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An exploration of language policy in Ukraine: The Ukrainian-Russian language conflict through history

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A mio nonno che vedo ancora seduto alla finestra ridere con la nonna, mentre insieme mi raccontano il giorno in cui si sono conosciuti, con la pancia piena di cibo cinese. A mio nonno, che mi ha insegnato a non accontentarmi mai di una sola risposta, ad andare in bicicletta e a voler bene infinitamente. A mio nonno che spero di poter rendere sempre orgoglioso mettendo cuore e coraggio come ha fatto lui.

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Abstract

This thesis entitled *"An exploration of language policy in Ukraine: The Ukrainian-Russian language conflict through history"* investigates the historical development of language policy and the role of language nationalism in Ukraine. It traces the origins and evolution of the Ukrainian language, highlighting its cultural and identity significance and its relationship with the Russian language. The study examines the impact of language policies in different periods, including the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the post-Soviet era. It emphasises the controversies and tensions in the Ukrainian-Russian language dynamic, focusing on the Ukrainian nationalist movement and its connection to language policy. The thesis delves into the language policies implemented in the Soviet Union, including Russification efforts, the treatment of minority languages and the suppression of linguistic diversity. Through historical examples, it illustrates key moments and dynamics of the language landscape. The analysis reveals how these policies influenced social tensions, political struggles and the formation of national identities in Ukraine. By tracing the historical trajectory of these policies, the thesis aims to deepen understanding of the complex interplay between language, nationalism and power dynamics, shedding light on the intricate and challenging development and use of the Ukrainian language in independent Ukraine.

Introduction

Language, as a means of human communication and interaction, has an intrinsic importance. It is the political and social manipulation of language that can lead to inequality, exclusion, and erosion of a society's cultural richness. Language is an indispensable tool for expressing and preserving culture, encapsulating the values, traditions, and historical narratives of a community, thus constituting a vital component of its cultural identity. Through language, cultural practices, stories, and rituals are transmitted across generations, strengthening the collective cultural identity of a community. Indeed, individuals sharing a common language foster a sense of belonging, commitment and shared cultural and social identity. A shared language facilitates effective communication, encourages exchange, and strengthens social bonds. In addition, language can influence access to resources and opportunities in fact information, services, training, and professional perspectives may only be accessible in certain languages. Knowledge of a particular language opens doors to broader perspectives and contributes to an individual's socio-economic identity.[1] Taking the Ukrainian language situation into consideration, certainly now, we would say that it is certainly not the most complex issue to deal with[2]. Ukrainian political scientist Vladimir Fesenko, head of the Penta Center for Applied Political Research, stated in an interview in 2011, while taking about the Ukrainian linguistic situation:

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[1] SIHOMBING, N.C., (2022). *The language instinct (Steven Pinker vs Noam Chomsky).* Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2(1), p.17-18

[2] By this sentence I am referring to the fact, that at this moment, i.e. in my academic year 2023-2024, Ukraine is at war with Russia. I am referring to the war that started in February 2022 when Russian troops invaded Ukraine, and since then the armies of both countries have regularly faced each other.

'There is a problem. Although this is not the most urgent problem in the country.'[3]

in any case, although it is not the country's most pressing problem, understanding the reasons behind it can help to find the answer to other problems the country has had since its independence, such as the great Ukraine-Russia dispute over culture.

The goal of this thesis is to find the reasons why the development of the Ukrainian language and its usage is so tortuous and complicated. This thesis is meant to be a historical thesis, that is precisely why the relationship between the Russian and Ukrainian languages will be constant. We need to understand whether this relationship has always been diametrically unequal, or whether it was somehow necessary for the development of these languages. Did Russian and then Soviet cultural repression prevent the development of a Ukrainian culture, what were the initiatives on the part of the Russian Empire aimed at discrimination against the Ukrainian language, and where people obliged to talk in Russian? Society during Russian and Soviet rule in what language did they speak, and why? Society today, how does it feel about the role of its mother tongue? One might also ask, why talk about language policies and Ukrainian language development, at a time like this, where the war, which began with the Russian invasion to Ukraine in February 2022, is still ongoing. This last question can also be answered immediately. In the same year Ivan Dzjùba, one of the most important

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[3]The interview for the newspaper Главред took place in August 2011, and the topics covered ranged from the political situation to Ukrainian-Russian relations. When asked specifically about the challenges of the Ukrainian language, he replied as follows «Проблема есть. Хотя это и не самая острая проблема страны. Оптимальный вариант ее решения, на мой взгляд, сохранение и последовательная реализация государственного статуса украинского языка, с предоставлением официального статуса русскому языку на региональном уровне в местах компактного проживания русскоязычных граждан страны" https://glavred.info/politics/4216-vladimir-fesenko-lucenko-bolshe-chem-timoshenko-riskuet-okazatsya-za-reshetkoy.html (accessed on June 15, 2024).

intellectuals and literary critics of contemporary Ukraine, died in Kiev.[4] Ivan Dzjuba was convinced that the Ukrainian man did not enjoy the right to be able to speak his own language because of Russian-Soviet cultural repression, a repression that continued, through different channels, even after Ukraine became an independent state, and that therefore strong policies aimed at promoting the Ukrainian language are needed. Following this thinking, language is the representation of identity, and to have a strong national identity, one must have an equally strong language. Surely a war, does not break out because of a language, but language can be a very strong propaganda medium, it is no coincidence that the world's most famous news journals, including for example the BBC and the New York Times, but also many Western governments, decided to change the transliteration of the name of the Ukrainian capital from Kiev to Kyiv, because it is closer to the Ukrainian spelling, "Київ," while previously the Russian spelling "Киев" was used[5]. While Ukrainian language policies at this time are not paramount, what can be said is that language, its use, its role, is a symbol, especially in Ukraine. So, the question is what are the language policies that led the Ukrainian people to be a bilingual people?

The first chapter will discuss the birth of the Ukrainian language, where it comes from and where it developed. We will see that the territory of today's Ukraine was divided between the Russian, Polish and then Austro-Hungarian empires, and that the Ukrainian language will begin to take shape precisely in the Russian empire. He will look at the linguistic situation today and the phenomenon of Surzhyk. Once then the origin of the language, its geographical development and the current situation have been explained, it

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[4] HUFFPOST: https://www.huffingtonpost.it/rubriche/cose-dell-altro-mondo/2022/02/22/news/la_morte_di_ivan_dzjuba_e_il_racconto_dello_spirito_ucraino-8813292/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[5] EURACTIV: https://euractiv.it/section/capitali/news/la-germania-cambia-ufficialmente-lortografia-del-nome-della-capitale-ucraina-a-due-anni-dallinizio-della-guerra/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

will then motivate why this analysis will mostly focus on the linguistic situation in the Ukrainian territory in correlation with Russian and Soviet rule. In the second chapter therefore, the linguistic situation of the Ukrainian territory belonging to the Russian Empire will be considered. The focus will be mainly on the 1800s, where the Ukrainian language takes shape along with identity. Important figures in the development of this language and the first laws against it will be analysed. Probably the most complex chapter, since there were no homogeneous cultural and linguistic laws, and therefore to try to give a linearity to the chapter we will divide it in turn into periods, taking a cue from Pavlenko's (2001) analysis in his text *"Linguistic Russification in the Russian Empire: peasants into Russians?".*[6] In addition, also in chapter two, since many scholars agree that the Ukrainian language is also derived from the Ruthenian language, there will be an in-depth look at the Ruthenian language in the territory of Galicia occupied by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In chapter three the focus will be the Ukrainian Socialist Republic and the Soviet Union. Soviet language policies will be discussed, delving into the policies of Ukrainization and Sovietization. It will analyse how society in the Ukrainian socialist republic expresses itself, and why although much autonomy was left to the popularization of national languages Russian was preferred. This chapter will take up the figure of Ivan Dzjùba and lay the groundwork for why identity and language in Ukrainian became increasingly united. The last chapter will discuss language policies in the Ukrainian state; there were three basic laws in addition to the constitution that dealt with language. Language minorities and the role of the Russian language will be discussed. The last chapter leaves much more room for legal analysis rather than social or cultural analysis, as the relationship between

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[6] PAVLENKO, A. (2011). *Linguistic russification in the Russian Empire: Peasants into Russians? / Языковая руссификация в Российской империи: стали ли крестьяне русскими?* Russian Linguistics, Springer, 35(3), p.331-350.

the Russian and Ukrainian languages is a very hot topic, finding an objective analysis proved very difficult. During the course of writing this thesis, I came across analyses by very authoritative scholars, who however fell into the trap of propaganda and subjectivity, and especially with regard to the current linguistic situation, it seemed to me that it was necessary at all costs to take a position, which is something this thesis does not want to do. This thesis is intended to be as objective as possible, data, laws, and many sources, Western, Ukrainian, and Russian, were analysed, and an attempt was made to leave no room for emotions and feelings in order to write such a difficult topic as comprehensively and truthfully as possible.

CHAPTER 1

The historical evolution of the Ukrainian language and its relationship to culture, identity, and society

1.1 The Emergence and Development of Ukrainian: an overview

Before analysing the various language policies and how they influenced the development of the Ukrainian language and its use in society, it is deemed necessary to write a brief excursus on the birth of the Ukrainian language and its early development in the sociolinguistic sphere. The Ukrainian language has its roots between the 6th and 9th centuries, descending like all other Slavic languages from Protoslavic.[7] Protoslav was the language spoken by the first tribes living in what we commonly refer to as Eastern Europe. In fact, today's Slovakia, the Czech Republic, the Balkans, Russia, Belarus, Poland and Ukraine are often referred to as the 'Slavic homeland'. The first Proto-Slavic tribes gradually extended into these regions and led to the development of the various Slavic languages that are commonly recognised today.[8] Around the 9th century, the Medieval state of Kievan Rus began to take shape, and with it the Old East Slavic from which Ukrainian, Belarusian and Ukrainian were derived. These were periods in which language rigidity did not exist, there were regional dialects that wrote in Cyrillic and others in Glagolitic and this obviously created orthographic differences.[9] Old East Slavonic, also referred to as the lingua franca of Kievan Rus, was used to communicate between the various ethnic groups in the state. By sharing a

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[7] SHEVELOV, G.Y. (1979). *A Historical Phonology of the Ukrainian Language.* of Historical phonology of the Slavic languages, Winter, 4, p. 1- 21. See also: Caldarelli, R. (2018). *Il protoslavo, letnogenesi slava e il contatto linguistico. Problemi e prospettive di ricerca.* In M. C. Ferro, L. Salmon, & G. Ziffer (Eds.), Contributi italiani al XVI Congresso Internazionale degli Slavisti, Belgrado, Serbia, 13-17.
[8] COMRIE, B., & CORBETT, G. G. (2002). *The Slavic Languages.* Routledge, chap 3, p.1-19, 63-83.
[9] Ibidem

basic vocabulary, the East Slavs and Finno-Ugric peoples[10] could communicate with each other, trade and administer government. Of course, then each group had its own dialect, and a different vocabulary, but it can be said that Old East Slavonic was a unifying force within Kievan Rus.[11] The various testimonies of this language are the literary texts such as the 'Tale of bygone years'[12] or the various religious manuscripts. Religion played an important role, and the Church Slavonic language was based on Old Bulgarian, and the many religious texts thus influenced the vocabulary, syntax, and style of Old East Slavonic.[13]

While Old East Slavonic is therefore the mother of the three modern East Slavic languages, there are different factors by which these languages have had their own, dependent development.[14] Certainly, the various invasions of different peoples throughout history have influenced the Slavic languages: the Mongol invasion in the 13th century had a significant influence on Russian, introducing elements of Mongolian vocabulary and phonology. In contrast, areas not directly under Mongol rule, such as the territory of present-day Ukraine, were less influenced. But during the era of the Polish-

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[10] While Kievan Rus was in what we commonly refer to as Eastern Europe, Finno-Ugric peoples lived to the north and north-east of it. Due to their geographical proximity, there was much contact between these peoples between the 9th and 13th centuries. The most important trade routes were the Volga River and its tributaries. At that time, tribal movements were quite common; therefore, it is assumed that both groups adopted elements of each other's cultures, languages and customs through daily interactions, marriages, and shared experiences. Moreover, Kievan Rus was a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural state, thus facilitating communication between different ethnic groups within the kingdom. MAGOCSI, P. (1997). *A history of Ukraine.* University of Washington Press, Seattle, p.51-65

[11] HRUSHEVSKY, M. (1984). *From Kievan Rus' to Modern Ukraine: Formation of the Ukrainian Nation.* Ukrainian Studies Fund, Harvard University, pp. 355-364. See also: COMRIE, B., & CORBETT, G. G. (2002), cit. p.1-19

[12] The 'Tale of bygone years' is a historical narrative that provides a description of the early history of the East Slavic peoples, particularly Kievan Rus'. The chronicle dates to the 12th century and is said to be written by Nestor, a monk who lived at the Kievan Cave Monastery. The book thus tells us about the legendary origins of Kievan Rus as well as the Christianisation that took place in 988. In addition to important historical events, this chronicle is an excellent primary source, as it also recounts the society of Kievan Rus, its legal system, in trade, and the role of the Church. In any case, it should be read critically, because real facts are mixed with legends and folklore of the region. HOLMGREN, B. (2003). *The Russian memoir: History and literature.* Northwestern University Press, p.186-206

[13] MAGOCSI, P. (1997), cit. p. 283-290.

[14] COMRIE, B., & CORBETT, G. G. (2002), cit. p.1-19

Lithuanian Commonwealth, both Ukrainian and Belarusian were influenced by Polish due to political and administrative control.[15] These two different influences certainly laid a foundation for the development of differences between the Slavic languages. Thus, although Russian and Ukrainian share a common linguistic ancestry and belong to the group of East Slavic languages, their development paths have been different due to various historical, political, and cultural influences.[16]

Since Kievan Rus is partly today's Ukraine, the latter claims its own heritage, pointing out that Old East Slavonic was fundamental in the development of today's Ukrainian language, as many expressions used at the time are still used; in general, traces of the ancient language structure resonate in contemporary Ukrainian.[17] According to the theory of Ukrainian ancestry, there is a very strong historical link between Ukrainian identity and the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the medieval state, also stating that these peculiarities are not present in Russia or Belarus. The dispute between Russia and Ukraine over the legacy of Kievan Rus' is probably one of the most heated.[18] Both countries place their historical roots in Kievan Rus', it represents the birth of an Eastern Slavic identity. With the disintegration of the kingdom into several principalities, there was the emergence of the Grand

[15] BERCOFF, G.B. (2005). *La lingua letteraria in Ucraina: ieri e oggi.* Studi Slavistici, 2(1), pp. 119–125. See also: MAGOCSI, P. (1997), cit. p.12-25

[16] PLOKHY S. (2008). *Ukraine and Russia: Representations of the Past*. University of Toronto Press, p. 3-16

[17] Kuzio, T. (2018). *Nation Building, History Writing and Competition over the Legacy of Kyiv Rus in Ukraine*. Nationalities Papers, Cambridge University Press, 33(1), p.29 - 58. See also: PELENSKI, J. (1998). *The Contest for the Legacy of Kievan Rus*. Boulder, Col.: Columbia University Press, p.1-21.

[18] This dispute to this day remains important to know because it is intertwined with the geopolitical dynamics of the region; while symbols are not the real cause of tensions between the two countries, they certainly play a key role in moving the masses. In fact, it does not remain only at the theoretical level, for example in the museums of the two capitals, if visited both one can see these differences in historical interpretations. The Kiev Museum of History, (Музей сторії міста Києва https://kyivhistorymuseum.org.ua/uk/) showcases Kiev's cultural heritage by displaying artifacts from the medieval period, contributing to the Ukrainian interpretation of historical descent. In Moscow, on the other hand, the State Historical Museum (Государственный исторический музей https://shm.ru/) aims to tell the story of Russian history, and artifacts such as religious icons, manuscripts, ceramics, and tools from Kievan Rus can be found. See also: SMART THIS HISTORY: https://smarthistory.org/byzantium-kievan-rus/(accessed on June 15, 2024). CELLA G. (2021*). Storia e geopolitica della crisi ucraina. Dalla Rus' di Kiev a oggi. Carocci, p.35-41*

Duchy of Moscow, which marked the beginning of the Russian state. The Russian rhetoric, therefore, says that the Grand Duchy is the successor to the state of Kievan Rus, while Ukraine says that although its territory suffered various subjugations from neighbouring powers, Kiev was the capital of Kievan Rus, just as it is now the Ukrainian capital, was an important cultural and economic centre, and throughout the centuries and has nothing to do with Moscow, as it was not subjugated by the Russian game alone, but also by the Poles and Lithuanians.[19] The historical events referred to by the two sides are correct, it is up to the interpretation one wants to give to these events to decree depending on the criteria used which theory should prevail over the other, these historical interpretations are often influenced by the strong nationalisms present in the countries.

One could settle the debate by talking about linguistics; all three modern East Slavic languages derive from the East Slavic dialects spoken in Kievan Rus; in fact, already in medieval times, the region had different dialects, different pronunciations or variations in vocabulary usage or grammar. Over time, as political, cultural, and geographical factors changed, the linguistic descendants of Old East Slavonic began to diverge. Different regions developed their own linguistic norms, leading to the emergence of distinct languages: Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarusian. It is important to note that linguistic evolution is a complex process, influenced by a wide range of historical, political, and cultural factors. The relationship between Kyiv Rus and modern Slavic languages is dynamic and scholars continue to study and discuss the intricate details of this linguistic evolution. And so, it is reductive to talk about the descent debate by analysing only the linguistic side, there are theories that speak of a common ancestry and those who say that none of

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[19] DVORNICHENKO, A. (2016). *The Place of the Kievan Rus in History*. Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University, 61, p.5-17. See also: BUSHKOVITCH, P. (2013). *Breve storia della Russia. Dalle origini a Putin*. Einaudi, Torino, p. 25-50. KOLSTO, P. (2000). *Political Construction Sites: Nation Building In Russia And The Post-soviet States* (1st ed.). Routledge, p.35-37. CELLA G. (2021*),* cit. p.35-41.

the three countries can claim direct national ancestry as the regional and historical interaction in the centuries to come is very complex.[20] In any case, although Old East Slavonic is not directly spoken today, its influence is evident in the vocabulary, grammar, and phonology of modern Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarusian.[21]

1.2 Historical Impediments and Linguistic Evolution

One might wonder, however, why the Ukrainian language, despite being part of the East Slavic family of languages, develops with more difficulty than the Russian language. It is not easy to answer this question, the bibliography thus far encompasses both the preceding century and the initial two decades of the twenty-first century. Given that language is widely regarded as a cornerstone of cultural identity, political influences[22] have exerted significant pressure on the portrayal and evolution of the Ukrainian language.[23] It was very difficult, at least for this thesis to identify essays, research, and texts that objectively described the course of the Ukrainian language within a geographical and demographic analysis of Ukrainian territory.

The comparison between the Ukrainian and Russian languages is therefore necessary. Not to end up in the propaganda game, however, Joshua Fishman's theory[24] of language shift and maintenance clarifies the not always easy

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[20] PLOKHY, S. (2006). *The origins of the Slavic nations: Premodern identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus*. Cambridge University Press, p. 1-9,354-362.

[21] DEL GAUDIO, S. (2016). *Per una descrizione linguistica dell'ucraino*. Quaderni di Linguistica e Studi Orientali, 2, pp.209-233.

[22] The 20th and 21st centuries are marked by major events that have increasingly distanced the Western world with the Russian world, the most striking example being the Cold War. This is denoted in this way even in cultural and linguistic studies, where depending on the publications, one has analyses that are not always historically accurate. If one takes American studies, one finds an absolute denigration of the Russian world; Ukrainian studies, on the other hand, often turn out to be nationalistic in nature, highlighting only the poor performance on the part of the imperial or Soviet central power; while if one looks at Russian studies, one often finds the rhetoric that Ukrainian originated as a dialect, "a peasant form" of Russian.

[23] BULLI, E. (2007). *La situazione linguistica in Ucraina tra passato, presente e futuro. I risultati di una ricerca sociolinguistica*. Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica - Università di Firenze, 17, p.13-15

[24] Joshua Aaron Fishman (1926–2015) was an American sociolinguist, whose studies of sociolinguistics, language planning, and the study of multilingualism were fundamental. His most important works are *"Language Loyalty in the United States: The Maintenance and Perpetuation of Non-English Mother Tongues*

relationship of these two languages. The application of Fishman's theory can reveal the subtle interplay between internal efforts and external pressures in shaping the development of the Ukrainian language. By language shift, therefore, we mean external pressures and socio-political change, two closely related elements in the Ukrainian world. Certainly, censorship during the Russian Empire and later in the Soviet Union and thus the so-called Russian-speaking diaspora contributed to a greater spread of the Russian language. During the Soviet Union, social and political change due to collectivisation and industrialisation ensured that the Russian language gained a foothold in various areas including administration, education[25], and communication.[26] The study of the domains where the language is used is fundamental for Fishman, and certainly while The Soviet Union recognising Ukrainian as an official language no policies were created to preserve it, instead the policies to implement the use of the Russian language were applied. So certainly the predominant use of the Russian language has created what is commonly called diglossia, that is, in a situation of apparent bilingualism, the use of one language in different social contexts compared to another, creates a sort of linguistic hierarchy, hence the idea that the prestige language was the Russian language[27]; this can also be seen from the

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by American Ethnic and Religious Groups" (1966); "Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages" (1991); "The Sociology of Language: An Interdisciplinary Social Science Approach to Language in Society" (1972); "Can Threatened Languages Be Saved? Reversing Language Shift, Revisited: A 21st Century Perspective" (2001). Although his studies do not specifically deal with the Ukrainian language, his theories and his sociolinguistic studies can be used to understand various linguistic situations in various regions. Fishman also boasts a vast range of essays and articles. For the analysis we attempted to do in this thesis, these two articles of his were mainly used: "Language maintenance and language shift as a field of inquiry. A definition of the field and suggestions for its further development" Linguistics, vol. 2, no. 9, p.32-36 (1964); and "What is reversing language shift (RLS) and how can it succeed?" Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, p.10-30, (1990).

[25] For much of its history, education in Ukraine was mainly conducted in Latin, Polish or Russian, depending on the ruling power. The lack of formal education in Ukrainian hindered its development as a standardised and widely spoken language. KOROSTELINA, K. (2011). *Shaping unpredictable past: National identity and history education in Ukraine.* National Identities, 13(1), 1-16.

[26] BULLI, E. (2007), cit. p. 14-19

[27] SÉRIOT, P. (2005). *Diglossia, bilingualism or mixure of lanuages: the case of surzyk in Ukraine.* La linguistique, 41, p.46-52.

fact that many writers of Ukrainian origin, including Nikolai Gogol, preferred to write in Russian, most likely to reach a wider audience. This further consolidated the influence of the Russian language in many Ukrainian communities, even outside Ukraine: there are various accounts that during the first wave of Ukrainian migration to the United States, the Russian language was spoken, not Ukrainian. So, for all these many reasons during the Soviet era, Russian was often used as the language of diplomacy and international communication, contributing to its importance on the world stage.[28] In summary, the relative influence of Ukrainian over Russian in its territory can be attributed to a combination of historical migration patterns, demographic factors, socio-political context, cultural exports, and economic ties. Although Ukrainian is a vibrant and important language with a rich cultural heritage, these historical and demographic factors have contributed to the broader global influence of the Russian language.

1.3 The Intersection of Language Maintenance Theory and Ukrainian literature

When researching the reasons why the development of the Ukrainian language has been slower, what is often left out, perhaps for propaganda reasons, is the fact that what we now call "Ukraine" is an idea that has been formed since the mid-1800s; before that it was a territory, where to the west were the Poles and to the east were the Russians.[29] It should be remembered that the present Ukrainian state inherits the borders of the Soviet social republic of Ukraine, but during the Russian Empire the borders were completely different. During the 1700s, the territories of present-day Ukraine

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[28] SHEVELOV, G.Y. (1979), Cit. p. 1-17. See also: FOURNIER, A. (2002). *Mapping Identities: Russian Resistance to Linguistic Ukrainisation in Central and Eastern Ukraine*. Europe-Asia Studies, 54(3), p.415–433. SATZEWICH, V. (2002). *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (1st ed.). Routledge, p.1-23. DEL GAUDIO, S. (2012). *The Russian Language in Ukraine: some unsettled Questions about its Status as a National Variety*. In R. Muhr (Ed.), Non-Dominant Varieties of Pluricentric Languages: Getting the Picture, Peter Lang, p.207-227.
[29] MAGOCSI, P. R. (1996), cit. p. 171-172. See also: PACHLOVSKA, O. (1998). *Civiltà letteraria ucraina.* Roma, Carocci Editore, p. 82. LAMI, G. (2005). *La questione ucraina fra '800 e '900*. Milano, Campus Cuem, p. 11.

were mainly divided by three major powers: the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Russian Empire, and the Ottoman Empire; with also smaller entities that exercised their power in localized areas. The western regions of present-day Ukraine, including territories such as Galicia, Volinia and parts of Podolia, were controlled by the Polish-Lithuanian Confederation; whereas the eastern areas, including the territories of present-day cities such as Kiev, Chernihiv and Kharkiv were the Russian Empire that exercised power. The Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, had a presence in the southern regions; specifically with its vassal state on the Crimean Khanate, until its annexation by Russia in 1783. In the central and eastern regions particularly along the Dnepr River, there was the Cossack Hetmanate that maintained a degree of autonomy during the 1700s under the sovereignty of the Russian Empire. In the late 1700s, parts of western Ukraine, including the regions of Galicia and Bukovina, following the partition of Poland, the Habsburg Monarchy took control. Even during the 1800s these territories remained under the control of the various powers, with certainly a very noticeable Russian expansion, especially to the south consolidating its control over Crimea and integrating it into its administrative structure.[30] This brief excursus, although not exhaustive on the geographical divisions of the region, I believe it is necessary to clarify a very specific point: When addressing Russian influence on the Ukrainian population during the 18th and 19th centuries, it's crucial to recognize that only the eastern and southern territories fell under direct Russian control, labelled as the "Little Russian" region. Therefore, when assessing why an autonomous Ukrainian language and culture didn't materialize until the mid-19th century, blaming solely the

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[30] AREL, D. AND V. KHMELKO (1996), *The Russian Factor and Territorial Polarization in Ukraine.* The Harriman Review 1-2, p. 81-91. See also: LAMI, G. (2005), cit, p. 12-15. CELLA, G. (2021), cit, p. 27-33. See also: BRITANNICA: https://www.britannica.com/summary/Ukraine (accessed on June 15, 2024). YouTube: presentazione del libro di Hrytsak, Y. (2023) *Storia dell'Ucraina. Dal medioevo a oggi*. il Mulino. https://www.radioradicale.it/scheda/727972/presentazione-del-libro-di-yaroslav-hrytsak-storia-dellucraina-dal-medioevo-a-oggi-il (accessed on June 15, 2024).

Russian leadership would be incomplete. The responsibility also extends to the Polish, Austrian, and Ottoman authorities for their roles in shaping this outcome.[31]

Another point that in my opinion is worth emphasizing is the social stratification of this region. In contrast to other areas within the empire and beyond, the various nationalities inhabiting the territory were stratified according to social classes. Here, ethnic groups were organized based on their respective societal roles. There was a certain social rigidity, passed down between generations in which an ethnic group was assigned a certain job or expected certain socioeconomic tasks.[32] Obviously being that these territories were divided among the various powers mentioned above we do not have the exact statistics of this social construction, but from the various historical texts taken into consideration we understand that the social pattern was like this,[33] both in the part commanded by the Russian empire and the Poles. The native Slavs[34] were certainly outnumbered by other ethnic groups, and they were mainly engaged in agriculture. With the expansion of the Russian empire, large groups of ethnic Russians arrived in some regions of eastern and southern Ukraine, occupying positions within the imperial administration, clergy, and army. In the western regions of Galicia and Volinia there were Poles, who were part of the nobility and played a dominant role in the administration, judiciary, and land ownership.

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[31] This statement in this thesis is the consequence of a very extensive research of the development of the Ukrainian language in which one encounters in most cases an indictment against the Russian empire as the sole culprit for the late development of the Ukrainian language. This geographical analysis, though not detailed, is useful in making it clear that if indeed the cause of the late development is the central power, since not even in the areas where the central power was Polish or Ottoman did a Ukrainian language develop, it means that both the Russian empire and the Poles and Ottomans are to blame.

[32] KAPPELER, A. (2003). *Centro e periferie nell'Impero russo.* Rivista Storica Italiana, 2, pp. 419-438. See also: DEL GAUDIO, S. (2012), cit. p. 207-227.

[33] The first real census is in 1897, taken by the Russian Empire, which denotes great ethnic diversity within the territory. CADIOT, J. (2005). *Searching for Nationality: Statistics and National Categories at the End of the Russian Empire (1897-1917).* The Russian Review, 64(3), p.440–445.

[34] For historical correctness in this thesis, we prefer to use the term Native Slavs and not Ukrainians. Until the mid-1800s there was no idea of a "Ukrainian" nation that included a specific culture and identity. Native Slavs, they did not feel Ukrainian, it will be a sentiment that will come after the second half of the 1800s.

Throughout the territory then there were Jews, who engaged in the trade of finance, and crafts. In the southern area the Crimean Tatars had a distinct cultural and social identity, and they occupied the highest ranks of society. Then there were the Cossacks, who played a major role in the Ukrainian territory, especially in the areas occupied by the Russian Empire. They are not an ethnically distinct group, they represented the free peasants; therefore, they were mostly nobles and military, and the first Cossack settlements appeared in the lower Dnepr area during the 16th century.[35] This parenthesis is crucial to highlight one point: the typical Risorgimento idea of nation and people was slow to enter within Ukrainian society, because a so-called Ukrainian society was for all intents and purposes absent. The native Slavs were mostly peasants and serfs and, having a very low, often non-existent level of education, they expressed themselves in mostly oral Slavic dialects and there was no standard language. As for the more educated ones, the schools were in Polish or Russian to make it easier for them to interact with the elites. Instead, the elites, who played a key role in shaping culture and literature, spoke Polish in western Ukraine meanwhile in Eastern Ukraine, the Cossacks willingly adopted Russian as their language of choice, considering it prestigious. Certainly, with the advance of the Russian Empire in the Ukrainian region, there was an increasing tendency to speak Russian, even among the peasants, who spoke Russian to the landowners.[36] During the 1700s and 1800s, the primary architects of literature, language, and culture were the educated elite, in contrast, the uneducated peasant population, focused on agricultural labour, had minimal influence in these spheres; and it is probably for this reason that the development of a codified Ukrainian language faced significant delays. Until the mid-1800s, the

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[35] PACHLOVSKA, O. (1998), cit. p. 141-143. See also: CADIOT, J. (2005), Cit, p.445–455. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 90-106, 109-122.

[36] SUBTELNY, O. (1994) *Ukraine. A history.* Toronto, University of Toronto Press, p.108-195. See also: PAVLENKO, A. (2006). *Russian as a lingua franca.* Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 26, p.78–99

concept of "Ukraine" didn't exist; instead, there were Poles on one side and "Little Russians" on the other.[37] The prevalent notion of each people having their own nation didn't hold sway in the regions of modern-day Ukraine within the empire. This was mainly because the notion of being a distinct people separate from Russians was absent, to be more precise, within the multicultural Russian empire, many individuals, beyond Russians, identified with the broader Slavic community.[38]

Picking up on Fishman's Language Maintenance theory, so the ability of a community to sustain the use of its language through generations despite external pressures, we can certainly identify key points regarding the development of the Ukrainian language. Ukraine has been at the crossroads of civilisations, including Byzantine, Mongolian, Polish and Russian. This resulted in a complex linguistic ecosystem with multiple overlapping influences, making the emergence of a single Ukrainian language more difficult.

1.4 the Ukrainian Folklore

Prior to the 19th century, the Ukrainian language lacked a standardized form, thus its literature predominantly existed in the oral tradition of folk tales and narratives. Folk songs, ballads and oral tales were an important form of expression of Ukrainian culture. Ukrainian folklore is a rich and varied tapestry of traditional beliefs, customs, legends, songs, and rituals passed down from generation to generation.[39] Ukrainian folklore has its roots in

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[37] PLOKHY, S. (2006). *Ukraine or Little Russia? Revisiting an Early Nineteenth-Century Debate*. Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne Des Slavistes, 48(3/4), p.335–353.

[38] KAPPELER A. (2001). *The Russian Empire: A multi-ethnic history*. Longman, chapter 4. See also: PAVLEEVA, E. (2011). *Russian national identity: Beyond "empire" versus "nation" dichotomy.* ALPPI Annual of Language & Politics and Politics of Identity, 5, p.41-55

[39] NABOK, M. (2020). *Teaching Ukrainian folk dumas at university: Analysis in context of intercultural communication.* Advanced Education, 16(4), p.1-5. See also: Синєок, В. А., & Калієвський, К. В. (2023). *Ukrainian folk dance as a founder of national identity.* Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук, 64 (2), p.104-108

ancient Slavic traditions.[40] These early beliefs and practices were associated with animism, the worship of nature and ancestral spirits. Oral tales, songs and rituals played an important role in the transmission of knowledge and cultural beliefs. The oral transmission of literature meant that cultural knowledge was disseminated through direct face-to-face interaction and fostered a strong sense of community identity and shared heritage.[41]

The Ukrainian epics, known as "dumy" consisted of songs and ballads recounting historical events, heroic deeds, and legendary stories. They were usually sung or recited by bards called 'kobzars' or 'bandurists'. "Dumy"[42] served to preserve and transmit historical and cultural knowledge within the community.[43] Each region of Ukraine had its own oral legends, myths, and folk tales. They often reflected the region's unique history, landscape, and beliefs. Local legends[44] served to connect local people with their environment and ancestors. They were also an important means of cultural expression and identity formation.[45]

The emergence of the Cossack Hetmanate[46] in the 17th century led to the formation of a distinctive warrior culture reflected in Cossack songs, ballads,

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[40] While Ukrainian folklore has its roots in Slavic culture, the various historical events that have taken place in the region have since influenced the tales, such as the arrival of Christianity in the 10th century or interactions with other peoples. NABOK, M. (2020), cit. p. 1-5.

[41] KONONENKO, N. (2019). *Ukrainian Epic and Historical Songs: Folklore in Context*. University of Toronto Press, p. 7-20.

[42] The word "duma" is singular while "dumy" is plural transliterated from Ukrainian

[43] NABOK, M. (2018). *Ukrainian National Dumas: National Perceptions in the Process of Intercultural Communication*. Psycholinguistics, 24(2), p.198 – 217.

[44] Ukrainian folklore features mythical creatures, often representing nature. The most famous figures are the nymphs, called the 'Rusalki', they are often depicted as long-haired and very beautiful women, depending on the legend told they can be good or vindictive. Then there is the figure of the Slavic witch 'Baba Yaga', found in various tales of Eastern European peoples, or the three-headed dragon 'Zmey Gorynych'. 'Domovoi', on the other hand, is the domestic spirit, and in tale's families often leave gifts to the spirit to ensure health and wealth for the family. These are of course only a couple of examples of mythical beings, each tale having its own characters that also reflect the cultural context of the region in which they are told. https://www.ucraina.cc/leggende-e-folklore-ucraini.html (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[45] KONONENKO, N. (2019), cit. p. 7-20.

[46] The Cossacks were a semi-military population and free peasants who lived mostly within the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian confederation. in 1654, with the treaty of Pereyaslav, they were granted a degree of autonomy. The Cossack Hetmanate was then divided along the Dnepr River between the Poles and the Russians, and with the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739 was granted autonomy within the Russian Empire as well,

and epics. The Cossack period enriched Ukrainian folklore with stories of heroism, battles, and adventures. Cossack riddles were a popular form of wordplay and entertainment among Ukrainian Cossacks. They often featured witty riddles with elements of humour and wordplay. Although during the 18th the Cossacks lost their social influence in the territory, their songs were inherited by their descendants, and if in the beginning the songs were sung by men, gradually it was the women who carried on this tradition.[47] In the early 2000s, various scholars and enthusiasts began recording these songs, and in 2016, the Cossack Songs of the Dnipropetrovsk region were inscribed on the UNESCO[48] World Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Cossack songs are easily recognisable as they are characterised by slow melodies and the singing of each note very prolonged, there is usually no use of musical instruments, but the various voices with the various intonations create the melody. This type of art demonstrated individual creativity and linguistic ability and became a form of entertainment within the community.[49]

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today's Dnipropetrovsk region is also commonly called the region of the Cossacks, as they settled there. However, in 1764, Catherine abolished the Hetmanate, leading to the incorporation of its territories into the Russian Empire. The Cossacks are important in Ukrainian history because they were the first and the only form of self-government and relative autonomy during the 17th and 18th centuries in today's Ukrainian territory. SUBTELNY, O. (1994) *Ukraine. A history.* Toronto, University of Toronto Press, p.108-195. See also: CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 109-150.

[47] GONCHARENKO, O. (2018). *Historical and cultural origins of the Cossack folklore of the Dnieper region*. Scientific Journal of Polonia University, 31(6), p.109-115. See also: KONONENKO, N. (2019), cit. p. 7-45.

[48] The UNESCO report provides information on the project for the preservation and development of cultural heritage in the Dnipropetrovsk region. Thanks to the regional council, three song collections were published in the period 2017-2020. The Dnipropetrovsk Music Academy is also educating groups of new generations to preserve the Cossack-Ukrainian folklore in local communities, events are organised to make it more widely known. Every year, research continues to unearth more and more traditional songs, so much so that the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council approved the updated Plan for the Protection of Cossack Songs for 2021-2024 https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/cossack-s-songs-of-dnipropetrovsk-region-01194 (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[49] BALDI, A., MYKHAYLYAK, T. (2016). *L'Impero allo specchio - antropologia, etnografia e folklore nella costruzione di un'identità culturale nazionale ai tempi della Russia zarista 1700-1900*. Squilibri, Roma, p.1-28. See Also: GONCHARENKO, O. (2018), cit. p.109-115.

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In conclusion, while folklore is an important part of Ukrainian culture and even the language, it remained something holed up in the countryside until the 2000s, and depending on where you came from, you had your own different tradition. Furthermore, during the Soviet Union, to avoid clashes with the authorities, traditional Cossack and Ukrainian songs were performed clandestinely, in private places. Certainly, these songs and the idea of a Cossack heritage became a symbol of the struggle against Soviet

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[50] Photo taken from the UNESCO site, depicting the singers singing a Cossack traditional song. © Kravchenko Dmytro, 2014

[51] Photo taken from the video published by the Virtual Museum for the Preservation of Ukrainian Culture. In this video, they sing a traditional Cossack song in the Ukrainian language entitled 'Коло річки, коло броду' in English "Around the river, around the ford". It is noticeable here that the singers are young; in fact, thanks to the cooperation between Ukraine and UNESCO, efforts are being made to preserve this art through the younger generation. https://virtmuseum.uccs.org.ua/en (accessed on June 15, 2024).

uniformity.[52] In addition it can be stated that the oral tradition has therefore probably slowed down the development of a written literature, and consequently the development of a language recognised socially by all.

1.5 The turning point

A turning point came between the 19th and 20th centuries, with the emergence of nationalist movements in which the desire for cultural and linguistic independence and thus the desire to preserve and promote the Ukrainian language was first expressed. It is no coincidence that concomitant with the birth of these movements, Ukrainian literary development intensified, inevitably influencing the vocabulary, style, and expressions of a language. In the 19th century, especially during the Ukrainian national revival, attempts were made to develop a standardised literary language and to create a more coherent Ukrainian literary tradition. During this period, prominent writers and intellectuals emerged who made significant contributions to the development and dissemination of Ukrainian literature.[53]

The main figures of this period are Ivan Kotlyarevsky (1769-1838), known for his satirical and humorous works, Kotlyarevsky's *Aeneid* (1798) is considered a milestone of Ukrainian literature. It is written in a mixture of Ukrainian and Church Slavonic. Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) known a s the national bard of Ukraine, Shevchenko's poetry and writings played an important role in the formation of Ukrainian national consciousness. His works deal with themes of social injustice, national identity, and the struggle

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[52] SYSYN, F. (1991). *The Reemergence of the Ukrainian Nation and Cossack Mythology*. Social Research, 58(4), p.845–864. See also: KONONENKO, N. (2011). *The politics of innocence: Soviet and post-Soviet animation on folklore topics.* Journal of American Folklore, 124(494), p.272–294. KONONENKO, N. (2019), cit. p. 304-338. NABOK, M. (2018), cit. p.198 – 217.

[53] GRABOWICZ, G. G. (1992). *Ukrainian–Russian Literary Relations in the Nineteenth Century: A Formulation of the Problem.* In Ukraine and Russia in Their Historical Encounter, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press University of Alberta Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, p. 214-245. See also: MILLER, A. I. (2022). *National identity in Ukraine: history and politics*. Russia in Global Affairs, 20(4), p.46-65.

for freedom.[54] Nikolai Gogol (1809-1852) wrote only in Russian but made significant contributions to the representation of Ukrainian themes in literature, including *Taras Bulba* (1835), which draws heavily on Ukrainian culture and history. Ivan Franko (1856-1916) was an important Ukrainian writer, poet, and social activist whose work covered a variety of genres and played an important role in the development of Ukrainian literature. In any case, these writers also used Russian in their works, there is no evidence that they were in any way obliged to by the central power, the hypothesis is certainly that Russian remained the most prestigious vehicular language to make themselves known as much as possible. However, these and other writers contributed to the establishment of Ukrainian as a literary language and the creation of works that are still admired and studied today.[55] The development of the Ukrainian language was thus shaped by various historical and cultural factors that were intertwined with the various political and social changes. We have seen how the nationalist movement was fundamental to the promotion of the Ukrainian language. During the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, there were various attempts to Russify society, and there were times when publications in the Ukrainian language suffered great restrictions, as well as other times when the use of the Ukrainian language was widely permitted.[56] Certainly, the great turning point came in 1991 with

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[54] BROGI G., PACHLOVSKA O. (2015). *Taras Ševčenko. Dalle carceri zariste al Pantheon ucraino*. Milano, Mondadori Education, p. 1-10.

[55] PAVLYSHYN, M. (1998). *A History of Ukrainian Literature (From the 11th to the End of the 19th Century)*. An Overview of the Twentieth Century. Journal of Ukrainian Studies, 23(2), pp.444-578. See also: BROGI BERCOFF, G. (2005), cit. p. 119–136.
ZANICHELLI: https://aulalettere.scuola.zanichelli.it/materie-lettere/italiano-lettere/gli-scrittori-ucraini-e-la-letteratura-russa; Britannica: https://www.britannica.com/art/Ukrainian-literature (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[56] As we shall see in the following chapters, there was no law against the use of the Ukrainian language. There was certainly strong censorship of certain literary texts, including nationalist texts especially during Stalin's rule. What we will see is the constant pursuit of Russification of society and at times even the discouragement of the use of the Ukrainian language. WEEKS, T. (2010). *Russification/Sovietization*. European History Online, p. 1-15.

the declaration of independence and the creation of an independent Ukrainian state[57].

1.6 A insight into the language situation in the Ukrainian state

Although Ukrainian is the only national language according to the Constitution[58], Ukraine is a bilingual state with numerous ethnic minorities. These include Belarusians, Jews, Romanian Moldavians, Bulgarians, Poles, Hungarians and Crimean Tatars, where the largest minority is Russian.[59] Geographically, Ukrainian is predominant in the west, while Russian takes precedence in the east and south. The industrialisation of the USSR led to the concentration of Russian speakers in the urban industrial regions of the eastern and southern part of the country and approximately 80% of the population in these areas identified themselves as Russian-speaking, while the remaining part used Russian in everyday life. In central Ukraine, the two languages are equally spoken, although Russian is more common in Kiev and Ukrainian is dominant in rural areas.[60] Hence the 'myth of the two Ukrainians'[61]; often used to describe regional differences in the country. On the one hand, Western Ukraine, which is historically linked to what we now

[57] There was a brief period at the beginning of the 20th century when the Ukrainian People's Republic was born, an independent state with Ukrainian as its state language, but it did not last long and eventually fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p.195; 251-267.

[58] The Ukrainian Constitution has been in force since 1996 and consists of 161 articles divided into 15 sections. Article 10 states that 'Державною мовою в Україні є українська мова', i.e. that the state language in Ukraine is Ukrainian. There are then several sections that also discuss the Russian language and monolithic languages, but this will be the subject of the next chapters.
https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/cgi-bin/laws/main.cgi?nreg=254%EA%2F96%2D%E2%F0#Text (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[59] The Ukrainian state recognises 13 minorities, but in reality, there are about 130 of them.
https://ukurier.gov.ua/uk/articles/skilki-narodiv-zhive-v-ukrayini/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).   Se also: DEL GAUDIO, S. (2012), cit. p. 207-227

[60] STEPANENKO, V. (2003). *Identities and Language Politics in Ukraine: The Challenges of Nation-State Building.* In F. Daftary & F. Grin (Eds.), Nation-Building, Ethnicity and Language Politics in Transition Countries. Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, p.107-137.

[61] This concept was used extensively during the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Euromaidan, to identify the two political oppositions. FOMINA, J. (2014). *Language, identity, politics - The myth of two Ukraines.* Institute of Public Affairs, p.4.
See also: ATLANTIC COUNCIL: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/debunking-the-myth-of-a-divided-ukraine/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

define as Western Europe, and on the other hand, Eastern Ukraine, defined as much more 'Russian'. It should be noted that this geographical division turns out to be very reductive and oversimplifies dynamics that need to be considered when talking about language. In fact, the linguistic division just made refers to official census data[62] concerning mother tongues. These are data that consider, nationality, language knowledge of the individual and the honesty of the individual's statements. Precisely for these reasons, the situation is much more complex and varied than what one sees on the surface.[63]

The linguistic situation changes radically when one considers the parameters of the language used rather than the mother tongue. Indeed, the mother tongue does not always correspond to the language used in everyday life.[64] From the outset, the study of the Ukrainian linguistic landscape was complicated by the researchers' difficulty in distinguishing between the language self-identified by individuals (referred to as 'mother tongue' or 'ridna mova') and the languages actively used.[65] After clarifying this distinction, it emerged that more than half of Ukrainian citizens considered Ukrainian to be their mother tongue. However, more than half of this same population predominantly used Russian in everyday interactions[66] .For example, the Crimean Tatars[67] declared Tatar as their mother tongue in the

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[62] The only Census we have available dates to 2001. It is therefore difficult to have up-to-date data on the demographic, social and economic conditions of the country. Every number that is considered is more than 20 years old, thus being outdated. https://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[63] FOMINA, J. (2014), cit. p.4-20. See also: STEPANENKO, V. (2003), cit. p.107-137.

[64] AREL, D. (1995). *Language Politics in Independent Ukraine: Towards One or Two State Languages?* Nationalities Papers, 23(3), p.597–622.

[65] OLSZAŃSKI, T. A. (2012). *The language issue in Ukraine*. An attempt at a new perspective. OSW Studies, 40, pp.14-16

[66] MASENKO, L. (2009). *Language situation in Ukraine: Sociolinguistic analysis*. In J. Besters-Dilger (Ed.), Language policy and language situation in Ukraine. Peter Lang, p.101-139.

[67] The Crimean Tatars are an ethnic group of Mongol-Turkish descent. They have been present in the region since the 13th century, when led by Genghis Khan they invaded the area. The Crimean Khanate came into being in the 15th century, first as a vassal of the Ottoman Empire, then as a dependent entity. Over the centuries it was a buffer territory between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire. In 1783 after the Russo-Turkish wars it became part of the Russian Empire. In 1944, accused of collaborating with the Nazis, they were deported to Central Asia, the entire population suffering heavy human losses. Only late in the 20th century

census, but in everyday life they mainly use Russian.[68] The choice of mother tongue expresses the desire to identify themselves differently from Russians and Ukrainians, but in everyday life they choose Russian, this is because Russian is the most widely spoken language in their environment and is probably the language they have spoken since childhood[69]. About a fifth of the population identifying themselves as Ukrainian declare that their language is Russian, underlining the lack of complete agreement between the national and linguistic groups. As far as bilingualism is concerned, native speakers of Ukrainian are more fluent in Russian. The alleged superiority of Russian over Ukrainian stems from the population density in regions where Russian is predominantly spoken and its social, economic, and cultural prevalence in urban areas.[70]

As far as the life of each individual Ukrainian citizen is concerned, since most of them are even passively bilingual, communication between them does not encounter any difficulties. They are therefore aware that, depending on the context, they can safely use one language over another.[71] Especially regarding the younger generation, Ukrainization in the east of the country corresponds to Russification in the west, this is mainly due to the use of the internet and social media. Russian turns out to be among the top five most widely used languages in the online world. [72]While the English language is

with the dissolution of the Soviet Union did many returns to Crimea, eventually becoming part of independent Ukraine, becoming the largest minority in the region. 2014 is the year of the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Fisher, A. W. (2014). *The Crimean Tatars.* Hoover Press, p.9-19, 33-57.
See also: MINORITY RIGHTS:
https://minorityrights.org/communities/crimean-tatars/#:~:text=Crimean%20Tatars%20numbered%20around%20248%2C200,in%20the%20region%20for%20centuries (accessed on June 15, 2024).
[68]Kyiv independent: https://kyivindependent.com/who-are-the-crimean-tatars/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).
[69] OLSZAŃSKI, T. A. (2012), cit. p. 8-14.
[70] SHEVCHENKO, N. (2015). *The History of Bilingualism in Ukraine and Its Role in the Present-Day Political Crisis*. Cahiers Sens public, 17-18(1), p.203-225
[71] PAVLENKO, A. (2008). *Russian in post-Soviet countries: Language revival, language removal, and sociolinguistic theory*. The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 32, p.59–80
[72] STATISTA: https://www.statista.com/statistics/262946/most-common-languages-on-the-internet/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

first overall, it is noticeable that searches in South America are mainly done in Spanish though in the Eurasian world Russian turns out to be the most used language. The Internet and the web have now become part of our everyday life, and to stay connected and up-to-date Ukrainians tend to use the Russian language. On social media it is clearly noticeable, until 2020 the language used on Ukrainian Twitter was Russian. With the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 we see an increase in Ukrainian language tweets, reaching the level of Russian language tweet numbers. Predicting language behaviour on social media it is not easy, certainly the increase in Ukrainian language use is a clear signal to move away from what is Russian, but it is also to be said that the numbers do not give Russian language as finished, far from it, still remaining the vehicular language among young people active on social.[73]

The same cannot be said when it comes to formal or legal moments such as courts or public administration offices, the use of the Russian language is never allowed and this can cause problems, including legal ones, especially among the older generations who have always been used to using the Russian language, obviously creating impediments.[74]

1.7 Surzhyk

As mentioned above, there are no communication problems among Ukrainian citizens, even less so among the younger generation. Young people often use Russian when talking to their peers or surfing the Internet, even though they are Ukrainian citizens, and their mother tongue is Ukrainian. The linguistic 'asymmetry' of young people is mainly due to the specific environmental conditions in which they live, which leads them to

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[73] RACEK, D., DAVIDSON, B. I., THURNER, P. W., et al. (2024). *The Russian war in Ukraine increased Ukrainian language use on social media*. Communications Psychology, 2, p.1-14.
[74] OLSZAŃSKI, T. A. (2012). *The language issue in Ukraine*. An attempt at a new perspective. OSW Studies, 40, pp.23-32

differentiate their behaviour according to situations and ways of speaking. Many of them speak Surzhik, a mixture of Russian and Ukrainian, which often combines Russian vocabulary with Ukrainian grammar and pronunciation. The study of Surzhyk has attracted considerable interest among linguists, sociolinguists and cultural scholars for its reflection of complex historical and cultural interactions. The origins of Surzhyk date back to the late 18th and early 19th century, a period marked by substantial socio-political changes. It experienced accelerated development in the 20th century, particularly during the Soviet era, when Ukrainian and Russian coexisted and influenced each other.[75] The characteristics of Surzhyk are manifold. Surzhyk incorporates a varied lexicon, drawing from both Ukrainian and Russian vocabulary. Its grammar includes a fusion of syntactic structures, resulting in a unique syntax. In addition, the phonetic patterns of Surzhyk may show influences from the Ukrainian and Russian phonetic systems. This language variety is not uniform and has regional variations in different areas of Ukraine. The social and cultural significance of Surzhyk is fundamental. It is a mirror of the intricate historical, social, and cultural interactions between Ukrainians and Russians. Furthermore, Surzhyk emphasises the malleability and adaptability of the language in response to societal changes and external influences. Some consider it a natural linguistic evolution, reflecting the dynamic interactions between Ukrainian and Russian cultures. Others, however, see it as a potential threat to the purity and integrity of both languages, sparking discussions on language preservation and identity.[76] The persona Vjerka Serdjučka, created

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[75] Ivi, p. 12-14. See also: BILANIUK, L. (1997). *Speaking of "Surzhyk": Ideologies and mixed languages.* Harvard Ukrainian Studies, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute 21(1/2), p. 93-117. BERNSAND, N. (2001). *Surzhyk and national identity in Ukrainian nationalist language ideology*. Lund University, Forum, 17, p.38-47

[76] KENT, K. (2010). *Language Contact: Morphosyntactic Analysis of Surzhyk Spoken in Central Ukraine*. LSO Working Papers in Linguistics, Proceedings of WIGL, 33-53.

by Ukrainian artist Andriy Danylko[77], is famous for using Surzhyk in her performances. In this thesis we take her as an example because in 2007 she came second in the Eurovision Song Contest with the song "Dancing Lasha Tumbai", making her famous abroad. Her performances represent Ukrainian linguistic diversity, she uses exaggerated language combining Russian and Ukrainian elements, creating a successful satire that entertains the audience. The Eurovision contest aims to acquaint the audience with the various national identities of the participants, and Vjerka's performance combined the various Ukrainian cultural elements by manipulating various gender and ethnic stereotypes. During her performance she combined choreography typical of Soviet village festivals by incorporating elements of Ukrainian folklore, the lyrics of the song predominantly in Ukrainian and Surzhyk is a rebellion against Russian military dominance and the encroaching pressure from Europe to conform, advocating instead for the preservation of Ukrainian identity and culture. Verka Serduchka's performance at the 2007 Eurovision contest represents a combination of contradictory elements that reflect both exotic Orientalism and Ukrainian national identity. On the one hand she mocks elements of Western culture by depicting them in a stereotypical way highlighting how unnatural they are within Ukrainian tradition and society, and on the other hand she boldly appropriates and manipulates Soviet symbols, accepting their importance both negatively and positively historically, seeking to highlight Ukrainian identity by bringing Ukrainian folklore to the stage. Verka represents a form of rebellion against the cultural expectations imposed by Europe and Russia and seeks to promote an image of Ukraine that is unique and uninfluenced by external traditions. These fusions of symbols create an ambivalent image, provoking mixed reactions. The use of the Surzhyk represents this, the desire to act as

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[77] Andriy Danylko is very famous in Ukraine, besides being a singer he is also a comedian. Vjerka Serdjučka is his drag persona, and she is an extremely satirical character.

a cultural intermediary between a post-Soviet identity and the search for new aesthetics, the union between the past and the future, serves to redefine the Ukrainian national image, starting with society, which is often seen as having to take positions that are not its own with respect to the use of language, limiting the linguistic fluidity that has always characterised the Ukrainian people.[78]

1.8 Language and identity

Although identity studies cannot be limited exclusively to the linguistic context of a specific nation, in Ukraine the language plays a central role in establishing the country's national identity. Initiatives to rejuvenate and defend the Ukrainian language often align with broader efforts to strengthen Ukrainian cultural and national identity.[79] The Ukrainian national project, which took shape before independence in 1991, placed significant emphasis on language as the cornerstone of national identity. The 1989 Law on the Language of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine, where "the Ukrainian language is one of the fundamental symbols of the national identity of the Ukrainian people"; the Ukrainian political movement 'Ruch'[80] that claimed the promotion and preservation of the Ukrainian language and culture; and finally, the 1996 Constitution where the Ukrainian parliament declared the

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[78] MIAZHEVICH, G. (2012). *Ukrainian nation branding off-line and online: Verka Serduchka at the Eurovision Song Contest.* Europe-Asia Studies, 64(8), p.1505-1523.

[79] KOROSTELINA, K. V. (2013). *Mapping National Identity Narratives in Ukraine.* Nationalities Papers, 41(2), p.293 - 315

[80] The Ukrainian political movement 'Ruch' (Рух in Ukrainian) was a popular pro-democracy and nationalist movement that played a significant role in the Ukrainian political landscape in the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly in the period leading up to Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union. The 'Ruch' was officially known as the People's Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika (Народний Рух України за Перебудову in Ukrainian). It was founded on 28 May 1989 in Lviv, Ukraine. The movement was dedicated to supporting democratic reforms, human rights and the independence of Ukraine from the Soviet Union. Ruch played a crucial role in mobilising public support for Ukrainian independence and many of its prominent members went on to become key figures in Ukrainian politics after the country's independence in 1991. The movement's activities and advocacy efforts contributed significantly to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an independent Ukraine. ALIARCHUK, O., & KOGUT, O. (2020). *Origins of the People's Movement of Ukraine – Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Cultural and Scientific Society "Rukh".* East European historical bulletin, (17), p.197-211.

Ukrainian language to be the only official language; are all examples of the ongoing struggle to assert this aspect of Ukrainian identity.[81] Although on a legal level, the Ukrainian language is now fully protected, it is on a symbolic level where the greatest problems are encountered. This crucial aspect of Ukrainian statehood has been continuously challenged by the Russian Federation since the beginning of Ukrainian independence.[82]

On the one hand, Ukrainian national identity places significant emphasis on the use of language, equating it closely with a sense of belonging; on the other hand, in Russian-speaking circles, the use of the Russian language in the public sphere is seen as a political statement of alignment with the 'Slavic-Russian community', as distinct from Ukrainian national identity.[83] Consequently, the language dispute has evolved into a contest over a symbolic and ideological principle, the significance of which has amplified over time[84]. In the case of Ukraine, the evolution of the Ukrainian language carries significant historical and political weight.[85] The language serves as a vital tool to sustain traditions, literature, history, and folklore, all of which are crucial to the promotion of a collective national identity. Moreover, knowledge of the Ukrainian language is often considered a demonstration of dedication to Ukrainian culture and identity. It is a symbol of cultural pride and unity, prompting the promotion of the growth and use of the Ukrainian language in conjunction with broader cultural and national awareness campaigns. In essence, the promotion of the Ukrainian language and the

[81] CSERNICSKÓ, I. and MÁTÉ, R. (2017). *Bilingualism in Ukraine: value or challenge?* Sustainable Multilingualism, 10(1), p.14-35.

[82] AREL, D. (2017). *Language, Status, and State Loyalty in Ukraine*. Harvard Ukrainian Studies, 35(1/4), p.233–263

[83] Ibidem. See also: O'LOUGHLIN, J., TOAL, G., & KOLOSOV, V. (2016). Who Identifies with the "Russian World"? Geopolitical Attitudes in Southeastern Ukraine, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria. Eurasian Geography and Economics, 57(6), p. 745–778

[84] BILANIUK, L. (2002). *Gender, language attitudes, and language status in Ukraine*. Language in Society, 32(1), pp. 47-70.

[85] KULYK, V. (2011). *Language identity, linguistic diversity and political cleavages: evidence from Ukraine.* Nations and Nationalism, 17(3), p.627-648

strengthening of Ukrainian identity are closely linked. Language is the basis of cultural heritage and constitutes the foundation of Ukrainians' sense of belonging and identity.[86]

The very nature of the Russian language adds a further layer of complexity to the issue. It is seen not simply as a local dialect, but as a symbol with historical and political significance, associated with a historical opponent rather than a neutral linguistic medium.[87] The politicisation of the language issue, coupled with the country's diverse ethnic composition and historical context of perceived domination, has contributed to a fragile and tense situation. This has generated animosity not only within the political arena, but also in society at large. The result is an environment where animosity and deep divisions persist, hampering efforts towards national unity and reconciliation.

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[86] PRIZEL, I. (1998). *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine*. Cambridge University Press, 300-371.
[87] KULYK, V. (2011), cit. p.627-648. See also: DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019). *Linguistic russification in Russian Ukraine: languages, imperial models, and policies*. Russian Linguistics, Springer, 43(1), pp. 19-39

CHAPTER 2

Language policies in the territory of Malorossiia during the Russian Empire

The complications already analysed in the first chapter on the development of a modern, universal Ukrainian language begin to take concrete form in this chapter, predominantly historical in which we will look at the linguistic situation in the 18th and 19th. We have already pointed out in the last chapter a certain cultural pressure that endangered the development and survival of other languages in the territory of today's Ukraine[88]. Both because of Polish, which was in vogue between the 16th and 17th centuries, and later Russian, which managed to establish itself as a language of prestige up to the present day. Russian, between the 18th and 19th centuries thus turns out to be not only the example of tsarist repression and censorship, but also the expression of the literary, philosophical, and artistic world of the Ukrainian social classes. Russian was chosen as the language of preference due to its association with the elevated and refined discourse of the privileged echelons of society, accurately, its usage signified belonging to a particular social stratum.[89] At the University of Kiev[90], teaching was conducted exclusively

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[88] During the Russian empire, the territories of today's Ukraine were divided into Little Russia (of which the Kiev region was also a part), southern Russia and western Russia. in this chapter, unless otherwise stated, when we speak of 'Ukraine' we are referring to the territories of Little Russia, territories that were mostly Cossack; historically speaking, it would therefore be more correct to always call these territories 'Little Russia'. it is in fact in the territories of little Russia where the Ukrainian language was formed in the 19th century, and this is perhaps the reason why in this thesis we tend to identify these territories as 'Ukraine' or 'little Russia'. As far as the territories of southern and western Russia are concerned, an in-depth study would certainly be of particular interest. however, what can be said in this thesis is that these are territories whose annexation came later, and that in the western territories there was a large presence of Poles, while in the southern areas there was a large presence of Turkish speakers. for a more in-depth study, look: Cella G. (2021). *Storia e geopolitica della crisi ucraina. Dalla Rus' di Kiev a oggi*. Carocci.

[89] AREL, D. AND V. KHMELKO (1996), cit. p. 81-91. See also: PAVLENKO, A. (2006), cit.p.78–99

[90] The university of Kiev was founded in the first half of the 19th century, thanks to the policies of the Minister of Education Sergey Semennovich Uvarov. LAMI, G. (2005), cit. p. 64-69.

in Russian, and all scientific publications were released in the same language. The predominance of the Russian language is not to be confused with the absence of a traditional Ukrainian culture, in fact, especially in recent studies, it emerges a very interesting phenomenon concerning the cultural and linguistic interactions between Russians and Ukrainians that produced Ukrainian national consciousness.[91] It challenges the conventional notion that cultural expression is inherently tied to a particular language. A very interesting phenomenon that can also be seen from the opposite side, just as Ukrainians used the Russian language to express their culture and history, Russians used Ukrainian culture and traditions to enrich their literature leading to a rich and varied cultural landscape[92]. A set of interactions all equally important in forming the cultural mosaic of these two peoples.[93]

When considering all the territories incorporating contemporary Ukraine, linguistic diversity prevailed; depending on the location people wrote in Ruthenian, Latin, Polish, or Church Slavonic. Completely different was the situation in everyday life, there was no single oral form with which the population expressed themselves. The language used in church circles, such as in churches and monasteries, would have been Church Slavonic, a liturgical language based on Old Bulgarian and Old Macedonian, used in Orthodox Christian services throughout the Eastern Slavic world. For Ecclesiastical Slavonic used in the Ukrainians Orthodox churches there was a strong influence from Ruthenian and Polish, there were also attempts to

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[91] These interactions facilitated the cultural and national development of the Ukrainian populace, which was formed more and more decisively by Ukrainian intellectuals who, however, had studied in the great capital cities of the empire. MILLER, A. (2001). *Shaping Russian and Ukrainian Identities in the Russian Empire During the Nineteenth Century: Some Methodological Remarks*. Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas, 49(2), p.257–263.
[92] BROGI BERCOFF, G. (2005), cit. p. 119–136.
[93] Prominent examples can be found in the writer Michail Afanas'evič Bulgakov (1891 - 1940), one of the most important Russian writers of the twentieth century, who trained in Kiev, or the Nikolai Vasil'evič Gogol (1809 - 1852)

translate the sacred scriptures into Ruthenian to reach a wider segment of the population.[94] These influences meant that the Church Slavonic used in Ukrainian churches compared to that used in Russian churches was different, so much so that some scholars call Ukrainian Church Slavonic a language in its own right.[95] Thus, according to some scholars, therefore, the three languages that led to the formation of today's Ukrainian language were Ukrainian Church Slavonic, Ruthenian[96], and New Literary Ukrainian[97]. As we have already seen, such a categorization can certainly be useful in simplifying the linguistic situation during the modern age, but it can be understood as partly correct only if one takes into consideration the written, not the oral, language. Furthermore, despite the debatable status of Ukrainian Church Slavonic, its confluence with Ruthenian played a pivotal role in shaping the emergence of modern literary Ukrainian during the 19th century.[98] [99]

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[94] Church Slavonic, also known as Meletian Church Slavonic, was codified by Meletij Smotryc'kyj in 1619 to standardise the language used in religious texts by adapting it to the common linguistic characteristics of the region. Its ancient variant came from the Byzantine Empire thanks to Saints Cyril and Methodius who translated the language into Slavonic using the glagolithic alphabet. DOSTÁL, A. (1965). *The Origins of the Slavonic Liturgy.* Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 19, p.67–87. MATTHEWS, W. K. (1950). *Sources of Old Church Slavonic*. The Slavonic and East European Review, 28(71), p.466–485.

[95] BODIN, P.-A. (2020). *Church Slavonic or Ukrainian? Liturgical Language, Tradition, and Politics.* Teologinen Aikakauskirja, p.176-186. See also: DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit. p. 19-39

[96] Ruthenian developed during the medieval period, particularly in the territories of Kievan Rus' and later during the times of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Confederation. The Ruthenian language was used in Galicia, a region of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In addition, the Ruthenian language was officially recognized and used for the publication of laws and official documents of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. SEREDA, O. (2001). *"Whom Shall We Be?" Public Debates over the National Identity of Galician Ruthenians in the 1860s.* Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas, 49(2), p.200–204

[97] New Literary Ukrainian refers to the standard literary form of the Ukrainian language that emerged in the 19th century during the Ukrainian national revival. It was elaborated by the efforts of Ukrainian intellectuals, writers and linguists to promote Ukrainian language and culture, who took into consideration the various dialects of ordinary people and tried to purify them by adding elements of Ruthenian and Church Slavonic. Remy, J. (2017). *Against All Odds: Ukrainian in the Russian Empire in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century.* Harvard Ukrainian Studies, 35(1/4), p.43–58.

[98] BROGI BERCOFF, G. (2005), cit. p. 119–136. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018). *The Fate of the "Ruthenian or Little Russian" (Ukrainian) Language in Austrian Galicia (1772-1867).* Harvard Ukrainian Studies, 35(1/4), p.87-104

[99] To be more precise, chronologically, we see the formation first of Church Slavonic, then of Ruthenian, which also was influenced thanks to the Poles and Austrians, and finally in the nineteenth century, thanks to the influence of Ruthenian, Church Slavonic, Russian, and local dialects the new literary Ukrainian was formed.

Moreover, what now it is known as Ukrainian literature, during the nineteenth century it had different names, including little Russian, Ruthenian, Galician, depending on the interlocutor; but what it is clear is that for a good part of the century it was seen as an integral part of Russian literature.[100] In retrospect, it can be said that this literature began to assert itself as 'Ukrainian' paradoxically[101] after Valuev's circular in 1863[102]. In any case, although the works of Taras Shevchenko were fundamental to the formation of a distinct literature, the standard definition remained 'little Russian literature' until the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Even among literary circles, there was uncertainty in defining this emerging literature,[103], often linked to the different political perspectives of its supporters. This ambiguity arose largely from the educational background of many Ukrainian writers, who had been educated mainly in Russian institutions and were surrounded by the Russian literary tradition.[104]

To facilitate the writing of this chapter the Valuev's circular will be taken as a watershed. Prior the circular, writers who wrote in Ukrainian language were defined as little Russians; nonetheless, following the 1863 circular, they were called 'Ukrainians', marking a shift towards the recognition of Ukrainian literature. Although this simplification may lack historical accuracy, this chapter will analyse a situation of great ambiguity, especially

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[100] DIBROVA, V. (2017). *The Valuev Circular and the End of Little Russian Literature*. Kyiv-Mohyla Humanities Journal, 4, p.123.

[101] The word 'paradoxically' is used because this circular was the first written attempt by the empire to censor the Ukrainian language and literature, as the following pages will show, this circular was not as successful as hoped

[102]. REMY, J. (2007). *The Valuev Circular and Censorship of Ukrainian Publications in the Russian Empire (1863-1876): Intention and Practice*. Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne Des Slavistes, 49(1/2), p.87–110.

[103] One example was the Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Drahomanov, who in 1876 published a brochure in Vienna *'on the question of little Russian literature'* and in Lviv published an article in the Ukrainian language declaring that Ukrainian literature was a "child" of Russian literature and that it was better to remain that way; while Panteleimon Alexandrovich Kulish, a great Ukrainian-language novelist, as well as being the first biographer of Nikolai Gogol, who had been a member of the Cyril and Methodius brotherhood, an underground Ukrainianophile group, firmly believed that the two literatures needed a clear division. DIBROVA, V. (2017), cit. p.123-138

[104] Ibidem

in the 19th century. However, with this kind of approach an attempt is made to find a balanced perspective, avoiding the pitfalls of nationalism and extremism.[105] These distinctions in literature are important for this thesis, because what was Little Russian literature is not the Ukrainian literature we know today. They are certainly related, chronologically there was first Little Russian literature and then Ukrainian literature, but there are language-related features that make it possible to divide these two literatures today. In the first half of the 19th century, writers changed language in their texts depending on what they wanted to portray, while writing in Russian they portrayed upper middle-class characters, very polite with a sometimes-ironic side, in Ukrainian they had more humble, simpler characters;[106] while contemporary Ukrainian literature is mainly used in the Ukrainian language.[107]

2.1 Russification

Since the relationship between Russian and Ukrainian will be extremely important for this thesis, an in-depth study of language policies in the Russian Empire is essential for understanding the topic. Russification refers to a series of policies to promote Russian language, identity, and culture within the Russian empire[108], a vast, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural

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[105] If a change is needed to explain a particular thought, it will be specified in the notes.

[106] An excellent example is Mikola Zerov, who wrote a book in 1923 entitled *'History of Ukrainian Literature'* (p. 104-106). He describes a typical little Russian writer who juggles Russian aristocratic dances with great ease and becomes a simple country Cossack at home.

[107] MILLER, A. (2003). T*he Ukrainian Question. The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century.* Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, p.1- 41, 117-147. See also: DIBROVA, V. (2017), cit.p.123-138. AMRAJ, A. (2023). *Verso una storia obiettiva della letteratura ucraina (La Storia della nuova letteratura ucraina di Mykola Zerov in prospettiva storica),* eSamizdat, 16, p.279-290.

[108]Between Kievan Rus and the Russian Empire is the Grand Duchy of Moscow. The Grand Duchy of Moscow emerged as a political entity in the north-eastern part of Kievan Rus' in the 14th century. Under the leadership of Ivan III, the Grand Duchy consolidated power, freed itself from Mongol control and expanded territorially. This period also marked important cultural and religious developments, culminating in the transition to Tsardom of Russia under Ivan IV. This event marked the transition from the title 'Grand Prince' to 'Tsar', emphasising the absolute authority of the ruler. The Russian Empire was officially declared in 1721 under Peter the Great and continued to exist until the Russian Revolution of 1917.

empire.[109] Russification for the tsarist government was seen to centralise power and give a sense of unity among the various populations living within the empire. The Russian language was promoted as the official language, Russian Orthodox Christianity was encouraged, and there were administrative changes with Russian-like systems of governance. During the Russian empire, there was thus the promotion of cultural norms, Russian holidays, as well as the encouragement of migration of ethnic Russians to non-Russian regions. These policies were seen by various scholars as something negative, emphasising that with the promotion of Russian culture and language there was at the same time a marginalisation and suppression of other languages and cultures; this then provoked various resentments from non-Russian populations, creating nationalist groups that contributed to various tensions, some of which are still in force today.[110] This conception is especially evident when studying Belarusians and Ukrainians, where various sociolinguistic, mainly Western, or Ukrainian, claim that the Ukrainian language was banned from adoption during the Russian empire and then the Soviet Union.[111]

In any case, the complex policy of the Russian empire does not fit into the simplistic idea of Western scholars where at every moment aimed at promoting Russian language and culture there was a moment of oppression of other cultures. Recent studies, including Kappeler's (2004)[112] have shown that there was not a specific policy with the aim of unifying the empire linguistically, culturally, and socially. There was no clear and lasting law for

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[109] PAVLENKO, A. (2011), cit. p.331-333.

[110] Ibidem. See also: HOSKING, G. A. (1997). *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*. Cambridge, p. 75-95. KAPPELER A. (2001), cit. chapter 8.

[111] This statement does not appear to be completely correct, so far there is no evidence of laws during the Russian empire that clearly prohibited the Ukrainian language. TARANENKO, O. (2007). *Ukrainian and Russian in contact: attraction and estrangement*. International Journal of the Sociology of Language, p. 119-140.

[112] KAPPELER, A. (2004). *The Ambiguities of Russification.* Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History, 5(2), p. 291-297.

the Russification of the empire; on the contrary, policies were often inconsistent and short-lived. It can therefore be seen that these policies were partly conscious, there was, therefore, certainly an imposed Russification but intertwined with a voluntary Russification.[113]

Pavlenko (2011)[114] divided the Russification process into four major moments; the first can be called "linguistic autonomy", which lasted from 1721 until 1830, the second from 1830 to 1863 we have "selective Russification", as a third moment we have the "expansion of Russification" (1863-1905) and lastly the "withdrawal of Russification" that lasted until 1917[115], the year of the February Revolution and thus the end of the empire. The aim of this chapter is therefore to understand how the Ukrainian language has undergone the process of Russification, and above all to analyse whether Pavlenko's analysis is also consistent for the Ukrainian people[116].

2.2 Linguistic autonomy (1721 – 1830)

During the language autonomy[117], the administration of the various territories was based on the cooperation of the local elites and there was the

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[113] SUNY, R. G. (1997). *The Empire Strikes Out: Imperial Russia, "National" Identity, and Theories of Empire.* In R. G. Suny (Ed.), A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Soviet Union, 1917-1953, The University of Chicago, p. 23-66. See also: WEEKS, T. R. (2004). *Russification: Word and practice 1863-1914*. Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, 148(4), p.471-489.

[114] PAVLENKO, A. (2011), cit. p. 331-350.

[115] In this chapter we will deal with the first three moments, as for the fourth, historically it was a period of major issues and therefore there were no major language policies to be adopted, as the main goal was to save the empire, which we know will not be the case.

[116] Ibidem

[117] Between 1721 and 1830 Ukraine was at the centre of complex geopolitical systems that changed its political status, geographical division, and the role of the Cossacks. With the victory against the Swedes, Peter the Great ensured the consolidation of Russian rule on the left bank of the Dnieper River (often seen as the natural border of the two Ukrainians) and the city of Kiev while the right bank remained part of the Polish-Lithuanian Confederation. The Cossack Hetmanate in this century began to lose its political autonomy (the region was called 'Sloboda', which means free territory in Russian) and with Catherine II in 1764 it completely lost its autonomy and became to all intents and purposes part of the territory of the Empire. Also, Poland at the end of the 18th century was divided between Prussia, Austria and Russia, and a large part of what was the right bank became part of the Russian Empire. The Ukrainian territory was thus divided in two, the territory of the Left Bank was called 'Little Russia' (Malorossiya), while the parts of the Right Bank were called 'Ruthenian', these

use of interpreters whenever necessary; there was no codified language policy. During this period, Orthodox baptism was demanded, but otherwise there was still no compulsory teaching of the Russian language. These were also the years of Peter the Great[118] (1696 –1724) who granted great autonomy to the German language in the Baltic provinces and in the various provinces, German could be spoken in the administration, courts, and schools. Although the Russian language also began to be promoted, the various provinces were free to use the language they preferred.[119]This linguistic autonomy first came to a halt with Catherine II[120] when she ended the autonomy of the Cossack Hetmanate, and thus with eastern Ukraine[121] becoming a full part of the Russian Empire, imposing Russian as the official language. This imposition of Russian in the region meant that elites began to speak Russian to enjoy the benefits their Russian counterparts had as high-ranking positions in the

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names were retained even when both territories came into the hands of the Russian Empire; the term Ukraine fell into disuse at this time. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 131-146, 173-176.

[118] His general idea was to strengthen the Russian state by popularizing the Russian language within the empire. During his reign he tried to standardize the Russian language. He had dictionaries and textbooks prepared to unify spelling, grammar, and vocabulary, in order to facilitate communication and administration in the vast territory of the empire. Non-Russian languages were marginalized in official circles and tried to impede their use in favour of Russian. Peter the Great's language policy was part of a larger effort to modernize and centralize the Russian state. Although Peter the Great did much to popularize the Russian language and culture, the success of his linguistic policy varied according to the regions of the empire. SCHULZE, L. (1985*) 'The Russification of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences and Arts in the eighteenth century'*, The British Journal for the History of Science, 18(3), p. 305–335.

[119] Peter the Great did not implement any real works of censorship toward specific languages, certainly he was not a great supporter of the development of a different ecclesiastical Slavonic from that which already existed, but for the simple fact that he was not a great lover of the Church in general, so much as to try to reform it and bring it under state control. So if there were any works of censorship against ecclesiastical Slavonic used in Ukrainian Orthodox churches it was only to try to standardize its use so as to reduce the power and influence of the Church. PAVLENKO, A. (2011), cit. p.331-350.

[120] Catherine II, also known as Catherine the Great, was Empress of Russia from 1762, until her death in 1796. BRITANNICA:https://www.britannica.com/place/Russia/The-reign-of-Catherine-II-the-Great-1762-96 (accessed on June 16, 2024).

[121] The term 'Ukraine' means 'on the border' in Old East Slavic and was a term used to describe the border area in the state of Kievan Rus. The term was also used with the same meaning during the Polish-Lithuanian Confederation (14th - 17th). With the Cossack Hetmanate, this word began to gain in importance and the idea of a Ukrainian identity began to develop. With the arrival of Catherine II, the term 'Ukrainian' was no longer used and the word ' *Malorossiia*' was preferred, literally 'Little Russian', referring mostly to the territories of today's central and eastern Ukraine. It was in the 19th century that the term regained importance, especially among those who wanted cultural and political autonomy for the region; until the 20th century, when the term 'Ukraine' was officially used in the name of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 131-161.

military service, and the non-use of the Russian language would have made it difficult the entry into Russian high society.[122] However, it can be argued that the general narrative of language autonomy in this period cannot be applied to the Ukrainian population. The absence of a standardised Ukrainian language, combined with the diversity of dialects spoken by the general population, added layers of complexity to the linguistic landscape. Moreover, if russification in Ukrainian territory is mentioned, it may simply take as reference the clergy, and the aristocracy, not all social classes. On the other hand, as far as the lower classes were concerned, they were left to manage themselves at this early stage, as they were mostly illiterate, and their dialects were only orally transmitted languages. Thus, if Pavalenko's analysis is only partly true, Kappeler's according to which there is no single, coherent, and precise law on Russification turns out to be correct[123].

Ukrainian Church Slavonic

If we consider the Ukrainian variant of Church Slavonic as a language, we can identify that at first this language with its texts were viewed positively by Moscow, they were seen as a conduit for bringing Orthodoxy to the more peripheral regions of the empire, thus also reaching ordinary people; however, in 1690 more than 300 were banned by the Council of Moscow[124]. One example is the teaching Gospel of Kyryl Trankvillion-Stavrovec'kyj, which was decreed heretic and burned in Moscow in 1627.[125] The concern, probably dictated by a misunderstanding, arose from a perceived inadequacy in the indoctrination of Orthodoxy in Ukraine. This apprehension stemmed

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[122] DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit. p. 19-39
[123] KAPPELER, A. (2004), cit. p. 291-297.
[124] As early as 1688 substantial censorship of Ukrainian liturgical works began, as in that year the Kyivan Rock Monastery became directly subordinate to the Patriarch of Moscow. In the 18th century, the Holy Synod steadily pursued linguistic Russification among the Ukrainian clergy and Cossack nobility through various decrees. These decrees, issued between 1727 and the following years, aimed to censor Ukrainian printed books and prohibit the import of Lithuanian books from Polish-ruled Ukraine. SUBTELNY, O. (1994), cit. p. 92-100.
[125] DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit. p. 19-39

from the typical features of the ecclesiastical Slavic language used in Ukrainian religious practices, which were influenced to a large extent by the Ruthenian and Polish languages. These influences were not understood by Moscow, which mistook these Polish features as a rapprochement with Catholicism.[126] With the arrival of Peter the Great these actions of censorship against the Ukrainian ecclesiastical Slavonic language continued in a fierce manner, culminating in 1720 with the first Ukaz[127] in which he banned the printing of new books in the Ukrainian ecclesiastical Slavonic language. It is thought that this punitive action on the part of Peter the Great, was not due to religious aims, it is widely acknowledged that he was not a lover of the Orthodox church, but as a consequence of the Russo-Swedish war, more specifically for the battle of Poltava in 1709 when the Cossacks decided to turn their backs on him to help the Swedes.[128] [129]

Exploring the policies regulating the use of ecclesiastical Slavonic in Ukrainian churches is a challenge, especially because of the scarcity of accessible sources. Moreover, these policies are intertwined with ecclesiastical regulations, particularly within the Orthodox Church, although Orthodoxy undeniably occupies a central position in the Slavic cultural sphere, examining every work of censorship and policy would not be so useful for the purposes of this thesis. Tracing a clear line between the censorship of Church Slavonic and the promotion of Russian as a prestigious language is very difficult. What is important to know is that the clergy in those days was very important and trying to Russify it meant having a great ally, that is why in addition to the censorship of various Ukrainian religious

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[126] One example is Lavrentij Zyzanij's Catechism written in Ruthenian in 1626, which the Muscovites censored and was thus rewritten entirely in Slavonic.
[127] In english decree
[128] SUBTELNY, O. (1994), cit. p. 92-100. See also: DANYLENKO, A. (2008). *The formation of New Standard Ukrainian: From the history of an undeclared contest between right- and left-bank Ukraine in the 18th century*. Die Welt der Slaven, 53, pp.82-115. BODIN, P.-A. (2020), cit. p.176-186.
[129] This decision will lead to the beginning of the Cossack decline and the consolidation of imperial power.

liturgical books, there were various educational reforms[130] aimed at unifying the education of parish priests[131].

Ruthenian

The Ruthenian language, on the other hand, falls fully within the period under consideration. This language was called 'prostaja mova' or 'common language' and was spoken in the territories of eastern Ukraine in the 18th century. The language was also used in the administration of the Cossack autonomous region.[132] Due to the Cossack decline and the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (which we have already explained above), the Ruthenian language underwent a process of Russification, which led to a gradual abandonment of the use of the language.[133] The Russification of Ruthenian was influenced by the centralisation of power in the Russian Empire and resulted in a gradual absorption of elements of Russian speech. This process, that took place between 1720 and the end of the century, led to a decrease in the use of the Ruthenian language in various administrative and social contexts and contributed to a significant change in the sociolinguistic situation in Russian Ukraine. In this case, however, in addition to the push for Russification by the central government, it can also be said that the region's elite was inclined to include Russian language and traditions to

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[130] These educational reforms mainly touched the Kiev Academy, which, however, was good at preserving the Ukrainian Church Slavonic, in a more clandestine manner. The Kyiv Academy was founded in 1632 and was a very important centre for the higher education of future political leaders, intellectuals and politicians. The institution was known for its emphasis on theological and philosophical education and played a key role in the promotion of culture and education in 17th century Ukraine. During Russian imperial rule, the academy came under a lot of pressure, especially to change the language of instruction from Ukrainian Church Slavonic to a Russian version. This change undoubtedly had a great impact on the sociolinguistic situation of the country's elites by favouring the promotion of Russian, which became more and more widely used among the various literary circles. In any case, the Kyiv Academy had a lasting impact on Ukrainian culture and education and contributed to the spread of Ukrainian language and culture.
SHARIPOVA, L. (1999). *The library of the Kiev Mohyla Academy (1632-1780) in its historical context.* University of Cambidge, p. 188-210.
[131] The Great Russian literary standard was promoted, contributing to the decline in the status of Ukrainian Ecclesiastical Slavonic. DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit. p. 19-39
[132] KOHUT, Z. E. (1988). *Russian centralism and Ukrainian autonomy. Imperial absorption of the Hetmanate. 1760s-1830s.* Harvard Ukrainian research institute, Cambridge, pp. 24-169, p.237-285.
[133] DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115

integrate themselves into the imperial aristocracy and acquire its privileges, thus indirectly entering a voluntary process of Russification.[134]

2.3 Ruthenian language in Austrian Galicia (1772 – 1893)

If the influence of Ruthenian in 'Little Russia' was very limited, the same cannot be said in Galicia, territories of today's Lviv Oblast of Ternopil' in western Ukraine. In 1772, with the partition of Poland[135], the Habsburgs noticed that in Galicia, there were not only Poles, but also many people who were identified as 'Rusyny' or 'Ruthenians'. The Ruthenians were Orthodox, and their liturgical language was Church Slavonic, and even in everyday life, they did not speak Polish, but a dialect that came to be known as 'Ruthenian'. Under Polish rule[136], they were not well liked, that is why the Ruthenian elites had completely disappeared, the few survivors used the Polish language and over the years had lost all their traditions, becoming part of the Polish national identity for all intents and purposes. The Ruthenians during the Polish rule were either peasants or priests, mostly illiterate and their language was seen as a mere folk dialect and the few educated ones still lived

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[134] WEEKS, T. R. (1996). *Nation and state in late imperial Russia. Nationalism and russification on the western frontier, 1863-1914.* Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb, pp. 3-19; 44-131. See also: DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit. p. 19-39. See also: KOHUT, Z. E. (1988), Cit. p. 24-169, 237-285.

[135] The partition of Poland in 1772 was the first of three partitions that led to the division of the territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between Imperial Russia, Prussia and Habsburg Austria. This partition was a crucial moment in Polish history, because it initiated the period of foreign rule over the territory that lasted until 1918. The partition took place due to various internal rebellions, the now corrupt system of elective monarchy and military defeats. These were years when Poland was surrounded by Catherine the Great of Russia with the Russo-Turkish War, Frederick the Great of Prussia, who aimed to consolidate Prussian territories, and Austria, under Maria Theresa and later Joseph II, who aimed for territorial expansion. BRITANNICA:https://www.britannica.com/summary/Partitions-of-Poland#:~:text=In%20the%20First%20Partition%20(1772,third%20of%20its%20land%20area. (accessed on June 16, 2024).

[136] In the Ukrainian territories dominated by Poles, the linguistic situation was much simpler than it was in the Russian and Austrian empires, for the Poles there was only one official language, which was precisely Polish, and all other languages were seen as local oral dialects, so they did not have to be studied or even books published. To be brief, but nevertheless correct, it can be said that Polonization was certainly very incisive and heavy, there was no possibility of developing other languages. Furthermore, on a social level, in the Lithuanian-Polish confederation there was no integration with the elites of other nationalities. Those who went to school and studied were Polish, and therefore spoke Polish. There were no social and educational conditions for another language to emerge. SEREDA, O. (2001). p.206–207.

in an inferior situation compared to the Poles.[137]The language issue became important in 1777 when the Habsburg monarchy introduced compulsory primary schooling for all its subjects, including in Galicia. To facilitate study, it was soon realised that there was a need to use the local languages in the empire in addition to German, and so the first schools in the Ruthenian language were opened in several villages, under the supervision of priests, as well as the introduction of schoolbooks in the Ruthenian language[138]. In any case, the Ruthenian language never saw its full splendour; in fact, Ruthenian schools were very small and, in any case, in addition to Ruthenian, Polish was taught, which was not the case in Polish schools, whereas in schools where the children were both Orthodox and Catholic, Polish was taught. Moreover, the percentage of children in Galicia who went to school was very low, so much so that the Habsburg Empire abolished compulsory schooling in 1812.[139]

Although at the higher levels of education, Ruthenian was not normally used, between 1787 and 1809, there was an attempt to impose the 'Studium ruthenum', i.e. the use of Ruthenian for the education of Greek-Catholic priests[140] at the University of Lviv for those who did not know Latin. It was not a proper university course, the professors had lower salaries than the Latin teachers, and as time went on, enrolment in the 'Studium ruthenum'

[137] FALK, B. (1919). *Ruthenians Versus Poles in Galicia.* Current History (1916-1940), 9(2), University of California press, p.326–329. See also: MAGOCSI, P. R. (1983). *Galicia: a Historical Survey and bibliographic guide*. University of Toronto, pp-1-50. MICK, C. (2014). *Colonialism in the Polish Eastern Borderlands 1919– 1939.* In R. Healy & E. D. Lago (Eds.), The Shadow of Colonialism on Europe's Modern Past, Palgrave Macmillan, p.126-141. SURMAN, J. (2019). *Habsburg Slavs and Their Spaces*. In Universities in Imperial Austria 1848–1918: A Social History of a Multilingual Space, Purdue University Press, p. 175-216.

[138] Most important was Ivan Mohyl'nyc'kyj, a clergyman who, starting in 1815, expanded the network of schools in the Ruthenian language and wrote the first grammar, and a book entitled *'information of the Rutheninan Language'* that was translated into Russian and Polish. It can be said that he made the first attempt to transform Ruthenian from a dialect into a language.

[139] DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115
See also: MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104.

[140] What is interesting is that unlike in the Russian Empire, where the Cossacks became part of the aristocracy, (certainly Russified) this did not happen in the Polish Empire, let alone the Habsburg Empire; thus, the Ruthenian identity and language was limited only to the Orthodox clergy.

declined until 1809, when the Ruthenian community itself demanded its discontinuation. As far as the impact on the development of the Ruthenian language is concerned, this had little effect, so much so that the Habsburg administration and the Ruthenian scholars were unclear as to what standard Ruthenian[141] and often translations into Ruthenian came closer and closer to Church Slavonic or Old Russian.[142] [143]

There were several decrees from 1785 onwards that imposed knowledge of German on all officials in Galicia, however, the Habsburg administration recognised that knowledge of German alone was insufficient for local officials; therefore, Latin and Polish were often used. As a result, while important laws such as the Civil Law Book were translated into Polish, Ruthenian was not similarly accepted. Although regulations introduced after 1818 specifically required local officials of the monarchy to know the language of the region in which they operated, the official language in Galicia remained Polish, without any consideration for Ruthenian or any other language. As Galicia got closer to autonomy[144] Polish became the main administrative language at the expense of German.[145] With Polish becoming

[141] There were several debates on which alphabet was best to use, but in the end, Cyrillic came out on top; a first Ruthenian grammar was published in 1834, but especially with regard to spelling, there was no agreement, which led to a profusion of loan words from Polish, Church Slavonic or Russian in Ruthenian language texts related to higher culture. MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.90.

[142] DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104. HOREL, C. (2023), *Multicultural cities of the Habsburg Empire, 1880-1914: imagined communities and conflictual encounters.* Central European University Press, Budapest–Vienna–New York, Chapter 2.

[143] In 1787, for Christian Baumeister's textbook *'Philosophiae moralis institutiones',* a translation into Ruthenian was not deemed necessary, as there was already a Russian translation, but the scholar Petro Lodij prepared a translation of his own free will, which turned out to be closer to the Russian Slavonic language with a basis of Church Slavonic.

[144] After the 1848-49 Revolution (in the Austrian Empire there were a series of popular nationalist uprisings that manifested themselves in almost the entire territory), the influence of Poles and the Polish language throughout Galicia increased considerably, especially with the appointment of Count Agenor Gołuchowski as governor of Galicia, the first Polish governor and his officials who were Polish or at least completely assimilated into Polish culture. SURMAN, J. (2019), cit. p. 175-216.

[145] LESLIE, R. F. (1952*). Polish Political Divisions and the Struggle for Power at the Beginning of the Insurrection of November 1830.* The Slavonic and East European Review, 31(76), p.113–132. See also: DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115. MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104. HOREL, C. (2023), cit. Chapter 2.

more and more important, the Ruthenians became closer and closer to the small Russians, who, speaking Russian, belonged to the same Slavic family. This rapprochement meant that between 1850 and 1860, eastern Galicia spontaneously became Russified, to the extent that writings in the Ruthenian language became closer and closer to the Russian language. This was not well received by the Habsburg Empire, which began to ban all activities and writings in Russian. They were helped by Orthodox clergymen, who considered the Russian language to be a danger to the Ruthenian language, as it could also lead to an identity crisis. In May 1859[146] the Ministry of Education together with prominent Ruthenian intellectuals tried to introduce the Latin alphabet for Ruthenian. This proposal, supported by Josef Jireček, a Habsburg official of Czech origin, and endorsed by Count Gołuchowski, the Polish governor of Galicia, marked the beginning of what in retrospect may be called the 'second alphabet war'[147] . This war, obviously far removed from a traditional war, was nothing more than a series of heated debates between various intellectuals and attempts by the Austrian administration through decrees and censorship to ban Cyrillic. The intellectuals against this proposal were afraid of further assimilation into Polish culture, which would have been detrimental to the survival of Ruthenian.[148]

As seen while on the one hand there was an attempt to impose the Latin alphabet, on the other hand there was a natural phenomenon of rapprochement with the neighbouring Little Russians. In the Russian Empire these were the years of the Crimean War (1853-1856), the reign of the 'liberator' Tsar Alexander II, and the birth of Ukrainian literature with Taras Ševčenko. With the small Russians creating their own identity with their own

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[146] During the Battle of Solferino in the Second Italian War of Independence
[147] The first one took place in the first half of the 19th century but was not considered important as Cyrillic had the upper hand immediately.
[148] DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104. MAGOCSI, P. R. (1983), cit. p-1-234. SEREDA, O. (2001), cit. p. 200–212.

language, and the Galician Ruthenians getting closer and closer to them, if Russian was previously seen as the alternative way, it is now starting to become the new Ukrainian language. This meant that, coinciding with the Habsburg Empire's acceptance of the failure of its language policies (around March 1861), the Ruthenians began to suppress Russophile movements themselves. The Ruthenians in Galicia increasingly saw Ukrainian literature as a model for their linguistic development and saw in the small Russians cultural and identity allies who could go against the Russian and Habsburg empires[149]. After the defeat suffered by Prussia at the Battle of Königgrätz in 1866, the Habsburg monarchy underwent a significant restructuring, dividing the territories into Austrian and Hungarian administrative spheres. Galicia, located within the Austrian-controlled territory, gained de facto autonomy as a result of these changes, with Poles at the head. In 1867, Emperor Franz Joseph sanctioned the 'December Constitution', restoring the principle of the 'inviolable right to preserve and practise one's nationality and language' for all ethnic groups, with equal language rights guaranteed in education, government and public life. As a result, Ruthenian regained the status of a fully recognised official language within the Habsburg Empire, theoretically enjoying equal rights with other languages. Despite Polish rule, Galicia became the centre of Ukrainian identity at a time when the true development of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire was hindered by various language bans such as the Valuev Circular (1863) and the Ukase of Ems (1876). The Galician populists, supported by the Ukrainian communities in the Russian Empire, took decisive steps to promote Ukrainian culture and education, Ruthenian became closer and closer to modern standard Ukrainian.[150] Thanks to the writer Ivan Franko (Nahujevice 1856 - Lviv 1916) and the writing of several grammars, including the 1886

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[149] Ibidem
[150] SEREDA, O. (2001), cit. p. 200–212. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104. SURMAN, J. (2019), cit. p. 175-216.

grammar by Roman Smal'Stoc'kyj and Theodor Gartner[151] the distinction between the two languages became almost impossible to decipher.[152] Consequently, Galician 'Ruthenians' increasingly embraced the term 'Ukrainian' to refer to themselves and their language.[153]

2.4 Selective Russification (1830 – 1863)

The period of selective Russification identified by Pavlenko (2011) is a period in which the Russian empire adopted specific policies according to different ethnic groups. They were targeted policies with the aim of integrating elites into Russian culture and making them loyal by giving them career opportunities in return. There is a promotion of the Russian language both in education and in the administrative sphere. These actions took place more in the western territories, especially after the Polish uprisings in 1830-1831.[154]

Probably the most important event is the opening of the Kiev University[155] in 1833-1834, which was strongly supported by the Minister of Education Sergey Semennovich Uvarov (1786 – 1855)[156] with the approval of Tsar

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[151] A grammar that was used in the schools of Austrian Galicia from 1893 onwards. MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.97.

[152] In other words, it can be said that the new Ukrainian language, not yet standardised, merged with the Ruthenian language, also not standardised, speeding up the process of a single standard language with precise grammatical and lexical rules. We know that this process of standardisation of the language was a long one, all the way back to Soviet times.

[153] MAGOCSI, P. R. (1983), cit. p-1-234. See also: SEREDA, O. (2001), cit. p. 200–212. DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115. MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104. HOREL, C. (2023), cit. Chapter 2.

[154] PAVLENKO, A. (2011), cit. p.331-350.

[155] Certainly, one of Sergei Uvarov's most important works was the reorganization of the Russian university system. There was the opening of different universities and institutes especially in the more peripheral regions; the idea was to bring higher education to a wider segment of society with the goal of russification, in fact the most studied subjects were history of Russia, literature, and theology. Obviously, the main goal was to gain more and more loyalty to the tsar, therefore state control and censorship during this period became very intense, but in any case, it can be said that Uvarov influence was instrumental in the educational development in Russia, decreasing the level of illiteracy and broadening the intellectual background of the country. FLYNN, J. T. (1986). *Uvarov and the 'Western Provinces': A Study of Russia's Polish Problem*. The Slavonic and East European Review, 64(2), p.212-236

[156] Sergei Uvarov was a very important figure in the first half of the nineteenth century, his ideas had a fundamental impact in Russian society, famous his principle, also referred to as the Uvarov doctrine of "Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality" which is understood to mean that Russian identity is based on the power of the Russian Orthodox Church, the absolute authority of the tsar, and the promotion of Russian culture

Nicholas I. For Uvarov, creating a university in Kiev was crucial; he saw Kiev as the southern Russian cultural centre and his main goal was to educate young Poles in Russian culture. It sought to Russify Poles through education by teaching them the Russian language, the Russian literature, and the Russian institutions.[157] The University of Kiev opened in 1834. Kiev midway[158] between east and west Ukraine was a strategic place to infuse Russian culture into this territory. The founding of the University of Kiev came after the 1830-1831 Poles' uprising, who wanted greater freedoms and autonomy from the imperial power. The tsar's response was very harsh, with a sharp restriction on the freedoms of the Polish population[159]. The aimed of this university was to educate the new generations, especially Poles Russian thought, so as to curb mere nationalism by creating more homogeneous thinking within the empire.[160]

It is remarkable, in retrospect, that this university, opened specifically to Russify the Polish population, was eventually the centre of Ukrainian literature, culture and language. Certainly, the abolition of the Cossack state and the integration of the Cossack elites into the Russian nobility meant that by the end of the 18th century there was no need to further Russify today's

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and tradition throughout the empire. He was minister of education under Nicholas I from 1833 and 1849, and his role was to infuse Russian culture into all areas of the empire. TRECCANI: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sergej-semenovic-uvarov/ (accessed on June 16, 2024).

[157] FLYNN, J. T. (1986), cit. p.212-236

[158] If one look at the geographical map Kiev was not halfway between the "little Russia" and the formerly Polish territories. In fact, by this statement it is meant that Kiev was more of an identity and cultural border; if in the east Russification had already had its results, in the west Polish language and polish culture were still prevalent.

[159] The suppression of Polish national institutions, the censorship of Polish language and culture, and the imposition of martial law.

[160] SZPORLUK, R. (2005). *Review of The Ukrainian Question: The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century.* "Ukrainskii vopros" v politike vlastei i russkom obshchestvennom mnenii (vtoraia polovina XIX v.), by A. Miller & A. I. Miller]. The Russian Review, 64(1), p.136–138. See also: MILLER, A. (2008). *Official nationality'? A Reassesment of Count Sergei Uvarov's Triad in the Context of Nationalism Politics*. In The Romanov empire and nationalism: essays in the methodology of historical research. Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, p. 139-160. PETERSEN, H.-C. (2010). "*Us" And "Them"? Polish Self-Descriptions and Perceptions Of The Russian Empire Between Homogeneity And Diversity (1815–1863).* In Empire Speaks Out: Languages of Rationalization and Self-Description in the Russian Empire, Brill, p. 89-119

eastern Ukraine, and this meant that many professors who were placed in the Kiev university were Cossacks (or as they were called at the time 'Little Russians').[161] It was seen to all intents and purposes as a 'little Russia'; and although dialectal languages still circulated, they were only found among the peasants or at least in low society where the level of illiteracy was very high and therefore not seen as a danger.[162] Precisely because of this loyalty on the part of high society, there were no opinions against the Ukrainian people, so much so that the past of eastern Ukrainian was defined as a component of Russian patriotism. The first half of the 19th century was characterised by a growing interest in Ukrainian culture. In that time, the imperial aristocracy read the Russian-language works of Nikolai Gogol'[163] , which emphasised the author's deep attachment to his homeland, integrating elements of eastern Ukrainian folklore into his stories; his collection of short stories *'Night Vigils near Dikan'ka'* published in 1831-1832 were a great success not only among Ukrainian elites, but also among those in Moscow and Saint Petersburg, because he expressed a romantic-type sentiment aimed at the rediscovery of Ukrainian folk traditions seen as authentic[164]. Moreover, it was at this time, that the Ukrainian language began to gain a foothold in literary salons,[165] but it was understood as a dialect and there was no great stir or scepticism[166].

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[161] FLYNN, J. T. (1986), cit. p.212-236

[162] BUSHKOVITCH, P. (1991). *The Ukraine in Russian culture 1790-1860: the evidence of the journals.* Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, 39, p. 339-363

[163] Nikolai Vasil'evič Gogol' was born in 1809 in Poltava, (in the central part of Ukraine, on the east bank of the Dnepr River) and died in Moscow in 1852. He is considered one of the greatest of Russian literature, he is the first to bring the Skaz technique, i.e. he manages to recreate oral narration in his writings. As much as he loved the folkloric side of his land, he always wrote in Russian. The motivations that drove him to write in Russian are surely manifold, certainly as Russian was the language of prestige, it was easier to reach the widest possible audience. TRECCANI: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nikolaj-vasilevic-gogol/

[164] GRABOWICZ, G. G. (1992), cit. p. 214-245. See also: D'AMELIA, A. (1995). Introduzione a Gogol´. Laterza, Bari, 12-47.

[165] Somehow it was the Russians themselves who brought the ideas of nationhood, and Slavism to Ukrainian intellectuals, who for the first time in history, as we shall see shortly, in the next pages of this chapter, made a critical analysis of them, creating at least on a theoretical level a cultural identity different from that of Moscow.

[166] MAGOCSI, P. (1997), cit. p. 365-385.

New literary Ukrainian

The new literary Ukrainian[167] relates to the birth of Ukrainian national literature, the moment when it went from being an oral language to being written and thus standardised.[168] The evolution of this language was a process throughout the 19th century that mainly characterised the territories of 'Little Russia'. The Ukrainian society in this area, as we have already seen in the previous paragraphs, lived in a bilingualism that can be identified as asymmetrical. Asymmetrical bilingualism means a situation in which two languages coexist, one of the two languages enjoys social and cultural prestige within the society; in this case it was Russian, the language that was spoken among the Ukrainian elites; Russian was the symbol of nobility in the region and was therefore the language of choice for the literary production of the time. Ukrainian[169] language on the other hand, was spoken by the lower social ranks, the peasants; in literature, it was only used if one wanted to give a popular mould to the work[170].

The New Literary Ukrainian is to all intents and purposes the first written language reflecting the culture, folklore, history, and traditions of the Ukrainian people, no longer just of the elites, it was emancipation of a people that for the first time began to feel different from the Russian people. The new Ukrainian language has its roots in these two movements. On the one hand, there is the admiration of Ukrainian folklore and the bucolic character of Ukraine, which could only enrich Russian literature; on the other hand, there is a search for traditions as a symbol of distinct identity aimed at a national consciousness. These two movements certainly differed from each

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[167] One of the firsts major works in Literary New Ukrainian was the burlesque comedy *"Eneida"* by Ivan Kotljarevs´kyj published in 1842. ZYLA, W. T. (1972). *A Ukrainian Version of the "Aeneid": Ivan Kotljarevs'kyj's "Enejida."* The Classical Journal, 67(3), p.193–197.
[168] DANYLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.82-115
[169] It would be more specific to say Ukrainian dialects rather than Ukrainian language, in this period Slavic dialectal forms still occur.
[170] SHEVCHENKO, N. (2015), Cit. p.203-225

other, but what they had in common was the desire to rediscover the traditions of their ancestors. These two thoughts were both born at the beginning of the 19th century, and they both considered themselves essential to the development of this new language, which managed to gain readers from the various spheres of society, leading to the strengthening of Ukrainian culture within the Russian cultural and literary context.[171]

Cyrillic-Methodian Brotherhood

However, these were also the years of the Cyrillic-Methodian Brotherhood founded in 1845[172] by Kostomarov[173]with the goal of promoting Ukrainian culture and identity, fostering the literacy of the working classes to trigger a feeling of Ukrainian national self-awareness. The idea was to promote literacy through the teaching of the Ukrainian language and the distribution of books in Ukrainian, with the goal of unifying the entire population under a Ukrainian identity. The centre of this fraternity's philosophy was Kiev University, most of the members in fact were professors or students at this university, the founder Mykola Ivanovyč Kostomarov was the university's professor of history. It can be said that the Kiev University created to bring imperial Slavophilism turned out to be the centre of Ukrainianophiles' thinking. Somehow Uvarov's idea of opening a university in Kiev to increase imperial loyalty was unsuccessful for obviously the central empire, but at the

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[171] REMY, J. (2007), cit. p.87–110. See also: DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit. p. 19-39

[172] The confraternity was based on the European Masonic societies of the early 19th century and was highly secretive. The aim was to interpret Slavophilism by emphasising the Ukrainian element rather than the Russian one. It did not last long, in 1847 the tsarist government discovered it and arrested its various exponents. LUCKYJ, G. S. N. (1991). *Young Ukraine: The Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, 1845-1847.* University of Ottawa Press, 1-3, 29-45.

[173] Kostomarov was a professor of history at the University of Kiev, and his thought was a key element in the 19th century debate on Ukrainian identity, advocating the promotion of Ukrainian language and culture by reducing Polish influence in certain areas of the region. He was probably one of the first to see Ukraine (both eastern and western) as a nation, with its own history although certainly intertwined with other Slavic and Polish populations. His thought was used as a source by Ukrainian nationalists from the second half of the 19th century. LUCKYJ, G. S. N. (1991), cit. p. 16-19.

same time it opened the door to new national resurgent thoughts.[174] One of the members[175] of the Cyrillic-Methodian Brotherhood was Sevchenko[176], he was called in retrospect the most radical member of the group since he suffered the harshest sentence of all his colleagues. Certainly, his poetic production was very critical of the empire and the Tzar, but at the same time he represented one of the pivotal points in the development of the standard Ukrainian language, and he had a significant impact on the formation of Ukrainian national identity and thus the emergence of the first Ukrainian nationalists.[177]

The Trial against the Cyril-Methodian brotherhood in 1847 was certainly a turning point. It was the first moment of reflection by imperial institutions between Slavophile thought and all its ramifications, between the centre and the imperial peripheries. The brotherhood was accused of promoting Ukrainophilism, or worse, democratic Slavism, unacceptable to the empires[178] of the Ancien Régime.[179] It was acknowledged that the empire

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[174] Ivi. 29-53. See also: REMY, J. (2007), cit. p.87–110. REMY, J. (2016). *Brothers or enemies. The Ukrainian national movement and Russia, from the 1840s to the 1870s.* University of Toronto Press, Toronto, pp. 3-60. FRANCO, A. (2019). *L'eredità Di Kostomarov e Ševčenko in Russia e Ucraina*. L'Ucraina Alla Ricerca Di Un Equilibrio, in Edizioni Ca' Foscari, Eurasiatica, 14, pp. 11-37

[175] In the trial against the fraternity by the empire, Shevchenko was condemned as a member of the fraternity, in reality there is no written evidence whether he actually belonged to it or was just a supporter of it.

[176] Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko was born in 1814 to a family of serf servants in a small village in central Ukraine; he showed a natural talent for the arts. He began his journey as a painter and in 1821 entered the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg where he studied painting and sculpture. Thanks to his paintings and writings, including *"Kobzar"* published in 1840, he became a full-fledged artist of the empire in 1845. A year later he became friends with Kostomarov and probably joined the brotherhood. Because of certain of his writings and membership in the brotherhood he was imprisoned and then exiled for some time. In 1861 he died in St. Petersburg. An artist certainly with a complex life, and this can also be seen in his writings in which he denounced the lives of serfs and Ukrainians in general; his works were of great importance both for the formation of a Ukrainian identity and for the Ukrainian language, which thanks to him increasingly became a standard language. His figure in the years to come was mythologized a great deal, both by Ukrainians and also by the Soviets, continuing to make him an interesting figure to study. LUCKYJ, G. S. N. (1991), cit. p. 22-26 See also: SHEVCHENKO MUSEUM: https://shevchenko.ca/taras-shevchenko/biography/

[177] FRANCO, A. (2019), Cit. p. 11-37.

[178] In this particular case, the Russian Empire, but no Empire would have wanted a democratic breakthrough. We should not forget that at that time some Slavic populations were also present in the Habsburg and Prussian empires, infusing democratic Slavism would have brought not a few problems. LUCKYJ, G. S. N. (1991), cit. p. 57-73.

[179] FRANCO, A. (2019), Cit. p. 11-37.

was multi-ethnic, and while there was a tendency to try to expand a cultural Russification, what was crucial for the tsar was loyalty: the more communities showed loyalty, the more they could climb the social ranks, but at the same time they could continue to maintain their traditions without too much trouble. What is curious, that unlike the Germans, Armenians, Georgians, Poles for example, the East Slavs belonged to one and same nationality, understood as "common Russian". To be more precise, the Russians felt they belonged to the same ethnic group as the little Russians, and vice versa, certainly, they recognized the existence of some different traditions and folklore, but they were not strong enough characteristics to have an ethnic distinction.[180] That is precisely why the Cyril-Methodian brotherhood changed the game.[181] This trial was very important because it cast doubt on the loyalty of the Cossack aristocracy, and that therefore the ideas of this brotherhood had spread among the population. A concrete example of this fear[182] was the closing in 1862 of the Sunday schools by the central government. These Sunday schools were free schools for elementary education meant for ordinary people, and that between 1859 and 1862 one of the subjects taught was precisely the Ukrainian language.[183]

Nevertheless, in 1847 only the works of the Cyril-Methodian brotherhood members were censored, while for all other Ukrainian-language publications there was no problem with publication, with an increasing of numbers of

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[180] In this case, Russians means mostly Muscovite and St. Petersburg Russians, while Little Russians means the population that lived in Kiev, or in the territory of present-day Ukraine occupied by the Russian Empire.

[181] One may wonder when this sentiment against the Russian-common may have erupted. This thesis seeks to focus primarily on language, such an in-depth study might be too long and problematic, what we can state, is that the 19th century sees a change in thinking throughout Europe, the idea of nation, patriotism is born, even in Italy there is the Risorgimento. Certainly, Russian rule over the Poles after the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian confederation was also a pivotal moment, who brought their independence and nationalistic ideas to Kiev. The change of outlook within the Ukrainian elites was a very complex and also lengthy process, and these assumptions mentioned above are just the tip of the iceberg; most likely in the mid-19th century the Ukrainian territories would not have been able to be effectively independent, but certainly this fraternity that lasted only two years was able to resurrect that thirteenth-century Cossack idea of "Ukraine".

[182] More specifically the fear of losing control over elementary education by increasing concern about the development of nationalist groups.

[183] FRANCO, A. (2019), Cit. p. 11-37

publications in Ukrainian-language. With the increase of literary texts in the Ukrainian language, it can be said that, at least until 1860s, the problem was not the language itself, but the content of the publications. However, despite this specific censorship, until 1862, writings and books by Kulish and Shevchenko could easily be found in both Moscow and St. Petersburg.[184]

Osnova

In the 1850s[185], Ukrainian movements made great strides, especially in the sphere of language. In 1861 Panteleimon Kulish[186] founded a magazine in St. Petersburg called *Osnova*. This journal in studies on the linguistic history of the Ukrainian language is never given too much prominence, unlike literature, but it was instrumental in the standardisation of the language.[187] This monthly gazette is the first example that a written form of the Ukrainian language can also be used at intellectual and political levels, not just folkloric ones. An important, though later censored, example is the proposal made by the imperial authorities to translate from Russian into Ukrainian the manifesto announcing the abolition of serfdom in 1861. Kulish also founded a printing press, and from his brotherhood days, he was convinced that literacy was a key element in the rediscovery of Ukrainian identity. A man absolutely of nationalist ideals, he believed that language and nation were part of the same coin and in one of the first articles of *Osnova* he drew the borders of his idea of Ukrainian nation by also adding the territories of

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[184] LUCKYJ, G. S. N. (1991), cit. p. 73-85. MILLER, A. (2003), cit. p.49-97. See also: REMY, J. (2007), cit. p.87–110.

[185] These were the last years of Nicholas I who died in 1855 and was succeeded (1855- 1881) by Alexander II also known as the Liberator, these were the years of the Crimean War (1853-56) and the liberation of the serfs.

[186] He was already famous as a member of the Cyril-Methodian brotherhood, was recognised as a great exponent of Ukrainian culture and wrote several articles including two very important volumes on Ukrainian orthography (called *Zapiski* or *Iuzhnoi Rusi*, in English Notes on Southern Rus'), and also in '57 he published the first novel in the Ukrainian language called *Chorna Rada* (The Black Rabbit). LUCKYJ, G. S. N. (1991), cit. p. 20-22. See also: KRAVCHENKO, O., PYZHIANOVA, N., PIDVALNA, U. AND REZNICHENKO, I. (2020) *Educational activity of P. Kulish: book publishing and folklore preservation.* Amazonia Investiga, 9(26), pp. 282–290.

[187] MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104.

Austro-Hungarian Galicia because linked, in his opinion, by the centuries-long history of Kievan Rus'. The journal lasted for two years between 1861-62, and was important mainly for three reasons: language, historical relevance, and Ukrainian identity.[188] However, it must also be said that most of the articles were still written in Russian, most probably because in addition to being the prestige language of the empire, the main readers and therefore buyers were Russian speakers, but also because the Ukrainian language was still developing, it did not yet have the lexicology and grammar fully formed to be able to deal with any topic. *Osnova* was born at a time of great worrying within the empire, this magazine moved the minds of Russian intellectuals, who began to fear a possible new language that could reach the same level of prestige as Russian (a thought, completely unfounded, the Ukrainian language was still far from standardised, it had certainly become more homogenous, but it still had a long way to go). Wherefore *Osnova* closed after only two years of operation, due to certainly lack of funds, and probably mismanagement.[189] In any case, it put a very important foundation on the development of the language on a lexical and grammatical level, as well as outlining more and more what it means to be Ukrainian.[190]

Policies during this period (1830-1863) mainly still emphasised the sharp division between Western and Eastern Ukraine. Western Ukraine, seen as still too 'Polish' undergoes selective Russification, with a series of actions to promote Russian language and culture and gain loyalty from the elite. The eastern part, on the other hand, is understood as an integral part of the

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[188] Ibidem. See also: MILLER, A. (2003), cit. p.75-97. REMY, J. (2016), cit. p. 61-80.

[189] In those days the groups of Ukrainian intellectuals, called *Hromadas*, did not always get along well with each other, especially with regard to Ukrainian language education and the study of Ukrainian history, there are several examples of debates within the newspaper that prove this. In the article by Moser, M. (2017). *Osnova and the Origins of the Valuev Directive*. East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies, 4(2); the most important debates are given. One example in the article is the spat between the Moscow newspaper Otvet 'Dniu' and Osnova concerning the legitimisation of the Ukrainian language.

[190] MILLER, A. (2003), cit. p.75-97. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104. REMY, J. (2016), cit. p. 61-210.

Russian empire, there is no identity other than Russian, so much so that Kiev is identified as the centre of Russian culture in the southern part of the empire, opening the university to integrate Poles into Russian culture, not the Cossack elite. Although there were certain elements that made the Russian authorities question the loyalty of the Ukrainian elites, but not enough to prevent the Ukrainian language, once understood as a popular dialect, from becoming a literary language.

2.5 The expansion of Russification (1863-1905)

The period between 1863 and 1905 is defined by Pavlenko (2011) as the maximum period of expansion of Russification policies by the Russian Empire. These years in themselves were characterised by great changes, with major reforms implemented by Tsar Alexander II. During this period, efforts were made to systematically spread the Russian language at all levels of administration and education, such as the opening of several primary schools even in rural areas. Certainly, it is a period when non-Russian ethnic groups begin to suffer forms of legal and cultural discrimination, with a more intense form of Russification, which, however, was ultimately unsuccessful, because it is during this period that nationalist political movements develop within the empire, and the emergence of non-Russian national cultures.[191]

The Ukrainian language underwent several restrictions at this time.[192] As we have seen in the first half of the 19th century, the Ukrainian language was still perceived as a Russian dialect and its supporters, apart some exceptions, were seen as part of the Russian population. In the 1860s It began to be thought that Ukrainian ideas were a consequence of a proximity to the Polish population, which had always been recognised as having great nationalist

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[191] WEEKS, T. R. (1996), cit. p. 3-19; 44-131. See also: PAVLENKO, A. (2011), cit. p.331-350. See also: WEEKS, T. R. (2004), cit. p.471-489.
[192] SAVCHENKO, F. (1970). *Zaborona ukrainstva 1876: The Suppression of the Ukrainian Activities in 1876.* München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, pp. 1-17.

ideas. It was in fact the Polish rebellion of 1863 that turned the tables. For Tsar Alexander II, the Poles having a very old national tradition were a real threat to the Russian Empire, so various policies were applied to prevent and diminish the eventual Polonization of society, especially among Belarusians and Ukrainians still seen as Russians.[193] For this very reason, various restrictions on the use of the Ukrainian language began to be introduced. In 1864-65, the Latin alphabet was banned in Ukrainian language books by imposing the Cyrillic alphabet. The fear was that after the liberation of the serfs[194], the peasants would become emancipated, and therefore attempts were made to abolish primary education in the Ukrainian, to prevent them from acquiring nationalist ideas. However, the new educational system completely in Russian did not reach all the rural areas of the region, where most of the Ukrainian population lived, most likely due to a lack of both funds and teachers. The Valuev circular of 1863 was therefore important. In 1863, the Interior Minister of the Russian Empire, Aleksandrovich Valuev sent a confidential circular, commonly referred to as the Valuev Circular, to the censors of Kiev and Saint Pietersburg under the approval of the tsar. There were written directives to be followed on the censorship of Ukrainian-language texts: books, including literature, that were addressed to a popular audience could no longer be published, whereas Ukrainian-language texts that belonged to the belles-lettres were not subject to censorship. Although it did not formally pass into law it remains in force until the Ems Decree in 1876[195] What is interesting is that the circular never says, 'Ukrainian language', but always speaks of literature of the "Little Russians". The circular explains why certain writings have to be censored, saying that earlier works in the Little Russian language were for the educated classes of Little Russia and Great Russia, thus devoid of political significance, whereas now

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[193] WEEKS, T. R. (2004), cit, p.471-489
[194] In 1861, Tsar Alexander II abolished serfdom, freeing around 40 million peasants.
[195] MILLER, A. (2003), cit. p.179-211

those who claim that Little Russians are a different, specific ethnic group, are trying to distribute books in this 'language' to the poorer, uneducated masses in order to seek political consensus, thus spreading a type of literacy and education that goes against the Russian empire. The government believed that if a language developed as a vehicle for harmful political ideas and tendencies, there was no alternative but to fight against that language. Again, in the circular it is explained that education should be done in the Russian language, and how these ideas are not only shared by the imperial power, but also by the elites of "Little Russia", who claim that a language other than Russian does not exist, and that the dialect used is nothing, but Russian influenced by the Polish language. Among the books to be censored were also religious ones, including the "little Russian" translation of the New Testament, as the common people went to church. Somehow, an attempt was made to divide the books written in the Ukrainian language into two types: the books that fell under "belle-lettres" were books suitable only for the aristocracy and the elite because they could understand them; all the others, ranging from didactic books to spiritual books, were not considered suitable.[196] This division created quite a few problems for the censors, who were very confused on what could or could not be published since the new Ukrainian literary language was evolving.[197] The real reasons for this circular were explained in several letters between Minister Valuev and Education Minister Alexander Golovin, who was very much against the circular's directives. He somewhat denies that the circular was written to hinder Poles, effectively pointing the finger at Ukrainian intellectuals. He explains that banning the publication of popular literature and schoolbooks in the Ukrainian language was the right way to stop the Ukrainian elites from

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[196] In Miller's book Alexei. *The Ukrainian Question. The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century*. Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2003, a translation of the original text of the circular can be found on page 263. the summary of the Valuev circular in this thesis was written using both Miller's book and the circular itself as a reference.
[197] MILLER, A. (2003), cit. p.117-139 see also: REMY, J. (2007), cit. p.87–110.

joining the popular mass in the future by creating a political bloc against the empire. He also said in the letter that he was against the Ukrainian peasant mass being educated in a language where its existence and birth was still doubtful, Minister Valuev was convinced that the peasants who were now freed, in their lives had to deal with the aristocracy who spoke only Russian, to such an extent that they knew it better than their own dialects and therefore there was no need to learn another language.[198] This circular, which was only counterproductive because it soured the spirits of the Ukrainian literati, also annoyed to some extent the "Great Russians", who sympathised with the dialect of the little Russians that recreated an exotic and folkloric feeling in the books they read. [199] What the circular certainly did was to prevent a substantial increase in Ukrainian-language readers rather than writers, moreover, as we mentioned before, the circular was not very precise and sometimes the free interpretation of the censors meant that some books were published anyway.

It was only in 1876 that the circular was revised and became law under the name Ems decree.[200] Alexander II signed this decree with the knowledge that he was trying to block the patriotic inspirations of the Ukrainians. This decree can effectively be called the first law that went directly against the development of the Ukrainian language and its teaching. According to this decree, no primary school was allowed to teach the Ukrainian language, or to use books written in the Ukrainian language or written by Ukrainians. The authorities also had to ensure that there were no Ukrainian, but Russian,

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[198]Alexander II, Reforms, Autocracy - Russian Empire, in Russian Empire: References & Edit History, BRITANNICA: https://www.britannica.com/place/Russian-Empire/Alexander-II See also: SAVCHENKO, F. (1970), cit. p.1-17.

[199] In analysing the Valuev Circular, finding common ground between Ukrainian and Russian scholars was almost impossible, for the Ukrainians the circular banned all books in the Ukrainian language, and this caused a delay in the development of Ukrainian literature and language, while for the Russians this circular banned some Ukrainian books because they were not considered appropriate. DIBROVA, V. (2017), cit. p.123-138
MILLER, A. (2003), cit. p.117-139

[200]BRITANNICA: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ems-Ukaz

teachers in schools or universities in the Kiev, Kharkiv and Odessa districts; Ukrainian teachers could teach in other districts. As well as, of course, the ban on publishing any fiction books in the Ukrainian language. If the circular was somewhat vague, Ems' law was very clear, but even then, it was not entirely effective. Many censors in the big cities such as Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kiev, were highly educated and some of them supported the Ukrainian cause and managed to find shortcuts or tricks to authorise the publication of certain works of Ukrainian fiction. What Alexander II succeeded in doing was certainly to drastically reduce the number of readers in the Ukrainian territory, especially among the common people, but in any case, albeit to a small extent, books with a nationalist and independence character made their way illegally among the Cossack intelligentsia.[201]

The result of these policies was limited and complex, they certainly limited non-Russian cultural autonomy and identity, and a more massive use of the Russian language, but in some rural areas the previously used language was retained, due to an ineffective education system, certainly due to the few imperial resources and lack of Russian teachers. This period is certainly a time of awareness on the part of the tsarist authorities that what had previously been defined as a simple dialect, somewhat exotic and folkloric, was establishing itself as a language, which served as a surface for nationalist, anti-tzarist sentiments that were very dangerous for the survival of the empire. However, it was also the period when from 'little Russians' we began to call ourselves 'Ukrainians', a symbol that these Russification policies were unsuccessful. For the first time, an attempt was made to eliminate the bilingualism that had always been present in the territory in order to prevent the peasant masses, now free, from bonding with the Ukrainian speakers. Moreover, an important, yet unspoken fact was that what

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[201] REMY, J. (2007), cit. p.87–110. See also: SCEEUS Report Series on Ukrainian Domestic Affairs, No. 11: https://sceeus.se/en/publications/scorched-by-war-a-report-on-the-current-language-situation-in-ukraine/

the circular and then the Ems decree did was to culturally unite, obviously unintentionally, the territories of Galicia[202], Bukovyna and Lesser Russia, as Ukrainian writers, trying to influence as many readers as possible, also found fertile soil in the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire[203]. Ukrainian literature continued to circulate and the language to become more and more standardised, but unfortunately only in a clandestine manner, depriving it of the possibility of having large numbers of readers for almost two centuries, this was certainly a problem that we will discuss in the following chapters.

2.6 Withdrawal of Russification (1905- 1917)

These were difficult years for the Russian empire, they were the years when indeed the national spirits of some ethnic groups were growing louder and louder, after the 1905 revolution there was a need somehow to change something within the empire, Tsar Nicholas II (1894-1917) left some concessions in some territories, including the partial liberation of censorship, the end of restrictive literacy and thus the possibility of opening schools with the teaching of languages other than Russian; except, however, for Ukrainians and Belarusians because for the authorities the languages were so similar to Russian that the teaching of both was not necessary.[204] In any case, several public schools were opened where the Ukrainian language was taught, the confusion was so great at that time that although the Ems Treaty was still in force, it was very complex to implement it.

Certainly, the publication of texts in the Ukrainian language was always very small, according to Danylenko (2017) less than 200 books were published. However, these were only the hottest years of the Ukrainian National Revival or Ukrainian Renaissance, this group of intellectuals promoted Ukrainian language,

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[202] An analysis of Galicia and the use of Ruthenian in the territory is certainly very interesting, unfortunately for reasons of space this thesis does not analyse it.
[203] MOSER, M. A. (2017-2018), cit. p.87-104.
[204] WEEKS, T. R. (1996), cit. p. 3-19; 44-131. See also: PAVLENKO, A. (2011), cit. p.331-350.

identity and culture in an increasingly cohesive manner.[205] There will be no in-depth study of this group as in this thesis we will try to focus as much as possible on the Ukrainian language and its development, what should definitely be mentioned, however, is that with the fall of the Tsar in 1917, this group of Ukrainian nationalists came to power, before the arrival of the Bolsheviks, the government declared Ukrainian independent in 1918, declaring the Ukrainian language the national language[206].

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[205] YEKELCHYK, S. (2006). *The Body and National Myth: Motifs from the Ukrainian National Revival in the Nineteenth Century.* Studies of New Imperial History and Nationalism in the Post-Soviet Space, Ab Imperio, 2006(3), pp. 23-50. See also: DANYLENKO, A. (2017). *The 'Doubling of Hallelujah' for the 'Bastard Tongue': the Ukrainian Language Question in Russian Ukraine, 1905-1916.* Harvard Ukrainian Studies, p. 59-86.
[206] This topic will be covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Language policies during the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic

3.1 Pre-soviet period

Ukrainian territory became an independent state[207] between the fall of the Russian Empire and the birth of the Soviet Union.[208] For a short moment between 1917 and 1921, it established a national government, and although it was short-lived because of conflicts between neighbouring states, internal struggles, and the arrival of the Bolsheviks[209], it remained a very important period because it created for the first time the idea that an independent Ukraine was possible.[210] This period of stalemate saw major changes in the Ukrainian linguistic and identity landscape, with the promotion of the Ukrainian language as a language of prestige and a symbol of statehood and independence.[211] During this period, there were several policies in favour of the Ukrainian language, the most important being the law adopted by the Ukrainian central Rada in January 1918 declaring the Ukrainian language as

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[207] The territory of the Ukrainian people's republic underwent several changes in the years 1917-21, and it was never possible to establish definite borders, the Red Army was slowly advancing, and the areas to the east and south were occupied, while Poland took the territories to the west in 1920. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 193-210.
[208] SOTIROVIC, B. (2017). *A new age of global security: the 'Ukrainian question' and 'Kosovo precedent'.* Vojno Delo, 69(4), pp.176-211. See also: VARGA, B. (2023). *Az ukrán államiság periodizációja 1918–1920.* között, pp. 273-281.
[209] As we have seen in the previous chapter, Ukrainian territory was divided between various powers, and this caused two major identities to emerge, namely the western and therefore anti-Russian Ukrainians and the more pro-Russian Eastern Ukrainians.
[210] It is said to have been a troubled independence because in 1917, thanks to moderate liberals and social democrats, Ukrajins'ka Central'na Rada, or the Ukrainian Central Council, was born, but was dissolved by the Bolsheviks in 1917, so on 20 November of that year they formed the Ukrajins'ka Narodna Respublika, or Ukrainian People's Republic, but in 1918 the Germans arrived and set up the Etmanate headed by Pavlo Skoropads'kyj, but it lasted until November 1918, because it was replaced by the Directory headed by Petljura and Vynnyčenko, and the Ukrainian People's Republic was established once again, which joined the People's Republic of Western Ukraine on 22 January 1919, which had been founded in Lviv in the meantime. In 1922 it became a full-fledged part of the Soviet Union. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 193-210. See also: ZHUKOVA, E. (2016). *Trauma management: Chernobyl in Belarus and Ukraine.* British Journal of Sociology, 67(2), pp.195-215.
[211] KULYK, V. (2011), cit. p.627-648. See also: OSIPOV, A. (2021*). Nonterritorial autonomy in northern Eurasia: rooted or alien?* Nationalities Papers, 51(1), p.205-222

the only official language[212],the study of the Ukrainian language was made compulsory throughout the territory at the expense of Russian, Crimean Tatar, and other languages such as Romanian and Hungarian, although Russian remained very much present[213]. The choice of a single language as the official language was motivated by the strong nationalist movements present at that time and was seen as the only strategy to counter all Russophile movements and in an attempt to get closer to the European world; however, despite this, these proposals were not so incisive because the majority of the population continued to express themselves in Russian, which for this exact reason it was not banned[214].If the use of the Russian language could not be curtailed, the same cannot be said with Polish; the pro-Ukrainian intelligentsia through great cultural and educational efforts succeeded in imposing the Ukrainian language in the westernmost territories at the expense of the Polish language. It was a very tumultuous period, which saw the emergence of many debates and issues concerning linguistic identity, mother tongue, and ethnic specificity, which are still in vogue today.[215]

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[212] The law in question was the law on 'national-personal autonomy,' which was included in the constituent declaration, known as 'the third Universal' whose implementation took place a year earlier. REMY, J. (2017). *'It is unknown where the Little Russians are heading to': The Autonomy Dispute between the Ukrainian Central Rada and the All-Russian Provisional Government in 1917*. The Slavonic and East European Review, 95(4), p.691–719. See also: KAZAKEVYCH, O. (2021). *Linguistic issue in the Ukrainian state-building of the 20th century.* Bulletin of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv History, (150), p. 23-28

[213] we are talking about a very short period, there were areas where the Ukrainian language had not yet arrived, so in order not to risk generalized illiteracy, the Russian language was maintained at all levels of society. BILANIUK, L., & MELNYK, S. (2008), cit. p. 340–372.

[214] Official texts explain that it was not banned because they wanted to accommodate the linguistic differences in the country as well as minority languages, but historically what we know is that the population expressed themselves mainly in Russian, so in percentage terms it was the Ukrainian language that was a minority language; banning the Russian language would have disproportionately increased the level of illiteracy. PAVLENKO, A. (2006), cit. p.78–99. See also: GOODMAN, B. (2018). *Acts of negotiation: governmentality and medium of instruction in an eastern Ukrainian university.* Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 49(1), p.36-52.

[215] KULYK, V. (2011), cit. p.627-648. See also: KAZAKEVYCH, O. (2021), cit. p. 23-28. DOIAR, L. (2021). *Soviet Ukrainization as an important stage language development of Ukraine*. Вісник Книжкової Палати, (7), p. 22-28.

3.2 The Early Soviet Years in Ukraine and The Politics of Korenizacija

With the Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War and thus the birth of the Soviet Union in 1922 with the annexation of Ukrainian territories, the brief period of Ukrainian independence ended, and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was born. The Soviet strategy of centralizing control in various regions resulted in Ukrainian becoming a constituent republic on par with the Russian republic. This annexation and the promotion of the Marxist-Leninist project found various forms of resistance in the Ukrainian population, but never so strong as to declare independence. Regarding language and nationality, the Soviet idea is based on Marxist and Leninist principles, in which the ultimate goal is to create a single socialist state. It cannot be said that policies were homogeneous throughout the Soviet period; there were more complex and oppressive moments, and others were more peaceful. In any case, it can be said that there was continuous interaction between the promotion of languages and cultural differences and the desire to build a centralized state structure in a socialist landscape. The approach to strong nationalism was to establish the idea of a good nation that did not undermine the linguistic and cultural development of various nationalities. Certainly, Russian remains the most widely used language, but there are no documents that forbade the use of local languages. Throughout the Soviet Union, there was a kind of social bilingualism with the Russian language always present because it somehow represented the Marxist social language par excellence; therefore, various local Soviet authorities tended to promote it.[216]

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[216] SLEZKINE, Y. (1994). *The USSR as a communal apartment, or how a socialist state promoted ethnic particularism.* Slavic Review, 53(2), p.414-452. See also: BILANIUK, L., & MELNYK, S. (2008), cit, p. 340–352 MATVIISHYN, Y. And MICHALSKI, T. (2017). *Language differentiation of Ukraine's population.* Journal of Nationalism Memory & Language Politics, 11(2), p.181-197.

There were various problems with language policies and their implementation, due to bureaucratic rivalries[217] within governments, rivalries between intellectuals and governors, and due to extremely widespread illiteracy. In any case, in the early years of the formation of the Soviet Union, Leninist thought was taken as a reference. Lenin considered cultural advancement with literacy and economic-administrative competence to be fundamental because it was perfectly intertwined with technical progress. Soviet cultural uplift was fundamental to advancing socialism and had to take place through the state. Education for the Bolsheviks was crucial as society had a very low level of literacy, non-existent in certain rural areas. Literacy was important in several ways, on the one hand you had such a vast territory that local administrations had to be efficient in carrying out the socialist project, on the other hand to educate the masses in Marxism-Leninism they had to be literate. In addition, having the working masses literate meant getting rid of the stigma of backwardness and showing Europe that with the Soviet industrialisation project you had educated workers.[218]

Vladimir Lenin, but also for Josef Stalin[219] who at the time was the people's commissar for nationalities, to avoid friction and hostile feelings, believed in the need to create a multinational structure in which nations and languages all had the same rights, and therefore the bureaucracy and education within the republics had to take place in the local language, the general idea was

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[217] In the early Soviet years, there were two bureaucratic entities within the Soviet government, the Narkompros and the Narkomanats, the former led by the Lunacharskii commissariat for enlightenment and the latter by Stalin. If the Narkompros had dealt with cultural and educational policies, the latter would have worked on the different nationalities within the Soviet Union. Lunacharskii's position on language policy was very clear, while Stalin only dealt with it around 1919-20, in any case there was a political struggle between these bureaucracies especially in the area of language in the end, the ideas of the Narkompros prevailed. BLANK, S. (1988). *The Origins of Soviet Language Policy 1917-21*. Russian History, Brill, 15(1), p.71-92

[218] FILZPATRICK, S. (1971). *The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet organization of education and the arts under Lunacharsky*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-46, 162-210. See also: KENEZ, P. (1985). *The birth of the propaganda state: Soviet methods of mass mobilization 1917-1929.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1-21, 29-50. BLANK, S. (1988), cit. p.71-92.

[219] Who we will see would later change his mind.

that in order to spread Soviet socialist ideology and ensure that there was a positive acceptance of it the medium to be used was the mother tongue of each individual nation, because it felt more representative. In other words, if culture was a matter of state policy based on a Soviet socialist culture in which any autonomy of national cultures was to be eliminated, the strategy for language policy was different.[220] Lenin was convinced that as socialism unfolded, the Russian language would naturally become the main language, without the need to impose heavy-handed language policies. Certainly, Lenin's own ideas were quite conflicting, but eventually the balance between central control and linguistic diversity was found.[221]

In November 1917, there was the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples,[222] It was a fundamental document recognising the self-determination of all nations of the Soviet Union, it allowed the freedom to choose one's political status, such as becoming independent states and then splitting off. It also recognised the right to use one's mother tongue in all social spheres, including education and administration.[223] Lenin's idea was to balance the promotion of national identities with the overall Soviet identity, he was convinced that leaving these certain freedoms would diminish nationalist forces, and that as socialism progressed, a unified Soviet identity would be achieved.[224] In 1918, the Constitution stated that the oppression of national minorities went against the fundamental laws of the state, although it did not clarify the provisions to guarantee language equality. The Soviet constitution

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[220] Probably this view comes from the missionary N.I Il'Minskii, who was a friend of Lenin's father who taught Orthodoxy to Muslims in their own language and not in Russian.

[221] KREINDLER, I. (1977). *A neglected source of Lenin's nationality policy.* Slavic Review, 36(1), p.86-100.

[222] The text was published on the site of the electronic library of the Faculty of History of Moscow State University, http://www.hist.msu.ru/ER/Etext/PICT/ussr.htm

[223] MAGNANIMI, E. (Ed.). (2006). *I diritti civili nell'URSS, 1917-1936.* DEP, 5-6. Rivista telematica di studi sulla memoria femminile. Ca' Foscari Edizioni, p.273- 307

[224] SLEZKINE, Y. (1994), cit. p.414-452. See also: DULLIN, S. (2023). *A double-edged sword: the political use of national heterogeneity in the Soviet Union during the interwar period.* In E. Dalle Mulle , D. Rodogno & M. Bieling (Ed.). Sovereignty, Nationalism, and the Quest for Homogeneity in Interwar Europe, Bloomsbury Academic, London, p. 147–168.

in 1918 reflected the desire to recognise and respect the languages of the different nationalities within the Soviet Union.[225] Moreover, the constitution classified languages hierarchically, starting with the titular languages, i.e. of the republics, then those with some official status, and then lastly those of small minorities. The Ukrainian language, therefore, was legally on the same level as Russian within the Soviet Union, as it was the official language of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.[226][227]

The policy of Korenizacija

Language policies in the Soviet Ukraine had two very important moments, the policy of Korenizacija, in English indigenisation, applied from 1923 with the aim of promoting national languages and cultures, and the policy of 1933, called 'Sovietisation', where preference was given to the use and promotion of Russian-Soviet culture, probably out of fear of possible independence aspirations on the part of certain ethnic groups. The language policy in Ukraine in the early years of the Soviet Union had to cope with a complex panorama of ethnic groups and nationalities present in the territory and the desire to break away completely, even culturally, from the Russian empire. In the early Soviet years in Ukraine, therefore, the process that the Ukrainian government had begun during its brief period of independence between 1917-1921 was continued, to ease friction with the more nationalist figures who had seen the Ukrainian People's Republic become a Soviet republic. In fact, even before the Bolshevik victory in 1919 during a Communist Party conference, the Bolsheviks had already given full support to the promotion of the Ukrainian language, believing it essential for the masses of workers to study in their mother tongue, transforming the language into a means of

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[225] MAGNANIMI, E. (Ed.). (2006), cit. p.273- 307. See also: PAVLENKO, A. (2006), cit. p. 78–99
[226] FORKER, D. (2020). *The late success of soviet language policy: the integration of Russian verbs in languages of the former Soviet Union*. International Journal of Bilingualism, 25(1), p.240-271.
[227] However, there were great debates within the republic itself regarding the development of the Ukrainian language, with some supporting it and others favouring Russification policies.

raising awareness of Soviet culture.[228] This policy of 'indigenisation' was implemented in Ukraine in 1925 and lasted until 1932.[229] In this period the use of the Ukrainian language increased, albeit with much effort, both in schools, where there were even about 80% of schools in the Ukrainian language, and in publishing, with more than half of the newspapers printed in the Ukrainian language.[230] Ukrainianisation aroused a state of almost euphoric optimism that pervaded the majority of the Ukrainian population: by now, political independence from the Soviet Union was no longer felt to be a priority as, thanks to the policy of ukrainizacija, Ukrainian culture and language had been given the opportunity to assert itself in complete autonomy. The effects of Ukrainianisation were, however, contradictory as it was an artificial and to some extent forced process. On the one hand, the number of speakers of the language increased, it was heard more frequently in the streets of the main cities. Although it must be emphasised that the role of the Ukrainian language always remained at a lower rung than Russian. The reasons stemmed mainly from the internal administration and from the party leadership, which did not follow Lenin's directives to precision because they were convinced that Lenin's policies were too light on the Ukrainian language and culture, which, according to them, fuelled Ukrainian nationalism and independence.[231] [232]

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[228] ORAZI, L. (2019). *Identità nazionale e lingua: politica linguistica e pianificazione linguistica nell'Ucraina sovietica interbellica.* In A. Franco & O. Rumyantsev (Eds.), L'Ucraina alla ricerca di un equilibrio: Sfide storiche, linguistiche e culturali da Porošenko a Zelens'kyj, Edizioni Ca' Foscari, p.125-137.

[229] Ukrainian became Soviet in 1922, but the Ukrainian Bolshevik party was very disunited and there were often disagreements that slowed down the implementation of the laws.

[230] these data were reported by Education Commissioner Mykola Skrypnyk during 10th Congress of the Ukrainian Communist Party in 1927. Anyway, The figures are very different when looking at universities, where only 30% of courses were in the Ukrainian language. MOSER, M. A. (2016). *« 'Ukrainization' and the Ukrainian Language». New Contributions to the History of the Ukrainian Language*. Edmonton; Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian studies press, p.482-584.

[231] Ibidem. See also: RADZIEJOWSKI, J. (1983). *The Communist Party of Western Ukraine 1919-1929* (M. Rutkowski, Trans.). Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, p.112-119. KRAVCHENKO, B. (1985). *Social Change and National Consciousness in Twentieth Century Ukraine*. New York: St Martin's Press, pp. 86-98. BULLI, E. (2007), cit. p. 14-29

[232] In 1920, Pan-Islamism and Pan-turchism were condemned as bourgeois and counter-revolutionary because they fuelled Tatar nationalist aspirations (Tatars were very present in southern Ukrainian and Kazan areas).

If the language policies did not achieve the desired success, the same cannot be said of the linguistic planning of the Ukrainian language in the 1920s-30s implemented by various specialists and linguists of the time. In 1918, there was the founding of the Academy of Science where the main goal was to unite the two Ukrainian variants in a uniform and balanced manner, the one present in the territory of the former 'Little Russia' (note: the Ukrainian territory to the east that was part of the Russian Empire), which represented to some extent the standard Ukrainian where it had begun to form in the 1800s, with the dialectal variant present in the Galician area. Intellectuals and linguists were divided into two schools of thought, one used more in Kiev[233] and the other in Kharkov[234] [235]The result of their collaboration is an analysis of the importance of language and nation[236], an analysis that is still very much in vogue in Ukraine today, which is why talking about the role language plays within Ukrainian identity is still very important and heartfelt.[237] The idea is that the very essence of nationhood is based in the moment there is a specific culture and language[238], the most famous text referring to this thought is by Kurylo who in 1920 wrote and published

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This increased the idea among the Ukrainian Bolsheviks that, like the Muslim Tatars, they were trying to use education and their language to inculcate independence drives, which could also have happened in Ukraine, where there was still a very high presence of nationalists and independence activists unfavourable to the Soviet regime, and therefore attempted to restrict the Ukrainian language in schools because it was considered inherently reactionary. FENEIS, R. W. (1992). *Pan-Turkism, Turkey, and the Muslim peoples of the former Soviet Union: A modern problem in historical context* (Individual Study Project). Defense Technical Information Center, p. 47-57.

[233] This was called 'ethnographic' purist, and important were: Olena Kurylo (1890-1946), Jevhen Tymčenko (1866-1948), Ahatanhel' Krymskyj (1871-1942), Vasyl' Simovyč (1880-1944) and Ivan Ohijenko (1882-1972)

[234] SHEVELOV, George Y. (1989). *The Ukrainian Language in the First Half of the Twentieth Century (1900-1941). Its State and Status.* Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, pp. 20-200

[235] which was called 'synthetic' and relatively purist, and famous scholars include: Oleksa Synjavs'kyj (1887-1937), Mykola Sulyma (1892-1955), Mykola Nakonečnyj (1900-1981) and the aforementioned Kurylo, who in the second half of his life as a scholar changed his mind.

[236] In 1922 Oleksa Synjavs'kyj wrote in '*Handbook of the Ukrainian Language*' that "The unity of any people is expressed first and foremost in the unity of its literary language, which is the distinguishing feature of a nation".

[237] ORAZI, L. (2019), cit. p.125-137.

[238] It is a thought from the German philosophy of Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Wilhelm von Humboldt, which was renamed by Tomasz Kamusella in 2017 as 'ethnolinguistic nationalism' in his essay "*The Rise and Dynamics of the Normative Isomorphism of Language, Nation, and State in Central Europe*".

"*Observations on the Contemporary Ukrainian Literary Language*", in this text the way of thinking and writing in Ukrainian is analysed in correlation with Russian. In a way, Kurylo highlights the relationship between the Russian and Ukrainian languages, admitting that the latter could not have existed without the former. According to Kurylo, when new words have to be expressed to adapt to various historical moments[239], the Ukrainian man, by habit, has always thought like a Russian, but he states that there is a specific Ukrainian way of thinking that differs from the Russian one. In other words, for Kurlyo there is a different way of thinking, in order to separate the existence of the Ukrainian language from the Russian language. For Kurylo, language influences the way of thinking, hence ideas, and to develop an increasingly pure language or create an increasingly distinct identity, one must think in Ukrainian.[240] Ivan Ohijenko's ideas[241] were also very important. He is more critical of Polish and takes up the fundamental analysis of how important it is to use one's own language and make it as pure as possible because it is the representation of a nation and identity. Simply put, what these scholars did was to recognise Russian and Polish influences, with the task of not only purifying the language on a technical level but also unifying the nation through language to create a common thought. This is a very important philosophy, because it lays the foundation for today's political rhetoric concerning language in Ukraine; language has never been just a means of communication but is still the symbol of a nation and identity that wants to differentiate itself at all costs. [242] In ten years, these scholars elaborated the Ukrainian language that we know today, fixing spelling, vocabulary, syntax, making it as pure as possible. Probably due to their ideas

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[239] They were in years of great changes, the socialist revolution, and the Soviet Union were something never seen before

[240] This analysis is certainly too simplistic, but it gives an idea of how deep the relationship between nation, language and thought is in the Ukrainian identity.

[241] His book was published in 1925 and is entitled '*Purity and Correctness of the Ukrainian Language*'.

[242]SHEVELOV, George Y. (1989), cit. p. 20-200

MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584. See also: ORAZI, L. (2019), cit. p.125-137.

being seen as too nationalist by the Ukrainian Bolshevik Party leadership, many scholars were accused of prosecuting bourgeois nationalism. During a trial in 1929, many Ukrainian intellectuals were accused of being part of an organisation called, 'Union for the Liberation of Ukraine', which was a complete fabrication in order to frame them.[243] [244]

3.3 Stalin's language policies and the Sovietization regime

Under Lenin, Ukrainian literature flourished more than ever.[245] Ukrainian Literary works, rather than conforming to communist culture, tried to stay out of politics as much as possible. However, this turned out to be a problem, especially after the implementation of the first five-year plan[246], implemented by Stalin in 1928 in which the cultural sphere, literature, film, music and art take on a clear propagandistic function aimed at idealising the Soviet reality and Stalin's political role, while any artistic representation that is free or not subservient to power is labelled as 'reactionary' or 'petit-bourgeois' and stifled or repressed. The problem faced by Ukrainian literature was not only that of conforming to Marxist ideologies, but also that of having to abandon the typical 19th-century aesthetics of folklore, traditions, and popular descriptions as they had characterised nationalist and counter-revolutionary bourgeois authors and embrace the rhetoric of

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[243] MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584.

[244] This specific organisation never existed, certainly there were clandestine organisations, but absolutely not this one, and above all there is no evidence that these scholars were part of any organisation.

[245] Famous authors were Tychyna, Zerov, Kulish, Khnvyl'ovy, Ianovskyi, Ryl'skyi

[246] The First Five-Year Plan (1928-1932) was created with the aim of speeding up the country's development process through forced industrialisation and the modernisation of all productive sectors. The first step was the collectivisation of agriculture. This process brings with it a real persecution of the rich peasants, the kulaks, who are deprived of their land, exiled and killed. Through this revolution from above, the kulaks are eliminated not only as a class, but in many cases also physically, leading to a dramatic reduction of the population in the countryside. This situation also led between 1932 and 1933 to a great famine that caused millions of deaths, especially in the Ukraine, which had the effect of permanently weakening the peasant resistance. the Stalinist period is also remembered for the deportations to the gulags (as they were called), which involved millions of individuals. In fact, between 1934 and 1938 Stalin unleashed the period of the 'great purges', in which the terror machine, which had been put into operation with the five-year plans and the persecution of the kulaks, now persecuted any form of internal dissent, targeting in particular internal opponents within the party. BRITANNICA: https://www.britannica.com/money/Five-Year-Plans

glorifying Soviet Russia as a big brother. This new model of literature was not received with great enthusiasm, even by some members of the Ukrainian Communist Party, who were convinced that Ukrainian literature should grow independently of Russian literature, people such as M. Skrypnyk[247] agreed with the creation and promotion of an increasingly independent Ukrainian culture and having a setback at the peak of the expansion of literature led to increasing discontent[248].

With Stalin we perhaps have the darkest period in terms of the development of Ukrainian language and culture.[249] There were various policies aimed at Sovietisation to centralise and homogenise power, at the same time suppressing all other languages and ethnic groups, including Ukrainians. During this period, attempts were made to marginalise the use of the Ukrainian language as much as possible, especially in schools, in order to train the next ruling class in the Russian language and thus more in line with the great Soviet thought and will.[250] Although the Constitution of 1936[251], signed by Stalin enshrined the right of education in one's mother tongue for all Soviet citizens, from the 1930s onwards there is what is called the policy of 'Sovietisation'[252]. In 1938, the Russian language entered the school curriculum on a compulsory basis, and gradually became the mother tongue of the Soviet Union.[253] There was no ban on the use of certain languages, on paper all languages enjoyed an equal position, quite simply policies were

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[247] Mykola Skrypnyk attempted to introduce letters of the Latin alphabet into the Ukrainian language in 1926, and was later accused of forcing Ukrainianisation during the Stalinist period.

[248] BULLI, E. (2007), cit. p. 14-29. See also: SHEVELOV, George Y. (1989), cit. p. 20-200.

[249] it can be said that Stalin was not directly angry with the Ukrainians, but with everything he considered different from his idea of Soviet socialism, he was the most violent dictator in the history of the Soviet Union.

[250] BILANIUK, L., & MELNYK, S. (2008), cit, p. 340–352.

[251] Art. 40, 110, 121 of the Constitution of the USSR of 1936 and similar articles 109 and 120 of the Constitution of the USSR of 1936, translation of the constitution at: http://www.dircost.unito.it/cs/pdf/19361205_urssCostituzione_ita.pdf

[252] Some scholars also call this policy 'Russification', in this thesis it will be called 'Sovietisation' to differentiate it from the policies implemented by the Russian empire, and additionally because calling it only Russification is reductive, because it was not only promoting the Russian language, but also a culture, art, and literature that had to comply with Soviet socialist canons.

[253] PAVLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.59–80. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584.

implemented to ensure that Russian became the language of communication par excellence in the political, economic and social spheres. Russian became the lingua franca in the Soviet Union, and knowing how to speak it was seen as an opportunity for economic exchange between the various republics. It can be said that the impact of the Russian language on society depends on which nationality one takes as a reference, in the Slavic republics; thus, Ukrainian and Belarus almost takes over.[254]

The Great Famine of 1932-1933 was not only the death of thousands of Ukrainian peasants[255], but also a severe blow to culture and language. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, and the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union in 1932 declared that the ongoing famine was due to the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists[256] and their disproportionate ideas of Ukrainization, which did not take into account local specificities and differences. For Stalin, therefore, it was necessary to rebalance the Ukrainian Bolshevik party and reduce the use of the Ukrainian language in education and the media. What is clear is that the policy of 'Ukrainization' was never abolished but became completely unused due to Stalinist terror policies. However, an attempt was made to maintain the impression that Ukrainian language and culture continued to flourish, an example being the Sevchenko monuments inaugurated in 33 and 35 in the cities of Kharkiv and Kiev.[257] In the course of 1933, more than four thousand people were declared enemies of the Soviet state, people both within the Ukrainian Bolshevik party and intellectuals or simple teachers. Stalin's operation took every part of the population, especially those of Galician descent, probably because they were seen as too European and were accused of Ukrainian nationalism. As the

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[254] MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584.

[255] The great famine mostly attacked Ukrainian minorities, especially the Kubans. KUROMIYA, H. (2008). The Soviet Famine of 1932-1933 Reconsidered. Europe-Asia Studies, 60(4), p.663–675.

[256] The Ukrainian nationalists in these years were pointed at as spies for the fascists.

[257] SHEVELOV, George Y. (1989), cit. p. 20-200. See also: DANYLENKO, A., & NAIENKO, H. (2019), cit.p.19-39

works of Ukrainian literati often did not respect Soviet values[258] there was great censorship, persecution and execution, slowing down the Ukrainian cultural course. With the idea of bringing Soviet culture to the entire union Stalin sent Pavel Postyshev to Kiev (second secretary of the Central Comittee of the CPBU) who, using unorthodox methods (after his arrival Skrypnyk committed suicide in 1933), dismissed many scholars and teachers from Kiev University. From 1933 onwards, many Ukrainian writers and historians were defined as traitors, then deported or executed, the most prominent being Marxist historians Matvii Yavorsky and Mykhailo Hrushevsky who were designated as counterrevolutionaries, and writers such as Kosynka, Fal'kivski, Vlyzko and Burevii who were executed.[259] [260]

On the level of language planning, things also changed enormously, trying to align the Ukrainian language more closely with Russian. This began with the publication by Andrij Xvylja, the head of Ukrainian language planning, of an article advocating Bolshevik control over Ukrainian culture.[261] Shortly afterwards, a commission was set up to oversee language matters, again headed by Xvylja, this commission is interesting because among the members there was not a single linguist, but in any case they revised all Ukrainian terminology, preferring a type of spelling similar to Russian and eliminating some letters, such as 'ґ'. Although there were many efforts to eliminate any kind of foreign influence and bring the Ukrainian language closer to the Russian language, very few books or dictionaries were published to inculcate these linguistic changes, so the result was very poor,

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[258] They did not go against values, but neither did they go for them, they were literary writings that did not really deal with socialist and Soviet subjects

[259] In this period many of them were not brought before proper courts, they were often tortured, forced to confess to the existence of non-existent subversive groups, there was truly a cleansing of intellectuals, mostly innocent ones. It must be specified that these oppressive policies were not specific to the Ukrainian population, in fact this happened in all the other republics of the Soviet Union.

[260] SHEVELOV, G. Y. (1989), cit. p. 20-200

[261] The article *'For Bolshevik Vigilance at the Front of the Creation of Ukrainian Soviet Culture'* was published in 1933 in the newspaper the Communist.

rather than great linguistic changes there were only great condemnations against hypothetical nationalist influences.[262]

As fascism became more and more in vogue in Europe, the idea of the existence of Ukrainian fascism spread, with the Ukrainian language at the centre of this controversy. Nikolai Popov, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, stated in various articles and speeches the concern he had for the party, saying it was imbued with nationalism, famous his article *'On Nationalist Deviations in the Ranks of the Ukrainian Party Organization and the Task of Fighting Them'* of 1933, which he wrote after the suicide of Mykola Skrypnyk, and defined 1933 as the year of the rupture, a key moment to destroy all counter-revolutionary forces. The Ukrainian Bolshevik Party recognised that the policy of Ukrainization of the past years had been implemented in order to grow bourgeois nationalism. During these years there were multiple articles by various Bolshevik exponents, which were of great significance because they were printed in large numbers to reach the largest number of the population, it must be remembered that propaganda was a very important medium during the Soviet era.[263] In any case, the use of the Ukrainian language did not cease, certainly bilingual or Russian-speaking schools were becoming more common, but in the more rural areas the language continued to be spoken, even if Russian was preferred. Certainly, with these changes aimed at Sovietisation, the population adapted greatly, if in the 1920s knowing the Ukrainian language was an added value, by the end of the 1930s it had lost its value, the Russian language was the fundamental language not only for work, but also for sociality among citizens. It was the intellectuals who were hard hit during the years of Stalinist terror, and the media, which although

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[262] HORBYK, R., & PALKO, O. (2017). *Righting the writing: The power dynamic of Soviet Ukraine language policies and reforms in the 1920s-1930s*. Studi Slavistici, 14, p. 67-89
[263] HORBYK, R., & PALKO, O. (2017), cit. p. 67-89

there were still Ukrainian newspapers, the content was completely in Russian. Few Soviet journals such as Červonyj Šljax continued to point out the importance of the Ukrainian language and how it needed to be standardised with the working-class masses, because it could become an important medium for Soviet cultural development. With Stalin came the moment of terror, so in order not to have any problems, only Russian was used.[264]

3.4 The Thaw Period

Undoubtedly, the two moments described earlier, i.e. those of Ukrainianization and Sovietisation, determined the identity and linguistic situation of Ukraine in the years to come. With the death of Stalin and the condemnations of Stalinist crimes came the period remembered as the 'thaw period'. If during the 'thaw', the Ukrainian press regained some vigour, the idea of the Ukrainian language within the USSR was certainly not encouraging, for although it was a period of linguistic and cultural openness and freedom, the Russian language took over. If languages such as Armenian, Lithuanian and Georgian during the Stalinist period resisted the attempt at Russification and remained true to themselves, the same thing did not happen in Ukraine[265]. The reasons are many, probably due to the similarity of the language, being part of Eastern Slavic like Russian, the policies of the 1930s, and the decision by the population to prefer Russian over Ukrainian as it was the language that opened more doors, especially in the world of work.

Nikita Chruščev (in government from 1953-1964) realising certain linguistic situations introduced the idea of the Russian language[266] as the second

[264] SHEVELOV, George Y. (1989), cit. p. 20-200 see also: SHEVCHENKO, N. (2015), Cit. p.203-225, PAVLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.59–80. MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584.
[265] The same happened in Belarus. BULLI, E. (2007), cit. p. 14-29
[266] It would be interesting to analyse why the Russian language was used, but this is not the focus of this thesis, what we can briefly say is that the Russian language for obvious historical reasons was the most widely used language in the entire Soviet Union, the centre of the Soviet Communist Party was in the Russian republic, the Russian language became the language of the socialist struggle. What we can say is that in these years in the

mother tongue, the language of the Soviet people, the means of communication between the republics within the Union. This idea became a written prospect in the programme of the 22nd Congress of the PCUS in October 1961.[267] Three years earlier, in 1958, there was also the school reform, with the law was for the 'strengthening of the link between school and life and the further development of public education in the USSR',[268] it was proposed on 24 December 1958 and implemented from 17 April 1959, aimed at modernising the school again, seen as the hub for learning to become the ultimate Soviet man. The reform left the possibility of choosing the language of instruction[269], most Ukrainians chose Russian for their children, seen as the fundamental language for finding work.[270] This law, which in fact left its citizens free to choose, placed the Ukrainian language at a disadvantage in relation to other languages, strengthening the Russian language in particular, so much so that the USSR Ministry of Education at the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party sanctioned a series of measures to improve Russian language teaching in the Ukrainian Soviet republic in 1960.[271] Moreover, as of 1954, knowledge of the Ukrainian language was no longer compulsory for admission to universities in the

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Western world it was the English language that gained more and more power, the Cold War was a cultural struggle, and language being an integral part of culture had to differentiate itself, and as English was used as the hegemonic language in the West, Russian was seen as the strongest language and succeeded in imposing itself in the Soviet union, in some areas becoming completely the main language used in communication, in others simply being able to speak it, but as a second language.

[267] MARTINELLI, R. (Ed.). (2000). *Togliatti, lo stalinismo e il XXII congresso del Pcus: Un discorso ritrovato*. Italia contemporanea, 219, p.297-313. See also: KINDRACHUK, N. (2022). *Ukrainian Language in Educational Institutions of the USSR: 1960s–1970s*. Historia i Polityka, 42 (49), p. 151–162.

[268] BIBLIOTECA PRESIDENZIALE: https://www.prlib.ru/history/619837

[269] Law on Strengthening of the School's Contact with Life and Further Development of Public Education System in USSR. (1959). Soviet Education, 1(6), 3–8. https://doi.org/10.2753/RES1060-939301063 (article 9)

[270] PAVLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.59–80. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584.

[271] Why talk about school? Because schooling is seen as fundamental to bringing the Marxist Leninist project forward, Soviet socialism to the new generations (there was a project on the future of the nation and society) is why education was always at the centre of government discussions and never left to chance, or never given complete freedom to the various ethnic groups

Ukrainian Socialist Republic; admission in certain cases was only in Russian, so knowing it perfectly was very important.[272]

The influence of the Russian language on the Ukrainian population from the 1930s onwards was immense. But while in the beginning an attempt was made to agglomerate Russian linguistic features into the Ukrainian language, from the late 1950s onwards the Ukrainian language was almost completely excluded in everyday use in favour of the Russian language.[273] [274]If this Russification phenomena are indeed evident at the social level, the same cannot be said at the political level, as the Communist Party never admitted its intentions, let alone implemented laws against the Ukrainian language[275], in 1954, during the Plenum of the Central Committee, the Communist Party leader O. Kyrychenko declared that the term Russification[276] was never used in Ukraine during the Soviet period.[277] In Ukraine, the study of Russian was made compulsory in Ukrainian language schools. Although these schools initially remained bilingual, the use of Russian soon prevailed in teaching. This change occurred due to a shortage of students and teachers who preferred the use of Russian, leading to a dominant preference for the Russian language.[278] It must be emphasised that the working masses chose the Russian language, certainly many initiatives were implemented to make

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[272] BULLI, E. (2007), cit. p. 14-29. See also: KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

[273] SERGIYCHUK, O. (2002). *Language Situation in Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine (1955–1965)*. Ethnic History of the Peoples of Europe, 6, p.4–8. See also: KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2014). *Narrowing of the Ukrainian Language in the Late 1950s – During the First Half of the 1960s*. Notes of the Faculty of History, 25, p.145–152. KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

[274] Probably the first tactic was too machine-like and too cumbersome, unlike Surzik, which in the 1960s and 1970s gained more and more popularity, and turned out to be a quasi-fusion of Russian and Ukrainian, creating to all intents and purposes a new language/dialect that was created naturally within the population.

[275] There were laws in favour of the Russian language, but throughout the union, which does not mean that they necessarily had to attack the Ukrainian language.

[276] Certainly, the term Russification was not used, not least because they somehow wanted to avoid any kind of allusion to the Russian empire, what the Bolsheviks really liked was the term 'internationalisation'. That is, the idea of implementing a series of policies aimed at uniting the various republics in the social and economic spheres in order to achieve perfect socialism, and to do this they needed to have a common language, which in this case was Russian.

[277] KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

[278] Ibidem

the Russian language more accessible, but there was never a prohibition of the Ukrainian language by the central power, the only time there was the idea that speaking the Ukrainian language could be dangerous was during the Stalin era.

In any case, in the 1960s, the Ukrainian intelligentsia tried to bring the promotion of the language back to the centre, and there are several publications of dictionaries and history of the language[279], the most important being the Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopaedia, written in six years from 1959- 1965 edited by Bažan. What can be seen in all these publications is the continuous rapprochement to the Russian language, there was no obligation from above, it was simply thought that borrowing language from Russian served to embellish the Ukrainian vocabulary. This period of voluntary 'Russification' of the Ukrainian language led to the formation among Ukrainian intellectuals of a movement called šistedesjatnyky, which in English translates as 'those of the sixties'.[280] This movement, which was absolutely opposed to a return to Russification, fought against it, and its members were the first to criticise the theory of Russian-Ukrainian bilingual harmony very strongly. Representatives of this group of the Ukrainian intelligentsia protested in various ways against the initiatives of the Soviet government, and at the 3rd Plenum of the Union of Ukrainian Writers in Kiev in 1962, as well as at the scientific-practical conference at Kiev University in 1963, they condemned the 1958 Education Law, stating that it was a threat to Ukrainian culture, and tried to find alternatives to promote the Ukrainian language. Among the many options was to return to teaching in schools only in the Ukrainian language, but all these ideas, which were shared among

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[279] The most famous include Bilodid, ed., Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language, 11 volumes (1970-80, Kyryljuk, ed, History of Ukrainian Literature, 8 volumes (1967-71), Bažan, ed., History of Ukrainian Art, 6 volumes (1966-70)
[280] Dzjuba's 1965 book, 'Internationalisation or Russification?' was the turning point for the movement.

intellectuals, never caught on among society, let alone the authorities.[281] They accused the Soviets of destroying the Ukrainian grammar, famous is Antonenko Davydovyč's 1970 article entitled 'a missing letter' in which he discusses the phenomenon of the disappearance of the letter <Ґ> from the Ukrainian alphabet[282].

Already from 1962-64 until the 1970s, the KGB went after many Ukrainian intellectuals, and many of the members belonging to the šistedesjatnyky were arrested. Soviet propaganda tried to point to their sentiments in defence of their mother tongue as 'bourgeois nationalism' and an attempt at Western linguistic approximations; lists of banned words were also sent to authors and newspapers.[283] [284]

Ivàn Dzjùba

Ivàn Dzjùba is one of the most important scholars of literary linguistic identity. Dzjùba was born in 1931 in the Donbass and moved to the industrial areas to escape the famine. Of peasant origin he was Ukrainian speaking, but living in the city he learnt Russian and studied Russian philology at the University of Donec'k. Universities in Ukraine were places, where even

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[281] If the 1958 law is looked at, parents were free to choose the language of choice for their children, yet they chose Russian, these are no longer the years of Stalin where one was castigated as a nationalist just because of the language one spoke, one is free to choose, in Ukraine and Belarus people freely chose the Russian language, probably because it was seen as a language that could give them more job opportunities, but it was also the language actually most spoken among Ukrainian society, in this period there is a strong misunderstanding between Ukrainian literati and the popular masses. KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2016a). *National Enslavement of Ukrainians in the Conditions of Russification of the Linguistic and Cultural Space of the USSR*: *60s–70s of the XX Century*. East, 2, p.48–53. See also: KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2016b). *Eradication of the National Element from the Life of the Ukrainian Ethnic Environment as a Result of the Russification of the Cultural and Papers Educational Environment of the USSR: The First Half of the 1960s.* Intelligentsia and Power: A Collection of Scientific Papers. Series: History, 35, p.90–102. KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

[282] The letter <Ґ> was eliminated in the 1930s and was pronounced /g/. SHEVCHENKO, N. (2015), Cit. p.203-225, PAVLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.59–80. See also: MOSER, M. A. (2016), cit. p.482-584.

[283] What Ukrainian intellectuals did was not only to defend their own language, but also to accuse the state, and its laws, in a democratic country contestation to power is normal, in countries like the Soviet union it is not, and above all the leadership of the country had on its side the fact that per se there were no laws in writing that went against the Ukrainian language, so the ideas of the Ukrainian cultural movement of the 1960s were seen as subversive.

[284] SHEVELOV, George Y. (1989), cit. p. 20-200. See also: KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2016a), cit. p.48–53. KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2016b), cit. p.90–102. KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

though people studied in Russian, the Ukrainian language and literature was very much present. In Kiev, he began working as an editor, but immediately began to relate to the literary groups that opposed the ideologies of the regime, and in the 1960s he supported the šistdesjàtnyky very actively. He became famous thanks to his article 'Internationalism or Russification?' written in 1965, this sociolinguistic study was published abroad in 1968 and also circulated clandestinely in Ukraine.[285] In the text, Dzjùba criticises the Russians for exercising repression on Ukrainian culture using the sentiment of 'Slavic brotherhood'. Furthermore, speaking of the Soviet Union, he believes that Marxist ideology is only a façade in order to maintain control over all national cultures; individuals no longer matter and are manipulated by a puppet ideology. The title *'Internationalism or Russification?'* It shows how Lenin's ideas on the plurality of nations turned into a Russification machine in the Soviet republics. Interestingly, his criticism does not go against Leninist socialist ideology per se, but against the political leadership that instrumentalised it without properly applying its principles.[286] He then analyses the significant decline in the use of national languages from the advent of the union until the 1960s, showing how the initiatives that favoured Russian in all social circles forced citizens to change their language of communication, while making them believe that this shift between mother tongue and Russian language had come about spontaneously. Having completed his work, he sent it to the Ukrainian Communist Party, and the Russian translation to the Central Committee in Moscow, the text was abolished, censored, received administrative sanctions, but already in '68 he returned to his job. The 1970s were again difficult years for the intellectuals, academics and leaders of the Ukrainian Communist Party, and in 1972

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[285] RUMYANTSEV, O. (2019). *Ivàn Dzjùba e l'identità linguistica*. In Persona, comunità, strategie identitarie Palermo University Press, pp. 195-213. See also: RAPETTI, S. (2016). *Dalla censura e dal samizdat alla libertà di stampa. URSS 1917-1990.* goWare, p.10-37; 58-120. PACHLOVSKA, O. (1999). *Ucraini come minoranza in patria*. Letterature di frontiera, 2, p. 117-141.

[286] DZIUBA, I. (1998). *Internationalism or Russification*. Fitzroy Dearborn, London.

Dzjùba was tried and forced to do hard labour, but received a pardon because he was ill. He became an editor of major national newspapers and became Minister of Culture in independent Ukraine in 1992.[287] After Ukraine's independence, Dzjùba continues his sociolinguistic analysis of the country, and criticises those who point to the Ukrainian state as a country full of nationalists, also referring to the fact that no extreme right-wing party plays a major role in parliament, and he often refers to a book of his, still written in the Soviet era 'The Oppression of Nationalities' 1971, in which he refutes those who accuse people whose only goal is Ukrainian culture and language of being nationalists. As we shall see in the next chapter, the linguistic situation in independent Ukraine does not see Ukrainian overtaking Russian as hoped, indeed in 2009, 32% of the population still stated that their mother tongue was Russian, as opposed to 55.5% Ukrainian, while in everyday life, Russian surpassed Ukrainian, albeit slightly[288]. According to Dzjuba, the reason why Russian remains predominant is due to a series of prejudices that the Ukrainian language has to fight against, which are the inferiority complex in comparison to Russian, the lack of prestige, the feeling that knowing only the Ukrainian language is an impediment in the world of work, as it was in Soviet times, and lastly that the Ukrainian language is understood only as a language to be studied on a theoretical level and not on a practical level. On these ideas of his, one may agree or disagree, certainly the knowledge of the Russian language can be an extra element for the career of any individual, however, it must also be said that among Ukrainians, both Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking, the idea that the official state language must only be Ukrainian is very much shared.[289]

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[287] RUMYANTSEV, O. (2019), cit. p. 195-213.
[288] 34.6% Russian as opposed to 31.9% Ukrainian, and 22.8% of the population stated that both languages were used in communication. MASENKO, L. (2009), cit. p.101-139
[289] DZIUBA, I. (1998). *Internationalism or Russification*. Fitzroy Dearborn, London.
DZIUBA, I. (2021). *La russificazione in Ucraina* (O. Rumyantsev, Trans.). Aracne, Roma.
DZJUBA, I. (1971). *L'oppressione delle nazionalità in URSS*. Samonà e Savelli, Roma.

3.5 The Last Years of Soviet Language Policies

With the arrival of Brezhnev[290] (in government from 1964 to 1982), policies aimed at Sovietisation were once again in place, an attempt was made to promote the Russian language in all administrative and public spheres. Although at an official level Ukrainian remained the state language, Russian continued to be increasingly used, maintaining its role as the favoured language. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, there were always more students going to Russian schools than Ukrainian ones.[291] Under Brezhnev, there were indeed moments that hindered the promotion of the Ukrainian language, an example being the dismissal in 1972 of Petro Shelest from the position of First Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, because he was accused of pro-Ukrainian ideas akin to nationalism, or the order by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education of the Ukrainian SSR that all scientific and scientific-linguistic works had to be submitted in Russian and approved directly by Moscow.[292] (Ivanchenko, 1996; The Russian language from this time onwards became part of the official communication of the administration of the Ukrainian Soviet republic.[293]

In the face of all these obstacles, there remained one part of society in Ukraine that firmly believed in promoting the Ukrainian language, and that was the young students. The student community that could afford to go to university and thus could study ways to preserve Ukrainian culture and

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[290] The Soviet Union saw a period of economic stability, and prosperity.

[291] KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2015a). *The Acceleration of the Ukrainians' Assimilation due to Deliberate Narrowing of the Ukrainian Language: 60s–70s of the XX Century*. Torun International Studies, 3(8), pp.61–69. KINDRACHUK, N.M. (2015b). *The State of Ukrainian Schools in Odessa and Odessa Region in the 60's of the XX Century*. In: G.I. Goncharuk (Ed.). Kochubiev – Hadzhibey – Odessa: Materials of the First All-Ukrainian Scientific Conference on the 600th Anniversary of the City, Odessa: Polytechnic Periodical, p. 62–65. See also: Hentschel, G. and Palinska, O. (2022). *Restructuring in a mesolect: a case study on the basis of the formal variation of the infinitive in ukrainian–russian surzhyk.* Cognitive Studies | Études Cognitives, (22), pp. 1-21.

[292] KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

[293] YARMOLENKO, M. (2013). *Language Policy in the USSR in the 40–80s of the Twentieth Century.* Scientific Notes of I.F. Kuras Institute of Political and Ethnonational Studies of NAS of Ukraine, 3, p.365–377

identity. Attempts were made to stop this movement[294] with the dismissal of some teachers[295],but in any case, the attempt to completely destroy Ukrainian national existence failed.[296] In the 1980s there were no longer any major language policies in Ukraine, an attempt was made to implement Mikhail Gorbachev's Perestroika, but as we know by now the Russian language dominated the entire public domain from the media, to commerce, to schools, areas such as the east and south of Ukraine the presence of the Ukrainian language was almost non-existent. The 1989 census, the last of the Soviet Union, gives key insights into what has been said so far. According to the data, 72.7 per cent of the population identified themselves as Ukrainian and 22.1 per cent as Russian, with many of the elderly Soviet Union population residing in Ukraine[297]. Furthermore, the data highlight the complicated linguistic situation, where the mother tongue is Ukrainian, but the most widely used language is Russian, thus underlining the social bilingualism present in the region. Although the repressive character in some situations with respect to the Ukrainian language cannot be denied that the large majority of citizens voluntarily decided to adapt to the Russian language, the linguistic identity in the populations of the Soviet Union has blurred boundaries and it is often very complicated to understand the exact legacy of all policies.

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[294] More than a movement, these are the ideas of small groups, in this period, at least from the sources, there were no large illicit groups.

[295] The teacher B. Stepanyshyn of the Rivne Pedagogical Institute, P. Raevsky and the scientist, poet and journalist J. Michuda, accused of bourgeois nationalism.

[296] KINDRACHUK, N. (2022), cit. p. 151–162.

[297] IECOVICH, E., BARASCH, M., MIRSKY, J., KAUFMAN, R., AVGAR, A., & KOL-FOGELSON, A. (2004). *Social support networks and loneliness among elderly Jews in Russia and Ukraine.* Journal of Marriage and Family, 66(2), p.306-317. See also: MASENKO, L. (2009), cit. p.101-139.. MERLO, S. (2021*). Alla frontiera. Regioni, minoranze e rapporti transnazionali in Ucraina, 1989-1991*. Studi storici, 1, p.127-157. WILSON, A. (2023). *Ukraine at war: baseline identity and social construction*. Nations and Nationalism, 30(1), p. 8-17.

CHAPTER 4

From the fall of the Soviet Union to the present day: language policies in the Ukrainian state

4.1 Early language laws of the Ukrainian state

With the end of the Soviet Union, there is a geographic, cultural, and economic rearrangement of the entire area that comprised it. As far as Ukraine is concerned, on 16 July 1990, the Declaration of Sovereignty clarified the autonomy of Ukrainian laws with respect to Soviet laws and the development of cultures and ethnic groups in the territory, and with the referendum on independence on 24 August 1991, Ukrainian territory became an independent state.[298] As far as language policy[299] is concerned, since the fall of the Soviet Union, three precise ideas have been recognised, one radical, one conservative and one liberal; Ukraine has chosen the liberal approach. This means that, while promoting Ukrainian as the national language, provisions and protections are also established for other minority languages. The aim is to balance national identity by respecting the country's linguistic diversity[300]. As early as 1989, Law 8312-XI[301], which came into force in 1991, 'On Languages in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic', placed the Ukrainian language as the sole state language, while attempting to decentralise the role of the Russian language. The purpose of this law was

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[298] CELLA, G. (2021), cit, p. 251-257. See also: CARPINELLI, C. (2019). *Ucraina: la questione della lingua e le sue fasi di evoluzione politica e legislativa.* Nuovi Autoritarismi e Democrazie: Diritto, Istituzioni e Società (NAD), 2, p. 61.

[299] The Ukrainian state has instituted several important language policies. In this chapter, the original texts of these laws have been studied in order to derive a more comprehensive analysis of the language situation.

[300] In Belarus the approach was more conservative, the status of official language was held by both Russian and Belarusian, while the Baltic republics were very radical, discriminating heavily against the Russian language. CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p.67-68.

[301] On Languages in Ukrainian SSR, Document 8312-XI, first version - Adoption on October 28, 1989, on the site Legislation of Ukraine, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/8312-11/ed19891028?lang=en (accessed on June 15, 2024).

to promote the Ukrainian language and culture without, however, prohibiting education in the other languages, thus adopting as the sole official language that of the titular nationality. Thus, Ukrainian became the main language, of great symbolic value as if to guarantee the sovereignty and independence of the state. In the text of the law when it specifies that other languages are also protected, it refers mainly to Russian, as it is the only language specified in the text; in fact, much freedom is left to Russian speakers.[302] In truth, citizens can use whichever language they prefer, and state officials must speak both Ukrainian and Russian, as political discrimination is prohibited. As far as education is concerned, the network of schools supports the study of the Ukrainian language and ethnic minorities. Ukrainian is the main language of instruction at all educational levels, although both Ukrainian and Russian are compulsory in secondary schools. In other words, this law attempts a not-too-hard Ukrainianization, realising that it is a bilingual society, and removing completely the use of Russian in favour of Ukrainian would create many language communication and literacy problems. An attempt was made to begin a process, adding the Ukrainian language in areas where it did not exist, without discriminating against other languages, to inculcate that the only official language was Ukrainian, first on a symbolic level and then on a practical level.[303] In 1996, the Constitution declared Ukrainian as the only official language[304]. Article 10 guarantees the development and full functioning of the Ukrainian language in all areas of public life. The Russian

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[302] According to the 1989 Language Law, "the development of the understanding of the social value of the Ukrainian language as the state language of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Russian language as the language of the interethnic communication of peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics among citizens regardless of their national affiliation shall be the duty of the state, party and public bodies and mass. media of the Republic. The choice of the language of the interpersonal communication among citizens of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic shall be an inalienable right of citizens themselves."

[303] BILANIUK, L., & MELNYK, S. (2008). *A Tense and Shifting Balance: Bilingualism and Education in Ukraine.* International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 11(3–4), p. 340–370.

[304] The English translation of the constitution was used https://biblioteka.sejm.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Ukraina_ang_010117.pdf see also: https://rm.coe.int/constitution-of-ukraine/168071f58b (accessed on June 15, 2024).

language suddenly becomes a minority language, and is treated as such; in fact, Article 10(3) guarantees the use and protection of all minority languages, and while the Russian language enters as a minority language, it is the only one that is expressly mentioned, in some way reaffirming its prestige. In most instances, bilingualism in Ukraine is not balanced, for if Ukrainian speakers also know Russian, this is not the case in reverse. Thus, placing the Russian language on the same legal level as the Ukrainian language would only further affirm the idea that the individual is not obliged to know both languages to enter a bilingual society. This article of the constitution will be one of many attempts by political forces to diminish the role of the Russian language in favour of the Ukrainian language. If on the political and legal level this goal is achieved, on the social level things turn out to be different, the Ukrainian language will certainly begin to be more studied and spoken, but there will not be a net decrease in knowledge of Russian.[305]

4.2 The law 'on the principles of state language policy'

In 2012, in an attempt to improve the language issue outlined in Law 8312-XI on languages in the Ukrainian Soviet republic still in force since 1991 but completely obsolete, the Yanukovych administration enacted Law 5029-VI 'On the principles of state language policy'[306] also known as the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko[307] Law. The bill stated that regional or minority languages have the right to be used on an equal footing with Ukrainian in education, media, and public administration, in regions where at least 10% of the population has the minority language as their mother tongue; thus, regional

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[305] TOTSKYI, A. (2010). *Regional and minority languages in the Ukrainian legislation*. Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Cluj, Romania p. 30-45.
[306] On Principles of the State Language Policy, Document 5029-VI, first version - Adoption on July 3, 2012, on the website: Legislation of Ukraine, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/5029-17/ed20120703 (accessed on June 15, 2024).
[307] The two parliamentarians who drafted the bill.

languages in specific territories would enjoy equal status with Ukrainian. The law 'On the Principles of State Language Policy' was implemented eleven years after the first Ukrainian census in 2001[308], and a territorial criterion was thus used[309]. Article 7 of this law clarified the languages concerned, which were Russian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Armenian, Gagauzo, Yiddish, Crimean Tatar, Moldavian, German, Modern Greek, Polish, Romanian, Slovak, Hungarian, Rusyn (Ruthenian), Karaim (Karaima) and Krymchak. This law greatly favoured the Russian language, which in no less than 13[310] out of a total of 27 regions[311] and in many municipalities in the southern and eastern regions, as well as in the autonomous republic of Crimea, became the regional language. This law was implemented to somewhat reduce forced Ukrainization because it was not paying off, but was much criticised, especially by the opposition who accused it of ruining the Ukrainian language, in an extraordinary session of the Ukrainian parliament in Kiev July 30, 2012, the leader of the opposition Front of Change party, Arseny Yatseniuk, described the bill as a 'crime against Ukraine and the Ukrainian state'. It was seen as an anti-democratic and pro-Russian policy used for the pre-election purposes of the then ruling Partiia Rehioniv-PR party. [312]The law 'On the Principles of State Language Policy' was considered, by those in favour of it, an important strategy to try to bring Ukraine into line with other European countries whose language

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[308] Vseukrainskyi perepys naselennia 2001 [Ukrainian census 2001], on the website: Derzhavnyi komitet statystyky Ukrainy, http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/(accessed on June 15, 2024).

[309] The regional languages were therefore decreed using data from the 2001 census and divided according to territorial administrations.

[310] The regions were Donetsk (74.9%), Luhansk, (68.8%), Dnipropetrovsk (32%), Zaporizhzhia (48.2%), Odesa (41.9%), Kherson (24.9%), Mykolaiv (29.3%), Kharkiv (44.3%), Sumy (15.6%), Chernihiv (10.3%), Kyiv (25.3%)18, Sevastopol (90.6%)19, Avtonomna Respublika Krym (77.0%); while the municipalities were Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kakhovka, Izmail, Donetsk, Dnipro, Khrustalnyi, Kherson and the Bolhrad district.

[311] the other languages that acquired the role of regional language were Hungarian in the Zakarpattia region with 12%, Romanian in the Chernivtsi region (12%), and Crimean Tatar in the Avtonomna Respublika Krym (11.4%).

[312] CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p. 63-82.

minorities were much better protected. Moreover, given the large presence of the Russian language, especially among the elderly, it was a way to facilitate small everyday actions for the Russian-speaking population. In any case, the opponents were many, the main rhetoric being that it should not, according to them, rely on the 2001 census[313], for several reasons, in addition to being a census from ten years earlier, the respondents to that census had not been explained the meaning of mother tongue, and therefore the data according to them was not accurate. In the census we see that 77.8% considered themselves ethnic Ukrainians but only 67.5% declared Ukrainian to be their mother tongue, while 17% declared themselves ethnic Russians, and 29.6% had Russian as their mother tongue. What can be said is that indeed, since the census was taken a few years after the fall of the Soviet Union, some of the answers were probably not objective, moreover during the census interviews people were not asked what language they used daily, unlike in the 1989 census.[314] There were several cases where respondents in the census declared their mother tongue to be Ukrainian, to differentiate themselves from Russian culture, to specify that they were not Russian, but they used the Russian language as a vehicle language. So admittedly, the census may not be completely truthful, but to the detriment of the Russian language and not Ukrainian as the opposition claimed.[315] Indeed, in 2004, an analysis by the Russian Centre of Demographics and Human Ecology contradicted the 2001 census, stating that the Russian language was habitually used by 60 % of the population. Certainly, the situation has

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[313] Vseukrainskyi perepys naselennia 2001 [Ukranian census 2001], nel sito Derzhavnyi komitet statystyky Ukrainy, http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/

[314]KINGKADE, W. W. (1989). *Content, Organization, and Methodology in Recent Soviet Population Censuses.* Population and Development Review, 15(1), p.123–138. SCHWARTZ, L. (1991). *USSR nationality redistribution by republic, 1979-1989: From Published Results of the 1989 All-Union Census.* Soviet Geography, 32(4), pp.209–248. ROWLAND, R. H. (2004). *National and Regional Population Trends in Ukraine: Results from the Most Recent Census.* Eurasian Geography and Economics, 45(7), p.491–514. See also: MASENKO, L. (2009), cit. p.101-139.

[315] ROWLAND, R. H. (2004), cit.p.491–514. AREL, D. (2002). *Interpreting 'nationality' and 'language' in the 2001 Ukrainian census.* Post-Soviet Affairs, 18(3), p. 213-249.

changed over time, at the everyday level, the Ukrainian language is beginning to be used more and more, and in 2011[316] it was counted that around 50 % used it habitually, but there were still high levels of bilingualism, the population being able to speak either Ukrainian or Russian, depending on the need and time.

If on a symbolic and legal level no one questioned the Ukrainian status, the problem was in everyday speech. And that is why there were so many opponents to the 2012 law, because there was a risk that the Ukrainian language would be even more marginalised in the lives of citizens. [317] And placing the Russian language on a regional par with the Ukrainian language would have risked creating even more divisions between eastern and western Ukrainians. The problem was that the Ukrainian language was already in a strong position of power above the other languages, and such a law would have prevented this process of growth forever.[318] What this law showed, with its 10% threshold, is indeed a territorial division on the linguistic level, the Ukrainian language was very present among the population of western and central Ukraine, while in the eastern areas, such as the Donbass and Crimea, the Russian language was completely predominant. Moreover, even within society there was a big difference between urban and rural areas, Russian very much present in the cities while Ukrainian more so in the rural areas.[319] This is certainly due to historical reasons, firstly, the western part of the country experienced Polish rule, where no room was left for the creation of a different language, there were various oral dialects, but none prevailed over

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[316] Surveys by the Sociological Service of the Ukrainian Razumkov Centre of 2011 and Opytuvannia: Bilshist ukraintsiv rozmovliaiut vdoma ukrainskoiu [Survey: Most Ukrainians speak Ukrainian at home], in KorrespondenT.net, August 23, 2011, https://ua.korrespondent.net/ukraine/events/1253711-opituvannya-bilshist-ukrayinciv-rozmovlyayut-vdoma-ukrayinskoyu (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[317] Ukraine crisis media centre: http://uacrisis.org/56867-russian-language-ukraine (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[318] BOWRING, B. (2012). *Law in a linguistic battlefield: The language of the new state versus the 'language of the oppressors' in Ukraine.* University of London, Language & Law, 1, p. 87- 101

[319] ULIASIUK, I. (2012). *The Ukrainian language: What does the future hold? (A legal perspective).* In A. Milian-Massana (Ed.), Language law and legal challenges in medium-sized language communities. A comparative perspective, Institut d'Estudis Autonòmics p. 32-35.

the other. When the Russians arrived, and then the Bolsheviks with the annexation of Ukraine[320], imposing a language, whatever it was, was very easy, and Ukrainian was preferred, not least because it was in this area where Ukrainian nationalisms had settled and were more successful among the population.[321] In the East, on the other hand, the territory belonged to the Russian Empire, the work of Russification, as we have seen in chapter two, took place more or less voluntarily, the aristocracy was local, and although the Russian Empire is accused of being the power that forbade the development of the Ukrainian language, it is curious how the Ukrainian language is formed precisely in this part of the territory and not in Poland. As for the difference between the city and the countryside, there are several reasons for this. First, during the Soviet era, there was a period of great industrialisation, and this meant that many people belonging to the Russian ethnic group moved there, and since they found the native population who could also speak Russian and used it habitually, they continued to speak Russian without having to adapt to the Ukrainian language. The peasants who remained outside the industrial world, on the other hand, continued to express themselves in their mother tongue, Ukrainian. Moreover, the city has a very different daily life from the life of the countryside, there are many more stimuli, many more different activities, there is a need to use the internet and the vehicular language for media, social, commerce, industry was the Russian language; therefore, daily people continued to speak Russian. In any case, these divisions are very superficial, the reality is much more complex, there are many linguistic minorities coexisting other than Russian, the use of the language varies depending on who you speak to. To

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[320] The annexation of Ukraine was completed after the Second World War. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 217-229

[321] After Stalinist agrarian policies that were destructive to Ukrainian peasants, especially western Ukrainians, which increased hatred of everything Soviet, often confused with everything Russian. Remember that what is Soviet is not what is Russian, on certain aspects the two can be united, such as the preference for the Russian language, but they are two cultures, different phenomena.

such a diverse situation, however, clear were the political alignments whose rhetoric created the idea of the "two Ukraine".[322] [323]

Prior to the law on the principles of state language policy' implementation, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe[324] in late 2011 had pointed out inconsistencies in the law, having a threshold of only 10% put the Russian language in a position of great advantage, while at the same time, however stating that the law remained in line with Article 10 of the constitution.[325] The concern was that the role of Ukrainian would diminish in a multilingual society and that it would fail, due to this law, to achieve its main goal of being the unifying instrument of communication. The Commission called on the Ukrainian authorities to find effective strategies to support the Ukrainian language, because as more than this law itself, the big challenge was to counteract the market dynamics in media and culture that further strengthen the Russian language.[326] Indeed, a study by Ukrainska

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[322] The myth of the two Ukraine refers to the two great ideas one has for an independent Ukraine, one more oriented towards the West, the other more towards Russia. It is used to emphasise the difficulty of creating an independent national identity and no longer united to Russian power. The continuous relationship between Russia and Russian territory therefore helped the formation of this myth, which was used several times during the 2013 Euromaidan protests. This myth emphasises the diverse narratives and perspectives within Ukrainian society, highlighting the ongoing debates and tensions surrounding Ukraine's national identity. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 17-32.

[323] BOWRING, B. (2012), cit. p. 87- 101.

[324] Opinion on the Draft Law on Principles of the State Language Policy of Ukraine. Adopted by the Venice Commission at its 89th Plenary Session (Venice, 16-17 December 2011) on the basis of comments by Mr. Sergio BARTOLE (Substitute Member, Italy) and Mr. Jan VELAERS (Member, Belgium). Opinion No. 651/2011, Venice, Council of Europe, CDL-AD(2011)047, Strasbourg, 19 December 2011, para. 17, https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2011)047-e (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[325] This passage is important, because the opposition members of parliament called it unconstitutional, the Council of Europe did not believe in its unconstitutionality. We will see that it was finally declared unconstitutional.

[326] Opinion on the Draft Law on Principles of the State Language Policy of Ukraine. Adopted by the Venice Commission at its 89th Plenary Session, Paragraph B(21) stated: "Thus for different aspects of public administration the Russian language was treated "on a par" with the State language. Although the study of the Ukrainian language was compulsory and had to be ensured, under the draft law it was possible to conduct the entire curriculum from
pre-school to university in Russian. The recognition of linguistic freedom in the media and in the cultural area could moreover, due to market considerations, result in the dominance of the
Russian language." https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2011)047-e (accessed on June 15, 2024).

pravda[327] in 2012 had noted a much higher use of Russian than Ukrainian in the Ukrainian media and radio, noting that only 3.4 % of the songs broadcast were in Ukrainian, while Russian remained stable at 60 %, even on the internet the preferred language was Russian at around 80 %, with Ukrainian in third place at 9.5 %[328], and the same was true of television, where only 28 % of programmes were broadcast in Ukrainian. Russian prevailed on all platforms, digital and otherwise, the main Ukrainian websites used search engines with Russian language settings by default. The Russian language had remained the language of reference in publishing, in the media but also in trade, the Russian language in addition to allowing for more interconnectedness was a real medium used to facilitate trade, but also people-to-people exchanges between all the countries of the former Soviet Union and beyond.[329] To address this situation in 2016- 2017, President Poroshenko adopted several laws[330] to regulate radio and television broadcasts, stipulating that Ukrainian language films must be more than 50 % in local broadcasts and at least 75 % in national ones. Furthermore, from February 2017, book imports from Russia for commercial purposes were banned.[331]

[327] Ukrainska mova vtrachaie pozytsii v osviti ta knyhovydanni, ale trymaietsia v kinoprokati [The Ukrainian language is losing ground in education and publishing, but holds up in film rentals], in Ukrainska pravda, 9.11.2012, https://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2012/11/9/115486/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[328] the English language was in second place with about 10 %.

[329] MASENKO, L. (2009), cit. p.101-139. See also: PAVLENKO, A. (2008), cit. p.59–80. See also: Euromaidan Press. https://euromaidanpress.com/2019/04/25/ukraine-adopts-law-expanding-scope-of-ukrainian-language/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[330] Zakon Ukrainy, No. 1663-VIII, 06.10.2016 Pro vnesennia zmin do Zakonu Ukrainy 'Pro telebachennia i radiomovlennia' shchodo utochnennia umov rozpovsiudzhennia prohram teleradioorhanizatsii u skladi universalnoi prohramnoi posluhy [Law of Ukraine, No. 1663-VIII, 06.10. 2016 'On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Television and Radio Broadcasting" Concerning Clarification of the Conditions of Broadcasting of Broadcasting Programmes within the Universal Programming Service'], in Zakonodavstvo Ukrainy, http://search.ligazakon.ua/l_doc2.nsf/link1/T161663.html (accessed on June 15, 2024). The law had entered into force on 1/01/2017

[331] CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p. 63-67.
See also: The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/27/ukraine-russia-solve-nicolai-petro.
TASS: http://tass.com/world/950213 (accessed on June 15, 2024).
The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/feb/14/ukraine-publishers-speak-out-against-ban-on-russian-books (accessed on June 15, 2024).

For Ivàn Dzjùba, the reason why the Russian language remains so strong in the everyday life of Ukrainian citizens is because the bureaucracy and governments have not been decisive with their reforms to emancipate the Ukrainian language. To change a language situation in a country, one must have a clear idea that will lead to reforms aimed at the propagation of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of society. With weak governments and a shaky economic situation, the Russian language managed to impose itself again, especially in the mass media.[332] Famous his phrase from 2011, 'We have not had time to forget the motto "Communism speaks Russian", which was replaced by another, "Business speaks Russian"'.[333] The scholar does not believe that the Ukrainian language should be imposed as the only possible language, but that conditions should be created for citizens to choose Ukrainian as their language.[334]

4.3 The Law 'On Guaranteeing the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as a State Language'.

In 2014, an attempt had been made to repeal the law 'On the principles of state language policy'. The attempted and then failed repeal provoked various adverse reactions, in the Donbass area and the Crimean peninsula, where the Russian-speaking media accused the possible repeal as discrimination against the Russian-speaking population, but it caused a stir especially abroad, both from the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the OSCE[335] High Commissioner for National Minorities, stating that such a choice could bring various problems within the country, and suggested

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[332] Certainly globalisation, cultural exchanges, information flows, and the internet have greatly disadvantaged the Ukrainian language, as Russia being a stronger nation managed to impose itself in this digitised world. The same criticism can be made to some extent in the West, where the English language has a near-monopoly in today's social-tech world.

[333] In Rusyfikacija v sucasnij Ukrajini, in 'Nahnitannja moroku, Vydavnycyjdim "Kyjevo-mohyljans'ka akademija", Kyjiv 2011, p. 464

[334] RAPETTI, S. (2016), cit. p.10-37; 58-120. See also: RUMYANTSEV, O. (2019), cit. p. 195-213.

[335] Restraint, responsibility and dialogue needed in Ukraine, including Crimea, says OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, in OSCE (Newsroom), February 24, 2014, https://www.osce.org/hcnm/115643

rather implementing it with the help of parliament. Various foreign ministers, too, had accused this as undemocratic.[336] In any case, the repeal never reached a majority in parliament, but was declared unconstitutional[337] in 2018.[338] So, in 2019, Petro Poroshenko,[339] before leaving his post to the new president Zelensky, signed law no. 5670-d[340] 'On guaranteeing the functioning of the Ukrainian language as a state language[341]' where he drastically changed the position of the government and parliament towards minority languages.[342] In other words, all minority languages are stripped of their status as regional languages, obviously limiting their use in all public spheres. Unlike the 2012 law, the Russian language is never mentioned in the text, while the English language is mentioned 18 times. By removing the concept of a regional language, it obliges every citizen to know the Ukrainian language, as it is the only accepted language in the public sphere. Article 9[343] also clarifies that the Ukrainian language is a prerequisite for those holding public office at all institutional levels, from high-level authorities such as the President of the Republic, cabinet members and members of parliament, to prosecutors, military personnel, police officers, judges,

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[336] Repealing the language law could question Ukraine's democratic commitment, nel sito Hungarian Government, February 25, 2014, http://accessibility.government.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/news/repealing-the-language-law-could-question-ukraine-s-democratic-commitment

[337] UKRIFORM: https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-polytics/2412584-constitutional-court-declares-unconstitutional-language-law-of-kivalovkolesnichenko.html (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[338] CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p.63-79.

[339] During his election campaign, he had 3 pillars he referred to and they were the army, language and faith and the slogan was 'the army defends our land, the language our heart, the church our soul'. in C. Bettiol (2018), *Ukraine: 'Army, language and faith', President Poroshenko's election campaign*, in East Journal.
So, this new law on the language issue was passed close to the presidential elections, the law came into force on 16 July 2019.

[340] In this thesis in analysing this law, the articles and sections considered most useful are taken, if you want to read the full text, the official website of the Ukrainian Rada has a page entirely dedicated to it, in Ukrainian and English. For the analysis in this thesis, the law was viewed with its articles in English on the site: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/2704-19#Text. (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[341] It had been approved by the Parliament (Verkhovna Rada), in second reading on 25 April 2019, and signed by Poroshenko on 15 May 2019, at the end of his term of office, was the last law that passed

[342] It was a law, even during its design much discussed. Zakon Ukrayiny, No. 2704-VIII, 25.04.2019 - Pro zabezpechennia funktsionuvannia ukrainskoi movy yak derzhavnoi [Law of Ukraine, No. 2704-VIII, 25.04.2019 - 'On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as a State Language'], in Zakonodavstvo Ukrainy, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2704-viii

[343] The law is divided into 9 sections and 57 articles.

educators, and health workers. To make the language even more homogenous, i.e. to establish standards on terminology, spelling and transliteration of the language, there will[344] be a National Commission composed of members from the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine under the supervision of the Council of Ministers through the Ministry of Education. Commission decisions and language evaluations for people in public office will follow the same patterns throughout Ukraine (even in the more Russian-speaking areas). The Ukrainian language becomes the language of the school, minority languages become courses that can be studied according to the school curriculum, and there is the creation of Ukrainian language study centres for adults. While for primary schools there may be indigenous Ukrainian languages alongside Ukrainian, probably meaning Crimean Tatar, for high schools some subjects may be taught in other official EU languages[345] or English, Russian is always excluded.[346] This has created quite a few problems, especially since we are talking about many schools that until 2017 taught in Russian, and in addition to the immense school structural change, we are also talking about students who from one day to the next due to poor knowledge of their mother tongue cannot enter universities.[347] Television and radio must broadcast 90% of their programmes in Ukrainian, as must cinemas, websites must have the Ukrainian version on the front page and use programmes or software in Ukrainian or another official European language, such as English. As far as

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[344] The future 'Will' is used in this paragraph because many of the provisions have not yet been implemented, for various reasons, firstly the law left three years for the infrastructure to adapt, but between the Covid and the Russian invasion of 2022 and also internal difficulties this has not happened.

[345] the addition of this provision was since as early as 2017 there had been laws in favour of the Ukrainian language in schools, but this had created friction with Hungary who claimed it was discriminatory against the Hungarian language, relations soured so much that Hungary blocked Ukraine's negotiations to join NATO. (McLaughlin, 2017)

[346] MASON, A. and PAYANT, C. (2018). *Experienced teachers' beliefs and practices toward communicative approaches in teaching English as a foreign language in rural Ukraine*. Tesol Journal, 10(1), p. 143-170.

[347] CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p.63-79.

See also: OSSERVATORIO BALCANI E CAUCASO: https://www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Ucraina/Ucraina-la-nuova-legge-sulla-lingua-ultimo-atto-di-Porosenko-194879 (accessed on June 15, 2024).

newspapers and books are concerned, at least 50 per cent must be in Ukrainian, and for newspapers that did not originally have Ukrainian as a language, the language edition must be added to these, which will be detrimental to newspapers with limited capital. This excludes newspapers printed in Tatar or other indigenous languages, or in English, but no leniency for the Russian language.[348] The law also states that after three years of its implementation, citizens will be able to express themselves in the Ukrainian language thanks to the means offered by the state, and all civil servants who do not use the Ukrainian language may receive administrative sanctions. In a nutshell, everything Russian is obliged to be transformed into Ukrainian, from the mass media, art, tourism, newspapers, public administration, but also the names of streets and squares[349], everything must be changed within three years of the implementation of the law, otherwise, although there is no criminal liability in the case of a lack of knowledge of the Ukrainian language, no attempt at bilingualism can be accepted because it goes against the constitution and is therefore punishable under the Ukrainian criminal code.

This draft law, aimed once again at a forced Ukrainianization, was yet another attempt to emancipate and distance itself from Russia[350], and the use of the English language within the law is a sign of a larger project of a Ukraine looking towards Europe. The problem was that in the text of the law there were no articles on the protection of the rights of national linguistic minorities, no indigenous language was considered[351].[352] Not clarifying the role of the Russian language, which was a fundamental medium in everyday

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[348] All these provisions were supposed to come into force compulsorily from 2023, indeed this was partly the case, but with the ongoing war it is hard to say

[349] For example, it will no longer be possible to write Kiev but Kyiv, not Char'kov but Kharkiv.

[350] To distance itself on a cultural, linguistic level, because on a political level Ukraine is an independent state.

[351] Except for the Crimean Tatar in a few specific cases.

[352] It is arguable that this law does not meet European standards.

relations between citizens, by making it in a certain sense almost forbidden[353] was a problem.[354] In any case, the first to complain were the Hungarians, who, firmly convinced that this was a discriminatory law for the Hungarian minority present mainly in Transcarpathia, vetoed the negotiations between Ukraine and NATO, and Ukraine was therefore unable to attend the NATO summit in London.[355] Although this law was well received among the population, it must also be said that it was seen as a simple law reinforcing the constitutional principle of the Ukrainian language as the only state language, and not as a net change in language use.   In fact, even President Zelensky, who was born into a Russian-speaking family,[356] heavily criticised the law, so much so that he declared in his election programme that he would revise the law, and among the points was the idea of creating an information portal in Russian. Those in favour of this law criticise the Hungarian actions, pointing out that not even during the Soviet Union did the Hungarian minority study in their mother tongue, but in Russian, due to the Sovietisation policies of the central power. And it is precisely because of these Soviet laws that the Ukrainian language must lay a solid legislative foundation to be the language of its own people[357]. What can be stated through this thesis, however, is that during the Soviet Union, there were never laws prohibiting the study of minority languages, it was rather a decision due to multiple reasons that Russian was preferred over Ukrainian or other languages. Moreover, those who find themselves in favour with this

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[353] There is no explicit article in the law that infringes on the Russian language, but certainly the compulsory forced Ukrainianization in social aspects where Russian was the favoured language was a severe shock.

[354] CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p.79-86. See also: FILIPPINI, C. (2022). *Le minoranze in Ucraina: Gruppi minoritari e separatismi.* Diritti Comparati, 1-5.

[355] If you think about the situation today, this passage is very important. 'Spodivaiemos na Zelenskoho' - MZS Uhorshchyny pro pidpysannia Poroshenkom movnoho zakonu ['Let's hope for Zelensky' - the Hungarian Foreign Ministry about Poroshenko's signature affixed to the language law], in Radio Svoboda website, 16/05/2019, https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-zakon-mova-ugorshchyna/29946034.html

[356] Zelenskyi, who before becoming a politician was a comedian, his TV series that made him famous 'the servant of the people' was filmed in Russian.

[357] RUMYANTSEV, O. (2022). *National minorities and ethnic groups in Ukraine as part of the linguistic identity question.* Balcania et Slavia, 2(1), 27-50.

law say that in the first years of independence, the Ukrainian government was weak, and this caused Russian to become even more promulgated. This law raises the prestige of the Ukrainian language, and it is a law that takes its cue from Europe where there are well-established nationalities, languages and cultures that are moving towards the end of regionalisms.

4.4 Linguistic minorities

Among Ukrainian scholars, a national minority is a group of citizens who believe themselves to be different from the majority ethnic group of the titular nation, and who consider it necessary to have collective rights to be able to continue to promote their cultural specificities. Some scholars claim that the excessive attention paid to the Russian minority by Ukrainian politicians is due to the minority itself, who in the early years of Ukrainian independence demanded official recognition of the Russian language and formed a Russian-speaking national sentiment different from the Ukrainian one.[358] If this statement is not unanimously agreed upon, what we can certainly state is that ethnic minorities[359] in Ukraine are multiple, so much so that Ukraine is called the state of 134 peoples[360]. This rhetoric has been much criticised by pro-nationalists or at least sympathetic nationalists[361] stating that declaring the Ukrainian state multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual prevents the creation of an identity whose Ukrainian values are respected.[362] In the first years after the birth of the Ukrainian state, the advancement of language policies aimed at ethnic minorities was not of primary importance; the goal was to get out of the economic and social crisis the country was in

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[358] RUMYANTSEV, O. (2022), cit. p.27-50.
[359] The 2001 census, the only and last one taken in Ukraine, tells us that 22.2 % of the population belonged to an ethnic minority.
[360] this is reported by the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine in 2021 in https://www.coe.int/uk/web/kyiv/-/a-new-information-campaign-society-without-prejudices-is-launched.
[361] Of which many prominent scholars are also a part, making an objective analysis on the subject difficult.
[362] It accuses the Soviet Union of saying that its anti-Ukrainian policies prevented the creation of a united country, this claim can be historically refuted. MASENKO, L. (2009), cit. p.101-139

in the 1990s, and to promote the Ukrainian language as a state language capable of uniting the people. The European Charter in 2003 was the first effective written form aimed at protecting language minorities, but not all minority languages were taken into account, for example, the Caraimi and Krymchaki were excluded, it was only with the 2012 Law on the Principles of State Language Policy that rights were extended from 13 to 18 minorities.[363] In any case, Ukraine and its political forces focused much more on the relationship between the Ukrainian language and the Russian language, even within the non-Russian ethnic minorities, most likely because many minorities preferred Russian over Ukrainian to express themselves on a daily basis.[364] The work of Russification and Sovietisation that took place during the Russian empire and the Soviet union, respectively, greatly affected the ethnic minorities on Ukrainian territory. Unfortunately, in order to have precise data, one must always stick to the census taken in 2001. In the last 23 years have passed and given the numerous criticisms regarding the accuracy of the numbers reported on the census, we will limit ourselves to giving a general picture of the situation without going into too much numerical detail. The Romanian, Hungarian, Bulgarian and Gagauzi communities[365] are most probably the strongest in cultural and linguistic terms and maintain their mother tongue also as a means of communication, undergoing neither Ukrainianization nor Russification.[366] As for the Caucasian peoples, i.e. Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Georgians, they tend to use their mother tongue among themselves, while they use Russian, since it

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[363] KULYK, V. (2011), cit. p.627-648. See also: BESTERS-DILGER, J. (2007). *The Ukrainian language in education and mass media*. In Ukrainian philology and linguistics in the twenty-first century, , Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 29 (1/4), p. 257-293.

[364] This phenomenon started already in the Soviet Union, so we come to speak not of the combination of mother tongue and Russian language but of mother tongue and Ukrainian, where the mother tongue is Russian both for Russian speakers and for many minorities.

[365] Romanians are present in the regions of Černivci and Transcarpathia; Moldavians are present in the Odessa area, and have had great periods of Romanianisation; Hungarians are found on the border with Hungary and Transcarpathia

[366] The Odessa region is very multi-ethnic, there are Bulgarians, Albanians and Gagauzi whose language belongs to the Turkic-speaking languages.

is the language they have always studied in everyday communication. Completely separate cases are the Crimean Tatars and the Roma communities. The Crimean[367] Tatars increased in numbers after the annexation of the peninsula to the Russian federation. They have tended to retain the Tatar language but use Russian when necessary.[368] The Crimean Tatars get the status of indigenous population in 2021[369], which means there is no foreign state to refer to, because they are indigenous but do not have the right to form their own state. About the Rom, on the other hand, the Russian or Ukrainian language is used according to their geographical movements.[370] In a nutshell, ethnic minorities have remained faithful to their own language or for the most part have become Russified, especially in the eastern parts of Ukraine, the reasons certainly lie in historical, and geographical factors, and most likely a lack of protection by Ukraine when it became independent.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

On 15 May 2003, the Parliament approved the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.[371] According to the European Charter[372],

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[367] Crimea had been an integral part of the Russian Empire since Catherine II, it was only with the Soviet Union in 1954 under Nikita Khrushchev, who had many relations with Ukraine, having also been part of the Ukrainian Communist Party, that it was decided to leave it to Ukraine. The Russian government annexed the territory of Crimea in 2014, through military and non-military means, using rhetoric such as the preservation of Russian civilisation, the Russian language and Russian-speaking citizens in Crimea. The annexation of Crimea was condemned by the entire international community by declaring illegitimate the referendum held in Crimea on its accession to Russia. This annexation not only caused a very large migration flow, but also reduced Crimea's tourist economy to zero. CELLA, G. (2021), cit. p. 131-166, 290-295.

[368] Crimea was always very dear to the Russians, they used to go there on holidays, and there are a large number of ethnic Russians there.

[369] Two others have this status in Ukraine and are the Caraimi and the Krymchaki, Turkish-speaking.

[370] RUMYANTSEV, O. (2022), cit. p.27-50.

[371] The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is a legal instrument for the protection and promotion of historically rooted minority languages in order to maintain Europe's linguistic and cultural heritage. It indicates a series of measures to be implemented for these languages in different areas, namely: education, public administration and justice, culture, media, social and economic life. Translation of the charter into Italian: https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/filestore/fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/cc/2003/382/20130814/it/pdf-a/fedlex-data-admin-ch-eli-cc-2003-382-20130814-it-pdf-a-2.pdf (accessed on June 15, 2024).

[372] Official treaty site: https://www.coe.int/it/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages/testo-della-carta for the analysis of this treaty articles were analysed directly from this site.

regional or minority languages are languages spoken by a restricted group of people within a state whose language is different from the official language. The charter aims to protect these languages as part of the European heritage.[373] The right to be able to use a particular minority language should be inviolable, interculturality and multilingualism within a society is emphasised, and when the right to inviolability is respected, this right must in no way override the right of official languages and the need to learn them. [374] At the time of rectification, states must indicate the languages in relation to which the charter applies; Ukraine indicates the Russian language as a minority language, together with Belarusian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Greek, Jewish, Crimean Tatar, Moldovan, German, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Hungarian.[375] This charter is very problematic in Ukraine, because one cannot reduce the Russian language to a mere minority because its use goes beyond a distinct ethnic group; thus, the Russian-speaking population is much larger than the actual Russian-speaking minority. Moreover, the aim of the Charter is not to protect the rights of citizens and their modes of expression, but wants to protect languages as such; Thus, it wants to protect them from the risk of extinction. [376]Certainly the Russian language is not a

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[373] Article 1 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages:
 For the purposes of this Charter:
(a) 'regional or minority languages' means languages:
(i) traditionally used on the territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a numerically smaller group than the rest of the population of the State; and
(ii) other than the official language(s) of that State; this term includes neither dialects of the official language(s) of the State nor the languages of migrants
(b) 'Territory in which a regional or minority language is used' means the geographical area in which that language is the expression of such a number of persons as to justify the adoption of different measures of protection and promotion provided for in this Charter
(c) 'non-territorial languages' means the languages used by certain nationals
of the State that differ from the language(s) used by the rest of the population of that State but which, although traditionally used on the territory of the State, cannot be related to a particular geographical area of that State.
[374] This part is present in the preamble.
[375] Official website of the state's ratification page: https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=declarations-by-treaty&numSte=148&codeNature=0 (accessed on June 15, 2024).
[376] This is explained in the Explanatory Report to the 1992 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
Consulted at the following site: https://rm.coe.int/16800cb5e5 this specific aspect can be found in paragraph 17: 'The concept of language used in the Charter focuses primarily on the cultural function of language. For

language to be protected because it is in danger of no longer being used, but the same is true for most of the languages declared as minority by Ukraine, most likely the Ukrainian in the ratification did not make the distinction between minority and minority language, if by the former we mean a language whose use is being lost, by the latter we mean a language spoken by an ethnic minority group present in a state, but not for this reason the language itself is at risk.[377] In addition, at a time when the Russian language is defined as a language to be protected, having an ethnolinguistic balance is very difficult, as having a society that is bilingual whether one wants it to be or not, with certainly some territorial division, but not as clear-cut as one would have us believe, with the spread of the Russian language going beyond one ethnic group, the applicability of the obligations of this charter is problematic, as there is no connection between ethnic group and language group.[378] Furthermore, in 2014, the Committee of Ministers of the European Council wrote the second report on the correct or incorrect implementation of the charter in the signatory states[379], and they were very critical of Ukraine. They more specifically criticised education, saying, that apart from Russian where the situation is quite good, for the other minority languages there is a lack of teaching materials and teachers to teach these languages. Ukrainian is criticised for not adopting an ad hoc approach to respect the promotion and preservation of each language, and for lacking investment in the cultural sphere. Indeed, the Mejlis, i.e. the main representative body of the Crimean Tatars, has been very critical of the lack of protection of the

this reason, it is not subjectively defined in such a way as to enshrine an individual right, i.e. the right to speak 'one's own language', leaving the definition of that language to each individual. Nor does it rely on a socio-political or ethnic definition, describing a language as a vehicle for a particular social or ethnic group. Consequently, the Charter can refrain from defining the concept of linguistic minorities, since its purpose is not to establish the rights of ethnic and/or cultural minority groups, but to protect and promote regional or minority languages as such'.

[377] In the charter, for example, there is no mention of the language spoken by the Crimean natives, the Caraima language.

[378] TOTSKYI, A. (2010), cit. p. 30-45. See also: CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p.76-79.

[379] Second Report on the Application of the Charter in Ukraine, released on 15 January 2014 by the Committee of Ministers Doc. 13436 https://rm.coe.int/16806dd028 (accessed on June 15, 2024).

Tatar language, also criticising the definition given to them, i.e. that of a national minority, whereas they are an indigenous people of the Crimean territory. [380] [381]

4.5 Revolutions and the role of language in civil society

Although Ukraine is an independent state, every time there is a major political event there is always a debate about how Ukraine can define itself linguistically, religiously and culturally as a nation. The Ukrainian language remains a fundamental symbol in Ukrainian identity. Never before have the Ukrainian and Russian languages been pitted against each other as they have been since 1991, but not with regard to linguistic aspects, but to the symbolic meaning that these two languages carry. They have been placed at the centre of political, cultural and identity clashes. Political forces have pitted Ukrainian speakers against Russian speakers, shouting that choosing one language over another means choosing a certain identity. The idea that the only official language was agreed by all that it should be Ukrainian, even for Russian-speaking citizens, who do not define language as an impediment to feeling Ukrainian, is more important than the political orientation and values that the nation carries. Yet the rhetoric of various political figures has succeeded in making people believe that multilingualism, and especially bilingualism between Russian and Ukrainian, is a perversion of their own identity, Ukrainian speakers are patriotic, believe in Western democracy and promote national traditions, while Russian speakers are pro-Russian and believe in Russian imperialism.[382]   It is often talked about how the revolutions of 2004 and 2014 gave a jolt with respect to the Ukrainization of

[380] For historical and geopolitical reasons, which we have explained, we know that Crimea is part of a very complicated topic

[381] TYSHCHENKO, Y., & KAZDOBINA, Y. (2017). *Russophone identity in Ukraine in the context of the armed conflict in the east of the country.* UCIPR, p. 18. See also: RUMYANTSEV, O. (2022), cit. p.27-50.

[382] KULYK, V. (2015). *One nation, two languages? National identity and language policy in post-Euromaidan Ukraine.* PONARS Eurasia, Policy Memo No. 389. https://www.ponarseurasia.org/one-nation-two-languages-national-identity-and-language-policy-in-post-euromaidan-ukraine/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).

society, while this may indeed be true, it is also true that the various surveys on the language situation were always done after these specific events and never before; thus, the numbers turn out to be very relative; in fact, it can also be argued that the use of the Ukrainian language was becoming more popular in a natural way.[383] What can be said is that the language was used as a political and propaganda tool for purposes beyond the use of the language itself. In 2004, civil society took to the streets in a peaceful manner to denounce electoral fraud with the result that the Supreme Court annulled the verdict and postponed the vote, resulting in the victory of Viktor Juščenko instead of Viktor Janukovyč who was under investigation for electoral fraud. In any case, Viktor Janukovyč became president in 2010, leaving citizens with the idea that the Orange Revolution was ultimately a failure. The use of the Ukrainian language is seen as a symbol of resistance from outside influences, unifying the Ukrainian people and creating a specific national identity aimed at democracy. In 2013, in the protest first called 'Maidan' and then 'Euromaidan', citizens united against President Janukovyč's decision not to sign the association agreement with the European Union and succeeded in putting an end to his regime. The use of the Ukrainian language is seen as a symbol of resistance from outside influences, unifies the Ukrainian people and creates a specific national identity aimed at democracy.[384] The Ukrainian language is seen as a symbol of a pro-European stance against the pro-Russian government. The use of one language over another is seen as a stance aimed at expressing certain national aspirations. However, it should be emphasised that, as in the previous protest, participation at first was mainly student. Only later, when the protest took a more violent turn by the authorities in 2013, the number of participants

[383] STEPANENKO, V. (2005). *How Ukrainians view their Orange Revolution: Public opinion and the national peculiarities of citizenry political activities*. Demokratizatsiya (The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization), 13(4), p. 595-615.
[384] KUZIO, T. (2018), cit. p.29 - 58.

increased, increasing not only the percentage of participation but also the reasons for the protest, such as the introduction of the law against peaceful protests where penalties included up to 15 years of imprisonment. Thus, unlike the Orange Revolution, Euromaidan was led by an emerging civil society with a much more spontaneous activism, where the majority of protesters were not part of a political party or a specific group, as well as touching various social classes, from students to workers to doctors throughout the territory. In any case, Euromaidan highlighted the clear division, which can be described as tripartite, in which civil society lives. On the one hand, there are the pro-democrats, pro-liberal and pro-Western; on the other hand, there are the conservatives, the extreme right with a nationalist character (both of these ideologies are very influential in the west of the country, although the nationalists are advancing throughout the territory); the third pro-Russian group, on the other hand, did not participate in the protest, and remains in the eastern part of the state (where the most widely spoken language is still Russian). What the 2004 revolution and the Euromaidan revolution did, and one can also add the 2014 conflict with Russia with the annexation of Crimea,[385] was to shake up the population, with a population increasingly distant from Russia on a cultural level one can also see an effort to use the Ukrainian language.[386] What can be very interesting is to compare political rhetoric against what society thinks. A survey by the Sociolohična hrupa Rejtynh in 2022[387] analysing the population over the age of 18, excluding the population living in Crimea and the Donbass, found that only 12% of respondents considered the relationship

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[385] Today's conflict being still ongoing one cannot have precise data regarding the linguistic situation.

[386] STEPANENKO, V. (2005), cit. p. 595-615. KULYK, V. (2015) cit. https://www.ponarseurasia.org/one-nation-two-languages-national-identity-and-language-policy-in-post-euromaidan-ukraine/ (accessed on June 15, 2024).See also: CARPINELLI, C. (2019), cit, p.61-64.

[387] Sociolohična hrupa Rejtynh (2022). «The Six National Poll: The Language Issue in Ukraine» (2022). Sociolohična hrupa Rejtynh, 19 March.
https://ratinggroup.ua/en/research/ukraine/language_issue_in_ukraine_march_19th_2022.html (accessed on June 15, 2024).

between the Ukrainian language and the Russian language to be problematic and therefore not the threat to be fought, there are no problems between Ukrainian and Russian speakers, the languages are interchangeable depending on the moment, but absolutely more than 80% of respondents recognised Ukrainian as the only state language. What is interesting and is also reported in the final analysis of this survey is that all recognised the Russian state as the aggressor state and therefore to be defeated, regardless of the language used.

Conclusion

In this thesis the historical evolution of the Ukrainian language was traced in three major moments, the period of Russian imperial rule, Soviet and finally the independent Ukrainian state. Today's Ukrainian territory includes areas that used to belong to Poles and Austrians, but only on Russian empire soil was the Ukrainian language able to be born and flourish, and for a period of time there was also an interest in this new language in Moscow. In the Polish-Lithuanian confederation, the natives of the Ukrainian lands, were but illiterate villagers or priests, and in some ways the phenomenon of Polonization was more incisive than that of Russification, the difference being that Russification went on for longer, and with it the imperial and Soviet power that was increasingly strong in the region. By this is not to say that the Russians or the Soviets were always kind to the Ukrainian language, far from it, moments such as the Valuev Circular or the arrival of Stalin were a blow to the Ukrainian language. it was seen how the Ukrainian language, especially in Soviet times, never managed to vogue over society, but always remained very present in the universities. It is interesting to see the movement of the Ukrainian language within society, a language spoken by peasants who lived far from the cities, and by intellectuals, but not by working-class people, neither in imperial nor Soviet times. In addition to the movement in society, the geographical movement is also very intriguing, the language that originated in Malorossiia, i.e., eastern Ukraine, moved to Galicia and western Ukraine, where it found more fertile ground. Here of course the reasons are many, the Russian language in eastern Ukraine was in a too prestigious position, for centuries, even today areas such as the Donbass are completely Russophone, starting from voluntary Russification by the Cossacks, who wanted to maintain their aristocratic rights. In Galicia, on the other hand, where the Ruthenians saw the Ukrainian nationalist movements as a third way, between Austrians, Russians and Poles, they were much more

easily Ukrainized, as well as in western Ukraine, where in conjunction with imperial policies against the Poles and the advance of Ukrainian intellectuals, the Ukrainian language spread. What I want to emphasize in this conclusion, however, is that there were never any laws against the Ukrainian language per se. There were initiatives to promote the Russian language, certainly, which led to the understanding of the Russian language as the only language of prestige, but no government, either in imperial or Soviet times prohibited the Ukrainian language. What happened, at different times, was to prohibit certain content that was written in Ukrainian. The Ukrainian language, a symbol of Ukrainian identity since its beginnings, crushed by external powers, has always been linked to a set of nationalist and independence ideals and thoughts. this is due to the fact that in conjunction with the development of the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian national identity was born, both closely related elements, which made division impossible. The consequence was a censorship thought against these texts by the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, because we are talking about two authoritarian regimes where there was no freedom of speech, but there was freedom of language. Especially during the Soviet era, people were afraid to speak Ukrainian mainly because of the strict Stalinist policies and purges. But a significant factor was the perception that much of the literature in the Ukrainian language was anti-regime. This led to the erroneous and simplistic conclusion that the language itself, as well as the content, was problematic, and to avoid prosecution the working-class masses preferred to speak in Russian. In addition to this, the Russian language was seen as an opportunity, especially on the economic level; if in imperial times, serfs learned Russian to communicate with aristocratic landowners, in Soviet times workers spoke Russian because it was the vehicular language of the economy between the republics; surely the cultural power, or soft power in favour of the Russian language was highly successful. This perception has

continued in independent Ukraine, being that the Russian language has succeeded in imposing itself in the mass media, and the economy of the Russian federation remains incisive in the region, the Ukrainian population has continued to speak Russian as well. Certainly, pro-Ukrainian language policies and the lack of external pressure meant that the mother tongue became more commonly used, although the Russian language continued to have a strong presence. Russian is seen as a convenient language to know, useful, one can compare it to the use of English in the Western world. Looking at the current situation what is interesting, is that (even before the war) no one questioned that the official state language should be Ukrainian, not even among the Russian-speaking population, it is given, finally a symbolic meaning to the Ukrainian language, something that was not there until the 20th century. To conclude the Ukrainian sociolinguistic landscape has shown how individuals have developed great linguistic fluency, which allows for practical communication that adapts to any social context. However, it has been noted that in addition to language fluency in everyday life, there is deliberate manipulation by politicians, who see language as a tool for asserting power and delineating national identities; these political motivations have negative consequences for social compactness and the preservation of cultural diversity. Picking up on the second sentence in the introduction of this thesis, "It is the political and social manipulation of language that can lead to inequality, exclusion, and erosion of a society's cultural richness," I think the case of the Ukrainian language analysed in this thesis is a perfect example with respect to this idea. The problem has never been the Ukrainian language or the Russian language, but the desire to want to categorize these languages, to make them a propaganda tool aimed at pitting people against each other. Languages embody who we are and who we will become. They have overcome obstacles, evolved, adapted, and even hidden. What fate lies ahead for the Ukrainian language when this war ends.

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