Resisting Russification in Soviet Ukraine through Literary Translation: The Voice of Mykola Lukash[1]

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Abstract: The Soviet totalitarian regime not only violated human rights, it pursued an aggressive policy of assimilation, seeking Russian cultural and linguistic hegemony over all Soviet republics. Literary translation was no longer viewed as an apolitical activity and became an ideological weapon and an efficient "means of forced cultural change" (Monticelli). Regime ideologues sought control over both the selection of "reliable" authors / texts for translation and the ways in which these texts were interpreted in the target languages. This policy led to the appearance of massive translations from Russian literature and a widespread practice of indirect translations, with Russian intermediary texts as a criterion of fidelity. In Soviet Ukraine, however, this Russification policy went further and targeted the Ukrainian language itself; this resulted in the lexicographical deactivation of many authentic Ukrainian words and their substitution with Russian counterparts. Extensive repressive practices and tight ideological constraints gave rise to translators' activism and cultural resistance and inspired translators to take on new roles. The case of Mykola Lukash (1919–88), whose name went down in the history of Ukrainian translation as a symbol of resistance, illustrates some of the social roles performed by translators to resist Russification. Lukash's actions as translation gatekeeper, cultural custodian, and language guardian exemplified the importance of personal agency and a firm occupational identity for translators who opposed assimilation.

Keywords: social role, literary translation, Soviet Ukraine, Russification policy, Mykola Lukash.

INTRODUCTION

After a long tradition of discussing translations without much interest in the personality of a translator, a number of scholars urged that translation studies be humanized and that "translators, the human producers of translations, might also be legitimate objects of knowledge" (Pym 31–32).

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With his methodological principle "*Study translators, then texts*," Pym encouraged historians of translation to take a closer look at the translators' "contextual voices" (Alvstad et al. 3) and examine critically the language in prefaces, correspondence, and the subject's texts other than translations or ask biographical and sociological questions to reconstruct a social profile of a translator (Pym 37). Similarly, Kaindl emphasized that sources that have long been underestimated in Translation Studies might provide a comprehensive picture of the person of the translator (10). Indeed, textual analysis by itself does not elucidate the nature of a translator's decisions, let alone the motivations, constraints, ideologies, or other important factors that might colour a translation.

The recent wave of academic interest in the role of a translatorial identity (Eberharter 76) has shifted the focus of translation scholars from texts to people to such an extent that Transla*tor* Studies was recognized as a separate branch of Translation Studies (Chesterman). The next step was to develop the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological framework for an emerging field with the aim of "not only identifying the locus of the individual translator but also pinning down the possibilities, aims and limitations of research in the field of Translator Studies" (Kaindl 2). Such an attempt was made by Klaus Kaindl and others in a book whose title *Literary Translator Studies* gives support to Chesterman's suggestion and legitimizes the new subdiscipline. With the literary translator as the book's main focus, the authors emphasize the role of an individual as an essential aspect of humanized Translation Studies.

The underlying premise here is that "translators usually do more than translate" (Pym 40). "Being a translator," as pointed out by Toury, "cannot be reduced to the mere generation of utterances which would be considered 'translations'"; in fact, the status of a translator "amounts first and foremost to being able to *play a social role*" (53). As they function in certain social, cultural, and historical contexts that determine their activities, translators often act out of "activist motivations to improve their societies, helping their cultures take new directions and adapt to new conditions" (Tymoczko, *Translation* 14). In their seminal work *Translators through History*, Delisle and Woodsworth convincingly outlined many roles played by translators at various times around the globe: they created alphabets and compiled dictionaries, disseminated technical and scientific knowledge, and spread religions, contributing to the enrichment of languages and the development of national literatures. Throughout history, translators have made themselves visible in a number of ways; thus it is only natural that the idea of humanizing translation research and making it translator-centred keeps gaining momentum.

Here, I analyze Soviet translation practices and language policy in Ukraine, drawing in particular on the translation activity of Mykola Lukash

(1919–88) to illustrate key points. I consider his translation principles and practices, and his civic stance in the historical and political contexts of his time, which relate to the period from the death of Stalin in 1953 (coincidentally, the year of the first publication of a Lukash translation), to the launch of *perestroika* in the mid-1980s. Lukash entered the field of Ukrainian literary translation at a time when the Stalinist purges of the 1930s and the early 1940s had turned Ukraine into "an intellectual desert," followed by deadly World War II (Strikha 264). Literary translation was constrained by a shortage of skilled translators, and at the same time affected by low standards of translations and language and publishing policies that encouraged such low standards. Lukash's voice in translation came as a breath of fresh air and challenged established practices. By taking on the roles of language guardian, cultural custodian, and gatekeeper, Lukash stood out in the Ukrainian cultural landscape of the 1950s–80s as an influential agent of change. The Ukrainian language, heavily persecuted and Russified, was granted asylum in his translations, where it could revive and thrive as a proof or marker of Ukraine's identity and subjectivity.

Commenting on the role of Lukash in promoting Ukrainian nationhood and culture, Hryhorii Kochur (1908–94), an informal leader of the Ukrainian school of translation, maintained that "people like Lukash are probably born once in several centuries" (Miroshnychenko); his translations are "the pinnacle of Ukrainian literature" (Kochur, "Vystup").[2] This appreciation relied on Lukash's professional merits and his outstanding personality. His masterful translations from eighteen languages (comprising over 3500 texts of more than 180 authors) stood the test of time and many of them were never retranslated. His impact was so powerful that Ukrainian literature was never the same afterward. Bohdan Zholdak (1948–2018) considers Lukash's translation of *The Decameron* by Boccaccio (1964) a watershed that changed the face of Ukrainian literature by making Ukrainian authors write in a different way (5). The lively and flowery language of Lukash's translations, which was so much out of tune with the wooden language prevalent at that time, charmed and appealed to writers and encouraged them to delve deeply into the lexical and stylistic treasure trove of the Ukrainian language. Leonid Cherevatenko, echoing Ivan Koshelivets''s view of the post-Decameron period of the literary Ukrainian language, assumes that historical prose by Valerii Shevchuk, short stories by Ievhen Hutsalo, Lina Kostenko's "Berestechko" and "Marusia Churai," and Anatol' Perepadia's translations of Rabelais, Montaigne, and Petrarch would probably have been inconceivable if it had not been for the path trodden by Lukash ("Vzhe khoch iak" 18–21).

[2] All translations in this article are mine.

That said, Lukash is recognized not only as a top Ukrainian translator of the twentieth century and a language guardian, but also as a man of strong moral convictions and a firm occupational identity. In 1973 he was expelled from the Writers' Union after publicly supporting Ivan Dziuba, a writer and an activist of the dissident movement. This earned him the status of Orwellian "unperson," and he was subsequently "erased" from literary life for the next fourteen years. Yet he refused to make a statement of contrition to reverse the situation and remained true to his principles and to himself.[3]

Source Texts and Ideological Constraints

In the totalitarian societies, the social roles of translators were largely determined by political and ideological issues that derived from "asymmetrical power relations" and "constraints exerted by those in power" (Tymoczko, *Translation* 15). In Soviet Ukraine, for example, literary translation, as well as literature in general, was no longer viewed as an apolitical activity, but rather as a means that served ideological purposes. Soviet literature was officially declared to be "the most potent ideological weapon" used to safeguard the interest of the State and its people (Korniichuk 183, 187). Tymoczko's observation of the nature of empires helps us to understand this fact: "Empire involves more than physical control: it is also a matter of cultural assertion and control of meaning and knowledge" (*Enlarging Translation* 190). Obviously, literature was an efficient means of achieving the goals of the Soviet Empire, and therefore literature found itself under the tight control of the totalitarian regime. The State controlled all the stages of the translation process, filtering the authors and texts to be translated, censoring translations, and making sure that the name of the translator was not on the list of proscribed translators.

Russian translations served as a criterion of fidelity to the original texts, and relay translations were encouraged. This meant that Ukrainian translations were often produced from intermediary Russian translations, rather than directly from the original texts. Whereas in the nineteenth century the practice of indirect translations was due exclusively to a lack in the linguistic competence of the translator, in Soviet Ukraine, translations with Russian as a mediating language were made to assure the "control of meaning and knowledge" and the "accuracy" of the Ukrainian texts. In the eyes of party officials, translations done directly from the originals could question a translator's loyalty, especially when the source language was not one of the languages of the Soviet Union. An illustrative example in this

[3] For more on Lukash, see my monograph (Savchyn, *Mykola Lukash*).

regard is provided by Monticelli and Lange, who show how direct translation can "cast doubts on the cultural and political reliability of the translator, his translation and, by extension, the original and its author" (103). They tell a story about Johannes Semper, an Estonian translator who translated Pablo Neruda's poems directly from the Spanish language and published them in in 1953. The choice of an ideologically correct writer and his texts, accompanied by a protective preface to "set the 'right' interpretational framework," did not help Semper avoid accusations of having "faked" Neruda. The main reason behind these accusations was that he had translated directly from the original text, rather than through the Russian text, a fact that "gave rise to suspicions over the translator's loyalty." This example from the Estonian context of translation activity is typical of translation practices in the entire Soviet Union and the attempts to control the meaning of the texts.

When it came to foreign authors whose works were of great propaganda value, the control of meaning was even more rigid. One notable example is the Ukrainian translations of German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, whose Marxism doctrine was put into practice in the Soviet Union. When Mykola Lukash was asked to translate their works, he was cautioned to translate from the Russian language to avoid misinterpretation. His arguments that other socialist countries, like Poland or Hungary, have these texts in direct translations from the German language were not taken into account; therefore, the translator refused to participate in the project (Cherevatenko, "Notatky z pam''iati" 595, 610). This is also a good example of the translator's agency versus conformity, and it will be discussed in more detail.

Along with relay translation, the practice of interlinear translation was not uncommon. This was a direct result of the "official" Soviet policy of friendship among peoples aimed at welding the multinational people of the Soviet state into a single entity. This policy resulted in an increase in the so-called internal, or "intra-union translation," that is, translations from and into the nationalities languages of the Soviet Union (Witt, "The Shorthand of Empire" 158). Given that the number of translators knowing these languages was negligible, the translations were made with the help of interlinear cribs (for more on this, see Witt, "Between the Lines," "Institutionalized Intermediates," and "The Shorthand of Empire"). Guram Petriashvili, a Georgian writer, pointed to the colonial nature of such a translation practice:

> The Russian writer Genrikh Mitin formulated the following "law": "There are external Russian translations (from the languages of the countries outside the USSR) and internal Russian translations (from the languages of the "fraternal republic"). When the translation is external, the knowledge of the source language is of crucial importance, but when the translation is

> internal, interlinear translation would suffice." This, of course, is nonsense. These are the ravings of an imperial man who looks down on the literature of the colonies. It follows therefore that you need to know English if you translate a third-rate English poet, but you do not need to know Georgian, even if you translate Shota Rustaveli. (371)

"The regularity with which methods of indirect translation were applied in the Soviet context," as Witt observes, "actually makes them one of the distinctive features of the Soviet translation project as a whole" ("The Shorthand of Empire" 157). Thus, Lukash's translation principles, which ran counter to the prevailing practice of colonial translation, reflected his strong opposition and agency. Both methods of indirect translation—relay and interlinear—were rejected by Lukash in his public statements and in his translation activity. He saw indirect translation and literal translation as the two greatest evils in the field of literary translation in Soviet Ukraine (Lukash, "Prohresyvna zakhidnoievropeis'ka literatura" 244). In a bid to control the "accuracy" of Ukrainian translations, indirect translations through Russian resulted in Russian calques because Ukrainian texts tended to carefully mirror their Russian predecessors. In such translations, the Ukrainian language lost its natural flavour and resembled a kind of artificial construct, nicknamed "Russian-Ukrainian translationese." One such translation prompted heated discussion at an all-Ukrainian meeting of translators held in Kyiv in February 1956. Arguing against the practice of indirect translation, Lukash referred to the very literal translation to Ukrainian of *Don Quixote,* by Cervantes, by Ievhen Krotevych and Vasyl' Kozachenko (1955) from the Russian translation of Nikolai Liubimov (1951). Lukash provided about one hundred examples of how this translation, due to Russian linguistic interference, violated lexical, idiomatical, morphological, and syntactical norms of the Ukrainian language. These were such glaring examples that the chairperson, Leonid Novychenko, interrupted the speaker and suggested a special amendment to the criminal code to deal with such shameful translations. Lukash concluded that the "half-baked" translation of Cervantes's novel showed disrespect for the Spanish author, the Ukrainian readers, and the Ukrainian language (Lukash, "Prohresyvna zakhidnoievropeis'ka literatura" 252). This prompted Lukash to embark on his own translation of *Don Quixote* from the Spanish original a few years later.[4]

In advocating the practice of direct translation, Lukash came up with a number of practical ways to improve the situation in the field of literary translation. He stressed the importance of strategic planning in training

[4] The translation was not completed by Lukash and was published posthumously in 1995, with 29 out of a total of 74 chapters of the second part of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* in Anatol' Perepadia's translation.

translators, the need for a translation department at the university in Kyiv with a focus on European languages and special faculties of Oriental languages similar to those in Moscow and Leningrad, and opportunities for educational trips abroad, in particular to China and India, so that translators could master foreign languages. He also proposed a scheme of financial incentives to encourage those who translated directly from source texts (Lukash, "Prohresyvna zakhidnoievropeis'ka literatura" 253–54).

All Lukash's translations were exclusively produced from the originals, and many of them were the first-ever translations to Ukrainian. His contributions include, inter alia, *Faust* by Goethe (1955), *Madame Bovary* by Flaubert (1955), *The Decameron* by Boccaccio (1964), *The Dog in the Manger* and *Fuenteovejuna* by Lope de Vega (1962), *The Tragedy of Man* by Imre Madách (1967), *Troilus and Cressid* by Shakespeare (1986), *Don Quixote* by Cervantes (1995), and poetry by Adam Mickiewicz (1955), Robert Burns (1959), Julian Tuwim (1963), Friedrich Schiller (1967), Paul Verlaine (1968), Federico García Lorca (1969), Guillaume Apollinaire (1984), Attila József (1986), and Matsuo Bashō (1990; posthumous publication). He also translated children's literature and even some opera librettos.[5] Even this fragmentary list of Lukash's translations indicates that his translational preferences did not fit "the standardized Soviet discourse" and "officially sanctioned culture repertoire of the day," which encouraged in the first place translations from Russian literature and from other Soviet literatures, or translations of foreign literature of the countries loyal to the Soviet Union (Lange, "Henno Rajandi's Theory" 155, and "Performative Translation Options" 416).[6] Lukash was quite explicit about the deficiencies of the Soviet translation policy and urged that translators should not confine themselves to Communist writers or ideologically "correct" texts. He encouraged his colleagues "to give Ukrainian readers everything noteworthy, all the treasures created by literatures of other nations, irrespective of our [Soviet Union's] relations with this country," adding that "they should not wait for heads of government to exchange visits, and only then publish the works of writers from these countries" (Lukash, "Prohresyvna zakhidnoievropeis'ka literatura" 241; 244). In this way Lukash advocated cultural changes and,

[5] Some operas translated by Lukash, in particular *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Gaetano Donizetti and *Don Juan* by Mozart, were staged by the Opera House in Kyiv before a tradition of performing in the language of the original gained the upper hand in the 1990s. For more on this, see Strikha 307–08. *Lucia di Lammermoor* was staged in Ukrainian again in October 2019 in Lviv to mark the centenary of Mykola Lukash's birth.

[6] For more on Lukash's principles of source text selection, see my article (Savchyn, "Translator's Agency").

more importantly, called for the "empowerment of translators" (Tymoczko, *Enlarging Translation* 189).

It follows from the above that source texts as a key link in the translation process were exposed to ideological constraints in the Soviet translation tradition. As a result, some texts were given priority over others, not because of their literary merit but for ideological or political reasons; some were filtered out and were never translated in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the very notion of a source text was blurred, as the widespread practice of indirect translation led to a substitution of the original with a mediating translation, but this information, as a general rule, was missing. Therefore, the reader who was planning to buy a book in a Ukrainian translation could not be certain whether it was translated directly from the original or from a Russian translation. However, as Lukash suggested, this could be revealed without much effort by comparing its first page with the same page of the last Russian publication ("Prohresyvna zakhidnoievropeis'ka literatura" 245). The role of a translator in these processes was made manifest in their "willingness and ability to act" (Kinnunen and Koskinen 6) in order to resist the established practices and to become an agent of cultural change (Tymoczko, *Enlarging Translation* 190).

Language Guardian

The Soviet Empire pursued, among other things, a policy of Russification, seeking cultural and linguistic hegemony in all Soviet republics. The policy was implemented at various levels: through educational establishments and the workplace, through publishing houses and the media, through books and dictionaries, through controlled intra-Union labour migration, and many other channels; it penetrated all aspects of cultural and social life in Ukraine. According to Lukash's estimate made in December 1958, there existed at least fifty kinds of Russifications in Ukraine.[7] Literary translation became one of the tools of this policy, as evidenced by both massive translations from Russian literature and indirect translations with Russian as a mediating language.

While similar translation trends were observed in other Soviet republics (see, e.g., Monticelli; Monticelli and Lange), Russification policy in Ukraine went much further and targeted the Ukrainian language itself. Under the pretext of so-called "brotherhood of the two peoples" and mutual enrichment of their languages, the policy took the form of a forced linguistic

[7] NMLU. Personal fund of Mykola Lukash. Folder 760. Typewritten. The personal archive of Lukash is housed in the National Museum of Literature of Ukraine (NMLU) in Kyiv.

assimilation, whose final goal was to downgrade the role and the status of the Ukrainian language to a kind of a local patois, a dialect of the Russian language. Soviet language policy intruded into the structure of the Ukrainian language in order to destroy the language from the inside. A prominent linguist, Iurii Shevel'ov, pointed out, "in Soviet Ukraine, the conflict between the Russian and Ukrainian languages was shifted from the external, extralinguistic sphere to the most inner part of the language itself" (267). In Shevel'ov's opinion, this was an ingenious and novel Soviet invention that had never been practiced by any oppressors of Ukraine in the past: "Neither the Poles, nor the Romanians, nor the Czechs had ever done this; neither had the pre-revolutionary Russian Tsarist administration. They all had limited themselves to external pressure only" (267).

The intrusion into the structure of the language resulted in numerous changes that violated the norms of Ukrainian pronunciation, spelling, word-building, grammar, and syntax. It was accompanied by a massive use of Russian calques and the substitution of Ukrainian words and idioms with their Russian equivalents. Authentic words, different from their Russian counterparts, were marginalized and labelled "artificial elements" or "nationalistic forms," which purportedly hindered language development and separated Ukrainian from the Russian language. Such words often faced lexicographical deactivation, because dictionaries served as another important tool of assimilative language policy.[8] To reinforce this policy of editorial censorship, publishing houses were sent confidential lists of banned Ukrainian words.[9] This meant that the ideological vetting of literary translations was followed by a linguistic vetting, and this made the Ukrainian experience quite dissimilar from that of other Soviet republics. The attempts to "purify" the Ukrainian language were directed first and foremost against dialectal, colloquial, obsolete, and other "artificial" elements as well as against Ukrainian technical terms, that is, against the most authentic part of the language. These words were carefully checked against lists of proscribed terms by publishing editors. Translators who refused to conform to the imposed lexical norms were subject to fierce criticism in the press and, not infrequently, lost their jobs.

[8] For more on this, see my article (Savchyn, "Dictionary in the Totalitarian Society").

[9] These proscription lists are not available, yet some insights into the nature of such lists are provided by a "Register of repressed words" prepared by compilers of the book *Ukrains'ka mova u XX storichchi: Istoriia linhvotsydu* (*The Ukrainian Language in the Twentieth Century: History of Linguicide*) on the basis of documents and printed materials regulating language policy in Soviet Ukraine ("Reiestr").

An illustrative case, in this respect, is Anatol' Perepadia's translation of *Bandiera bianca a Cefalonia* by Marcello Venturi, edited by Lukash.[10] This translation was subjected to harsh criticism, which was levelled particularly at its vocabulary and syntax. Perepadia was accused of abusing dialectal and archaic words as well as outdated grammatical forms and constructions, and of using words that did not exist in Ukrainian (Bilodid; Rusanivs'kyi). The critics pointed to an unjustified use of the words *dliatysia, domiv, dopiru, chub, vyprava, triskit, domok*, and the grammatical construction "*zamist'* + infinitive" (Rusanivs'kyi). The phrases *doshch lyv iak iz tsebra, vyishla divchyna z hlekom na vodu, teplo vdarylo meni do holovy, tsyferblat dzygariv* were flatly identified as artificial and alien to the Ukrainian language (Bilodid 281). The result of the criticism was not long in coming: Perepadia, like many others, lost his job at the publishing house and forfeited the right to publish his translations.

The Ukrainian phenomenon of proscribed words could broaden the scope of the concept of "erasure," introduced by Monticelli to define the functioning of totalitarian translation (191). When discussing literary translation in Soviet Estonia, Monticelli used the notion of "erasure" to refer to (1) the prohibition of Estonian and foreign authors followed by the ban, and oftentimes destruction, of their books and (2) to the repression of living authors (191). In the case of Ukraine, we can also talk about the "erasure" of authentic words from dictionaries and literary (including translated) works. By the same token, Monticelli's concept of "overscription," that is, filling in the blanks generated by "erasure," can be expanded and applied to the forceful introduction of Russian words into the Ukrainian language (191).

Lukash's response to Russification was one of active dissent. He took on a role of language gatekeeper and guardian, whose ultimate ambition was to revive Ukrainian and repair its deformed structure. Literary translation and dictionaries, which were both turned by the totalitarian regime into instruments of assimilation policy, became Lukash's major means of resisting this policy. For Lukash, no word should be discriminated against on the grounds of its status in the Ukrainian language. He was known for his word hunting and his ambitious lexicographical project aimed at bringing back all the Soviet lexical outcasts along with words and forms that had faded into oblivion over time. This was supposed to be a dictionary surpassing any other Ukrainian lexicographical work in terms of covering geographical (including regional dialectal forms) and historical (archaic words) layers of vocabulary. Lukash also collected materials for dictionaries

[10] Marchello Venturi, *Bilyi prapor nad Keafaloniieiu*, translated by Anatol' Perepadia, edited by Mykola Lukash. Radians'kyi pys'mennyk, 1972.

of idioms, synonyms, proper names, and euphemisms,[11] drawing heavily on literary (comprising hundreds of folkloric, original, and translated texts) and scholarly sources, historical chronicles, ethnographical collections, and local vernacular. Periodicals served as a rich source of technical vocabulary and terminology, if Lukash's heavy underlining of them is anything to go by. It is hard to know whether he had an ambition to compile a separate dictionary of terms, but his meticulous attention to Ukrainian terminography, a field that suffered the most devastating blow in Soviet times, speaks volumes.[12] The words highlighted by Lukash denote tools and implements, crockery and pottery, types of dwellings and settlements, music and dancing, embroidering and carving, to mention but a few. Most of these are not registered in dictionaries of the Ukrainian language.

In his lexicographical endeavour, Lukash often turned to books and writers banned in the Soviet Union.[13] Panteleimon Kulish, Lukash's favourite author and, in his opinion, one of the best connoisseurs of the Ukrainian language, figured prominently in his notes (Perepadia 412). Lukash wrote copiously from his translations of Shakespeare's plays and Byron's *Don Juan* as well as from his novel *Chorna Rada* (*The Black Council*). Obsolete and archaic words, dialectal forms and occasionalisms, idioms and pleonastic expressions particularly captured Lukash's attention. They included, for example, such colourful phrases as *zapekloserdyi, midianopykyi, kryvosudnyi, nenavydets', nenavydnyk, nedovirstvo, zdurinnia, nesmakovytyi, zlorichyty, nikchemnytsia, zvirovydyi, tyranstvo,* and *despotstvo*.[14] Some of Kulish's coinages came back to life in Lukash's translations, either in their original form or in slightly transformed ways adjusted to fit the context. The former can be illustrated by the following example from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressid* in the translations by Kulish and Lukash:

[11] It is uncertain whether Lukash envisaged a number of dictionaries or planned to include all the collected material into one comprehensive dictionary of the Ukrainian language. But it is safe to say that his card index could form the basis of several dictionaries.

[12] Terminological dictionaries in Soviet Ukraine were not only heavily Russified, but also faced physical destruction followed by the execution of their compilers. A list of fifty-five terminological dictionaries destroyed by the Soviet regime in just one year (1933), compiled by Sirenko and Midak, gives an illuminating example of massive lexicographical "erasure." For more on this, see my article (Savchyn, "Dictionary in the Totalitarian Society").

[13] Such sources were abbreviated by Lukash for reasons of security, and some titles and names of writers are still a puzzle to researchers.

[14] NMLU. Personal fund of Mykola Lukash. Folders 301 and 324.

> *The cuckold and the cuckold-maker are at it.*
> Kulish: *Рогач шчепився из рогоробом.* (329)
> Lukash: *О, зчепилися уже, рогонос із рогоробом.* (386)

Reviving lexical and stylistic resources of Ukrainian belles-lettres was a conscious and consistent translation strategy of Lukash. He states this quite explicitly in a letter to Hryhorii Kochur dated 5 March 1966:

> Hot Pan'ko[15] helps me a lot—no one knew our language better than him! When I was translating a cut-in novella 'The Tale of the Slave' [from *Don Quixote*], I borrowed from Kulish's 'Baida [kniaz' Vyshnevets'kyi]' not only some Turkish realia (*kapudan-basha* instead of commander of the fleet, *zamkovyi aha*—commander of the fortress, *raiz kapitan* [*arráez* in Spanish transcription], etc.), but also entire phrases, such as '*zveliv ïm bratys' pouz samu skeliu*' [ordered them to sail close to the cliff], '*vid bereha shchodal'she vidvertaimo'* [let us turn away further from the shore], '*Geruite demenamy do lymanu*' [paddle towards the estuary], etc. . . . This is how the classic steals from the classics! (Kochur and Voronovych 110–11).

When Lukash was criticized for using words considered alien to the Ukrainian language, he relied on his lexicographical notes to argue with his opponents. Thus, in response to Viktor Koptilov's critical remarks on unjustified usage of some words in the translation of Goethe's *Faust*, Lukash came up with a series of three articles "Khto taki buly dvoraky" ("Who the *Dvoraks* Were"), "Pro zmishuvannia zakhidno-ievropeis'kykh realii z pol's'kymy ta pro tin' Frantsa-Iosyfa" ("On Mixing Western European Realia with the Polish Ones and on the Shadow of Franz Joseph,") and "Opus tertium atque ultium: Pro znyzhennia styliu ta pro skryvdzhenoho Mefistofelia" ("Opus tertium atque ultium: On Lowering the Style and Offended Mephistopheles"). To justify the use of contested words (like *dvorak, pan-brat, tsisar*), Lukash convincingly proves his point by citing dozens of examples from Ukrainian original and translated literature, folklore, lexicographical sources, and historical studies. He illustrates the use of words diachronically—from the earliest to the most contemporary writings—and refers to such authoritative texts as *Izbornik of Sviatoslav* (1073), *The Tale of Bygone Years* (12th c.), *Palinode* by Zacharias Kopystens'kyi (1622), *Latin-Church Slavonic Lexicon* by Epifanii Slavinets'kyi (the late 1630s), *History of Turkey* by Ahatanhel Kryms'kyi (the 1920s), to name but a few. Lukash concludes the first article with a hint of irony: "You can blame me for all the sins, but this one—the ignorance of my native language—is probably not worth it. Well, if I do not know it, then I have at least a bitter consolation that I share this ignorance with [Ivan]

[15] *Hot Pan'ko* (Hariachyi Pan'ko) is a nickname of Panteleimon Kulish used by his friends and later adopted by the writer himself as one of his pseudonyms.

Franko, [Ahatanhel] Kryms'kyi and [Borys] Hrinchenko" ("Khto taki buly dvoraky" 154).

The lexicographical materials known as Lukash's Card Index[16] have never been published as a dictionary, and some of them (representing euphemisms and obscene vocabulary) are irretrievably lost. For many years, the Card Index, which is currently kept in the Institute for the Ukrainian language of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Ukraine, has been inaccessible to researchers, and the story of its wanderings after the death of its compiler is reminiscent of the cruel twists of Lukash's own fate.[17] On the bright side, a glimpse into Lukash's Card Index was recently provided by Oleksa Synychenko's thesaurus of the Ukrainian language. The dictionary, which is unique in many respects, draws heavily on Lukash's materials for illustrative purposes. Tsymbaliuk-Skopnenko examines the phraseological part of the Card Index (14,898 entry words on separate cards) and comes to the conclusion that Lukash's lexicographical materials contain words that used to have high-frequency usage in Ukrainian but have been dying out since the mid-twentieth century (126). Some words were reactivated by Lukash himself through his translations, and there is every reason to believe that the whole Card Index deserves lexicographical recognition. Synychenko's thesaurus is an essential first step in that direction.

Lukash's lexicographical endeavour was made at a time when some types of dictionaries were practically non-existent or officially disapproved of, as was the case with dictionaries of synonyms. The richness and vibrancy of the Ukrainian language, reflected in its immense synonymic diversity, had no chance of being captured in official lexicography, which adopted a highly puristic approach and accentuated the close ties between Ukrainian and Russian. As a result, the first academic dictionary of synonyms came out in Ukraine only at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is not surprising, then, that activist translators assumed roles of unofficial lexicographers and committed themselves to producing alternative dictionaries. Apart from Lukash's project, the work on compiling dictionaries of synonyms was pursued in Soviet labour camps by Sviatoslav Karavans'kyi and Ivan Svitlychnyi. Out of the three compilations, only Karavans'kyi's *Praktychnyi slovnyk synonimiv ukrains'koi movy* (*Practical Dictionary of Synonyms of the Ukrainian Language*) saw the light of day. This was made possible only

[16] Tetiana Tsymbaliuk-Skopnenko hypothesizes that the beginning of Lukash's work on compiling his Card Index can be attributed to the early 1960s (127). Yet, numerous examples from a variety of literary sources provided by Lukash in his reviews of translations and dictionaries of the early 1950s, as well as the marginalia in the journals he subscribed to from 1955 suggest that his "word hunting" started much earlier.

[17] For a more detailed account, see Tsymbaliuk-Skopnenko.

because Karavans'kyi, a 30-year prisoner of Soviet camps (1944–60; 1965–79), managed to emigrate to the USA and complete his dictionary there. It was published in 1993, shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and has been reprinted in several revised and enlarged editions since then. Its noteworthy features are the use of the letter *r*, which was eliminated from the Ukrainian alphabet as a result of the Russification policy, and the introduction of new labels, such as "unduly neglected" or "Soviet word" to refer to lexical units that were either deactivated or forcefully introduced into the language during the Soviet period.

Lukash, for his part, referred to the marginalized vocabulary as "words discriminated for nothing by harsh judges who evict them to the backyard of the literary language" ("Novyi ukrains'ko-rosiis'kyi slovnyk" 154). He pointed to numerous instances where commonly used words got the discouraging dictionary usage label "*rare.*" This he observed in a Ukrainian-Russian dictionary (1953), the first volume of which he reviewed. Assimilation techniques tended to be more pronounced in the inverted Russian-Ukrainian dictionaries of that time, where the Ukrainian part of an entry was supposed to mirror the Russian one. Yet Lukash detected a number of dangerous tendencies in the dictionary he reviewed. He indicated that some Ukrainian words in that dictionary strangely acquired the same stylistic labels as their Russian counterparts, whereas others faced a convergence of their meanings (Lukash, "Novyi ukrains'ko-rosiis'kyi slovnyk" 155). The reviewer talked of the "optical or acoustic illusion" experienced by the compilers, who tried to "artificially converge words with a somewhat similar sound, but neither etymologically nor semantically corresponding to each other" (Lukash, "Novyi ukrains'ko-rosiis'kyi slovnyk" 158).

In his reviews of dictionaries, Lukash invariably addressed the issue of lexicographical "erasure" and reported words that were unjustifiably missing in a dictionary as well as lexical units that were deprived of their original meanings. For instance, a Ukrainian word *banda* used to refer to a crowd, *bandazh* meant a ribbon or a strip, *bura* used to describe a churn of the water, *buian* represented an obstinate bull; the meanings of these words were "erased" and they were substituted with similar sounding Russian words (Lukash, Review of *Ukrainsko-russkii slovar'* 121). Words for which the acoustic form was distinctly different from that of their Russian counterparts were not infrequently left out of dictionaries, and Lukash sounded an alarm about this. He pointed out that the lexicon entered in just the first volume of the dictionary (covering letters A through Ж) lacked hundreds of words marked by frequent usage in Ukrainian literature. A comparison of the dictionary's headwords against the works of Mykola Bazhan, Maksym Ryl's'kyi, Iurii Smolych, and Oles' Honchar made it clear

that at least 600 of lexical units were missing (Lukash, Review of *Ukrainsko-russkii slovar'* 121).

Lukash's unpublished review of a *Polish-Ukrainian Dictionary* (Kyiv, 1958–60) is an even more impressive example of his care about the Ukrainian language and its neglected words.[18] This is an extensive handwritten fifteen-page review, where Lukash underscored the richness of Ukrainian synonymic and idiomatic resources and the necessity to adequately reflect it in the dictionary so that the reader would not get an impression that the Ukrainian language was in some way inferior to the Polish language. Multiple examples of mistranslation provided in the main body of the review were accompanied by a 77-page supplement of words either missing in the dictionary or translated incorrectly. In this way, through his thorough reviews of lexicographical works or by compiling dictionaries alternative to official lexicography, Lukash performed the role of language gatekeeper.

Likewise, Lukash used literary translation as a means of language protection. In this respect, a small note found in his pre-war archive materials is an eloquent testimony to his views on translation. It is a quotation from "Pushkin i frantsuzskaia literatura" ("Pushkin and French Literature"), published in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (*Literary Heritage*) in 1937 (nos. 31–32: 11). The article states that the aim of translation is not so much the reproduction of the original as the enrichment of the target language. Apparently, the eighteen-year-old Lukash took this statement as a part of his philosophy of translation and made the Ukrainian language the spiritual epicentre of all his translations. The lexical profusion of his translations amazed even very accomplished writers. After reading Lukash's translation of "Ball at the Opera" by Julian Tuwim, Maksym Ryl's'kyi exclaimed in astonishment, "And where did he dig up so many of those words!" (Kochur, "Maistry perekladu" 24). The answer seems to be self-evident. Like an archaeologist, Lukash excavated the lexical treasures of the Ukrainian language using hundreds of literary and historical sources as his archaeological sites. The words he discovered were promoted through his translations. "Suppose someone would like to see and hear what Ukrainian language could look like if it had functioned and developed normally, they should read Lukash's translations," commented Cherevatenko ("Spodivaius', nikhto ne skazhe" 711).

Through his translations, Lukash sought to shape linguistic identity of Ukraine and promote the democratization of the Ukrainian language. He enhanced the linguistic status of the vernacular and brought together all the territorial varieties of Ukrainian, particularly the linguistic streams

[18] NMLU. Personal fund of Mykola Lukash. Folder 300, pp. 1–15. Handwritten.

historically marked by Russian and Polish influence. His principles of translation were frowned upon, as his diction was saturated with all the riches of the Ukrainian language, and this ran counter to the prevailing puristic tendencies. The reviewers of Lukash's translations criticized the excessive Ukrainization or folklorization and called his use of archaic and dialectal words "language extravagance" that "complicates the perception of the text" (Pervomais'kyi; Koptilov; Tarnavs'kyi). The translator stood his ground and metaphorically talked about a battle he was going to fight to defend his translations. In a letter to Ieva Narubyna (31 Dec. 1951), Lukash expressed a determination to fight for archaic and slang words in his translation of *Faust*, as without them the German masterpiece would not be genuine but sanitized and emptied (Narubyna 119). These battles were often heated as indicated by a short inscription Lukash wrote in a copy of his translation of *The Decameron*: "To Hryts'ko Kochur, who shed his blood for me, with love and gratitude M. Lukash."[19] As Kochur helped Lukash to protect his translation from editorial changes, it is little wonder that Lukash referred to his translation as *our Decameron*:

> I expected that many would turn their noses up at my (*our*) *Decameron*. This is indeed a polemical translation. Well, we will *fight* for it yet! The fact that it is published this way is a great *victory* already (it is a good thing that spelling issues *took the brunt*—and even though they *fell*, they *rescued* the lexis, phraseology and syntax), and I hope not a single copy will remain unread. (Kochur and Lukash 89; emphasis added)

Through military metaphors, the publication process here is portrayed as a battleground, on which a translator tested his strategies and gained victories in linguistic battles.

Persona Non Grata in Literature

Efforts to empower the Ukrainian language were also made through Lukash's activist practices. The latter included signing petitions and making public statements in support of the Ukrainian language, and voicing disagreement with everything that contradicted his views on Ukraine's independence and national identity.

Lukash's dissenting voice was most powerful when he openly protested against the imprisonment of Ivan Dziuba. The latter was arrested in 1972 in connection with his work *Internatsionalizm chy rusyfikatsiia?* (*Internationalism or Russification?*) (1965). Dziuba was accused of

[19] This copy of the *Decameron* in Lukash's translation is kept in the museum of Hryhorii Kochur in Irpin'.

undermining the national policy of the Communist Party and committing libel against "Soviet reality." In this work, Dziuba analyzed Soviet cultural and language policy in Ukraine through the lens of Marxism and supported his observations by abundantly quoting works by Lenin and other official party documents of the 1920s. Even within such a politically "innocent" framework he managed to expose the hypocrisy that underpinned the Soviet Union's language policy, the gulf that existed between official declarations and reality, and the disguised attempt to dismantle the Ukrainian nation. Unsurprisingly, the Soviet authorities did not tolerate this and declared the book anti-Soviet. Spreading, keeping, or reading it were treated as a crime. Following official prohibition, the book was spread as a clandestine *samvydav* (the Ukrainian equivalent of the Russian *samizdat*) publication and became a symbol of resistance.[20] As Volodymyr Badiak pointed out, "At that time, the Writers' Union of Ukraine measured the 'level of party reliability' and 'class maturity' of its members by their attitude to the 'seditious' work of Dziuba and his personality" (26). Lukash's archive materials include a copy of Dziuba's pamphlet, as well as other underground publications, letters, and petitions,[21] which is a testimony to his indirect involvement in the dissident movement.[22] The final guilty verdict in the Dziuba case was announced on 16 March 1973. The following week Lukash stunned his friends by writing a letter of protest against Dziuba's imprisonment in which he bravely offered to take his place given Dziuba's failing health.[23] In his letter, Lukash openly declared his full agreement with Dziuba's views on the issue of Russification, in defiance of Soviet claims that

[20] Dziuba's work also made its way abroad and was translated and published in several languages.

[21] NMLU. Personal fund of Mykola Lukash. Folder 769. Dissident materials in Lukash's archive include, among other items, a letter from the imprisoned Sviatoslav Karavans'kyi to the Soviet authorities, demanding that a twenty-five-year imprisonment term should be abolished in the USSR (22 March 1966; Folder 771. Typewritten); collective letters to the CPSU Central Committee and Prosecutor General of Ukraine regarding wrongful arrests of Ukrainian intelligentsia, with a demand for the immediate release of V''iacheslav Chornovil (1965; 1967; Folder 770. Typewritten); Ivan Dziuba's letter to Petro Shelest and Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kyi regarding political arrests in a number of Ukrainian cities (1965; Folder 769. Typewritten); Dziuba's address in the House of Writers celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of Vasyl' Symonenko (16 Jan. 1965; Folder 768. Typewritten).

[22] Lukash did not self-identify as a dissident, neither was he regarded as a political dissident by the regime. This might partially be a clue to why he was not arrested following his letter of protest. His opposition to the totalitarian system had more features of moral and cultural resistance than of political activism or of participation in human rights movements.

[23] NMLU. Personal fund of Mykola Lukash. Folder 457. Typewritten.

no such policy existed. Lukash wrote that he saw no difference between being *in* or *out of* prison in the current state of enduring repression. His letter, which he sent to the highest authorities of the Ukrainian SSR—Verkhovna Rada, Supreme Court, and Prosecutor General, with a copy to the Writers' Union—openly depicted Soviet Ukraine as a prison. Lukash adopted an ironical style, with some sarcastic overtones, when he "kindly ask[ed] to allow [him] to be imprisoned instead of Dziuba" ("Proshu laskavo dozvolyty meni vidbuty zamist' vyshchenazvanoho Dziuby I. M. vyznachene iomu sudom pokarannia") and treated his addressees with "due respect" ("z nalezhnoiu povahoiu").

By supporting Dziuba, one of the prominent activists of the dissident movement, Lukash, in effect, overtly joined the movement himself and joined the people whose "inner moral imperative outweighed the considerations of their own security" (Kas'ianov 142). The consequences of this step were not long in coming. Lukash was placed under KGB surveillance and was allegedly threatened with forcible treatment in a special psychiatric hospital ("Mykola Lukash"). The first KGB report issued on 3 April 1973, laid special emphasis on the contacts Lukash established with Ivan Svitlychnyi, Hryhorii Kochur, Ivan Dziuba, Zynoviia Franko, and other dissidents "whose nationalistic views he shared and in whose presence he spread all sorts of calumnies that the tsarism Russification policy was still continuing under the disguise of internationalism" ("Spetsial'noe soobshchenie" 253). The report also quoted Lukash's conversation with a "trusted information source" in which the former claimed that "Ukraine as a nation will disappear if the union with the Russians continues for a while" ("Spetsial'noe soobshchenie" 254). The report was signed by Vitalii Fedorchuk, a chairman of the Ukrainian KGB, and addressed to Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kyi, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, who immediately sanctioned Lukash's expulsion from the Writers' Union.[24]

An expulsion from the Writers' Union in Soviet times was tantamount to a career ban. Consequently, Lukash faced an outright ban on the publications of his translations and became a sort of persona non grata in literature, with an all-encompassing proscription of his name. His translations of Apollinaire, which had been scheduled for publication, were withdrawn. And despite the fact that the first three volumes of the academic *Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language* (1970–80; in 11 vols.) had already been published, all the quotations from Lukash's translations included in the forthcoming volumes were removed. Twenty-one volumes of his literary translations were published within 1953–69, but the next decade saw not a single publication: these figures speak for themselves. Despite Dziuba's release

[24] For details of Lukash's expulsion from the Writers' Union, see Koval'.

from prison six months later, following his admission of guilt, it was many years before Lukash regained his reputation and social rights. The career ban was partially revoked in 1979, when some of Lukash's translations made their way through a prolonged hushed silence. Yet his reinstatement into the Writers' Union was not possible until 1987, a year before his untimely death. For fourteen years, Lukash was, in effect, a "prisoner of conscience,"[25] being deprived of freedom despite formally remaining at large. Lukash's sense of occupational identity was not shattered by his persona non grata status, as evidenced by the fact that he turned down a job offer to translate technical texts (texts were typically translated into Russian) at the chamber of commerce at a time when he could hardly make ends meet.[26] Fully committed to literary translation and a mission to rejuvenate the persecuted Ukrainian language and enlarge the "domestic cultural horizon" (Monticelli 193), Lukash continued translating in the so-called desk-drawer mode, without any prospect of publication, and even set about learning Japanese, yet another language from which he produced translations.

Looking back on those dramatic events, Dziuba recalled how his own wife Marta and Hryhorii Kochur tried their best to dissuade Lukash from sending the letter of protest against Dziuba's imprisonment, because that would be, in their opinion, an ineffective act, but one with dangerous consequences. Lukash remained adamant, saying that he was doing it for himself (Dziuba 397). For him, it was an act of moral resistance to the totalitarian system and an open protest against its language policy.

Conclusion

Thus, the Soviet totalitarian system, with its repressive practices and policies endangering the Ukrainian language and nationhood, brought about "side effects," such as translators' activism and cultural resistance, inspiring translators to take on new roles. Lukash's case demonstrated his strong sense of personal agency and his firm occupational identity; his name went down in the history of Ukrainian translation as a symbol of resistance. Swimming against the tide of established practices of Soviet translation,

[25] Peter Benenson, who introduced this term in 1961, defined it as "any person who is physically restrained (by imprisonment or otherwise) from expressing (in any form of words or symbols) any opinion which he honestly holds and which does not advocate or condone personal violence." In the Soviet context, this term was traditionally used with reference to political prisoners of Soviet labour camps, but Benenson's definition allows its broader interpretation to include those whose voices were forcefully hushed in a "large zone."

[26] This episode is mentioned by Tkachenko (491).

Lukash took on the roles of translation gatekeeper and language guardian in a situation of asymmetrical power relations and under a threat of linguicide. His dissenting voice against indirect translation and literalism was heard and had a profound impact on Ukraine's translation landscape. This supports Maria Tymoczko's observation that "far from being invisible, postcolonial translators are almost inevitably prominent cultural figures, highly visible and publicly engaged in the creation of discourses . . . and in the enactment of resistance to oppression" (*Translation* 16–17).

In view of the above, the significance of Lukash's oeuvre cannot be appreciated fully from the perspective of a mere quantification principle, as its effects are multi-dimensional and far-reaching. The quality of his translations stood the test of time and most of them remained authoritative Ukrainian interpretations well into the twenty-first century and have not been retranslated. Both the selection of texts for translation and the linguistic and stylistic means were of prime importance for Lukash and served as a clear manifestation of his effort to resist Russification. His strategies of resistance, both textual and extratextual, were overt and explicit, acquiring at times a form of civil disobedience. As Andrii Sodomora, a contemporary Ukrainian translator, rightly said, "Lukash's translations were not so much reader-oriented, as anti-totalitarian."[27] This premise is fundamental to understanding the overall translation strategy of Lukash.

The activity of Lukash as a translator, lexicographer, and activist takes on a different perspective when viewed in the context of his national idea and through the lens of "the Ukrainian discourse of identity" against a backdrop of "the Little Russian/Ukrainian dualism [which] penetrated and informed Ukrainian modern history" (Kravchenko 204). Lukash's attempts to protect and repair the Ukrainian language as a key symbol of national identity were, in fact, attempts to resist the dismantling of Ukrainian identity through Russification.

[27] Sodomora emphasized this idea in his lecture given to the students of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv on 26 Oct. 2017.

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