published like that; publishers today do not care about the real translator --- they just copy Zola and Flaubert's books from 1930s). In 1943 Usov died of heart disease developed as a result of the inhuman conditions, hard work and depression he experienced in the camp. He was 46.

[PHOTO 13, 14. Two-volume collection by Usov. It came out in 2011 and has 1500 pages. On the cover there is a 1937 miniature drawing by the artist Timofeev from our own private collection. In it, there is a meeting at Sobachya Ploshchadka, the favorite place of all Moscovites, in Arbat. Arbat is the street where Usov was born. The author of this drawing was soon after arrested. Sobachya Ploshchadka would be destroyed in 1962 to make way for the construction of New Arbat Street. The line that serves as the title of the whole book, "We are reduced to almost nothing," is from Usov's 1924 poem --- a formula of existence for the people of his generation.]

Finalizing my story about Usov, I would like to quote his 1920s letter to a friend, Leningrad poet Vsevolod Rozhdestvensky. In early 1930s Rozhdestvensky stopped doubting the new order that destroyed the old values. He wrote to Usov: "It's hard to know you are "old-fashioned." As you know, I am diligently and sincerely learning the language of the new epoch. I make fewer and fewer grammar mistakes, my intelligentsia accent is less and less prominent; yet I am still a foreigner. I remember the other time and the other faces... It's painful to split with the old culture you grew up with, but the time is cruel and demands its own. And the time is right of course. As I said, it's hard to part with my previous aestheticism and the old world of books, but I have no way out. I do not want to be dead in our lively time. Also, I have a lust, interest, and compassion with everything being built around me. I would sincerely want to "march in time and catch the tune." I find people who run away from their epoch and cherish their ostrich ethics and cabinet barricades increasingly pathetic and ridiculous. One can only live if he believes this way." Rozhdestvenskii was ready to transform his inner self -- and he did. He became a regular Soviet poet and forgot his repressed friends. Usov was well aware of this threat and wrote in response: "If you look at the world like you do today, I am a dead man... it is beyond my power to see life where for me and the likes of me there is death and destruction."

## EVGENII IAKOVLEVICH ARKHIPPOV

Evgenii Iakovlevich Arkhipov was an old friend of Usov. Usov's letters to Arkhipov comprise most of the second volume of the Usov's two-volume collection.

[PHOTO 1: Evgenii Arkhipov --- student of Moscow University].

Arkhipov was born in 1880 in Moscow to the family of a postal service clerk. He graduated from a gymnasium (high school) in Tiflis (the old name of the Georgian capital Tbilisi, then part of the Russian Empire).

The teacher of history in that gymnasium was a very talented person and he had an impact on Arkhipov and his classmates, including the famous Russian philosophers Vladimir Ern and Pavel Florenskii.

[PHOTO 2: Pavel Florenskii (on the left) --- Arkhipov's classmate in Tiflis gymnasium].

Arkhipov, like his classmates, moved to Moscow, entered Moscow University, and graduated in Slavic philology and Russian History. At the university, he befriended an amazing man and little-known poet Prince Andrei Zvenigorodskii [PHOTO 3. Arkhipov's university friend, poet Prince Andrei Zvenigorodskii and



Boris Pasternak. Arkhipov's correspondence with Zvenigorodskii was carried on throughout his entire life.]

Arkhipov was briefly arrested and spent time in Butyrka Prison [Butyrskaiia tiurma] for his participation in a student political assembly, which had decided on the assassination of a Grand Duke. During the revolutionary events in Moscow in 1905, as the Cossacks shot into the crowd, Arkhipov miraculously survived. While studying, he worked as a walk-on at Moscow Art Theater. He saw Chekhov, Stanislavsky, and the artist Kachalov (all his life Arkhipov treasured the photographs Kachalov had given him). After graduating, he left Moscow for Vladikavkaz, a Russian city in North Ossetia, where he worked as a teacher of history and literature at a Women's Gymnasium. He dedicated his first book of critical essays on Russian poets of the 19th and 20th centuries, "The Myrtle Wreath," to his first class of students. A year earlier, in 1914, he issued the first bibliography of the prominent Russian poet Innokentii Annenskii, commemorating the fifth anniversary of the poet's death. Arkhipov was not asked to compile this bibliography, which was a fruit of his passionate enthusiasm. Albeit amateurish, the Arkhipov bibliography laid the foundation for Annenskii studies.

[PHOTO 4: Innokentii Annenskii, Arkhipov's favorite poet. Whenever Arkhipov wrote about him he used capital letter—about Him.]

Love for Annenskii brought Usov and Arkhipov together. In 1915 Arkhipov and Usov began to exchange letters. This friendship by correspondence, despite the big age difference—almost fifteen years—brought about a very close friendship that was based on deep mutual understanding.

During their lifetime, they saw each other only once: in the summer of 1928, they planned a vacation and spent two weeks together in Tsarskoe Selo, Annenskii's native town. As a result of years of friendship, they exchanged a huge number of very important letters. Not all of their correspondence was preserved, yet it is a source of utmost importance for literary historians of the 1920s-1930s.

During the Revolution and the first years of the Civil War, Arkhipov lost communication and for a long time was unable to correspond with Zvenigorodskii, who lived in Nizhnii Novgorod; Usov, who left Moscow for Astrakhan; as well as with the wonderful poetess Vera Merkurieva, who left Vladikavkaz for Moscow in 1917. The letters simply were not delivered. In 1920 Meyerhold's theater studio arrived in Novorossiisk where Arkhipov then resided. Arkhipov taught a course on Ancient Tragedy to Meyerhold's actors. Later, Arkhipov wrote several short memoir essays about Meyerhold [PHOTO : Meyerhold] This was Arkhipov's favorite style of work as a memoirist: he never delved deep into personal

relationships but instead preferred to create vignettes of memory. For example, he wrote:

"Meyerhold found, on Martynovskaia Street, a transparent glass hall that looked like a gallery and spent his day there, accepting visitors. Willingly or unwillingly, according to his own principle of intentional theatricality, he confined himself to a stage that had a glass partition between the big room and the hall.

I spent long hours in that half-lit room. Behind a huge round table, Vsevolod Emilevich [Meyerhold], unintentionally of course, held seances of sharp magic gesticulation, a complex series of movements of rare and fragile birds and whole collections of profiles.

When quiet, on the glass there spread and froze in Egyptian profile Meyerhold's brilliant head, poised as a pagan priest. A minute passed, and his head bent down in the manner of a Medieval Catholic priest. Yet when the vivacity of conversation or a flash suddenly forced Vsevolod Emilevich to rise to his full height, the fine aspect of a gargoyle bent at the waistline flew to us from Notre-Dame, invincibly merged with an attractive and different image. I cannot understand how one could enter there with a report or message of any kind. The image gave much more than a business conversation. --- It seemed necessary to do something quite different instead: to arrange the benches and armchairs near the glasses, that pit surrounded by glass, this ancient well, and to learn from him those treasures of unique movements, these historical twists of lines, these winged arms that flew up and enthralled with just a hint of a line, this crossing of waves that gave birth to a deep Old Testament, almost mythical image, this fusion of rapacity and fragility in one harmonious symphony."

In Ekaterinodar—the city in proximity of Novorossiisk—three there came to live Elizaveta Vasilieva, a Russian poetess that made herself a name in 1909 with the poems she signed by a mysterious pseudonym, Cherubina de Gabriak. This was the most famous hoax of the Silver Age.

Elizaveta, a modest, slightly overweight and limping young teacher came with the poet Nikolai Gumilev, then still Anna Akhmatova's husband, who was in love with her, to visit Maximilian Voloshin, a poet who lived in Crimea. Elizaveta quickly made friends with Maximilian Voloshin. Offended, Gumilev left alone, while Elizaveta and Voloshin created an image of a mysterious poetess, Cherubina de Gabriak, and sent Elizaveta's poems to the publishers of the Symbolist journal, "Apollon." On top of that Voloshin sent there a "Horoscope of Cherubina de Gabriak"—and all that taken together became a sensation. Sergei Makovskii, the

publisher of the Apollon, fell in love with the mysterious Cherubina, who now and then called the publishing house, without seeing her. Readers followed suit, doing a lot of guess-work and also falling in love with the poetess. After a while ELizaveta opened her secret to a German contributor of "Apollon." Gumilev referred to her disrespectfully. In the studio of theater artist Golovin, Voloshin slapped Gumilev in the face and challenged him to a duel. Luckily, the duel did not take place and both rivals stayed alive and well. But for Elizaveta this was a great turmoil, so she left St. Petersburg and never published another poem. Abroad, she became the best and most faithful student of the famous anthroposophy Dr. Rudolf Steiner. In 1914 she returned to Russia as the head of Russian anthroposophy. That was apparently when Usov, still a schoolboy but graduating that year, devoted passionate German verses to her.

And now --- in 1921 --- Arkhipov learned from his students that Cherubina (this is how from now on I'll call Elizaveta Vasilieva) lived in a neighboring town and that he could send a letter to her.

[PHOTO 5]

He wrote an article about her poems and sent it to her along with a letter. And he received an answer. The ensuing correspondence quickly reached an exceptional emotional intensity. Cherubina devoted a poem to Arkhipov:

Где б нашей встречи ни было начало,  
Ее конец не здесь!  
Ты от души моей берешь так мало,  
Горишь еще не весь!  
Wherever our meeting begins  
Its end is not here,  
You take too little of my soul  
You are not all aflame.

His answers were no less sincere, although they were less passionate: "I'd like to see You in a salon and in a close circle but not introduced or known to you by name."

Arkhipov didn't want to get closer to Cherubina in real life (in a sonnet about Cherubina, Usov wrote: "It seems to me you could bring a cherub down from heaven and drive him to sin.") Arkhipov wrote to Cherubina: "I wanted to tell you about myself in a series of moments from the past life. By mere alternation of those moments and by the fact that memory highlights these faded reflections you may see in me what I am unable to tell you in a simple straightforward story." And

Arkhippov creates a memoir that reflects the milestones of his soul's life entitled "A Plaster Mask" (1921). It was created solely for Cherubina.

The second person who was trusted with reading the "Plaster Mask" was Usov. Besides, Usov was the only reader of a "theoretic" composition by Arkhippov that was created around that time, too. It revealed Arkhippov's erotic code and would look innocent to a modern reader. It is entitled "A Confession, the Introduction to the Buried Novels." Usov responded to that composition. "The Plaster Mask" is pointedly nonmaterial, the events of life are intentionally reduced, and the author's selection is focused on what can be assessed as a "literary fact" and read with the help of the "Semantic Symbolist ABC." Arkhippov tells about his interest in Oscar Wilde and Huysmans. In his novel, *À rebours*, Huysmans wrote: "The most beautiful melody turns into an ugly, revolutive and unbearable one as soon as the crowd begins to whistle it and orchestras begin performing it." The novel's protagonist was extremely upset by having a style in common with anyone. Berdyaev wrote about Huysmans, "Everything looks alien, remote, and painfully ugly to him. He is first and foremost a man who is deeply offended, ulcerous, wounded by the "world" where he is called to live, the world he cannot accept. He has some anemic, ghostly aspect to him; his sensuality is almost incorporeal." These words can largely define Arkhippov, too. The real events in the "Plaster Mask" adjoin fixations of a mystical state.

Arkhippov highlights his completely peculiar attitude toward reading ("Books are more like creatures to me"). In response to "The Plaster Mask," Cherubina wrote her own "Confession." In it, she told him about her life without reserve, about the hoax and about her love relationship with Nikolai Gumilev who was shot in August 1921. Arkhippov asked her to send him poems; this way, he eventually collected them all. In 1924 Cherubina returned to Petersburg, where she was soon arrested. In 1927 she was exiled to Tashkent, and her archive was taken away from her. In a year, she died. This is how Arkhippov became the only person on earth who kept, in his home archive, Cherubina's poems and "Confession." He also kept all her letters. He created handwritten anthologies of her poems. He wrote two articles about her. And all that was without a slightest hope of publication. Usov joined the effort of keeping and collecting her poems and archives. Unlike Arkhippov, Usov met Cherubina and even prepared her poems for publication with a small private publisher, "Uzel [Knot]." But the poems didn't come out: by the end of 1920s private publishing houses in Russia had disappeared. The wider readership got access to those documents only in 1990s, when Perestroika lifted the ban on names that could not have even been mentioned before. This triangle of Arkhippov-Usov-Cherubina was not known to anyone, so I wrote an article about it, "The Invisible Trefoil."

In the 1920s, Arkhippov began writing one more autobiography, now entitled *The Golden Mask*. *The Golden Mask* included events up to 1935 and was then abandoned, most likely after Usov's arrest, which marked for Arkhippov the end of a huge period in his life (there's a special meaning of the title, "The Golden Mask," as a funerary mask). Usov was, for Arkhippov, the only companion to whom he didn't need to explain anything, who understood everything. Only to him in 1932 could Arkhippov write in ancient Greek, "do not come here, we have famine" (during the Holodomor, people were afraid to write the word famine or hunger in their letters).

The choice of correlative titles (*The Plaster Mask* and *The Golden Mask*) echoes Arkhippov's early interest in archaeology. At gymnasium, Ern, Arkhippov, Florensky, with their teacher, followed Schliemann's discoveries. It is important as a matter of principle that he was thinking about the "masks." "Mask" is not a revelation but a concealment. It is a compound, distanced intimacy, the defense of a true face, and it leaves a chance --- ultimately --- not to be recognized.

The work of a memoirist is making choices when one deals with the facts of biography that are allowed to appear in a text. For a historian of literature, the memoirist's omissions and the secret semantic caesurae are filled with meaning. Arkhippov, who worked his whole life as a teacher and who devoted his book of articles, "The Myrtle Wreath," to his first class of students in a gymnasium, wrote nothing about his pedagogical experience or his students --- because no teaching experience can be written into a Symbolist canon.

"Koktebel Diary" is also a kind of memoir. It comprises the day-to-day entries Arkhippov made in 1932 when he visited Voloshin --- polished after Voloshin's death (it is abridged in a book of memoirs about Voloshin; for example, some details are omitted: Voloshin told Arkhippov that after the extraction of the brain, Briusov's skull was filled with "Pravda" Bolshevik newspapers). This text is full of facts and shows almost an apostolic assumption of responsibility in witnessing the actual history happening here and now. In addition, he wrote several memoir essays and two books of memoirs, "Ten Portraits of Vera Merkurieva" (1940) and "Lectisternia" (1928). In the latter, he included all of his 1921-22 essays. It is very compact and consists of Impressionist snapshots, illuminated by memory: university teachers, poets, the fragment about Meyerhold I had read earlier, and even a memoir about the Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev written to commemorate the tenth anniversary of his death. Arkhippov didn't meet Soloviev, but he is telling the story of his vision of Soloviev on that day ten years after the

philosopher's death and how, when he had come to apply for Moscow University, he met the philosopher's coffin.

The book, *Ten Portraits of Vera Merkurieva*, is a collection of 10 "flashes" that tell about this phenomenal poet. Her book was published only in 2007, and it became immediately clear that she has to be considered one of the three greatest female poets of the 20th century, along with Tsvetaeva and Akhmatova.

[PHOTO: Arkhipov and his wife at center, surrounded by friends.

Up front, Vera Merkurieva, a poet. On the right, Aleksandr Kochetkov, a poet, author of the poem "S lyubimymi ne rastavajtes" (Don't part with your loved ones) known to everyone in Russia. Arkhipova and Merkurieva organized a poetry circle at home, "The Den," whose members wrote each other very witty, comical poems and messages.]

In provincial Vladikavkaz, Arkhipov was for Merkurieva a very important companion. She called herself "the grandmother of Russian poetry." She was incredibly ironic and gentle, young poets were attracted to her, and Arkhipov was a bit jealous of them. In the early 1930s Arkhipov and his wife found a refuge from cold at her place, and when she had no tutoring or place to live, they helped her as much as they could. In the Soviet era, when the way people thought contrasted with people's lives, the creation of memoir became for Arkhipov the proof of his own existence, not just a fight with the passage of time that left no trace --- it was also the prioritization of non-material and spiritual over the material aspect of life. It was a confrontation with the Soviet hierarchies and subordinations, their penetration into all aspects of life, as well as a defense of one's right to a meaningful system of values. Arkhipov didn't attempt to depict himself as an active participant in the Silver Age culture, yet he showed only important literary events in his own memoirs. One can see in this as "a desire to deepen this refined disunity" with a rough and socially alien world of Soviet reality.

The Soviet reality that fully intruded upon the life of Arkhipov (like all Soviet citizens, he went to the kolkhoz to help with the crops, unloads barges, and had to comply with the "ideological standards" of pedagogy) is completely excluded from his memoirs. One cannot help thinking this is a sort of defense mechanism of someone who is experiencing a long-term stress: denial, displacement, suppression.

Memoirs were the only form of guarding oneself from the Soviet reality.

The real consolation for Arkhipov was in what we now call "book-art"

and samizdat: he turned into a homegrown "cardboard master," copying his favorite poems, binding them in uniquely beautiful volumes that he gave as presents to his friends. Samizdat became not only a method of circulation but also a way of life for him.

[PHOTO 8,9,10].

Play in a make-believe reality as a form of defense against the current times appears vividly in a lovingly elaborate system of pseudonyms (a collection of 1935 is signed by a "Regina de Croix" --- an imitation of Cherubina), in a mythological geography. Arkhipov claims he wrote his letters and published his books in Tanezrouft, a huge dead plateau in the center of the Sahara desert that is mentioned in an adventure novel by Pierre Benoit "Atlantis;" or Ronchesalm, a fortress where Baratynsky served, which was as remote from the capital as Novorossiisk or Vladikavkaz; or sometimes Konungahella, a destroyed (in 12th century) ancient Scandinavian city.

[PHOTO 11: An example of a handwritten book by Arkhipov. Edited in Bernevalle (the French village where Oscar Wilde settled after his prison term). Publisher: Melmoth the Wanderer (a reference to the Gothic novel by Maturin). Arkhipov had his own system of pseudonyms, his own geography, and chronology].

His book "10 Portraits of Vera Merkurieva" is dated "Citta Dolente/103 (the city of woe from Dante's Inferno, in Italian, 103 means 103 years after Pushkin's death).

In front of Arkhipov's eyes the Atlantis of Russian Symbolism sank, and he felt he was the keeper of this underwater world. In a literary questionnaire he sent his friends in the early 1930s, there are very symbolic questions: how relevant is Dante's "Inferno," really; what writer do you think is linked to the Atlantis memory?

To the end of his days, Arkhipov worked as a teacher: after Olgina Gymnasium in Vladikavkaz he moved to the Real School in Nalchik and later to schools in Ordzhonikidze (Vladikavkaz) and Novorossiisk. He was relatively well adjusted under the Soviets because he was not arrested and received the Lenin order for decades of pedagogical service.

His literary activity after 1917 was not for print but it had a thoroughly thought-out program: Arkhipov became a chronicler of his literary friends and the whole epoch of Russian Symbolism. In that capacity, he acted as a critic, writing articles about the little-known poets, a memoirist and an editor of anthologies. The result of this work as a provincial teacher is unique and invaluable: he preserved the lives and work of Cherubina de Gabriak, Vera Merkurieva, Dmitrii Usov, Andrei

Zvenigorodskii. It can be fully appreciated only now, when his texts have found their readers.

The form of escapism he chose helped him carry on his youthful ideals without losing their value, helped him resist the corrosion of cynicism. The ever-young old man who, in the last decade of his life was writing letters to Prince Zvenigorodskii, stubbornly avoided all the unpleasant details related to everyday life and pain (when he couldn't tolerate pain, he made a break in correspondence, and the Prince was terribly worried about him). The wartime letters contain no mention of war (a situation so familiar to many of us who follow the events in Ukraine and Russia... silence in social media, no words can be found to discuss the terrible issues) yet in those letters he champions Tiutchev and Fet --- the two names close to his heart, to his youthful tears over the poems he so much loved, tears that cannot be taken away from him.

Literary iconostas, to which Arkhipov was devoted until the end of his life, became for him the ideal social environment, but he could not be included, doomed to live in the provinces under the Soviet powers.

V. Rozanov once wrote: "One has to knit the stocking of one's life well."

When I think of Arkhipov, I think he knitted his stocking well.

## VARVARA GRIGOREVNA MALAKHIEVA-MIROVICH

Varvara Grigorievna Malakhieva-Mirovich (1869-1954)

[PHOTO 1,2,3 Varvara Grigorievna Malakhieva-Mirovich] In 2013, I published another book [PHOTO 10]. It is entitled with the rare word *Chrysalis*, which refers to the cocoon to a butterfly after it has flown away. This image of something left behind after one's soul flies away is very important for Malakhieva's world and her poems. The book came out with the famous "Vodolei" publishers as part of a series entitled "Paralipomena"—that is, omitted, missed books.

During the author's lifetime, in 1923, only one little poetry book was published, entitled "Monastery Paraphernalia." It included 32 poems which comprised about one percent of her oeuvre. In the 70 years she devoted to poetry, Malakhieva-Mirovich wrote 4000 verses. The best were included in "Chrysalis."

She also left behind 130 notebooks of diaries. She wrote those for a quarter of a century: from the early 1930s till her death. At that time few people dared making journal entries of any kind. There was always a threat of sudden search without



warning or reason, of someone informing on you to the authorities and arrest --- it was highly dangerous. The more valuable are the remaining diaries of that time.

The story of Malakhieva's life and work is, in fact, a story of Russia at the end of the 19th and first half of the 20th century. And, in her development, Malakhieva went through stages similar to any member of Russian intelligentsia of the time.

Malakhieva was born in Kiev in a “raznochinets” family, that is, lower-middle class from all walks of life. Her grandmother was Count Sheremetev's daughter by a serf girl. Her father was a wanderer and vagabond, who was looking for the right faith and was poorly fit for the rooted life. He showed up in the family picture for a month and then disappeared for a year. There were five children in Malakhieva's family, and she was the oldest. Her mother took care of them practically alone. Malakhieva's closest friend was her younger sister Anastasia, who was as gifted, beautiful, and intelligent as her older sister. The two bookish girls read Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and later Nietzsche, Hamsun and Renan --- the books that left more questions than answers. Malakhieva's first verses were written in gymnasium at the age of 11: "The Gospel from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*." Only the title is preserved. At 16 she turned to Nihilism. She refused to take communion at the Church. And right after the gymnasium, at the end of the 1880s, for a short while she immersed herself in revolutionary work in underground Populist circles. She dreamt about the release of all political prisoners.

At 26 she returned to Christianity and developed interest in Sects, including the Tolstoyan sect. In 1909 she visited Iasnaia Poliana and wrote an interesting memoir about her meeting with Tolstoy (the memoir was published right after Tolstoy's death).

The next turn in her life was the meeting with Lev Shestov, a Russian existentialist philosopher.

[PHOTO 5. Russian philosopher Lev Shestov. He proposed, but Varvara didn't say yes. They stayed friends throughout their lives.]

Malakhieva was a gifted teacher. She began working as a governess in the home of a Kievan entrepreneur, Balakhovsky, whose wife was Lev Shestov's sister. Lev Shestov at that time was an intelligent and interesting young man. He had not yet written any of his famous articles or books. Malakhieva left with the Balakhovskys abroad. They traveled in Italy and Switzerland. She learned Italian.

An aside: In Italy, 22-year-old Lunacharskii, the future powerful narkom [Soviet People's Commissar of Education and Culture], fell in love with Malakhieva. They kissed several times but as Malakhieva wrote, "he was not from my skies." After the Revolution, she once asked him for help and immediately got a translating job that saved her from starving.

Having left the governess position, Malakhieva went to Paris and befriended Russian revolutionaries there. One of them became her close friend. It was Andrei Ivanovich Shingarev, a young doctor and family man.

[PHOTO 6] Andrei Ivanovich Shingarev. Doctor. Deputy of State Duma. One of the first victims of the Bolsheviks. He was arrested and killed by soldiers in a hospital in January of 1918. Malakhieva befriended him abroad in the 19th century. She fell for him, but he was married, and they did not have any relationship. When she found about his death she wrote, "I felt like his widow for one whole day."

This is why: in a year after their meeting in Paris, she met him near Voronezh in a village Gnezdilovka where he was a village doctor. She got sick with typhoid. "He had to visit me every day... I didn't want to get well, to live without him. But I didn't want to live with him either: he had a wife and two children. So I drank morphine. But it was too much morphine and it does not have any effect when you take a lot. So he easily saved me."

1897. Malakhieva was 28. Kiev. She lived in poverty. She became close with Shestov (they were both looking for a faith in God). Malakhieva wrote to Shestov, "Every day, your presence proves more convincingly than all Tolstoy's volumes that the Kingdom of God is within us."

"Nietzsche, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Shakespeare were our daily, inexhaustible themes. The lyrical part was confined to singing."

"His love, my half-answer."

Malakhieva recalled in her diary, "Having understood that I cannot reciprocate, Lev Shestov decided to tie himself with Anastasia Malakhieva (her younger sister) and proposed --- in order to have an unbreakable connection with me." This situation caused dramatic tension in the two sisters' relationship (they were exceptionally close).

Shestov had a nervous breakdown. He went abroad. After a while he got married there.

As a result of this indent, Malakhieva's sister Anastasia got sick. She became mentally impaired and stayed like that until her death from starvation in a psychiatric ward during the Civil War.

1899. Malakhieva and her sister moved to Moscow. They were witnessing the varied and bustling cultural life of the capital: first books of Symbolists, first plays of Stanislavsky's Moscow Art Theater, plays by Chekhov and Ibsen, Nietzsche's "Also sprach Zarathustra," poems by Verlaine and Baudelaire and by Russian Symbolists. "We created frightening commandments at the "Nietzschean" period of our lives, such as "Don't fracture yourself after a fall. If you do fracture, put yourself together and pretend it never happened. Acquire a liking of marmalade so you have something to love when you get leprosy. Jump over others' heads if you don't want others to gouge out your eye as they are jumping over you. Don't go to Mount Tabor --- you will transform anyway." "We were not only split in two and deprived of wings, as Stavrogin in "The Devils" --- we were split into three, four, ten. We had to feel multiple personalities within us and not to go insane." Malakhieva loved Shestov's idea of hopelessness as the ultimate hope and she returned to it multiple times throughout her life.

Hopelessness --- the highest hope  
Said my friend once.

In 1910, Malakhieva worked at the best journal of the time, "Russkaia Mysl [Russian Thought]." She was for a year responsible for literary criticism. She was then replaced by the famous Symbolist poet Briusov. She made the acquaintance of many Russian writers, poets and philosophers there. She befriended a wonderful poet and artist who died very early, Yelena Guro (and wrote a review of Guro's book, the "Little Bears of Heaven"). In her notebooks, Guro wrote, "Malakhieva cares about my opinion and about me. She sees the best in me. But she wants too much of me --- she is dangerous because she is very unsparing and she doesn't know what she wants from life and from me."

Malakhieva was interested in mystics, theosophy, and the occult. She had a not insignificant talent for casting spells to cure tooth and headaches --- she also created mystical spells that could stop pain or anxiety, and during the famine at the time of the Civil War, one doctor told her, "In the countryside, you can get milk and eggs for these word-remedies."

Malakhieva was a great translator: she translated "The Varieties of Religious Experience" by William James (together with Mikhail Vladimirovich Shik). Lev

Shestov, introducing the famous American psychologist to the Russian reader, wrote, "James is interested in what religious people call revelation. He cannot judge by his own experience due to the lack of such experience. He studied testimonies of religious people and came to a conclusion that revelation is a fact and people who experience it know things others don't." In James' eulogy, Russian philosopher Frank wrote that "James did a lot for the religious revival that is taking place now. It is linked to rejecting rational perception; the rational philosophy is being replaced by the philosophy of faith and feeling. The spiritual life is becoming deeper as a result, yet it is blurry and chaotic." This characteristic can be applied to Malakhieva's own religious journey: a deep spiritual suffering, but also a blurry and chaotic one. She wrote for the 1937 census, "A believer, but not a church-goer. Rituals mean little for me." In 1937 it was a fearless answer because of the persecution of religion. By that time, the mass killings of priests and destruction of churches by the Soviets had already made Russian religious life impossible, apart from small underground circles. Mikhail Shik, a young student who helped Malakhieva translate James' book, fell in love with her. He was 18 years younger. Malakhieva and Shik never had a common household. They considered their union as mystical. At the beginning of World War One, Shik was drafted.

In 1915-17 Malakhieva went on a pilgrimage to visit Russian monasteries. In 1915, she wrote a book, "Monastery Paraphernalia" (published in 1923). In 1916 founded a "Circle of Joy" --- daily classes with children of Moscow intelligentsia, where they discussed world religions and the meaning of human life. One of Malakhieva's students, Olechka Bessarabova, two decades later collected and copied all the poems of her teacher in 11 notebooks. I used these notebooks when I was preparing the 2013 Malakhieva book.

"Monastery Paraphernalia" became a turning point in her poetry. Every poem here is like a short novella. Character lyrics are intimate but also tinted by the author's irony. Lyrical polyphony turns into the epic polyphony. In "Monastery Paraphernalia" Malakhieva, following Leskov's tradition, managed to convey the world of an Orthodox woman without any falseness or glossiness, with all her weakness and human diminution of true faith, without any ecstatic laceration or accentuated individualism that are so characteristic of the decadent "spiritual search" of the early 20th century.

In the third year  
I was having a tormenting headache  
I was like someone who had an evil eye

cast on her

Head begins to ache  
They bring ice and medicine  
And I am laughing, shaking  
Will my little lights fly back to me?

Day or naught, all of a sudden they light up  
Around them the stars They make up a  
circle dance and patterns They buzz like a swarm of bees

The church will shine over them  
Invisible choirs will sing  
Is it my burian, or my wedding  
Or I am taken to Heaven alive?

And I was so much in love with my headache I tore off ice and threw the medicine  
away But the nurse was diligent And my little lights disappeared.

Malakhieva ran away to Kiev to escape famine in 1919, and she lived there with Shestov's family and the composer Skryabin's widow. In Kiev, she received a letter from Michail Shik where he wrote that he fell in love with a young girl, daughter of famous public figure Prince Shakhovskoy, Natalia Shakhovskaya. This wonderful pure girl also wrote to Malakhieva. Shik cannot put up with his own betrayal of Malakhieva's love. He convinced Malakhieva that this should be the union of three hearts. She could not put herself out of the picture because of the strong motherly component of her love for Shik. Shik was the pillar of her life and simultaneously her spiritual son and brother. He needed her support and was used to finding solace in caring about her. His letters convinced Malakhieva to accept the tripartite spiritual union, "If you leave me, I won't exist." He came to Kiev and was baptized; Malakhieva became his godmother. At that time Shestov and his family emigrated, and Malakhieva went to Voronezh to her mother, who by that time had gone blind and lost all the rest of her children. Malakhieva witnessed scenes of terror, famine, and street fighting. To convey all that in poems, she rejected Symbolist poetics and wrote very simple poems without any authoritarian commentary.

1

2.

В череду умерла старушка.  
Простояла всю ночь в череду,

Не дождалась хлеба и села.  
На рассвете грянула пушка.  
Разбежались все, а она – на льду,  
Как живая до полдня сидела.

[2

An old woman died in a line.  
She waited all night in a line.  
She didn't wait up for the bread and sat down.  
At the dawn, a cannon broke out.  
Everyone scattered and she sat on ice  
As if she were alive.]

3.

Всю ночь сегодня я помню, что кошка  
Терзает и будет терзать мышонка,  
И что прыгал потом под этим окошком  
Бурый козленочек.  
Янтарноглазый, милый и глупый,  
И звали его «Леша».  
А сейчас он лежит с ободранной кожей,  
И съедят ни в чем не повинного Лешу  
В картофельном супе.  
Ах, эти страшные супы Вселенной!  
Хрустящие кости.  
Разъятые члены. Пожиранье и тленье.  
Извечный пир на погосте.  
И про себя мне вдруг приснилось,  
Что варюсь я в кастрюле тесной  
С картофелем, луком и перцем,  
Но кипящее сердце  
Вдруг во мне завопило:  
«Ничего, я воскресну, воскресну».

[3

All night long tonight I keep recalling

That the cat has been torturing a little mouse And that under this window A brown kid was jumping up and down, With amber eyes, sweet and silly, And his name was Lyosha.

And now it's flayed and people  
Now he lies there flayed and people

Will eat the innocent kid in their potato soup.

Oh those horrible soups of the Universe

Crackling bones.

Dismembered limbs. Devouring and decay.

Perpetual feast at the gravesite.

And suddenly I dreamed

That I was boiling in a tight pot

narrow, small or stifling might convey it — “tight” is not usually used of pots.

With potatoes, onions and pepper,

But the boiling heart

But my boiling heart

Unexpectedly squalled inside me

squalled doesn't sound quite right — squealed?

"It's OK, I'll rise from the dead, I will!"]

Shik and Shakhovskaya in their letters persuaded Malakhieva and her mother to come to Sergiev Posad near Moscow, where they lived. And Malakhieva, who had lost all the rest of her close friends, moved to Sergiev Posad. Thus, the hardest years of her life began. She still believed in the tripartite union. When she learned that Natasha Shakhovskaya was pregnant she convinced herself that the child was "her promise in the womb" and she would also be the child's mother. This is amazing: I found two notebooks where Natalia Shakhovskaya and Malakhieva both record little Seryozha's first words and steps (he was born in 1922). Of course very soon each side of this strange triangle realized that their dreams about the tripartite union were nothing but a utopia.

After that Malakhieva fell seriously ill, but she had to survive --- her blind mother needed her care. Malakhieva taught at the Pedagogy College and translated. In Sergiev Posad at that time she befriended the famous philosophers Pavel Florensky and Favorsky.

[PHOTO 4 Varvara Mirovich with her students. Lower right Olya Bessarabova who copied 11 notebooks --- 4000 poems of Malakhieva's and kept them. In 2012 her journal was published. Her brother was the hero of Tsvetaeva's poem "Yegorushka." She was a participant of the "Circle of Joy" organized by Malakhieva.]

In December of 1925 Shik was arrested and, after six months in prison, exiled to Turtukul (Turkestan). Malakhieva helped Shakhovskaya with the children (Serezha, Masha and Lizochka, who was born after her father's arrest). Shakhovskaya lived in poverty but she shared with Malakhieva, who had lost her job.

In December of 1927 Shik returned to Sergiev and served in the Church of St. Peter and Paul. The arrests resumed and the family left Sergiev for a village. In 1929 Malakhieva's mother died. Malakhieva moved to Moscow.

From Malakhieva's diary: "Mother was after nine years being blind offered a surgery in Sergiev but answered: I don't complain, Thank God. It's better this way, I'll sin less."

For 40 days after her mother's death, Malakhieva was writing a keen text. It's a dialogue between a daughter and her deceased mother. She was attempting to express the strength of her love for her mother in that dialog. She called herself "undaughterlike daughter" and blamed herself for being unfit to take care of everyday life problems or give her mother the warmth she needed.

Malakhieva was afraid of being alone. Literary work ceased to feed her. She was thankful for every small job, such as answering young pioneers' letters or writing cross-word puzzle.

.  
Привыкает без руки  
Нищий воин жить.  
Привыкает в рудники  
Каторжник ходить.

Привыкает и слепой  
Солнца не видать.

Хочешь – плачь, а хочешь – пой –  
Надо привыкать.



[1.

A former soldier who is now a beggar  
Can get used to life without an arm.  
A convict can get used  
To working in a mining camp.

A blind man can get used  
To not seeing the sun.

Cry if you want, or if you want to — sing  
You just have to get used to it.

Around that time her schoolmate Leonila Tarasova arrived in Moscow. Her daughter, Alla Tarasova, became a famous actress, one of the first at the Moscow Art Theatre.

The Tarasovs suggested that Malakhieva move to their place and promised to take care of her and feed her. In exchange, Malakhieva was to give up her one room in a communal apartment to their young relative. As, Malakhieva wrote in her diary, "for lentil soup."

Malakhieva tried to be helpful at the Tarasovs. But she was growing old. People lost interest in her. She was half-deaf. People were irritated at seeing her around. In the bitterest time of her life, she had to go to live with her acquaintances.

A vision of the world as a prison became the root of her metaphysics. She accepted gnostic philosophy from her youth (dualism, the idea of an evil world that God had not created), and she thought that to have a better life, one has to shed the shackles of life and die.

In 1937 Mikhail Shik was arrested again and shot in Butovo. Thousands of people were shot in Butovo then, many of them martyrs.

[PHOTO 7. Mikhail Shik and his wife Natalia Shakhovskaya].

Malakhieva did not abandon Shik's family. She directed plays with his children and taught them. They called her Bab Vav (Grandma Varvara).

When the war started, the Tarasovs left Moscow but didn't take Malakhieva with them. Shakhovskaya, who lived in Maloyaroslavets, took Malakhieva (she had five

children and five old people to take care of). Malakhieva understood the everyday sacrifice and heroism of Natalia Shakhovskaya.

They lived through the German occupation. Shik's children and mother were Jewish and could be taken to camps. Malakhieva wrote in her diary that Natalia Shakhovskaya, after a failed attempt to exchange her last belongings for frozen potatoes and flour was sitting near the cold stove saying, "It's so good, so good to suffer with everyone else." Before, the suffering Shakhovskaya had to bear was a lonely one, and now it was all people who suffered, and she found solace in that. She died before the end of the war from consumption, and Malakhieva wrote two notebooks of memoirs about her and Shik for their children, so that they would know something about their parents.

[PHOTO 8. Malakhieva with Shik's children. She called Sergei "zamsyn" (deputy son), considered herself his mother, and devoted many poems to him. Dmitry Shakhovskoy (right) became a famous sculptor, creator of the monument to Mandelstam.]

Malakhieva was a very close friend of Daniil Andreev, a writer and poet who wrote the famous "Rose of the World."

[PHOTO 9. Daniil Andreev. He knew Malakhieva, and she ignited in him an interest in the gnostics and all things mystical. Andreev wrote a novel about the intelligentsia's plight during the 1930s terror, "Pilgrims of the Night." The NKVD found out. All who read the novel and Andreev were arrested, and many of them died in camps. After his release, Andreev asked around about Malakhieva. She had not been arrested, probably because she was too old, but by that time she was long dead.]

Andreev grew up in the family of Malakhieva's friend, a wonderful Moscow doctor named Dobrov. Andreev wrote "Pilgrims..." in 1937, and after his return from the war, he read it to his friends. One turned out to be an informer. In 1947 Andreev was arrested. All his archive was destroyed. Andreev depicted Stalin as a reincarnation of the Antichrist. At interrogation, Daniil Andreev revealed the names of the people who knew about the novel. They were all arrested, except the poet who was an informer and Malakhieva.

Investigation lasted for 19 months. The death penalty was banned that year, so everyone got 10 to 25 years in the camps in Mordovia. 200 people were arrested, even some who Andreev barely knew --- his case was made into a show trial.

Malakhieva never mentioned that in her diary. One after another, her friends disappeared in Lubyanka prison. But she couldn't mention that.

She revived the ancient genre known as the "Conversation in the Kingdom of the Dead." She talked to Chekhov, Tolstoy. She bitterly described her poverty. She lamented the absence of any "fruit" of her life and the fact that her poems helped only those few who read them. But even now, as it comes out, her poems and diaries help us overcome hopelessness.