

OLEH CHORNOHUZ and RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

**For those friends of yours that still wonder why Ukrainians resent the Russians...
Here is the opinion of one Ukrainian patriot, Oleh Chornohuz, with which no other patriot
could possibly disagree:**

For me,
the Russian language is

the unstoppable flow of Ukrainian blood spilled by our “elder Russian brother” who, according to his birth records, is by far the younger brother. With this blood we, Ukrainians, have written our history. And when we read our bloody history, we have to take sedatives and ponder the question: why was (is) this relationship called the “friendship of fraternal nations?”

For me,
the Russian language is

robbery committed in broad daylight before the eyes of the entire civilized world: the co-opting of the name of a neighbouring country (Kyivan Rus’-Ukraine) and its inclusion in all the maps of the world by supplanting the term “the state of Muscovy” with the words “Russian Empire” (1713).

For me,
the Russian language is

the condemnation and anathema proclaimed by the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church against the “new Kyivan books” of the Ukrainian theologians Petro Mohyla, Kyrylo Stavrovetsky-Tranquillon, and Simeon Polotsky (1690).

For me,
the Russian language is

the deliberate burning of all the original Ukrainian historical annals, the literary heritage of Kyivan Rus’, the treaties of hetmans Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Ivan Vyhovsky—our historical memory.

For me,
the Russian language is

the ukase issued by Tsar Peter I, prohibiting the printing of books in the Ukrainian language and the excision of passages from liturgical books.

For me,
the Russian language is

the crucifixion of Ukraine. It is the millions of bones of Ukrainian Cossack prisoners of war, which are literally immured in the foundations of St. Petersburg, the capital of Muscovy (1703); the all-out massacre of the Ukrainian population (over 17,000 men, women and children) of Baturyn, the capital of the Ukrainian Cossack Hetmanate, after the Battle of Poltava (1709); the devastation of Zaporozhian Sich Cossack outposts; and the use of Ukrainian forced laborers on the White Sea Canal and other artificial channels.

For me,
the Russian language is

the command issued by Tsar Peter III to rewrite, from Ukrainian into Russian, all government decrees and regulations.

For me,
the Russian language is

the decree issued by Tsarina Catherine II, forbidding instruction in the Ukrainian language at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (1753).

For me,
the Russian language is

the closure of Ukrainian schools attached to regimental Cossack offices and the uninterrupted spilling of Ukrainian blood by the bayonets of their Muscovite “brothers” (1775).

For me,
the Russian language is

“the conquest of Siberia and the subjugation of the Crimea” (a line from Russian playwright Alexander Griboedov’s play *Woe from Wit*) as promoted by Russia’s poets and painters.

For me,
the Russian language is

the sentiment expressed by Russia's pre-eminent poet Alexander Pushkin: "Humble thyself, O
Caucasus, for Yermolov is coming."

For me,
the Russian language is

the deportation of the larger and smaller nations of the Muscovite Empire to "unexplored
Siberia."

For me,
the Russian language is

the intensification of the brutal persecution of the Ukrainian language and culture in the 19th
century, as exemplified by the prohibition of the finest works of Ukrainian writers.

For me,
the Russian language is

the closure of Ukrainian Sunday schools for adults in the Russian Empire (1862).

For me,
the Russian language is

the circular issued by Peter Valuev, tsarist Russia's Chief of Gendarmes, who banned the
printing of spiritual and popular-educational books in the Ukrainian language because "*there
never was, is not, and never will be a
separate Ukrainian language*" (1863-1876).

For me,
the Russian language is

the declaration of Dmitry Tolstoy, tsarist Russia's education minister:

"The end goal of the education of all foreigners should be their complete Russification" (1870).

For me,
the Russian language is

the Ems Ukase of Tsar Alexander II, which *banned Ukrainian performances*, the singing of
Ukrainian songs, and even the printing of music notes accompanied by Ukrainian-language texts
(1876).

For me,
the Russian language is

the prohibition against the translation of Russian literature into Ukrainian and the *ban on publishing Ukrainian children's books* (1892).

For me,
the Russian language is

the closure by tsarist Russia's Prime Minister Petr Stolypin of all Ukrainian cultural centers, associations, and printing houses; the prohibition *against giving lectures in Ukrainian and organizing any kind of non-Russian clubs*.

For me,
the Russian language is

the resolution passed by the 7th Noble Assembly in Moscow concerning the exclusivity of Russian-language education and the *inadmissibility of using other languages of instruction in schools* throughout the Russian Empire (1911).

For me,
the Russian language is

the *interdiction against commemorating the 100th anniversary of Ukraine's national poet Taras Shevchenko* and the liquidation of the Ukrainian press (1914).

For me,
the Russian language is

the Russification campaign in western Ukraine, *the prohibition on Ukrainian letters, education, and the church* (1914-1916).

For me,
the Russian language is

the occupation of Ukraine by the Russian Bolsheviks and their red terror, organized by Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin.

For me,
the Russian language is

the *summary executions of Ukrainian civilians* in Kyiv by the cutthroats led by Soviet commander Mikhail Muravev simply because they spoke Ukrainian and some were wearing Ukrainian embroidered shirts (1918).

For me,
the Russian language is

the *phenomenon of cannibalism* during the first and second of the three famines that took place in Ukraine in the twentieth century (1921, 1932-33).

For me,
the Russian language is

the genocide, known as the *Holodomor*, which killed at least 10 million Ukrainian peasants, the finest farmers in the world, as Stalin informed Churchill during a conversation by indicating all the fingers of his two hands (1933).

For me,
the Russian language is

a crime without punishment. It is the Stalin-ordered *deaths of tens of thousands of my innocent countrymen* in the first days of the Second World War in the park named after the Soviet Russian writer Maxim Gorky in my native city of Vinnytsia.

For me,
the Russian language is

the poorly clothed, fed, and armed Ukrainian troops who were used as cannon fodder during World War Two to fend off the Nazi occupiers, who were armed to the teeth; ditto for the Soviet war in Afghanistan.

For me,
the Russian language is

the millions of Ukrainian refugees who fled to the West before the second Soviet invasion of western Ukraine (1943).

For me,
the Russian language is

the *wholesale deportation of the Chechens and Ingushetians* from their native lands during the Second World War.

For me,
the Russian language is

the *complete assimilation* of the peoples of the Muscovite Empire, be it *tsarist, communist, or post-Soviet*.

For me,
the Russian language is

the pledge “*to kill, slaughter, hang, drown, and exile those ‘khokhols,’*”
the derogatory term with which our “fraternal” neighbors, the Russians, refer to Ukrainians.

For me,
the Russian language is

the *political assassinations of the finest sons of my nation not only in Ukraine but outside its borders*.

For me,
the Russian language is

Siberia, Kolyma, the Solovetsky Islands, and the hundreds of other death camps in the Soviet GULAG, where the most brilliant Ukrainian intellectuals of the twentieth century—poets, including blind ones, writers, scholars, academicians, scientists, and clergymen, bishops, and archbishops) met their untimely end.

For me,
the Russian language is

21 January 1978, the day that Oleksa Hirnyk from the city of Kalush went to the gravesite of Ukraine’s national poet Taras Shevchenko in Kaniv, where he scattered a thousand handwritten leaflets protesting the Russification of the Ukrainian people. Then he doused himself with gas and raised a lighter to his chest. Hirnyk’s death marked the year of the building of the “single Soviet people.”

For me,
the Russian language is

Vladimir *Putin's notorious pledge to eradicate the Chechens' age-old struggle for independence*: "We'll get them anywhere—if we find them sitting in the outhouse, we will rub them out there" (1999).

For me,
the Russian language is

the executions of Ukrainian patriots who stood up for their right to speak and write in Ukrainian.

For me,
the Russian language is

the language of a fascist, a racist, a chauvinist—and my bitterest enemy.

For me,
the Russian language is

the continuing *threats made by the Putins, Zhirinovskys, Zatulins, and Luzhkovs of Russia to launch pre-emptive nuclear strikes at Ukraine.*

For me,
the Russian language is

the continuing cruelty and disrespect shown to my nation by the *installation or maintenance of monuments honoring the tsarist and Soviet oppressors of Ukraine* (2008).

For me,
the Russian language is

the language *of an oppressor, a conqueror, and an occupier.*

For me, Today,
the Russian language in

independent Ukraine, if Ukraine is indeed independent, is the death of my Ukrainian language and Ukraine's final enslavement.