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A Russian and Ukrainian Historical Novel:
Pantelejmon Kuliš's *Čorna Rada**

1. Over the last few years, the name of Pantelejmon Kuliš (1819-1897) has been circulating once again or has become familiar among Russian intellectuals and specialists in Russian literature thanks to the re-publication of his biography of N. V. Gogol', the first ever to be published¹. It is unfortunate that when asked more about P. Kuliš, the same intellectuals and specialists seem to be completely unaware of his place in Ukrainian literature and ignore the fact that he was a member of the Ukrainian *intelligencija* that actively participated in the literary-cultural environment of Saint Petersburg between the 1840s and 1860s. Such ignorance and lack of interest appear all the more eloquent when one recalls that P. Kuliš – along with most Ukrainian writers up to the middle of the nineteenth century and beyond – wrote their literary works also (and sometimes prevalently) in Russian. They often lived part of their lives in Russia, published their works in Russian periodicals, interacted with Russian literary circles and writers and did not deem their belonging to both Russian and Ukrainian literatures as mutually exclusive.

Indeed, the Russian-Ukrainian connection constituted the fundamental framework for nineteenth century Ukrainian literature, and awareness of its many implications is crucial to a thorough understanding of the latter. At the beginning of that century, modern Ukrainian literature took its first steps as a provincial *addendum* of Russian imperial literature², although possessing its own traditions. Its further development, the problems and the issues it would have to deal with, in particular the issue of its identity, were all determined by this relationship. Indeed, nineteenth century Ukrainian literature developed not only under the protection of Russian literature, but also

* Enlarged and modified version of G. Siedina, *Čorna Rada Pantelejmona Kuliša. Ukrajin's'ka ta rosij's'ka versiji: vidminnosti ta podobnosti*, "Slovo i čas" (Kyjiv), 2004, 7, pp. 3-11.

¹ P.A. Kuliš, *Zapiski o žizni Nikolaja Vasil'eviča Gogolja: sostavlennye iz vospominanij ego družej i znakovyx i iz ego sobstvennyx pisem*, vstupit. stat'ja i komment. I.A. Vinogradova, M. 2003 (SPb. 1856¹). The *Zapiski* had been preceded by two articles on Gogol by Kuliš, *Neskol'ko čert dlja biografii Nikolaja Vasil'eviča Gogolja* and *Vypravka nekotoryx biografičeskix izvestij o Gogole*, published in "Otečestvennye Zapiski" in 1852 and 1853 respectively. Moreover, in 1854 Kuliš had published *Opyt biografii N.V. Gogolja, so vključeniem do soroka ego pisem* (SPb.).

² Grabowicz 2003: 216.

fundamentally in opposition to it. The more Ukrainian literature perceived itself as different – and separate – from Russian literature, the more Ukrainian it became.

One of the consequences of the provincial existence of Ukrainian literature during the nineteenth century is that it constituted the main medium for the emerging national consciousness, indeed a substitute for national and political discourse.

One key factor resulting from Ukrainian-Russian coexistence, which characterized the peculiar development of Ukrainian literature, is Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism in the nineteenth century, i.e. the simultaneous participation of individual writers (essentially Ukrainian) in both literatures. This feature applies to literary critics, belletrists and scholars alike. Up until now, this multifaceted issue has been little and unsatisfactorily studied. Indeed, as Grabowicz remarked, in the case of Ukraine, the linguistic factor should not and cannot be considered “as the ultimate determinant of a national literature”. Much more productive, according to the scholar, is to consider “literature as a reflection, product and function of a society”³; thus, if a given society is bi- or multilingual, its literature will be so too. In the case of nineteenth century Ukrainian literature, an analysis of the choice of linguistic code must take into account the many issues that influenced such a choice, including the unequal development and status of the Russian and Ukrainian languages, and questions such as of audience, subject-matter, emotional resonance, education, censorship and self-censorship.

The gradual shift of Ukrainian literature to a monolingual basis lasted throughout the nineteenth century and P. Kuliš’s cultural and literary activity played an important part in it. In particular, my analysis focuses on his novel *Čorna rada*, the most important Ukrainian historical novel, in which the connection between the use of one’s own language and the representation of a shared past is central. The novel came out in 1857 in two versions, Russian and Ukrainian. An analysis of the differences between them reveals, on the one hand, the mid-nineteenth century Ukrainian intellectuals’ perception of their own Ukrainian and all-Russian allegiance; on the other, the increasing awareness of the inevitability and exclusivity of the use of a common linguistic code (i.e. Ukrainian language) for sharing a collective gamut of cultural-emotional values, experiences and traditions.

1.1. Kuliš’s life and cultural-intellectual activity exemplify many of the issues that Ukrainian-Russian coexistence in the nineteenth century posed to the Ukrainian intelligencija.

Exposed to Ukrainian language, folk poetry, customs and traditions since childhood by his mother, who only spoke Ukrainian, Kuliš devoted his life to creating modern Ukrainian literature. More than any other Ukrainian writer of the time, he contributed to expanding its thematic and generic range, giving it depth and resonance. Kuliš consciously took upon himself the task of grafting Western European cultural and literary traditions on to Ukrainian literature. At the same time, he firmly grounded the latter in national history, culture and folk traditions.

³ Grabowicz 1992: 221.

Kuliš's broad knowledge of European and classical languages and literatures is reflected, among other things, in his many translations and paraphrases from Shakespeare, Byron, Schiller, Goethe, in his full translation of the Bible (the first in Ukrainian, of which only some books survive) and in the Europeanization of the artistic forms in new Ukrainian literature (of genre, rhythmical, strophic). Indeed, Kuliš cultivated numerous literary genres in order to provide models for future development: novel, drama, epic poem, lyric poetry. His *kulturträger* activity can also be seen in his work as a linguist, journalist, literary critic, ethnographer and historiographer⁴. Feeling himself to be both a Russian (imperial and not ethnically speaking) and a Ukrainian writer, using both languages in his literary activity⁵, he did not consider his allegiance to the all-Russian imperial culture as opposed to or incompatible with his local Ukrainian patriotism. Nevertheless, the choice of one or the other linguistic medium (and thus also of subject-matter, audience, and voice) was of course not equivalent. Moreover, the fact that Ukrainian still had no elaborated literary style in prose effectively prevented it from being used, but at the same time it offered greater possibilities for the creation of an individual writer's style, for innovation and experimentation.

2. Many of the issues linked to Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism are illustrated in the way that Kuliš's novel *Čorna rada* was composed. It was, in fact, emblematic of the difficulties encountered by a mid-nineteenth century intellectual writing on the Ukrainian past and using Ukrainian language. As even a superficial comparison of the two texts will show, and as the author himself admitted, the Russian version was anything but a translation from the Ukrainian one, and, indeed, they constitute two different novels.

2.1. The central theme of *Čorna rada* is the conflict – underlying many of Kuliš's works – between the principle of construction of state and order, and that of destruction and anarchy in Ukrainian history. The former is represented by the *staršyna* (the Cossack officers) of town Cossacks (Jakym Somko, Šram), the latter by the Zaporozhian Cossacks, and by the least nationally conscious peasants and townspeople (*miščane*), who were most inclined to social rebellion. In the extenuating struggle between these two forces – the cultural force that builds the state, and the destructive force, the author sees the tragedy of Ukraine.

Kuliš turned to two main sources for the historical facts around which his novel is constructed: *Litopys Samovydyja* and *Litopys Hryhorija Hrabjankej*.

⁴ Noteworthy among his many works in the field of Ukrainian history, is *Zapiski o Južnoi Rusi* (Sankt-Peterburg 1856 [t. I], 1857 [t. II]; reprinted: Winter, Heidelberg 1989; "Dnipro", Kyjiv 1994), a monumental collection of ethnographic-folkloric, historiographical and literary material on Ukrainian history. In this work, Kuliš first used his own orthographical system (mainly based on the elimination of the letter *ѡ*, substituted by *u*, and on the introduction of the letters *i* and *č*). This system, subsequently known as *kulišivka*, is at the basis of modern Ukrainian orthography.

⁵ For an overview of Kuliš's literary Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism, cf. Naxlik 1997a.

Although the main events take place in one year, 1663, the facts narrated embrace the history of Ukraine after the victorious Xmel'nyč'kyj uprising (1648-1654) and the acquisition of autonomy leading up to 1663.

The narrative core of the novel is the project of the former colonel-priest of Pavoloč Šram and the hetman Jakym Somko to unite Left-Bank and Right-Bank Ukraine under one hetman, a project that fails when Ivan Brjuxovec'kyj⁶ is elected hetman.

The novel contains both historical and fictitious characters: among the former, besides Somko and Šram, we find hetman Ivan Brjuxovec'kyj, the colonel of Nižyn V. Zolotarenko, Somko's general secretary M. Vujaxevyč, and Hvyntovka⁷. The latter include Čerevan', a Cossack who had enriched himself with booty taken from the Poles during the Xmel'nyč'kyj wars, his wife and his daughter Lesja, the kurinnj

⁶ The conjecture that the colonel of Pavoloč Ivan Popovyč (the historical prototype of Šram) and the temporary hetman Somko, had they lived longer, could have united Right-Bank and Left-Bank Ukraine with their joint forces, under the tsar's hand, is found in the Hrabjanka Chronicle. After Bohdan Xmel'nyč'kyj's death, in 1657 his son Jurij was elected hetman. However, because of his young age, B. Xmel'nyč'kyj's general secretary I. Vyhovs'kyj succeeded in being elected hetman himself, and in 1658 he concluded in Hadjač a union or agreement with the Polish Commonwealth, according to which the Commonwealth would become a federation of the Kingdom of Poland, Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Grand Duchy of Ruthenia. The latter was to be the Cossack state within its boundaries of that time (Braclav, Černihiv and Kyiv voivodeships), and was to be an equal partner in the Commonwealth; moreover, it was to have its hetman who would be responsible only to the king, and was to have its own army, courts, treasury and mint. However, the union was never implemented and a Cossack rebellion, supported by Moscow, deprived Vyhovs'kyj of the hetmanship in 1659. Shortly after, the council of Perejaslav elected hetman Ju. Xmel'nyč'kyj, who however was maneuvered by the pro-Polish party of the Cossack *staršyna*. Having been defeated by the Polish army in 1660, he signed with it a treaty, according to which the Ukraine of the Right Bank passed under the power of the Polish Commonwealth, and the Polish nobility was given back all its possessions. At the beginning of 1663, under the pressure of popular dissatisfaction, Ju. Xmel'nyč'kyj resigned and became a monk. Meanwhile, in 1662 Somko, who along with the colonel of Nižyn Vasyl Zolotarenko had opposed Vyhovs'kyj, was elected temporary hetman of Left-Bank Ukraine. Moscow, however, did not confirm his election, accusing him of having summoned the assembly (*rada*) without its information and consent. Somko supported the union with Moscow and aimed at reinforcing the power of the Cossack *staršyna*. Being suspected of separatism, he lost the tsar's support, and was deprived of his hetmancy at the *čorna rada* of 1663, where Ivan Brjuxovec'kyj, an astute adventurer, having gained support from Moscow, and by exploiting the dissatisfaction of the Zaporozhian and the lower-class Cossacks, was elected hetman of Left-Bank Ukraine, thus starting the process of an increasing submission to Moscow. In the Right-Bank Ukraine, in 1663, Pavlo Teterja was elected hetman. He was colonel of Perejaslav, and a supporter of union with Poland (his hetmanship lasted only until 1665).

⁷ Hvyntovka represents the type of the well-off and greedy Cossack landowner, who after having seized as much land as he could, is unwilling to share it with lower-class Cossacks.

otaman⁸ Kyrlyo Tur, Vasyľ nevol'nyk, Božij čolovik (the *koščar*), the old Zaporozhian Cossack Puhač, and others. For the sake of his artistic purpose, Kuliš often dramatizes and embellishes events, and alters details concerning historical figures.

The author is particularly interested in understanding the social forces, and the social reasons behind historical facts (and in this sense *Čorna rada* can be defined as much a social novel as a historical one⁹). Therefore he gives an account of the conflicts of that period between the different classes of Ukrainian society: between landlords and peasants, nobility and townsmen, townsmen and Cossacks, Cossacks and peasants, Zaporozhian Cossacks and town Cossacks (the registered Cossacks, 'karmazynnyky'), and finally between the *staršyna* and simple Cossacks. In particular, Kuliš draws attention to the fact that after the Xmel'nyč'ky wars and the liberation from the Polish-noble yoke, the 'dominant' class of Ukrainian society had been reinforced and had taken the place of Polish nobility; thus, the lower-class Cossacks, who had participated in the liberation wars, had not witnessed the annulment of social inequality they had hoped for. One of the consequences of these social contrasts was precisely the 1663 *čorna rada*, that took place in Nižyn. It is, in fact, in the victory of the *čern'* (whence the adjective *čorna*), represented by Brjuxovec'kyj, and the subsequent violent death of Somko and Šram, that the author sees the onset of ruin in Ukrainian history¹⁰.

Čorna rada displays many typical characteristics of the Scottian novel: the main structural feature is the device of journey, through which the main character (two in *Čorna rada*) observes and links the events of the story by his presence. Thus, up to the central, culminating point of the council, the work consists of meetings and clashes between Šram, and his son Petro Šramenko, and individuals or groups of people, while they travel from the Right-Bank to the Left-Bank Ukraine to meet hetman Somko and get him to rise up against the Right-Bank hetman Teterja. It is mainly through the perception of these two characters that Kuliš shows the life and psychology of the different social groups and classes of Ukraine at that time. Among the Scottian features are the love story between Petro and Lesja, complicated by the arrival of another suitor (Somko, to whom the girl has been promised), against a

⁸ Chieftain of a *kurin'*, that was a section of a *kiš*, the name used to define an encampment or settlement of Zaporozhian Cossacks.

⁹ Cf. Petrov, "*Čorna rada*", *jak roman socijal'nyj*, in: Petrov 1929: 436-448.

¹⁰ The term *Rujina* is generally used to define the period of the late seventeenth century in the history of Ukraine, characterized by the disintegration of Ukrainian statehood and general decline. Some historians (such as Mykola Kostomarov) correlate it with the tenures of three Moscow-backed hetmans (Ivan Brjuxovec'kyj, Demjan Mnohohrišnyj and Ivan Samojlovyč) and limit it chronologically to 1663-1687 and territorially to Left-Bank Ukraine. Other historians (such as Borys Krupnyč'kyj) consider the *Rujina* to apply to both Left- and Right-Bank Ukraine from the death of Bohdan Xmel'nyč'kyj to the rise of Ivan Mazepa (1657-1687). During the *Rujina* the *čorna rada* became very popular in the southern part of Left-Bank Ukraine and the Zaporož'e, where economic and social circumstances favored them. More conservative sentiments were prevalent in the northern Left-Bank areas.

background of national turmoil; the duel over the girl (between Petro and a third suitor, the Zaporozhian Cossack Kyrlyo Tur); the capture and imprisonment of the hero (Somko), who refuses to escape with the help of a disguise; and others¹¹.

Using the devices of the genre, Kuliš filled his novel with a national content, created vivid 'national' types and tackled important issues from Ukraine's past, in particular the role of the common people in history. Moreover, to a greater extent than Scott, Kuliš rendered his main characters the bearers of a particular idea. The central idea of Somko and Šram, toward which their actions are directed, is the defense of Ukraine as a fatherland, conceived in their plans as a structured society without conflicts among the *staršyna* members and where the different social classes enjoy specific privileges; the idea of Božij čolovik (the *kobzar*) is individual moral integrity; that of the Sič Cossack Kyrlyo Tur, probably the most original and complex character of the novel, is an irrational life and total freedom, according to the unfathomable laws of the heart. Puháč, the old Zaporozhian Cossack, aims at the social equality of the original ideal of the Zaporozhian Sič (and acts as a guardian of its traditional values); Čerevan' aspires to a wealthy farmer's life and to satisfying his physical desires; finally the idea embodied by Petro and Lesja is that of a family idyll. Each character bears "their own truth" (which, however, has only limited validity), and the novel is built on the contrast between the different moral and ideological positions of the characters. Although Kuliš, in the spirit of the objective Scottian narrator, does not identify with any character, he appears quite close to the ideological positions of Šram and Somko, who defend the unity of the nation and the reconciliation of opposing social groups.

At the end of the novel, the love line, which had remained in the shade, is brought to the fore. The historical process seems to show no prospect of a solution to the social conflicts that the author has depicted. Šram and Somko failed to transform the world and to restore harmony in society, and thus Kuliš's characters are shown to reach harmony only in their private, family life.

2. 2. In my analysis of the differences between the two works, I will particularly concentrate on the divergences of ideological accents, which also encompass the two interrelated questions of Kuliš's loyalism to Russia and his conceptualization of Ukraine (past and present).

This, in turn, will provide a clearer picture of Kuliš's perception of Ukraine's place at this time of his literary career, and will add an important piece to the picture of the author's political-historiosophical views. As we shall see, contrary to what may appear from a superficial understanding of Kuliš's works, his views were quite consistent throughout his long life.

Besides this, the two versions of *Čorna Rada* constitute a sort of interesting 'laboratory', at once unique and subsuming in itself the key to understanding the situation of the Ukrainian *intelligencija* of Naddniprjanščyna in the middle of the

¹¹ Cf. Nejman 1927; Naxlik 1988.

nineteenth century. Particularly illuminating in this sense is also the epilogue to the Russian version, *Ob otnošenii malorosijskoj slovesnosti k obščerusskoj. Epilog k "Černoj Rade"*¹², one of the first, in-depth analyses of interrelations between Ukrainian and Russian literatures.

2. 3. The history of the composition of *Čorna rada* has been reconstructed in detail by Je. Naxlik¹³: let us thus briefly recall here its main stages. Kuliš began writing the novel between late 1843 and early 1844 and had finished it by the end of August 1846. The author continued working on the text, however, in order to perfect it. A series of circumstances, among which Kuliš's arrest in 1847 in connection with the discovery of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius¹⁴, delayed publication of the novel until 1857, when it finally saw the light, in both the Ukrainian and the Russian versions¹⁵.

Initially, as the author states, he began writing the novel in Russian, but soon after he switched to Ukrainian, which was his native language: "[...] 'Черная Рада', которую в Киеве начал я писать на языке Пушкина, а в Петербурге написал на языке Шевченка"¹⁶. The author's poorer knowledge of Russian, however, is not the only reason. As we know from his letter to O. Bodjanskij of May 23, 1846, Kuliš's main aim was to raise Ukrainian to the level of a literary language. Cf.: "Задача в том,

¹² The epilogue had been initially thought as a preface to the Ukrainian version, but after giving him permission to print the latter, the censor was holding the preface for observation; for this reason, not wishing to wait any longer, Kuliš printed the Ukrainian novel without the preface.

¹³ Cf. Kuliš 1998, t. 1: 586-594.

¹⁴ A secret society, which existed only for two years (1845-1847), whose program advocated the abolition of serfdom, social equality for all estates, education for the broad masses of the people, the end of national oppression, and a federation of Slavic states in which Ukraine would play a leading role. Among its members were M. Kostomarov, T. Ševčenko and P. Kuliš.

¹⁵ Five chapters of the Russian *Čorna rada*, which according to Je. P. Kyriljuk for their content correspond to two chapters of the final Russian version, were published by P. Pletnev in "Sovremennik" (1845, t. 37, kn. 6; t. 38); still another part of the novel, under the title *Kievskie bogomol'cy v XVII stoletii*, was published in "Sovremennik" (XLI, 1846, 1). Two other fragments were published in the journal "Moskvitjanin" (1846, 1, n. 1; 1846, 3, n. 5). As to the complete Ukrainian version of the novel, Kuliš intended to publish it in the journal "Čtenija Imperatorskogo obščestva ljubitelej istorii i drevnostej rossijskix pri Moskovskom universitete". However, things moved slowly, and Kuliš did not succeed in quickly publishing the two versions. In 1847 after his arrest, Kuliš was condemned to exile in Tula and prohibited from printing. Kuliš was freed from exile at the end of 1850, but only in 1856, under the new tsar Alexander II, was Kuliš finally given back the right to print.

¹⁶ P. Kuliš, *Vospominanija o Nikolae Ivanoviče Kostomarově*, "Nov", IV, 1885, 13, pp. 61-75, here 66. Cf. also his letter to Sreznevskij in March 1846: "Между прочим, хочу написать 'Черную раду' по-украински. Ведь я украинским языком гораздо лучше владею, нежели русским, — разумеется, в прозе" (Naxlik 1997a: 137).

чтобы украинский язык поднять на степень литературного. [...] Я написал ‘Черную раду’ по-украински и помещу в альманахе несколько глав. Страшно думать, что народ, так деятельно участвовавший в событиях рода человеческого, не в состоянии был рассказать о своей жизни в историческом романе!”¹⁷.

Moreover, in accordance with the Romantic, or, more precisely, Herderian idea of the time, Kuliš believed that there was an organic bond between the language of a people and its national character. Consequently, the spiritual world of characters from that people could only be expressed by their native or ‘natural’ language. In Kuliš’s linguistic perception, Russian and Ukrainian were associated with two very different, almost opposite cultural poles, which we could define as the world of structure and the world of emotions. He expresses this in the epilogue to *Čorna rada*, where he feels the need to justify his choice of Ukrainian, in spite of the suggestions from Russian intellectuals (particularly of his patron and close friend P. Pletnev) to write his novel in Russian¹⁸. Thus he writes:

‘Черная рада’ написана мною сперва на южнорусском, или малороссийском языке. Здесь напечатан вольный перевод этого сочинения. В переводе есть места, которых нет в подлиннике, а в подлиннике осталось многое, не вошедшее в перевод. Это произошло, как от различия духа обеих словесностей, так и от того, что, сочиняя подлинник, я стоял на иной точке воззрения, а в переводе я смотрел на предмет, как человек известной литературной среды. Там я по возможности подчинялся тону и вкусу наших народных рапсонов и рассказчиков; здесь я оставался писателем установившегося литературного вкуса. Думаю, что от этого подлинник и перевод, изображая одно и то же, представляют, по тону и духу, два различные произведения. Как бы то ни было, только считаю не лишним объяснить, почему русский писатель нашего времени для изображения малороссийских преданий, нравов и обычаев обратился к языку, неизвестному в Северной России и мало распространенному в читающей южнорусской публике¹⁹.

Besides drawing attention to the crucial difference between the two novels, these words express Kuliš’s need to adjust to the expectations of the Russian public in order to legitimize not only his use of Ukrainian in the genre of the historical novel, but also the right for a Ukrainian literature to exist in Ukrainian. Indeed, at this time Ukrainian prose had just made its first steps, and the ‘right to life’ of Ukrainian literary language and Ukrainian literature had been repeatedly attacked by V. Belinskij, N. Polevoj and

¹⁷ *Ibid.*: 138.

¹⁸ Cf. Kuliš’s words in his autobiography: “Плетнев за пустоту вважав писання по-нашому, та й ні одної людини не мав коло себе Куліш, щоб думала інше; а проте прямував своєю дорогою і щільно дбав про українську будучину” (Лус’кuj 1989: 44).

¹⁹ Kuliš 1969: 481.

other literary critics²⁰.

Thus, on one side Kuliš here speaks of himself as a Russian (i.e. all-Russian) writer, a fully-fledged participant in its “established literary taste” to which he had to accommodate his translation (to call himself a Russian writer is both the way Kuliš felt and a subtle means to give his words greater authority/prestige). On the other, he is stating, in a very politically correct tone, that there is a whole world of folk culture, historical traditions and customs that the Russian language is not able to express, because it is not the product of that world²¹. Indeed, the whole epilogue is dedicated to illustrating, in particular using the examples of H. Kvitka-Osnov’janenko and T. Ševčenko, the worth and the necessity for a Ukrainian writer to use his native language in order to express at best his creative fantasy and talent, and reach his artistic goals. In this context Kuliš also draws attention to the process of his own linguistic creation, underlining his own role in the foundation of modern Ukrainian prose.

The results of his Russian translation of the Ukrainian version, as Kuliš himself acknowledged, were poor. Thus we read towards the end of the epilogue:

...пишущий эти строки, предприняв верное изображение старинного козачества в ‘Черной раде’, на пользу своим ближним, напрасно усиливался заменить южнорусскую речь языком литературным, общепринятым в России. Перечитывая написанные главы, я чувствовал, что читатели не получают из моей книги верного понятия о том, как отразилось бывшее в моей душе, а потому не воспримут вполне и моих исторических и христианских убеждений. Волею и неволею, я должен был оставить общий литературный путь и сделать поворот на дорогу, едва проложенную и для такого произведения, как исторический роман, представляющую множество ужасающих трудностей.

²⁰ In reality, as remarked by Grabowicz (1992: 227), the first to voice doubts on the future of the Ukrainian language had been Ukrainian writers, M. Maksymovuč, A. Metlyns’kyj, M. Kostomarov and even Kuliš himself in his early historical novel *Мухайло Čарнушенко*. The appearance of T. Ševčenko’s *Kobzar* in 1840, while practically resolving the doubts of the Ukrainian intellectuals and thus changing their attitude in this matter, provoked Belinskij’s negative reaction, because it implied that a Ukrainian literature, written in Ukrainian, separate from Russian literature and not limited to the low genres (such as travesty, mock-epic, fables), could exist (cf. also V. Swoboda, *Shevchenko and Belinskij*, in: *Shevchenko and the Critics 1861-1980*, Toronto 1980, pp. 303-323).

²¹ With a very different tone the same concept is expressed in a letter to H. Halahan of 28 April 1857, when Kuliš was polishing up his Russian translation of *Čorna rada*. Cf.: “От я тепер морочусь над ‘Черною радою’ для ‘Руської бесіди’. Роскажи москалєві по-московськи, що се в нас слово ніжне, мальовниче, голосне як пісня! Хочеш повіять запашною садовиною, а йому несе квашеною капустою, – і сам бачиш, що воно зовсім не те, да не знаєш, як до його заговорити, щоб зрозумів він тебе!” (Kuliš 1998, I: 594). Cf. also the letter to O. Barvyns’kyj of 3 March 1876: “Ну, та в нас є багацько такого, чого немає в Москві. Тим же то нам і личить перед добрими людьми хвалитись. Шевченкового стиха в них немає. Як там не напинають пупа їх Кольцови і tutti quanti, ні! Що балалайка, то не кобза. Бринь-бринь, та й ні про що співати, та й голосної пісні з балалайки не видаси” (Ol. Barvyns’kyj, *Spomynu z moho žytja*, I, L’viv 1912, p. 261).

[...] Я должен был отказаться от удовольствия быть читаемым теми из писателей великорусских, которых судом я дорожу [...]. Я должен был ограничиться небольшим кругом читателей, ибо немногие из земляков моих в настоящее время способны оценить мои труды по предмету разработки южнорусского языка²².

Indeed, here Kuliš is saying that there is only one novel *Čorna rada*, the Ukrainian one, of which the Russian version is only a pale copy. In spite of the difficulties, Kuliš continued to pursue the two main goals of his writing in Russian: on the one hand, to show Russian readers that in spite of their present provincial status, Ukrainians had a glorious past; on the other, to arouse in Russified Ukrainians the feelings of their national belonging, of Ukrainian patriotism. Indeed, this is what we read in a letter addressed to the Bukovinian community in 1861: “[...] Я пишу й московською мовою, повертаючи на добру дорогу тих, що нашої мови не розуміють”²³.

3. The differences between the Russian and the Ukrainian versions have been illustrated by Naxlik²⁴. From a textual point of view, they manifest themselves in: 1. omissions in the Russian text compared to the Ukrainian and vice-versa; 2. re-making and re-phrasing of entire sentences and paragraphs; 3. divergences in style. They could be divided, according to their character, into two groups: those that are conditioned by artistic-aesthetic and cultural factors, and that can be ascribed, at least partly to Kuliš’s need to adapt to the “established literary taste”, and ideological differences, determined by the orientation toward readers with a different national consciousness and national past.

Overall, the Russian novel is much longer, and this is due to the many insertions and digressions. Here the author’s considerations are more extended and more frequent. One more clearly feels the personality of the writer, a Ukrainian intellectual who received his education in Russophone institutions and in conditions of dominant Russian culture; who, however, deeply immersed himself in the study of Ukrainian history, ethnography and folk poetry. The stylistic features of the “established literary taste”, that of the Scottian historical novel, which reside mainly in local colour and in the lengthy descriptions, are more marked in the Russian text. Indeed, we often find long, at times hyperbolic descriptions, full of ethnographic details; particularly heavy are those dwelling on the external appearance and dresses of single characters, such as that of Lesja. They display more elaborated, but also heavy, forms of expression and syntax. The psychological description of some of the characters is more extended (in particular Petro, Hvyntovka, and Brjuxovec’kyj). The Russian text, as was to be expected, is furnished with numerous footnotes that explain Cossack expressions, historical lexicon, Ukrainianisms, popular habits and rituals. The author also provides short historical-geographical notes, comments on his own and his characters’ words

²² Kuliš 1969: 498.

²³ “Kievskaja starina”, 1899, 4, p. 3.

²⁴ Kuliš 1998, I: 595-598.

with references to historical sources and editions; finally, he expounds in greater detail ethnographic descriptions and historical explanations.

On the other hand, in the Ukrainian version single sentences of the characters, present in the Russian text, are omitted. Moreover, particularly by using syntactical structures borrowed from folk literature, Kuliš achieves an incisiveness and pithiness of expression unknown to his Russian novel. Thanks to this condensation, the author gives his Ukrainian *Čorna rada* greater dynamism in the development of the action. First and foremost, however, the Ukrainian novel distinguishes itself from the Russian for its ideological accents. The reader feels the narrator's lively participation in the events described: if this is particularly evident in the last chapter with the death of Ukraine's faithful sons Somko and Šram, accents of a more palpable spiritual bond can be detected throughout the whole novel.

Finally, in the Ukrainian version, even if the author speaks less in the first person, one feels more his participation (for example in the repeated expression "Petro mij"), his emotional involvement with the events narrated. In the Russian text, on the contrary, the writer appears more distanced, assumes a didactic stance (cf., for instance, the repetition of the specification of time "v te vremena"), as if he is teaching the reader Ukrainian history, more than narrating it in a fictionalized form.

On the last page of the Russian text, in a footnote where Kuliš expresses his fascination with folk songs and *dumy* executed by bandura-players, he concludes: "Кстати замечу, что многое в этом сочинении написано целиком со слов народа (разумеется, в подлиннике, а не в переводе)"²⁵. The epigraphs at the beginning of each chapter in the Russian text (but not in the Ukrainian) seem to contradict this statement, but the contradiction is only apparent. Indeed, they have the function of 'giving the tone', so to speak, to the events that will be narrated, and, as Naxlik remarks, are drawn either from the memoirs of the former Zaporozhian Cossack M.L. Korž, transcribed and published by the historian A.O. Skal'kovskij in 1842, or from the *Litopys Samovydcja* or from Ševčenko's poetry²⁶. In the latter case they bear the signature "Anonim"²⁷, otherwise either "narodnaja дума", or "narodnaja pesnja", or "starinnaja pesnja"; the epigraphs show Kuliš's historical sources, as well as the folk sources of inspiration, the spirit of the people. At the same time they express the people's vision of historical events, and are thus somehow called to make up for the '*dux naroda*', otherwise not very perceptible in the Russian version. Particularly resonant with the events narrated, and as if setting the low key for the sad events that are going to take place, are the epigraphs from Ševčenko²⁸.

²⁵ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 7, p. 122.

²⁶ Kuliš 1998, I: 595.

²⁷ Which is dictated by considerations of political opportunity after Ševčenko's arrest.

²⁸ Indeed, three epigraphs overall are taken from Ševčenko, respectively to chapter 12, 14, 16 (there is a mistake in the numeration of the chapters in the Russian version: the diction "chapter nine" is missing, and instead we read "chapter ten", so that apparently the Russian has 19 chapters instead of 18, which, of course is not so). Ševčenko's lines are thus used as a

3.1. Overall, in the Russian novel the similarity to the Scottish approach, especially in the figure of Šram, is more marked. Indeed he appears, more than anybody else, as the carrier par excellence of the traditional values that Kuliš attributes to the Cossack *staršyna*, in particular honor and Orthodox-Christian devotion. It is mainly through him that Kuliš aims to show the Russians that Ukraine did not only ‘produce’ the wild Zaporozhian Cossacks, but is also the repository of high moral and civic values. As he says in the epilogue: “Мне хотелось доказать, что не ничтожный народ присоединился в половине XVII века к московскому царству. Он большею частью состоял из характеров самостоятельных, гордых сознанием своего человеческого достоинства; он, в своих нравах и понятиях, хранил и хранит до сих пор начала высшей гражданственности”²⁹.

Thus, for instance, no mention whatsoever is made of Šram’s wife, a Turkish prisoner, for it would have probably looked unfit for an Orthodox priest in the eyes of the Russian audience. Moreover, Šram is shown among all characters as the most devout (of course after Božij čolovik): thus in chapter 5, where the visit to the Kyivan Cave Monastery of Šram, his son, Somko, Čerevan’ and family is described, the Russian text dwells at length on Šram’s sincere Christian *pietas*. This is shown in his prayer, that uses verses from the Psalms: “Господи, возлюбих благолепие дому Твоего и место селения славы Твоея!”; “Боже, услыши молитву мою, и вопль мой к Тебе да придет. Не отврати лица Твоего от мене, в он же день скорблю, преклони ко мне ухо Твое, в он же день призову Тя, скоро услыши мя!”³⁰. However, the visit of the Cave Monastery in the Russian text inspires profound religious sentiments in the whole group: “можно после этого представить, с каким чувством вступили наши богомольцы в ворота Братства (как называлось тогда все вместе, монастырь и школы)”. And next to Šram’s prayers the author comments: “Наши богомольцы, вступя в церковь, произносили в слух свои молитвы, веруя всем сердцем, что они пришли в дом Отца Небесного”³¹. Šram’s religious devotion is stressed throughout the Russian text: as in the scene at the Cave Monastery, he is quite often portrayed in the act of praying, always using whole verses from the Psalms. At the same time, short authorial comments, apparently of no importance, stress his religious feelings here and there: cf., for instance, in Kyiv, when he is bothered by two Zaporozhians in the sacred place, the author concludes: “И

sort of commentary to the events narrated. Cf. for example at the beginning of chapter 12, where Kuliš relates the Cossack gathering at Kut Romanovs’koho and the judgment and subsequent severe physical punishment of Kyrylo Tur for having yielded to the temptation of a woman’s (Lesja’s) beauty, Ševčenko’s lines: “Тільки я, мов окаянный, / И день, и ніч плачу, / На розпуттях велелюдных - / И ніхто не бачить; / И не бачить, и не знає, / Оглухли, не чують, / Кайданами міняються, / Правдою торгують” (“Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 7, 41).

²⁹ Kuliš 1969: 499.

³⁰ “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 6, p. 56.

³¹ *Ibid.*

вскочив на коня поспешил удалиться, чтоб избежать греха”³².

3. 2. The ideas of the distinctness of Ukrainian history as well as its direct link with Kyivan Rus’ are more markedly worded in the Russian text, while in the Ukrainian there is less need to do so. This conception, which was in line with *Istorija Rusov*, is expressed in a very interesting work written by Kuliš around the same years as *Čorna rada*, but published only in 1990, *Knyha o dilax narodu ukrajins’koho i slavnoho vijs’ka kozac’koho zaporiz’koho* (1843)³³. This title clearly echoes A. Mickiewicz’s *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego*, a sort of catechism on the historical role of Poland in world history written for the Polish emigration in Paris. Kuliš’s *Knyha* is saturated, so to speak, with biblical language; the author takes the stance of a biblical prophet and makes an attempt to define the role of the Ukrainian people in world history and to give foundation to the idea of a different historical ‘fate’ of the Ukrainians as a separate subject of world history, and as glorious defenders of Christianity. Thus he wrote: “Из всех народов, населяющих землю, ни один не поднял таких отважных и благородных подвигов на пользу христианства, ни один не претерпел столько мучений и всякого рода бедствий за веру и любовь к родине, как народ малороссийский”³⁴. In spite of this glorious history, as Kuliš observed in the epilogue, the present state of the Ukrainian people was one of national decadence, because of the “бедственное разделение самой лучшей на земле семьи, семьи украинской”. Kuliš saw the main reason for this state of affairs in people’s ignorance of national history and abandonment of their own traditions. Kuliš hoped, however, that there would come a time, when Ukrainians, “обратившись к своей старине, к своим песням и своему обильному и пышному языку, докажут народам, что не напрасно их деды гремели славою во всем свете и не напрасно оставили им громкие песни свои и богатое слово”. Thus, in *Knyha* Kuliš laid a first foundation of the idea of national rebirth of Ukraine, and the biblical pathos of this work clearly resounds with the style of *Knyhy buttja ukrajins’koho narodu*³⁵. Kuliš’s *Knyha* also reflects the author’s historical research of the ‘40s, and the formation of his historical conceptions. Here Kuliš clearly defines the idea of divine Providence, in accordance to which the historical process is defined beforehand, determined by God. Thus, in *Knyha* we read such passages as the following: “Видно, Бог покарав їх [київських князів] і всю Україну за междусобную вражду і несогласію; а кого Бог хоче покарати, то прежде разум одніме”. The idea of divine Providence as the maker of history pervaded many of Kuliš’s works of the ‘40s on historical themes, among which *Čorna rada*. At the same time the author underlines the

³² *Ibid.*: 64. Cf. the corresponding Ukrainian text: “Да скорій до коня, да й поїхав” (Kuliš 1998, I: 66).

³³ See Hlyz’ *et al.* 1990, II: 66-80.

³⁴ *Ibid.*: 66.

³⁵ The main ideological and programmatic statement of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, written by M. Kostomarov in 1846 and reminiscent for its title and literary style, of Mickiewicz’s *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego*.

idea of the ‘people’ as an important factor in historical development.

3. 3. The glory of Ukraine’s past is exemplified by the city of Kyiv, cradle of the Eastern Slavs, in chapter 4 of the Russian text. In both versions the link with the past is stressed here. Kyiv is called “our old granddaddy”, and the glorious deeds of the Kyivan princes are recalled. However, the ideological accents diverge in the two versions. While in the Ukrainian text Kuliš recalls the recent taking and sacking of Kyiv by the Crown hetman Janusz Radziwiłł following the defeat at Berestečko in 1651, before that in the Russian novel he made a long digression on the sad consequences of the Union of the Churches. Thus we read:

Преполняют нашу душу горячими чувствами и недавние твои воспоминания – воспоминания о битвах за свободу нашей Церкви и национальности. Много наделала тебе бед, наш родной Киев, безумная уния! Она, вместо соединения церквей, воспламенила только страсти с обеих сторон и превратила свягую ревность к вере в жестокий фанатизм. Униаты и католики обыкновенно наезжали с вооруженными людьми на монастыри и монастырские владения, выгоняли из них православных, грабили церковное имущество, уничтожали духовные школы. Православные, в свою очередь, пользовались счастливыми обстоятельствами для возвращения подобным же способом своей собственности. Все время проходило в битвах и тревогах, и киевские святыни, потерпевшие в старые годы от Татар, не только не восстановились, а приходили еще в больший упадок³⁶.

This sort of *plač*, of lamentation, serves the dual purpose of stressing the author’s Orthodox loyalty, on the one hand, and introducing the following paragraph on Atanasij Kal’nofojs’kyj and his *Teratourgema* (also absent in the Ukrainian text)³⁷. Here Kuliš’s didactic stance is clearly perceptible, his aim being that of showing the high level reached by Ukrainian culture:

Монах Киевопечерского монастыря, Афанасий Кальнофойский, описывая в своей ‘Тератургеме’ тогдашний Киев, и упоминая о многих древних церквах, в одном месте говорит, что от такой-то церкви ‘остались едва стены, а развалины покрыты землею’, в другом – что церковные здания лежат под буграмы развалин и кажутся ‘пограбленными навеки’; наконец [...] бросает грустный взгляд на Киевопол, называя его ‘жалостным’, и говорит, что он едва ли достоин имени Киева, ‘в котором, по его словам, некогда было церковей более 300 каменных, 100 деревянных, а ныне всех едва ли 13’. Украинская летопись также [...] изображает нам плачевное состояние Киева около половины XVII века. Приде, говорит она, Хмельницкий в Киев, благодарение Богу воздавая, давшему ему победу, и, видевши красоту церковей божих

³⁶ “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 6, pp. 42-43.

³⁷ The full title of the work that records the miraculous events that occurred at the Kyivan Cave Monastery is *Teratourgema lubo cuda, ktore byly tak w samym swięto cudotwornym Monastyru Pieczarskim, Kiïonskim* (1638).

опустошенну и на землю поверженну, плакася³⁸.

Thus, the aim here is again to call attention to the devotion, the piety of Ukrainian people and their glorious hetman Xmel'nyč'kyj. It is interesting to notice, in this respect, that religious devotion is only stressed as regards the present Cossack *staršyna*, while the defense of the Orthodox faith (and thus Eastern Christianity) by Zaporozhian Cossacks is presented more as defense of a principle of self-identification than as a conscious, interiorized faith. Thus, in order to adapt to the expectations of the Russian audience Kuliš emphasizes, on the one hand, the difference and the present contrast between the *staršyna* and the Sič Cossacks, and on the other the divergence between the Zaporozhians of the early seventeenth century, whose role was positive, and those of the epoch he is portraying.

The stress on the destructive force of the Zaporozhians, their representing the principle of anarchy, as opposed to order is achieved by the author with both insertions and omissions. For example, in the episode when Kyrylo Tur and his companion follow the cart with Čerevan's wife and her daughter Lesja, the author, in order to stress their fear, adds: "Случилось им слышать про Запорожцев такие истории, от которых и не в лесу бывало страшно"³⁹. Two pages later, Kuliš's comment on the two Zaporozhians' plan to kidnap Lesja sounds more like a warning than the Ukrainian one⁴⁰ does.

As to the 'historical' Zaporož'e, Kuliš simplifies its depiction in the Russian novel, and attenuates its characterization as a wild, uncontrollable force. For instance, where the Ukrainian novel provides some information on the origin of the Zaporozhian Sič, the Russian one omits it, as is the case with the exclusion of the following characterization: "...до Січі сходились бурлаки з усього світу: прийде турок – і турка приймають; прийде німець – і німець буде запорожцем, аби перехрестивсь да сказав: Вірую во Христа Ісуса, рад воювати за віру християнську"⁴¹. In later historical works Kuliš will indicate exactly in this mixture, or better in the Asian (Turkish-Tatar) ethno-psychological factor, the destructive and anarchic tendencies of Zaporozhian Cossacks. Cf., for instance, in *Istorija vossoedinenija Rusi* (years '90s): "По формации Запорожской кочевой республики принимавшей к себе всех и каждого, без спроса, кто он и зачем бросил Города, эта республика-вольница необходимо должна была состоять из представителей всех племен, сословий и состояний. [...] Козацкое скопище, организовавшееся в своеобразную республику, было, во-первых, продуктом Азии [...] Во-вторых, оно было

³⁸ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 6, p. 43.

³⁹ *Ibid.*: 66.

⁴⁰ Cf. also, towards the end, the characterization of Brjuxoveč'kyj's Cossack banquet at Nižyn, in the perception of the Russian prince Gagin, absent in the Ukrainian text: "После чинных московских обедов этот пир казался ему настоящим Содомом" ("Russkaja beseda", 1857, 7, p. 98).

⁴¹ Kuliš 1998, I: 66.

продуктом Європы”⁴².

The above-mentioned polarization is also achieved in the Russian text with a well thought-out use of the language: when in the Ukrainian text the adjective *kozac'kyj* is used in reference to members of the *staršyna*, in Russian it is substituted by something else, usually the adjective *xristianskij*; at the same time the variety of terms used in the Ukrainian version to define the Zaporozhians is often reduced to either *kozaki* or *zaporožci*. Moreover, in order to stress the positive historical role of the Cossacks as defenders of the Orthodox faith, in the Ukrainian text Kuliš emphasizes the concept of *slava* in relation to the Cossacks, whereas in the Russian he often accompanies or substitutes it with *vera* (of course *pravoslavnaja vera*). It is also essential to stress that in the Russian version the concept of *naša vera* is very often accompanied with *imja*, or *samobytnost'*, or *nacional'nost'*, which can all be taken as signifiers of national identification, i.e. Ukrainian nationality, harking back to Kyivan Rus'. It is important to recognize this, because these same two concepts recur in the mouth of Somko, i.e. they constitute the kernel of Kuliš's conceptualization of Ukraine vis-à-vis Russia. Cf., for instance, the insertion in the Russian text of the following phrase, on hetman Petro Konaševyč-Sahajdačnyj who supported the Kyiv Epiphany Brotherhood Monastery and its school “не смотря на многократные разорения от фанатических противников нашей веры и национальности”⁴³. Cf. also the description of the paintings in the church built by the hetman Konaševyč-Sahajdačnyj and on the walled enclosure of the Brotherhood in both versions:

Ukrainian –

...й наше козацьке рицарство було там скрізь по ограді помальоване, щоб народ дививсь да не забував, як колись за батьків та за дідів діялось. Був там намальований і Нечай⁴⁴, і Морозенко⁴⁵. Крут його горять костюли й замки, а він січе-рубас, топче конем ляхів з недоляшками. Іще й підписано: ‘Лицар славного війська Запорозького’; а над ляхами: ‘А се проклятуці ляхи’. Знаєте, тоді ще хмельниччина тільки що втихла, так любив народ, дивлячись, споминати, як наші за себе оддячили. А ченці собі любили мирянам у голову задовбувати, що нема в світі ворога над католика⁴⁶.

⁴² The quotation is taken from Naxlik 2000: 18.

⁴³ “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 6, p. 54. In a footnote Kuliš makes clear that he is referring to the Jesuits, who had established their school nearby and tried to hamper the activity of the Brotherhood with all means.

⁴⁴ Danylo Nečaj (d. 1651), colonel of Braclav in the years 1648-1651, Cossack leader during the Cossack-Polish war. His deeds were glorified in numerous historical songs and dumas.

⁴⁵ Stanyslav Morozenko (d. 1649), colonel of the Korsun regiment (August 1648-April 1649), played a fundamental role in the liberation of Podillja and distinguished himself at the battle of Pyljavci. A historical song emerged about Morozenko and his heroic feats.

⁴⁶ Kuliš 1998, I: 63.

Russian –

Живопись [...] представляла разные события Священной истории, а также и народные воспоминания о славных защитниках **веры и имени** русского⁴⁷, так называемых *рыцарях*, или богатырях, каковы были Морозенко, Нечай и другие козаки, прославленные неумолкающими до сих пор песнями. Морозенко, или другой подобный ему витязь, обыкновенно изображался избивающим, при зареве пожара, Поляков, которых художник характеризовал свирепыми рожами и огромными брюхами. Земля была вся красная, в подтверждение стиха народной песни:

Де проїде Морозенко – кровавая річка.

В эпоху войн Хмельницкого все дышало козачеством и ненавистью к притеснителям **нашей веры и самобытности**; а потому монахи, натерпевшиеся вдоволь от католиков и униатов, позволяли своему художнику изображать, что ему угодно, для поддержания в народе духа ненависти ко всему неправославному и нерусскому. Не довольствуясь красками, художник прибегал к слову и прилагал к своим изображениям надписи: *Рыцарь славного войска Запорожского*, такой-то; а над Поляками: *А се проклятыи Ляхи*⁴⁸.

The length of the Russian text is due to the necessity for the author to explain phenomena with which the reader might have been unfamiliar (“так называемых *рыцарях*, или богатырях”), and add information that the Ukrainian audience already knew (“прославленные неумолкающими до сих пор песнями”). In spite of his presentation of the Zaporozhian Cossacks as a destructive force, Kuliš wants to explain to Russian readers their importance for the historical and national consciousness of Ukrainians. In order to do this, a few pages later in a footnote he likens the role of Zaporož'e, “убежище свободы во время польского владычества” to that of Moscow as defender of the people of Rus' from foreign aggressors⁴⁹.

Indeed, in numerous places of the Russian text you can feel the author's desire to teach Russians Ukrainian history: hence the need not only to insert long explanatory notes and shorter remarks, but also to quote the living witness of history, reflected vividly in folk literature. Cf. the long digression on Samijlo Kiška⁵⁰, evoked by the paintings in and around the church visited by the Cossack pilgrims:

Было также написано и знаменитое возвращение гетмана Самуила Кошки

⁴⁷ Here and subsequently the bold type is mine. Here and in further quotations, unless indicated otherwise, the italics are Kuliš's.

⁴⁸ “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 6, p. 57

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: 63.

⁵⁰ Samijlo Kiška (d. 1602), hetman of the registered Cossacks (1599-1602). In the 1570s he was made prisoner by the Turks, and in 1599 he organized a rebellion of the Cossack prisoners on Turkish galleys, and returned to his homeland. A famous *duma* emerged about his feats.

из неволи. По словам народной думы, он пятьдесят четыре года томился в неволе на турецких галерах и пятьдесят четыре года скрывал при себе старинную хоругвь; не погнулся его козацкий дух во все это время ни на волос; устоял он против тиранства и искушений ренегата, Ляха-Бутурлака, выждал счастливый час, захватил в свои руки галеру, освободил товарищей и возвратился с ними на ‘святорусский берег’, к козакам. Под этой торжественной сценой богомольцы наши прочитали стихи:

Тоді Кішка Самійло на чердак (*налу́б*) виступає,
 Хрепату давню корогов із кишені виймає.
 Роспустив, до води похилив,
 Сам низенько уклонив...
 А под групою козаков, стоящих на березу:
 Здоров, здоров, Кішко Самійло, гетьмане Запорозький!
 Не загинув еси у неволі, –
 Не загинеш з нами, козаками, на волі!”⁵¹.

3.4. Thus, in the recollection of the Ukrainian past to establish a link with the events narrated, the author’s voice intervenes to explain, specify and provide edifying examples. Other times the connection of past and present is only hinted at, as in a passage in chapter 3 where Lesja with the other pilgrims, for the splendour of her young age is likened to Ol’ga Igorixa and her retinue⁵².

In this insertion, as in many others, another important feature appears, which receives greater emphasis in the Russian novel, i.e. the idyllic treatment of the Ukrainian past. This tendency is evident from the very beginning, and is made explicit in numerous insertions (for instance, in the more detailed description of Ćerevan’s homestead in chapter 1), as well as in secondary details and authorial comments. As has been noted, it goes hand in hand with Kuliš’s ‘*xutirs’ka filosofija*’⁵³, here embodied

⁵¹ “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 6, pp. 57-58. Cf. the corresponding Ukrainian lines: “Був і Самійло Кішка, що й досі про його співають кобзарі, як він попавсь у турецьку неволю і п’ятдесят чотири роки був на галерах у кайданах, за замками, як йому Господь допоміг і себе, і товариства півчвартаста визволити і як, узявши ту галеру, приплив до козаків і короги хрепата давні у кишені козакам привіз – не зневажив козацької слави” (Kuliš 1998, I: 64).

⁵² “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 6, p. 39.

⁵³ In Kuliš’s concept of *xutirs’ka filosofija* (homestead philosophy) or *xutorjanstvo*, i.e. the idea of the Ukrainian nation organized on the basis of the homestead (*xutir*), is couched his vision and solution to the question of what constitutes the essence of Ukrainian nationality. At the same time, the principle of *xutorjanstvo* was also an attempt at reconciling the antithesis of statehood and anarchism, town and village (cf. also the chapter *Xutorjanstvo i Evropa* in Petrov 1929: 363-378).

in the story of Petro and Lesja⁵⁴. What is interesting in the Russian version is the fact that this ideal is also expressed in other characters. Cf. for example the digression on Šram's peaceful life after his retirement from active military life:

После военных бурь и общественной деятельности в сане полковника, Шрам полюбил тишину домашней жизни. В случае надобности, он посылал в походы сына, а сам хозяйничал на сенокосах и полях, сживал одиноким пустынным в пасике, а в праздники молился с народом Богу, и потом распивал с старыми приятелями меда и наливки; любил изредка посетить хутор такого ж, как и сам, пасичника, заброшенный в каком нибудь глухом байраке, чтобы помянуть за чаркой старину; [...] словом – вел такую жизнь, о какой только может мечтать козак под старость⁵⁵.

Even after Šram goes back to taking an active part in 'making the history' of Ukraine, his 'xutirs'kyj' ideal is still present: this is particularly made clear in the Russian version in his considerations on the difficulty of ruling the people, and on his lack of envy towards tsars and rulers.

The change in ideological emphasis in the recollection of Ukraine's past, which Naxlik observes in reference to the last chapter, as we have already partly seen, is spread throughout the novel. For instance, in chapter 6, the Russian version does not have the first two paragraphs, which in the Ukrainian text express feelings of national longing for the past greatness and glory under the Kyivan princes and then the hetmans. These lines were clearly meant for the Ukrainian nationally conscious reader, and witness to Kuliš's emotional involvement with his national history, which is absent in the Russian text: "Хто б то мав таке слово пишне да красне, щоб так, як на картині, змалював той монастир Печерський? Щоб хто й не був ізроду в Києві, так щоб і той, читаючи, мов бачив на свої очі ті муровані огради, ту височенну дзвіницю, ті церкви під золотом та під скульптурою? Се ж то воно так тепер; а років двісті назад треба було слова тихого, понурого, щоб розказати, як тоді знаходивсь монастир Печерський. Далось і йому взнаки батіївське лихоліття. Велика церква, що прописана в літописях 'небесі подобною', зруйнована була по вікна. Хоть же князь Омелькович Симеон⁵⁶ підняв її знов із руїн, тільки далеко їй було до стародавньої ліпоти. Не було ні срібла, ні золота, що тепер сіє по Лаврі всюди; усе було тоді убогенько"⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ Cf. V. Petrov's conclusion about this: "Задля ідилічної хуторянської заспокоєності, що її знаходять Петро й Леся, варт відмовитися од боротьби батьків за славу, гетьманство, багатство або верх над ворогами, відмовитися од Хмельниччини, як і од Чорної Ради" (Petrov 1929: 447).

⁵⁵ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 6, p. 10.

⁵⁶ Kyivan prince of the fifteenth century, during the Lithuanian dominion. He was a descendant of Algirdas, grand duke of Lithuania in 1345-1377.

⁵⁷ Kuliš 1998, I: 68-69.

4. To Kuliš's many changes in his dealing with Ukrainian history and culture in order to address the two audiences (Ukrainian / Russian) pertains his conceptualization of Ukraine within the framework of his loyalty to Russia.

4. 1. In order to give it a sound assessment, it is important first of all to recall the goals that the author declared he had set himself in the epilogue. We read:

...я желал выставить во всей выразительности олицетворенной истории причины политического ничтожества Малороссии и каждому колеблющемуся уму доказать, не диссертациею, а художественным воспроизведением забытой и искаженной в наших понятиях старины, нравственную необходимость слияния в одно государство южного русского племени с северным. С другой стороны, мне хотелось доказать, что не ничтожный народ присоединился в половине XVII века к московскому царству. [...] он придал России множество новых, энергических деятелей, которых влияние не мало способствовало развитию государственной силы русского народа; он, наконец, пришел в единоплеменную и единоверную ему Россию с языком, богатым собственно ему принадлежащими достоинствами, которые в будущем, своенародном образовании литературы должны усовершенствовать орган русского чувства и русской мысли⁵⁸.

Although already Kuliš's contemporaries thought that the statement that one of the goals of his novel was to demonstrate the necessity of the unification of Ukraine with Russia was more an *argumentum ad censuram*, rather than his main intent, it nevertheless quite faithfully reflects Kuliš's vision of Ukraine's political existence. His attitude toward Russia in his many historical works and reflections was ambivalent, and changed with time: on one side he saw in it the predominance of its Mongol-Tatar and Finno-Ugric remnants and influences, on the other (starting with Peter's reforms) the progressive assimilation of the acquisitions of European culture. In the development of his historical views the later rejection of the idealization of the Cossackdom (which he saw as a product of Turkish and Tatar influences) went hand in hand with the appreciation of the historical role of Peter I and Catherine II in his later years for their Europeanization of Russia and for Catherine's subjugation of the wild Zaporozhian Sič⁵⁹. In spite of the many apparent contradictions of his historical and socio-political views, Kuliš never expressed the idea of a separate existence of Ukraine from Russia. His view of a political unity of Ukraine and Russia, of a 'dvojedyna Rus', however, did not exclude Kuliš's bitter attacks on Russians for their lack of knowledge and recognition of Ukraine and the Ukrainian 'soul', and for their disinterest in all things Ukrainian⁶⁰.

Kuliš presents his conceptualization of the future of Ukraine through the mouths of Somko and Šram in the conversation that the two have while in Kyiv, where Somko discloses his plans for Ukraine. The discrepancy between the two versions says

⁵⁸ Kuliš 1969: 499.

⁵⁹ Cf. Naxlik 2000.

⁶⁰ Cf. Ševel'ov 1983: 23, 27.

a lot about how Kuliš adapted to the expectations of the Russian reader (and the Russian censor), and his attempt to show political loyalty. Thus we read in the Ukrainian text:

- ...Ось ходімо лиш до архимандрити, до нашого порадника. Гізель⁶¹, батьку, тепер у нас такий головатий чоловік, як колись був Могила. Поговоримо з ним де про що з Гадяцьких пунктів⁶². Не дурень був Виговський, що написав їх, тільки дурень, що з'якшавсь із ляхами. З ляхами в козаків вовіки-вічні ладу не буде. Чи гаразд, чи негаразд, а з москалем нам треба укупі жити. Се вже так, батьку!
- Ой, синку! – каже Шрам. – Рознюхали ми тепер добре бояр да воевод московських!
- Се, батьку, як до чоловіка! А москаль нам рідніший од ляха, і не слід нам од його одриватись.
- Бог його знає! – каже, здихнувши, Шрам. – Може, воно так буде й лучче⁶³.

And in the Russian novel we read:

- Пойдем-ка к отцу Иннокентию Гизелю; у него разумная и толковая голова. Поговорим с ним кое про что из Гадячских пунктов. Не дурак был Виговский, что хлопотал о типографиях и академиях; только худо сделал, что сдружился с Поляками. С Поляками у нас во веки вечные ладу не будет. Без Москаля нет нам житья на свете: Ляхи, Турки, Татары истребят, перевернут нас к верху дном. Один Москаль сбережет нам и **имя русское, и веру православную**⁶⁴.
- Ой сынку! сказал Шрам: – разнохали мы теперь добре бояр да воевод московских!
- *Се, батьку, як до чоловіка*, отвечал гетман; – а Москаль нам ближе Ляха, и не следует нам от него отрываться.
- Бог его знает! говорит в раздумьи Шрам; может, оно так и лучше будет⁶⁵.

The Russian fragment not only contains omissions compared to the Ukrainian; its whole tone is different and altered. Mohyla is not mentioned because he, with the creation of his College (later Academy) and his literary-cultural activity, could be seen here as representing the Latin-Polish influence in Ukrainian culture. Thus he would undermine the author's intention to deepen the Polish/Russian polarization, in which

⁶¹ Inokentij Gizel' (ca. 1600-1683), Ukrainian cultural and religious activist. After having completed his studies at the Kyiv Mohyla College, he studied abroad. From 1645 he was professor and rector at the Kyiv Mohyla College, and from 1656 archimandrite of the Kyivan Cave Monastery. He supported the aspirations of the Cossack *staršyna* for autonomy.

⁶² See footnote n. 6.

⁶³ Kuliš 1998, I: 79.

⁶⁴ The bold face is mine.

⁶⁵ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 6, p. 86.

the former was associated with the negative pole. As for the following phrase, the change in the Russian text compared to the Ukrainian completely deprives it of its essence, and divests it of much meaning. The political significance for Ukraine of hetman Vyhovs'kyj and of the Treaty of Hadjač is reduced to his plans for setting up schools and printing presses⁶⁶. In this way Kuliš's support of the provisions of this treaty (through Somko's words), as a way for Ukraine to coexist with Moscow on equal rights, loses its 'politically subversive' potential, and becomes a neutral statement on the importance of spreading culture in Ukraine. Although the treaty was never implemented, recalling its articles as the goal toward which Ukraine should strive, constitutes an open declaration of the author's 'political' agenda. In other words, Kuliš, through Somko, is postulating a federative State with Russia, where Ukraine is to enjoy great autonomy and equal rights with the other partner(s). The necessity for Ukraine to stick together with Russia is expressed with much more conviction in the Russian text than in the Ukrainian. While in the latter there is a sense of a historical 'compromise' that Ukraine has to accept, whether it is good or bad ("чи гаразд, чи негаразд") (and Šram's sighing suggests that the 'bad' prevails over the 'good'), in the Russian version this conviction is expressed with much greater intensity, and it is accompanied by the reasons for it: "Без Москаля нет нам житья на свете: Ляхи, Турки, Татары истребят, перевернут нас кверху дном". Again, the confessional and national motives are associated in one. In this respect, a few lines further in the Russian text the author adds a comment to this effect when the group gathered at Somko's residence drinks to the future of an undivided Ukraine and to the Orthodox tsar: "Ликовали от всего сердца, предвидя впереди много хорошего для всего православного мира"⁶⁷.

Šram, who has longer political experience, voices his doubts. Instead, the self-confidence with which Somko asserts his political plans is one of the signs that he is bound to fail. To this contribute in great measure his pride, his lack of political acuteness and his shortness of sight. His being a "living code of knightly virtues"⁶⁸ poorly masks lack of determination in carrying out his plans to the end. He is not apt to rule, and the final sacrifice of his life does not bring any good to Ukraine, while Šram's offering of himself saves the inhabitants of Pavoloč from the wrathful revenge of Teterja. Indeed, in the Russian conclusion, the author makes it clear to whom his sympathies go, where he states: "Шрам до конца остался героем, каких бывает мало"⁶⁹.

⁶⁶ One of the provisions of the Treaty of Hadjač was indeed the establishment of as many schools and printing presses "as were necessary", as well as two universities; however, this was clearly not the most crucial point (cf. also Subtelyny 1994: 144).

⁶⁷ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 6, p. 87. It is worth noting that in the 1855 manuscript text there is no mention of the tsar within this toast (cf. Petrov 1929: 441).

⁶⁸ "якийсь ходячий кодекс лицарських чеснот" (Zerov 1977: 207).

⁶⁹ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 7, p. 117.

4. 2. The change in the ideological accents, and the tendency to ‘measure the tone’ is even more marked in the conclusion. In the Ukrainian text Kuliš confers a poetic aura to the Ukrainian past, accenting the nobility and the glory of the historical deeds of the “широкого козарлюги і попа, Івана Шрама Паволоцького, і славного рицаря Сомка Переяславського”, who “не врадивши нічого супротив лихої української долі, полягли од беззаконного меча шановними головами. Хоть же вони і полягли головами, хоть і вмерли лютою смертю, да не вмерла, не полягла їх слава. Буде їх слава славна поміж земляками, поміж літописами, поміж усіма розумними головами”⁷⁰. On the contrary, in the Russian text the Ukrainian past is devoid of any aura of glory, and is presented simply as a sequence of facts: “Почти в то же время казнили в Борзне Сомка и Васюту. Их приверженцы сосланы в ссылку. Бруховецкий был всемогущ; Украина приуныла; все трепетало новой старшины козацкой; Запорожцы везде распоряжались чужою собственностью, как своею. Такова-то была та хваленая, поэтическая и геройская старина, о которой иные так простодушно вздыхают!”⁷¹.

This last sentence in the Russian conclusion, as it has been noted, represented a ‘concession’ to the censors of the III Department of the tsarist secret police. In fact, in 1847 the censors of the III Department, having read the first chapters of *Čorna rada* published in the journals “Moskvitjanin” and “Sovremennik”, had criticized the fact that the feats of Ukrainian Cossacks were presented there in an exaggeratedly glorious light⁷². They expressed a similar opinion with regard to Kuliš’s works *Knyha o dilax narodu ukrajins’koho*, *Povest’ ob urkainskom narode*, the poem *Ukrajina*, the historical novel *Myxajlo Čarmyšenko*⁷³. In view of these facts, Kuliš’s ‘political correctness’ in his Russian version of *Čorna rada* becomes understandable: here Kuliš strives to say as much as he can. Indeed, it is not devoid of meaning that the epigraph to the last chapter, called “narodnaja дума”, contains a glorification of Cossack history. Thus, without apparently showing his own emotional involvement in the Cossack past, Kuliš uses a mediated way to pass on his message. Cf.:

⁷⁰ Kuliš 1998, I: 170

⁷¹ “Russkaja beseda”, 1857, 7, p. 117.

⁷² Cf. the following literal comment: “...действуют полковник Шрамко и другие, более в обыкновенных случаях жизни. Но мимоходом говорится о набегах малороссиян как о важных войнах, о наездах казаков как бы о рыцарстве, словом, у Кулишина и здесь малороссийские казаки представляются в преувеличенной славе”. However, since all the glorious deeds of the Cossacks were directed against Poland, and not at all against Russia, the comment concluded that *Čorna Rada* does not contain “в себе ничего подозрительного” (Hlyz’ et al. 1990, II: 44).

⁷³ “В этих сочинениях он с восторгом описывал дух прежнего казачества, наезды гайдамаков изображал в виде рыцарства, представлял историю малороссиян едва ли не знаменитее всех историй, славу этого народа называл всемирною, приводил песни украинские, в которых выражается любовь к вольности, намекая, что этот дух не протыла и доселе также и в малороссиянах” (*Ibid.*: 80).

Полягла козацька молодецька голова,
 Як од вітру на степу трава;
 Слава не вмере, не поляже –
 Рицарство козацьке всякому розкаже⁷⁴.

At the same time, in the conclusion, through the figure of Petro, the author's ideal of a peaceful life in the *xutir* is enhanced in the Russian text. Here Petro's plan to enlist among the Zaporozhian Cossacks and fight for the Christian faith, of which we read in the Ukrainian text, does not appear. Even more remarkable here is that through Petro's reflection, the ideal of a life distant from the military 'glory' of Zaporoz'je appears to be the ideal even of the one who should be the most removed from it, Kyrylo Tur, who with his comrade departs for the Black Mountain. Cf. the Ukrainian and the Russian versions: "Одправивши по панотцеві похорони, поплакавши та пожурившись, Петро недовго загаявся у Паволочі. Думав був піти на Запорожжє і розпродав усе своє добро, да якось і звернув мислі на Київ. Опинивсь козак коло Хмаришца"⁷⁵; "Отправя скорбную тризну по своем отце, Петро не долго оставался в Паволочи. Как ни глубока была его сыновняя горесть, но она поглотила не все его чувства; беспокойство об участи Леси сильно томилло его душу. Ему как-то не верилось, чтоб он никогда больше не увидел ее. [...] Коротко сказать – он выехал из Паволочи и направился прямо к Хмарищу, почти в полной уверенности, что его Леся там"⁷⁶.

5. In conclusion, with his Ukrainian *Čorna rada* Kuliš achieved what no one had even attempted before: to create a novel dealing with the history of Ukraine in its national language, a language that displays a wide-ranging expressive potential, and whose richness, incisiveness and conciseness are still enjoyable today. Indeed, the linguistic gap with the not abundant literary output of Ukrainian prose of Kuliš's predecessors is manifest. The main novelty of the language of *Čorna rada* resides in the fact that, despite being formed on the basis of the vernacular, it embraces all strata of society. Its amplitude and stylistic variety derives from the combination in it of the language of ancient chronicles, folk literature, the conversational intonation of the daily spoken word, and archaic Biblical elements. These different linguistic components are merged harmoniously by Kuliš's fine linguistic feeling, which endowed the language of his Ukrainian novel with breadth and subtlety of expression, qualities that the Russian novel does not possess.

With his Russian *Čorna rada* Kuliš presents the readers with a novel that oscillates between an idyll, a historical chronicle and an ethnographical survey. From a stylistic point of view, the work is far from being homogeneous. This is clearly visible in the numerous expressions left by the author in Ukrainian and often underlined in italics or by the simple use of Ukrainian prepositions and lexicon (cf., for instance, the frequent

⁷⁴ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 7, p. 117.

⁷⁵ Kuliš 1998, I: 170.

⁷⁶ "Russkaja beseda", 1857, 7, pp. 117-118.

use of *koľy* instead of *koľda*). In spite of these and other flaws, of which the author was aware, the work achieved his goal of giving a vivid picture of a people that contributed so much to the creation of the Russian state and whose history, customs and traditions did not deserve to fade into oblivion or to be confined to the sphere of low culture.

His adaptation to the expectations of a Russian audience, as we have seen, is clearly perceivable in the conceptualization of Ukraine's existence within the framework of the Russian Empire. The author said as much as he could, taking into account his arrest in connection with the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius. If we were to put it in political terms, we would say that he is postulating a Federation with Russia, in which Ukraine is acknowledged as having an autonomous cultural and spiritual role. At the same time he is very subtly expressing his doubts on the real possibility of a common existence in which Ukraine enjoys great autonomy (cf. for example Šram's words on Russian boyars quoted earlier). From his meticulous study of Ukrainian history he was well aware of Russia's centralizing and autocratic tendencies. Cf. his article entitled *Herveniv "Dzvin"* (1869), where he comments negatively on Moscow's centralizing tendency, clearly manifested in the suffocation of the federative principles in the republics of Pskov and Novgorod.

On the other hand, Kuliš acknowledged that Ukraine was not ready to create a state organism of its own. And this he shows quite effectively in *Čorna rada*. Ukrainians still had too little knowledge of their history, their language and their traditions to be nationally aware of their distinctiveness as an autonomous and worthy subject of world history. Hence the goal that Kuliš set himself to fill this gap. In this sense we could say that Kuliš's *Čorna rada* certainly constituted an important step forward in this direction.

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Abstract

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A Russian and Ukrainian Historical Novel: Pantelejmon Kuliš's Čorna Rada

Čorna rada by Pantelejmon Kuliš is widely recognized as the most important Ukrainian historical novel. It was written and published in 1857, in both Ukrainian and Russian. This analysis of the differences between the two versions – and especially of their diverging ideological accents – highlights the dual allegiance felt by mid-nineteenth century Ukrainian intellectuals to an all-Russian (imperial) culture and to local Ukrainian patriotism. At that time, Ukrainian writers did not consider the two allegiances mutually exclusive, and they wrote their literary works in both Russian and Ukrainian. In spite of this, the history of the composition of *Čorna rada* is indicative of the growing awareness of a bond between a common linguistic code and the transmission of a shared past, historical and folk traditions, and common cultural-emotional values. In this sense, the Ukrainian *Čorna rada* is a landmark in the formation of modern Ukrainian literature and literary language, as well as in the gradual shift of Ukrainian literature to a monolingual basis.