

**THE LANGUAGE BEYOND THE WALL:
ON THE SOVIETISATION OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE
IN THE ‘EX-DDR’ (1945-1989)**

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I. Introduction

The German history of the twentieth-century – characterised first by the experience of National Socialism and then by the territorial division in two ideologically opposed States – is a typical example of how language can assume different characteristics based on enforced ideology, and of how linguistic manipulation in totalitarian regimes can become an effective tool of persuasion and indoctrination of the masses.

Although relevant for the development of the German language between the end of the World War II and the end of the 1980s, the division of Germany into two States – the Federal Republic, a member of NATO, and the Democratic Republic, linked to the Soviet Union and to the countries of the Eastern Bloc – also brought to repercussions in the field of linguistics. The natural inclination towards linguistic evolution manifested itself in a uniform manner in both East and West Germany through the development of two distinct *Kommunikationsgemeinschaften* (‘communication communities’), each of which was related to its respective socio-political context and whose influence is still today partly reflected in the communication between the Germans of the old and new *Länder* (‘federal states’), who have experienced the division of Germany.

The processes of linguistic evolution in the *DDR* (*Deutsche Demokratische Republik*, ‘GDR = German Democratic Republic’) did not involve morphosyntactic structures – which remained almost unaltered – but more specifically lexical and stylistic aspects.

The communicative problem between East and West Germans emerged, therefore, where the words of the ‘Others’ were unknown (neologisms and foreignisms being used just by one side), uncommon (new compounds, products of structural calques from other languages) or hardly recognisable in their significance (semantic adaptations due to the dominant ideology or contact with other languages).

The language characteristics of Democratic Germany, and the differences with those of Federal Germany, have been the subject of many critical studies, glossaries and dictionaries that emerged between the early 1960s and the present day, bearing witness to the interest that the topic has generated, and continues to generate, within the scientific community. Further scope for research emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, by monitoring the linguistic evolution following the *Wiedervereinigung* (‘German reunification’), which enables one to observe, among other things, which terms of the GDR’s lexical heritage are ‘survivors’ of the *Wende* (‘turnaround’), and are still – or once again – in use among speakers.

The present study intends to offer an overview of the direct (borrowed and structural calques) and indirect (semantic calques and processes of resemantisation) influence of the Russian language and Marxist-Leninist ideology on the German language in use in the GDR from the end of the Third Reich until the fall of the Berlin Wall.¹ The analysis of these linguistic phenomena is achieved through a comparative study based on dictionaries and specific researches on the lexicon of the GDR published in the Democratic Republic of Germany and the Federal Republic of Germany between 1968-2000.²

II. The Post-War Period in East Germany between Denazification and Sovietisation of Language (1945-1948)

The unconditional surrender of the Wehrmacht (May 1945) not only announced the end of the World War II and the definitive defeat of the Third Reich, but also the end of

¹ I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for his/her careful reading of my manuscript and his/her insightful comments and suggestions.

² They include: Hans H. Reich, *Sprache und Politik. Untersuchungen zu Wortschatz und Wortwahl des offiziellen Sprachgebrauchs in der DDR* (München: Hueber, 1968); Heidi Lehmann, *Russisch-deutsche Lehnbeziehungen im Wortschatz offizieller Wirtschaftstexte der DDR* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1972); Michael Kinne, Birgit Strube-Edelmann, *Kleines Wörterbuch des DDR-Wortschatzes* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1980); Manfred W. Hellmann, *Wörter und Wortgebrauch in Ost und West. Ein rechnergestütztes Korpus-Wörterbuch zu Zeitungstexten aus den beiden deutschen Staaten. DIE WELT und NEUES DEUTSCHLAND. 1949-1974* (Tübingen: Narr, 1992); Sabina Schroeter, *Die Sprache der DDR im Spiegel ihrer Literatur. Studien zum DDR-typischen Wortschatz* (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 1994); Birgit Wolf, *Sprache in der DDR. Ein Wörterbuch* (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2000).

the cultural and linguistic isolation in which Germany had precipitated during the experience of National Socialism. The country was divided into four *Besatzungszonen* ('occupation zones') governed, respectively, by the Americans, the British, the French and the Russians. The functions of the central government were transferred to the *Alliiertes Kontrollrat* ('Allied Control Council').

The new start for politics, culture and economy was named *Stunde Null* ('Hour Zero'), an expression borrowed from the military jargon concerning organisational planning. As far as the literature is concerned, terms such as *Trümmerliteratur* ('rubble literature') and *Kahlschlagliteratur* ('clear-cutting literature') were introduced to indicate the sharp split with the recent past that had immediately been put into place by the German intellectuals. The process of linguistic denazification, on the other hand, began in a slower, more gradual way, given that language – as a tool for interaction and socialisation – could not undergo substantial change in such a sudden manner. For one thing, it had to free itself from the lexical heritage and argumentative models imposed by the National Socialist ideology.

It is worth noting that the institutional language, namely terminology relating to the previous political system, was, of course, the first to disappear. Terms such as *Gau* ('regional district'), *Reichskommissariat* ('Reich Commissariat'), *Sturmabteilung* ('Storm Detachment') and even the title *Deutsches Reich* ('German Empire') in use from 1871, quickly became obsolete. In contrast, lexicon related to the immediate consequences of the war was preserved for a longer time and, in particular, the terminology relating to the rationing of foodstuffs and other primary consumer necessities – *Lebensmittelkarten* ('food ration cards'), *Bezugsscheine* ('ration coupons'), *Versorgungslage* ('supply situation'), and so on –, as well as the terms linked to certain forms of 'underground business' – *Hamsterfahrten* ('foraging trips'), *Schwarzmarkt* ('black market'), *Zigarettenwährung* ('cigarette currency') among others.³

In the zones governed by the Americans, the British and the French, the primary focus was the linguistic restoration of the *status quo ante*, without preventing the use of certain suitable words to describe the most recent events of the time. The political and cultural denazification of these territories was combined with the process of democratisation, which was also reflected in the language. On the other hand, in the *SBZ* (= *Sowjetische Besatzungszone*, 'SOZ = soviet occupation zone'), modifications shaped by socialism came about. Here, denazification was not linked to democratisation, but rather to the sovietisation of life and language.

³ Some of these terms, for reasons linked to planned economy, will be preserved in the GDR until the reunification of Germany. Horst D. Schlosser, "Die deutsche Sprache in Ost- und Westdeutschland", *Deutsch aktuell. Einführung in die Tendenzen der deutschen Gegenwartssprache*, ed. by Sandro M. Moraldo and Marcello Soffritti (Roma: Carocci, 2004), 159-168, here 160.

The steady presence of Russian occupants in the area had, as a primary consequence, i) the introduction of new Russianisms, which were linked to the contingent situation – for example *Propusk* ('identification paper, pass'), *Pajok* ('food ration, food-aid')⁴ –, ii) the input of new items in the culinary arena, and of related names – *Borschtsch* (beetroot-based soup of Ukrainian origin), *Soljanka* (thick soup of Russian origin with a spicy, sour flavour), *Pelmeni* (meat tortellini typical of Siberia), *Kwaß* ('Kvass', Russian fermented beverage commonly made from rye bread) among others –, as well as iii) the recovery of Russianisms, which had already entered the German language before 1933, among which the following are worth mentioning:

<i>Sowjet</i> 'soviet' (Russian <i>sovét</i>)	Literally 'council, assembly, advice, harmony, concord', meaning the kinds of political organisations finalised to the conquest and management of power on a central and on a local level by the working class and by workers. In German, the term had also taken on the meaning <i>Sowjetmensch</i> ('Soviet citizen').
<i>Troika</i> 'troika' (Russian <i>trojka</i>)	Literally 'a group of three'. Originally the term meant 'a sled drawn by three horses harnessed side-by-side', but later it took on the political-administrative meaning of 'triarchy, triumvirate'.
<i>Datsche</i> 'dacha' (Russian <i>dača</i>)	A home located in the countryside, sometimes owned by inhabitants of large cities and used to spend holidays, or to be let to holidaymakers.

Furthermore, whereas in the other occupation zones, a single meaning often had a number of variants, in the SOZ, a univocal terminology was imposed by way of a process of linguistic regulation and censorship for terms relating to history and politics. Examining the epithets relating to the end of Nazi Germany, for example, an important difference emerges in linguistic attitude: while, at the same time, in the Western zones – and later on in the Federal Republic – variants were acceptable such as *Zusammenbruch* ('collapse'), *Niederlage* ('defeat'), *Kapitulation* ('capitulation'), the Soviet occupants and the German communists officially adopted the use of the epithet *Befreiung* ('liberation') alone.

In the zone under Soviet control, the public use of words with a positive connotation – typical of the Nazi-Fascist period – was banned, such as *Großdeutschland* ('Greater Germany'), *Führer* ('leader'), and so on. There was, moreover, an increase in the use of terms with a negative significance referring to Germany of the Third Reich – for

⁴ Shortened form of the Russian *suchoi pajok*, literally 'dry provisions', consisting of packets containing potatoes, meat and sugar distributed weekly to a circle of intellectual elite, such as university professors, engineers, doctors and other specialists of some sort.

example *SS-Staat* ('Nazi police state'), *NS-Kriegsverbrecher* ('Nazi war criminals').⁵ In addition, the use of new terms was introduced – for the most part, semantic calques or Russian loanwords – with the scope of bridging the linguistic gap related to many areas of public life and to the organisation of work according to the Soviet model. Amongst others, some examples include the following:

<p><i>Brigade</i> 'brigade'</p>	<p>In the original meaning of 'large military unit', this term migrated from the French to the Russian <i>brigáda</i> where it also took on the meaning of 'smallest unit of people working together in a factory involved in campaigns to promote higher productivity', which was its primary meaning in East German since 1945. The derivative term <i>Brigadier</i>, 'head of a work brigade', takes on the pronunciation [briga'di:ʁ] from the Russian <i>brigadíř</i>, while in the military sense of 'officer commanding a brigade', it borrows the French pronunciation [briga'dje:].</p>
<p><i>Patenschaft</i> 'godparenthood'</p>	<p>As a semantic calque of the Russian <i>šefstvo</i> ('supervision', from the French <i>chef</i>) the term acquired a new specialist meaning of 'professional or ideological control, support and joint responsibility on the part of workers or businesses towards groups or single individuals for economic, cultural or political promotion'. <i>Patenschaft</i>, in this sense, would regularly feature in a contract, the <i>Patenschaftsvertrag</i> ('mentorship contract').</p>
<p><i>Subbotnik</i> 'working saturday'</p>	<p>Shortened form of the Russian <i>kommunisticeskij subbotnik</i> ('communist working Saturday'). The term implied 'a day of unpaid volunteer work at the weekend for the benefit of the collective'. Such days were dedicated to the collection of garbage and recyclable materials, to repairing public property, and to other services of public benefit.</p>

From June 1945, the formation of antifascist political parties was allowed in the area under Soviet influence. Such parties were established as the KPD (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, 'Communist Party of Germany'), the SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, 'Social Democratic Party of Germany'), the CDU (*Christlich-Demokratische Union Deutschlands*, 'Christian Democratic Union of Germany') and the LDPD (*Liberal-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands*, 'Liberal Democratic Party of Germany'). In April 1946, the two major parties – the KPD led by Walter Ulbricht and the SPD headed by Otto Grotewohl – merged to become a single political organisation, the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, 'Socialist Unity Party of Germany'). This party, with the help of the Soviet Union, gradually strengthened its position, gain-

⁵ Horst D. Schlosser, *Die deutsche Sprache in der DDR zwischen Stalinismus und Demokratie. Historische, politische und kommunikative Bedingungen* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1990), 21-22.

ing more and more sympathy through the establishment and control of mass organisations, as well as through People's Congresses.

These political choices, shaped by socialism, facilitated the retrieval of terms that were connected to propaganda, and with a Marxist-Leninist style of political and social organisation. These terms – that had already entered the German language before 1933 and were diffused almost exclusively within restricted circles of intellectuals and Pro-Soviet politicians – had fallen into disuse during the period of National Socialism. They underwent, first in the SOZ and then in the German Democratic Republic, a process of revitalisation, characterised by a significant increase in the frequency of use. Among many examples, it is worth mentioning:

<p><i>Agitation</i> '(political) agitation'</p>	<p>The activity of information and persuasion of the masses concerning terms of political, social and economic interest. The term takes its positive connotation from the Russian <i>agitacija</i>, while it is substituted by the Graecism <i>Demagogie</i> ('demagogy') with a negative significance.</p>
<p><i>Aktionseinheit</i> 'unity of action'</p>	<p>In socialist doctrine, the term indicates the cooperation of organisations and political parties of the working class for the achievement of crucial common objectives beyond different ideological-political standpoints.</p>
<p><i>Wandzeitung</i> 'wall newspaper'</p>	<p>Structural calque from the Russian <i>stengazeta</i>, abbreviated form of <i>stennaja gazeta</i>. Notice board present in factories, schools and other institutions, organised like a newspaper page with articles, images and communication panels regarding current events and political topics for the purpose of propaganda.</p>

From September 1945, in the SOZ, *Bodenreform* ('land reform') was launched through the expropriation of estates wider than 100 hectares and the formation of LPGs (*landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaften*, 'agricultural production cooperatives'). By similar measures, banks, factories and insurance companies were confiscated from private owners and turned into VEBs (= *volkseigene Betriebe*, 'people-owned enterprises').⁶ New

⁶ Here the adjective *volkseigen* ('people-owned') takes on the synonymical meaning of *staatlich* ('state-owned'), in the sense that, according to the Marxist-Leninist belief, a clear distinction between State and the people did not exist. It is significant that, even during the Third Reich, certain distinctive traits of communist lexicon were adopted. The compounds containing *Volk-* represented an evident example: *Volksempfänger* (literally 'people's receiver'), *Volkswagen* (literally 'people's car'), *Volksgemeinschaft* ('people's community'), *Volksgerichtshof* ('People's Court'), *Volkssturm* (literally 'people's storm') and so on. Considering how the German communists intended the prefix *Volk-* as an essential linguistic manifestation of ideology itself, they took it as their own, establishing, in this way, an associative link between the so-called *Sowjetdeutsch* ('Soviet German language') and the language of National Socialism.

compounds and euphemisms appeared in the language with reference to expropriation – *Neubauern* ('newly settled farmers', usually political refugees, to whom expropriated land was entrusted so that they would, in turn, look after it), *Umsiedler* ('resettlers', German refugees who had fled from the former territories of the Eastern German-Polish border),⁷ *Volkseigentum* ('people ownership').⁸ In addition, the revitalisation of some Russianisms, related to the Soviet-style agricultural economy, was also observed, as well as the introduction of new structural calques, among which the following should be noted:

<p><i>Kolchos(e)</i> 'kolkhoz'</p>	<p>Abbreviated form of the Russian <i>kol(lektivnoe) choz(jajstvo)</i>, literally 'rural collective economy'. The term denotes the farming cooperatives in which the farmers worked the land collectively, dividing equipment and machinery, as well as the harvest, in proportion to the number of hours actually performed by each farmer. The compounds <i>Kolchoswirtschaft</i> (from the Russian <i>kolchoznoe chozjajstvo</i>, 'rural collective economy') and <i>Kolchosbauer</i> (Russian <i>kolchoznik</i>, 'collective farmer'), as well as the respective synonyms <i>Kollektivwirtschaft</i> and <i>Kollektivbauer</i>, in addition to the derivative <i>kolchosieren</i> or <i>kollektivieren</i> ('to collectivise') can all be attributed to the Russian form <i>kolkhoz</i>.</p>
<p><i>Sowchos(e)</i> 'sovkoz'</p>	<p>Abbreviated form of the Russian <i>sov(etskoje) choz(jajstvo)</i>, literally 'Soviet economy'. The term implied large, state-owned farms, created as a result of the collectivisation of land and means of production. The farmers who worked there, the <i>Sowchosarbeiter</i> ('sovkhos workers', Russian <i>rabotniki sovchoza</i>) were, to all intents and purposes, dependent on the State, and received financial remuneration, while the entire harvest was property of the State.</p>
<p><i>Maschinen-Traktoren-Station</i> 'machine and tractor station'</p>	<p>Structural calque from the Russian <i>mašinnno-traktornaja stancija</i>. This term was used to indicate 'a state enterprise for ownership and maintenance of agricultural machinery that were used in kolkhozes'.</p>

⁷ In an official context, the term *Vertriebenen* ('refugees') could not be used as it would have put Poland, which was an ally, in a bad light. The term *Flüchtlinge* ('fugitives') was also discarded, as seeking refuge from a socialist State could not be acknowledged.

⁸ Expropriation and nationalisation were concealed behind the idea of collective community by the many compound words with the prefix *Volk-* ('people'): *Volkseigentum* ('people ownership'), *Volksüter* ('people-owned property'), and so on. As a result, the attribute *privat* ('private, personal') was no longer merely the antonym of *öffentlich* ('public'), but also of *kollektiv* ('collective'). Thus, in colloquial language, attributive forms or compounds with *privat* were used to indicate the few things that were not state-owned, such as: *Privatbäcker* ('private baker'), *Privatschreiner* ('private carpenter') or *private Kühe, Schafe, Schweine* ('private cows, sheep, pigs'). On the other hand, in the official language, the sole attribute *individuell* ('individual') was used, such as: *individueller Viehbestand* ('private livestock'). Schlosser, "Die deutsche Sprache in Ost- und Westdeutschland", 164-165.

In summer 1946, the Soviet-style ‘single educational course’ model, the *Einheitsschule* (‘comprehensive school’), was introduced by the Russian occupants into the SOZ educational system replacing the differentiated, formative courses offered by the pre-existing school system consisting of the *Gymnasium* (‘grammar school’) and the *Mittelschule* (‘technical secondary school’). The *Deutsche Zentralverwaltung für Volksbildung* (‘Central Administration of People’s Education’) – which, following the birth of the German Democratic Republic, became the *Ministerium für Volksbildung* (‘Ministry of People’s Education’) – was concerned with compiling school programmes that conformed to Marxist-Leninist doctrine.⁹ The study of the Russian language became compulsory in all schools beginning from the fifth class. Given that before 1945 the most widely studied foreign languages in Germany were English and French, the first issue to tackle throughout most of the SOZ territory was to find Russian teachers, as well as to overcome the lack of textbooks and other teaching materials. With the help of the Soviet occupants, the problem was quickly solved to the extent that, already by 1946, Russian was being taught in 3000 schools, as well as in all university courses. The Russian language was, in fact, considered an indispensable tool for work that gave immediate access to the principles and knowledge of the Soviet world.¹⁰

In 1947, the merging of the American and British zones took place – the so-called *Bizone* (‘Bizonia’) – soon joined in 1948 by the French-controlled territory, constituting the *Trizone* (‘Trizonia’).

While the Russian occupants in the SOZ, with the help of the new German political class, were introducing a model of Soviet-style planned economy, in the *Trizone* economic reforms were shaped by market economy, with consequent linguistic repercussions. In fact, where planned economy would only have allowed a small amount of consumer goods, for which univocal names and technical jargon defined over a long period of time were used – such as *Waren des täglichen Bedarfs* (‘goods for everyday consumption’), *Genussmittel* (‘luxury foods, alcohol and tobacco’), *Edelgemüse* (‘fine vegetables’) –, the Western model quickly showed a distinction in lexicon, undergoing the continual exposure to the diversified products of the market. Such a tendency towards a univocal terminology, on the one hand, and the recurrence of variants that were more or less synonymous with each other, on the other, was also clear for terms that had acquired ideological value, irrespective of them being on one side or the other. For example, in the SOZ, the term *Werkstätige* (‘worker’) had acquired the meaning of ‘person (worker, em-

⁹ Eberhard Meumann, “Education laws and schooling: the case of the German Democratic Republic”, *Education and the Law. International Perspectives*, ed. by Witold Tulasiewicz and Gerald Strowbridge (London; New York: Routledge, 1994), 94-111.

¹⁰ Alexandre Pirojkov, *Russizismen im Deutschen der Gegenwart. Bestand, Zustand und Entwicklungstendenzen* (Berlin: Weißensee, 2002), 69-70.

ployee or member of a socialist cooperative) who sustains him/herself from his/her own work and does not take advantage of other people's work', typical of the Marxist tradition, obtaining a wide semantic spectrum, while the variants *Arbeitnehmer* ('jobholder'), *Berufstätige* ('labourer'), *Beschäftigte* ('employee'), *Erwerbstätige* ('employed person'), *Lohnabhängige* ('wage-earner'), which were common in West Germany, gradually became taboos.

Between 1945 and 1948, in a period defined as 'anti-fascist democratic phase',¹¹ people were not expecting a long-lasting division of Germany, let alone a possible linguistic split. In the SOZ, rulers were working towards the creation of a Pro-Soviet, – or at the least neutral – united German State. The processes of resemanticisation of some political terms turned back to an ideological tone – such as *Antifaschismus* ('anti-fascism'), *Demokratie* ('democracy'), *Sozialismus* ('socialism'), *Arbeiterklasse* ('working class'), and so on – date back to this time. Such terms would have represented one of the most evident communication barriers between East and West Germany. On both sides, for example, people declared an ambition to restore 'democracy', which had been shattered by the Nazi-Fascist regime, but opposing political concepts were hidden, by then, behind the very same word. For example, while on the Western side, *Demokratie* was intended to mean a pluralism of opinions within decentralised (federal) structures, Soviets and German communists were aiming at a centralised State within which *Demokratie* would have been further and further downgraded, until becoming a mere label for a new totalitarian order of public life.

III. From the Birth of the 'Two Germanies' to the Building of the Berlin Wall (1949-1961)

The propensity to create two independent German States was established in 1949 when separate Constitutions were promulgated, in both the Western and Eastern areas, bringing to the birth of the *BRD* (*Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 'FRG = Federal Republic of Germany'), on the one side, and the *DDR* (*Deutsche Demokratische Republik*, 'GDR = German Democratic Republic'), on the other.¹²

¹¹ Schlosser, *Die deutsche Sprache in der DDR*, 28.

¹² While the Constitution in the fledgling Western State was given the temporary name *Grundgesetz* (literally 'Basic Law') in view of a review of the text, which would, fairly shortly, be extended to the whole of Germany, by naming the GDR's constitutive document *Verfassung* ('Constitution'), a demand for *ipso facto* validity was being put forward for the entire German territory, as can be seen from Article 1: "Deutschland ist eine unteilbare demokratische Republik" ('Germany is an indivisible democratic republic'). This first text was then followed by two additional versions, which were far more orientated towards

The first linguistic consequence of the new situation was the implementation of institutional terminology. In the *Bundesrepublik* ('Federal Republic'), whose name bears clear witness to its federal principles, all of the names of figures and institutions of state were introduced with the prefix *Bund-* ('federal'): *Bundesbank* ('Federal Bank'), *Bundeskanzler* ('Federal Chancellor'), *Bundesregierung* ('Federal Government'), *Bundespräsident* ('Federal President'), *Bundeswehr* ('Federal Armed Forces'). Likewise, in the Democratic Republic, in many official terms, the attributive forms *deutsch* ('German') and *Deutschland* ('Germany') were eliminated and replaced with the acronym *DDR*: *DDR-Fahne* ('flag of the German Democratic Republic'), *DDR-Hauptstadt* ('capital of the German Democratic Republic'), *DDR-Hymne* ('German Democratic Republic National Anthem'), *Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR* ('Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic'), *Staatliche Versicherung der DDR* ('state insurance of the German Democratic Republic').

Immediately after the birth of the GDR, many terms of Soviet origin began to play a role in lexical heritage; among these words, which were related to State and party organisation, the following should be highlighted:

<p><i>Zentralkomitee</i> 'Central Committee'</p>	<p>Structural calque from the Russian <i>central'nyj komitet</i>. The term denotes the standing administrative body, elected by Congress, which led the organisation of communist and socialist parties between one congressional session and another, carrying out deliberative roles, and choosing executive authorities. Based on the model offered by the Soviet Union, the structure, tasks and role of the Central Committee were nearly exactly the same in every country of the Eastern Bloc. The use of the acronym <i>ZK</i> was also widespread.</p>
<p><i>Politbüro</i> 'politburo'</p>	<p>Borrowed from the Russian <i>politbjuro</i>, abbreviated form of <i>političeskoe bjuro</i> ('Political Bureau'). Concerning the process of democratic centralism, this was the term for restricted collegiate authority, which was elected by the Central Committee and to which the management of the party was entrusted. Similar to <i>Politbüro</i>, the modifier <i>Polit-</i> makes up other compounds: <i>Politarbeiter</i> ('political worker', structural calque from the Russian <i>politrabotnik</i>), <i>Politökonomie</i> ('political economy', structural calque from the Russian <i>politekonomija</i>), <i>Politschulung</i> ('political education'), <i>Politoffizier</i> ('political officer').</p>

the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the first established in 1968 and the second in 1974, from which every reference to a united Germany had disappeared, and where the GDR introduced itself first as *Sozialistischer Staat Deutscher Nation* ('Socialist State of the German Nation') and then as *Sozialistischer Staat der Arbeiter und Bauern* ('Socialist State of Workers and Farmers').

<i>Kader</i> 'cadre'	The term was originally borrowed from military jargon with the meaning 'specialised army troop'. As a semantic calque from the plural form of the Russian <i>kadry</i> (from the French <i>cadre</i>), it acquires also the meaning 'qualified group of people with important functions in every area of social life'. Many are the compounds with <i>Kader-</i> as a modifier – <i>Kaderabteilung</i> ('personnel department'), <i>Kaderentwicklung</i> ('cadre development') – and as the base of the word – <i>Parteikader</i> ('party cadre'), <i>Wirtschaftskader</i> ('economics cadre'), <i>Redakteurkader</i> ('editor cadre').
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In January 1951, an academic reform was introduced by the SED with the propagandistic objective of contrasting middle-class objectivism, cosmopolitanism and social democratism, inspired by the Marxist-Leninist ideology. A centralised control system, carried out by the *Staatssekretariat für Hochschulwesen* ('State Secretariat for Higher Education'), was launched for universities. All students from every department had to take a *gesellschaftswissenschaftliches Grundstudium* ('basic course in social sciences') in which political economics, Marxist-Leninist principles, dialectics and historical materialism were taught.¹³ In addition, new university courses were opened being based on the Soviet model that allowed students to combine study with work. New terms influenced by the Russian language became part of the lexicon relating to university teaching, some examples being the following:

<i>Aspirantur</i> 'research studentship'	This Latinism had passed through French to Russian, meaning a 'training course for junior researchers', following which one obtained a 'doctoral degree'. Although the term, with this meaning, had already come into use in East German in 1945, the <i>Aspirantur</i> was legally established in the German Democratic Republic only in 1951.
<i>Akademiker</i> 'academician'	As a semantic calque from the Russian <i>akademik</i> , the original meaning of the Graecism – 'person of higher education' – is set aside in favour of 'member of a scientific community or of an association of scholars, artists or writers from a socialist State outside the GDR'. In this sense, the term came to be used as a title, placed before the proper names of scholars who came from countries of the Eastern Bloc.

¹³ Jens Wurche, *Marx und Engels in der DDR-Linguistik. Zur Herausbildung einer „marxistisch-leninistischen Sprachtheorie“* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999), 55.

<i>Abenduniversität</i> ‘evening university’	Structural calque from the Russian <i>večernij universitet</i> . Originally, this term generally referred to the structures devoted to popular political education. From 1959, however, the term came to be used for university establishments for working students whose educational activities took place during the evening. Similar to <i>Abenduniversität</i> , the terms <i>Abendstudium</i> (‘evening study’) and <i>Abendstudent/-in</i> (‘evening university student’) also emerged.
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In an attempt to weaken the pre-existing peripheral powers in favour of a new kind of centralised State, in 1952, *Länder* (‘federal states’) were abolished and replaced with fourteen *Bezirke* (‘districts’). The SED took on absolute power, creating a system of political police and secret services that, in fact, limited the personal freedom of all the citizens. The existing gap between party agendas and the political and social reality of the State was widened by the hardening of the work laws, which led to the *Volksaufstand* (‘people’s uprising’) on 17 June 1953, when the citizens claimed, among other things, democratic elections and the reunification with the FRG. The Soviet military government responded by sending troops, stifling the uprising in bloodshed. In the following years, the number of escape attempts from the country increased, resulting in the building of the *Berliner Mauer* (‘Berlin Wall’, 13 August 1961), and the strengthening of control along the whole border.

The years between 1949 and 1961 represented the end of the ‘Pacifist Period’ with the abandonment of the concept of a united German State and the establishment, in 1956, of the *Nationale Volksarmee* (‘National People’s Army’), whose aim was to defend the GDR and the entire Eastern Bloc. The SED was busy in the formation of a new nation, aiming at recognition from other socialist States, and trying to fix a clear borderline between the GDR and the FRG. The latter, in particular, combined with the now clear semantic separation between the ‘two Germanies’ concerning the political-institutional lexicon, gave rise to fear, on the part of the Western observers, of an imminent *sprachliche Spaltung* (‘language split’), along with the resulting development of a ‘new language’ in the GDR.¹⁴

¹⁴ The titles of some essays published in the BRD in the 1950s are already very eloquent in this sense: *Sprachentartung in der Sowjetzone* (‘The linguistic degeneration of the Soviet zone’, Karl F. Borée, 1952); *Deutsche Sprache in östlicher Zwangsjacke* (‘The German language with the Eastern straitjacket’, August Köhler, 1954); *Sowjetdeutsch – Die Sprache als Opfer und Werkzeug der Sowjetisierung* (‘Soviet German – Language as victim and tool of Sovietisation’, Friedrich Koepp, 1955); *Gefährliches Parteichinesisch – Verhängnisvolle Sprachspaltung zwischen West und Ost* (‘Dangerous political jargon – The fatal linguistic split between East and West’, Hanswilhelm Haefs, 1956); *Die Sprache als Waffe* (‘Language as a weapon’, Elisabeth M. Herrmann, 1958); *Sowjet-Deutsch – Die Sprache als politisches Kampfmittel der Kommunisten* (‘Soviet German – Language as the communists’ political weapon’, Brigitte Korntner, 1959). Manfred W. Hellmann, ‘Die doppelte Wende. Zur Verbindung von Sprache, Sprachwissenschaft und Zeitgebundener

On the other hand, prominent scholars of the Democratic Republic, like Victor Klemperer, responded to the accusations, criticising, in their turn, the linguistic situation of the Federal Republic.¹⁵ However, on closer inspection, during the whole decade of the 1950s, linguists from the GDR concentrated their efforts, above all, on meeting the needs of the new state education system, working for the most part on drafting dictionaries, grammatical manuals and linguistic atlases.¹⁶

IV. *Abgrenzungspolitik* and ‘Linguistic Separation’ (1962-1970)

Following the building of the Berlin Wall, for the whole decade of the 1960s, there was a tightening of the *Abgrenzungspolitik* (‘demarcation policy’). This was made even more extreme by the adoption of the ‘Hallstein doctrine’ in the FRG, which marked the breakdown of diplomatic and commercial relationships with those states that had legitimised the existence of the GDR.

Meanwhile the Germans of the Federal Republic – who were by then experiencing a strong economic growth – were losing their perception of the existence of the ‘other Germany’: in the West, the word *Deutschland* was being used as a synonym of *Bundesrepublik*, and the majority of Western Germans showed little interest in the GDR, compared to the rest of the world.¹⁷ Many *DDR-Bürger* (‘GDR citizens’), on the other hand, remained attached to the belief that they were nothing else than *Deutsche* (‘Germans’), even though this went against everything the State stood for.

politischer Bewertung am Beispiel deutsch-deutscher Sprachdifferenzierung”, *Politische Semantik. Bedeutungsanalytische und sprachkritische Beiträge zur politischen Sprachverwendung*, ed. by Josef Klein (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1989), 297-326, here 301.

¹⁵ According to Klemperer, in the FRG, under the cultural influence of the United States of America, there was still no liberation from the ‘linguistic plague’ of National Socialism. Furthermore, the lexical innovations in the GDR did not represent a splitting of the language, but were rather considered the basis of a development in a ‘progressive’ perspective. Victor Klemperer, *Zur gegenwärtigen Sprachsituation in Deutschland. Vortrag gehalten im Klub der Kulturschaffenden Berlin* (Berlin Ost: Aufbau, 1953).

¹⁶ Dieter Schmitt, *Doktrin und Sprache in der ehemaligen DDR bis 1989. Eine politikwissenschaftliche Analyse unter Berücksichtigung sprachwissenschaftlicher Gesichtspunkte* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993), 27.

¹⁷ Manfred W. Hellmann, “Zur Sprache vor und nach der ‚Wende‘: Ost-West-Kulturen in der Kommunikation”, *Deutschland und die ‚Wende‘ in Literatur, Sprache und Medien. Interkulturelle und kulturkontrastive Perspektiven*, ed. by Hiltraud Casper-Hehne and Irmay Schweiger (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag, 2008), 97-116, here 100. In this respect, it is worth emphasising how even the scarce interest of Western Germans in the ‘other Germany’ is behind the causes of the discomfort still experienced by Eastern Germans some years after the reunification of the two States, a discomfort that manifested itself, among other things, in a sense of linguistic alienation.

The desire to keep a distance from the FRG – not only in the sense of political ideology, but also on a linguistic level – led to the tabooing of many Anglo-American internationalisms during the 1960s. Terms such as *Jeans*, *T-Shirt*, *Supermarkt* (‘supermarket’), already widespread in West German, were not in use in the GDR, where the same items were referred to using different words: *Jeans* → *Niet(en)hose*, *T-Shirt* → *Nicki*, *Supermarkt* → *Kaufhalle*.¹⁸

Surprisingly, however, in the language of the Democratic Republic, other Anglo-Americanisms, which came from the Russian and were unknown or scarcely used in West German, were accepted, including:

<p><i>Meeting</i> [ˈmi:tɪŋ]</p>	<p>The Anglicism made its way through the Russian <i>miting</i> to German, meaning ‘political event, mass meeting’. Many compound words having <i>-meeting</i> at their core also emerged, such as: <i>Abschlussmeeting</i> (‘closing meeting’), <i>Arbeitermeeting</i> (‘workers meeting’), <i>Freundschaftsmeeting</i> (‘political friendship meeting’), <i>Kampfmeeting</i> (‘political fight meeting’), <i>Solidaritätsmeeting</i> (‘solidarity meeting’).</p>
<p><i>Dispatcher</i> [dɪsˈpɛtʃɐ]</p>	<p>The term, which takes its meaning from the Russian <i>dispetčer</i>, was descriptive of a ‘worker in socialist shops, responsible for the central management and supervision of the production processes according to state guidelines for the realisation of a development plan’. Many compounds having <i>-dispatcher</i> at their core – <i>Grubendispacher</i> (‘mine dispatcher’), <i>Hauptdispacher</i> (‘chief dispatcher’), <i>Schichtdispacher</i> (‘shift dispatcher’) – or as their modifier – <i>Dispatcherdienst</i> (‘dispatching services’), <i>Dispatcher-system</i> (‘dispatcher system’, structural calque from the Russian <i>dispetčerezacija</i>), <i>Dispatcherzentrale</i> (‘dispatcher centre’) – were also known.</p>
<p><i>Kombine</i> ‘combine harvester’</p>	<p>The Anglicism came into East German through the Russian <i>kombajn</i>. The pronunciation can be [kɔmˈbaj̯n], as in English and Russian, or adapted to the phonetic rules of German [kɔmˈbi:nə].</p>

At the 9th Session of the Central Committee of the SED (22 October 1968), the analysis of the *Grundfragen der gesellschaftlichen Wirksamkeit der Sprache* (‘fundamental questions of the social effectiveness of language’) was chosen by the *Politbüro* as the cen-

¹⁸ *Niet(en)hose*: literally ‘trousers studded with rivets’; *Nicki*: in West German, the same term meant a light jumper made from synthetic fibre; *Kaufhalle*: literally ‘shopping hall’. During the 1970s and the 1980s other internationalisms in the GDR gave rise to the same processes of tabooing in the official vocabulary: *Diskjockey* (‘disc jockey’) → *Schallplattenunterhalter* (literally ‘entertainer playing vinyl records’), *windsurfen* (‘windsurfing’) → *(steh)brettsegeln* (literally ‘to sail standing on a board’), *Hamburger* → *Grilletta* (from the verb *grillen*, ‘to grill’), *Pizza* → *Krusta* (pseudo-Italianism referring to *crosta*, ‘crust’).

tral subject of sociological interest.¹⁹ Thanks to these studies, sociologists and linguists were supposed to contribute in a fundamental way to the ideological struggle against Western imperialism for the affirmation of the GDR as *entwickeltes gesellschaftliches System des Sozialismus* ('developed social system of socialism').²⁰ Such encouragement came from the General Secretary of the SED, Walter Ulbricht himself in his speech at the 13th Session of the Central Committee (10 June 1970), when he declared that even the linguistic unity between the GDR and the FRG had, by that time, been compromised, inasmuch as:

Zwischen der traditionellen deutschen Sprache Goethes, Schillers, Lessings, Marx' und Engels, die vom Humanismus erfüllt ist, und der vom Imperialismus verseuchten und von den kapitalistischen Monopolverlagen manipulierten Sprache in manchen Kreisen der westdeutschen Bundesrepublik besteht eine große Differenz. Sogar gleiche Worte haben oftmals nicht mehr die gleiche Bedeutung.²¹

(A large difference exists between the traditional German language of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Marx and Engels and the manipulated language that in some fields in the Western Federal Republic has been corrupted by imperialism and manipulated by capitalistic, monopolistic publishers. Even the same words often no longer mean the same things').

Such a validation of the linguistic split was mirrored in the SED's political propaganda, emphasised by the motto: *Nichts verbindet uns mit der imperialistischen Bundesrepublik und alles mit der DDR, unserem sozialistischen Vaterland* ('Nothing links us with the imperialist Federal Republic and everything unites us with the GDR, our socialist fatherland').

Meanwhile, in the FRG, the belief was spread that the cohesive strength of the language, combined with the aversion of the GDR's population to the jargon imposed by the party, would have proved stronger than any attempt at linguistic separation pursued for political purposes.²²

¹⁹ Ulla Fix, *Sprache, Sprachgebrauch und Diskurse in der DDR. Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2014), 680.

²⁰ Schmitt, *Doktrin und Sprache in der ehemaligen DDR bis 1989*, 28.

²¹ "Rede auf der 13. Tagung des ZK der SED", *Neues Deutschland*, 16 June 1970: 4.

²² Hellmann, "Die doppelte Wende", 308.

V. The ‘Honecker Era’: from the politics of easing tensions to the fall of the Berlin Wall (1971-1989)

In 1971 in the GDR, Erich Honecker, with the Soviet support, became the new General Secretary of the SED Central Committee, replacing Walter Ulbricht. Meanwhile in 1969 in the FRG, the social democrat Willy Brandt had come to power; he was an advocate of the *Ostpolitik* (‘eastern policy’), aimed at improving inter-German connections, a policy which came to a head in 1972 with the signing of the *Grundlagenvertrag* (‘Basic Treaty’), sanctioning the reciprocal recognition of the two nations as sovereign States.

The easing of tensions in the relationship between the ‘two Germanies’ brought another success to the SED in foreign politics, that is, the legal recognition of the GDR by the international community with the opening of diplomatic headquarters in many countries, as well as an invitation to join the United Nations.

Having gone beyond Ulbricht’s *Abgrenzungspolitik*, the GDR, under the leadership of Honecker, introduced itself to the world as a socialist nation which promoted its autonomous development in the field of politics, social development, science and sport, in order to rival the FRG in all these fields. Culture, history, traditions and customs that connected the ‘two Germanies’ merged in the concept of *Nationalität* (‘nationality’), while peculiarities and differences in production, social structures, and political and economic systems, were at the core of the concept of *Nation* (‘nation’).²³ The citizens of the GDR were, therefore, Germans (*Nationalität*) of the Democratic Republic (*Nation*).

As far as the linguistic field is concerned, during the 1970s many complaints in the Democratic Republic stressed the lack of studies on the link between doctrine and language, as well as the absence of a linguistic theory inspired by the Marxist-Leninist ideology, even though language and linguistics were seen as ideal tools for developing and reinforcing social consciousness.²⁴ Even the language, therefore, was considered to have ideological and political value in the two German States, something which came into full evidence in the use of the concept of *Nation*, showing how – as much in the GDR as in the FRG – the linguistic use was determined by two opposing social situations. Thus, although speaking about two different languages was considered inappropriate, distinguishing four national variants of the German language, each possessing equal value – German used in the FRG, in the GDR, in Austria and in Switzerland – was also

²³ Hellmann, “Die doppelte Wende”, 311.

²⁴ Wilhelm Schmidt, *Sprache und Ideologie. Beiträge zu einer marxistisch-leninistischen Sprachwirkungsforschung* (Halle, Saale: Niemeyer, 1972), 7.

considered theoretically important.²⁵ This theory, in line with the linguistic politics of the SED, took the name *Vier-Varianten-These* ('four-variants thesis'), a theory which gained a large consensus and influenced linguistic studies in the Democratic Republic for nearly a decade.

Between the 1970s and 1980s, a growing public debt in the GDR caused a notable decrease in the otherwise steady improvement of living standards. The State had a greater and greater need for foreign currency²⁶ and the Democratic Republic was indebted by then to several Western institutions. Commercial links between the 'two Germanies' were indispensable mostly to the economy of the GDR, and the East did not hesitate to ask the West for loans worth billions in exchange for small improvements in terms of international political relationships.

Inter-German dialogue became a way of collaborating with the FRG and even the 'question of language' was scaled down to a certain extent. Therefore, during the 1980s in the GDR it was noted that, although most of the basic lexicon between Eastern and Western speakers was the same, mutual understanding was not always assured: in fact, the linguistic differences invested even the everyday informal language, to the point of affecting not only the *Verlautbarungssprache* ('release language'), but also the spheres of work and private life.²⁷ For the whole of the 1980s, scholars in the GDR – in contrast to what had happened until then – tended to minimise the significance of the differences, focussing instead on what brought language together in the two States.

In order not to openly discard the *Vier-Varianten-These*, linguists made a distinction between *Sprachgemeinschaft* ('linguistic community'), including the whole Germanophone area, and *Kommunikationsgemeinschaften* ('communication communities'), referring to the single nations.²⁸ Eventually the concept of *Variante* ('language variant') was replaced with

²⁵ Gotthard Lerchner, "Zur Spezifik der deutschen Sprache in der DDR und ihrer gesellschaftlichen Determination", *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, 11 (1974): 259-265 and Gotthard Lerchner, "Nationalsprachliche Varianten", *Forum*, 3 (1976): 10-11.

²⁶ In this way, for example, the same officials who ordered the opening of every package sent from the FRG and other Western countries for fear of the circulation of unwanted books, newspapers and magazines, allowed citizens from the East to accept gifts in foreign currency. Therefore, the Western Mark started to circulate in the GDR as a form of second currency through which one could also buy otherwise rare products in *Intershopläden* ('international shops').

²⁷ In this respect, it is worth emphasising that, in reference to the GDR, one needs to distinguish between two linguistic planes: the formal plane of politics, the press and institutions, regulated by party officials, and the language of informal communication that, in many cases, escaped a proper control. Moser postulates a sort of diglossia for the East Germans, characterised by the precise use of the official standard in conversations with officials and members of the party, and a 'cautious' divergence from the norm in informal and private situations. Hugo Moser, *Sprachliche Folgen der politischen Teilung Deutschlands* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1962), 47-48.

²⁸ Wolfgang Fleischer *et al.*, *Wortschatz der deutschen Sprache in der DDR. Fragen seines Aufbaus und seiner Verwendungsweise* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1987).

Varietät ('language variety'), which, in fact, introduced the more neutral notion of pluricentricism of the German language.²⁹

In the meantime, the Soviet Union – still considered strong and dangerous at an international level – was a 'giant in agony': the economy was experiencing a set-back, productivity was scarce and the huge efforts to keep up with the United States in the arms race had worn out the State's finances. In addition to this, increasingly unbridled corruption dominated the State, leading to its downfall. In 1985, after the death of Konstantin Chernenko, Mikhail Gorbachev was elected General Secretary of the Soviet Union Communist Party. Gorbachev promoted a political reform, which was shaped by the principles of *glásnost* (literally 'publicity', but generally translated as 'transparency') and of *perestrojka* ('reorganisation'), soon leading to the end of the Cold War between the USA and the USSR, and greatly reducing the risk of nuclear war.

In the GDR, the leaders of the SED saw the Soviet Union's process of democratisation first with a certain embarrassment and then with increasing resistance, in the sense that applying the same principles in the Democratic Republic would have called into question their own power. Meanwhile, opposition anti-regime groups, supported by the evangelical church of the GDR, began reorganizing themselves, to the cry of *Von der Sowjetunion lernen, heißt siegen lernen!* ('Learning from the Soviet Union means learning to win!').³⁰

On 7 May 1989, the administrative elections gave a clear result of 98% of the vote in favour of the candidates from the National Front,³¹ but immediately the sensation was that the vote could have been rigged, leading to people's protests. Some months later, the citizens of the GDR poured into the Federal Republic embassies in Prague, Warsaw and Budapest in the hope of being able to join the 'other Germany'. Those who stayed in the Democratic Republic, instead, organised *Montagsdemonstrationen* ('Monday demonstrations') in Leipzig, calling for freedom of expression and freedom of the press, and putting pressure on the government.

In October 1989 in East Berlin, seemingly unconcerned by the serious problems afflicting the State, Honecker and the rest of the *Politbüro* were celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the birth of the Republic. In the context of these celebrations – from 31 October to 1st November – the GDR's last linguistic conference took place, characterised by a wide variety of topics. For the first time linguists of the Democratic

²⁹ Wolfgang Fleischer, "Zur Situation der deutschen Sprache heute", *Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung*, 42 (1989): 435-442.

³⁰ The slogan, coined in 1949 by the SED's leadership for the purposes of propaganda, by then had become one of the symbols of people's protests.

³¹ The *Nationale Front der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* ('National Front of the German Democratic Republic') was a coalition of political parties and of mass organizations led by the SED.

Republic autonomously chose the subjects to debate without any submission to party guidelines.³²

The Berlin Wall would be torn down just eight days later, thus declaring the end of GDR's socialist system and the beginning of the reunification process with Federal Germany.

VI. Language after the Reunification of Germany

The events that occurred since the fall of the Berlin Wall at the official celebration of the German reunification on 3 October 1990 are well known and do not need to be recalled here. However, certain processes of linguistic transformation, which took place as a result of these events, are worth mentioning.³³

By 1990, the first studies to monitor the evolution of vocabulary and communicative behavioural patterns had begun, producing an almost unilateral and selective linguistic transformation, which involved the Eastern speakers much more directly than the Western ones.³⁴ In fact, in the territories of the former-GDR, there was a rapid disap-

³² Schmitt, *Doktrin und Sprache in der ehemaligen DDR bis 1989*, 31.

³³ Normally, linguistic evolution occurs slowly and in an almost imperceptible manner. Therefore, it can only be observed and described after a certain period of time. The rapid process of the German reunification, on the other hand, gave the possibility of a direct and almost simultaneous observation of the cultural and linguistic transformations that took place after 1989.

³⁴ Among the many publications, the following are worth mentioning: "Die deutsche Sprache nach der Wende", *Germanistische Linguistik*, special issue ed. by Klaus Welke, Wolfgang W. Sauer, and Helmut Glück, 110-111 (Hildesheim: Olms, 1992); *Sprache im Umbruch: politischer Sprachwandel im Zeichen von "Wende" und "Vereinigung"*, ed. by Armin Burkhardt and Karl Peter Fritzsche (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 1992); *Sprachgebrauch im Wandel: Anmerkungen zur Kommunikationskultur in der DDR vor und nach der Wende*, ed. by Gotthard Lerchner (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992); *Wer spricht das wahre Deutsch? Erkundungen zur Sprache im vereinigten Deutschland*, ed. by Ruth Reiher and Rüdiger Läger (Berlin: Aufbau, 1993); Marianne Schröder, Ulla Fix, *Allgemeinwortschatz der DDR-Bürger – nach Sachgruppen geordnet und linguistisch kommentiert* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1997); *Kommunikation in gesellschaftlichen Umbruchsituationen. Mikroanalytische Aspekte des sprachlichen und gesellschaftlichen Wandels in den Neuen Bundesländern*, Peter Auer and Heiko Hausendorf (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000); *Mit gespaltener Zunge? Die deutsche Sprache nach dem Fall der Mauer*, ed. by Ruth Reiher and Antje Baumann (Berlin: Aufbau, 2000); *Deutsche Sprach- und Kommunikationserfahrungen zehn Jahre nach der "Wende"*, ed. by Gerd Antos, Ulla Fix, and Ingrid Kühn (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001); *Ost-West-Sprachgebrauch – zehn Jahre nach der Wende. Eine Disputation*, ed. by Ingrid Kühn, Hans-Joachim Solms, et al. (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2001); Patrick Stevenson, *Language and German Disunity: A Sociolinguistic History of East and West in Germany, 1945–2000* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); *Vorwärts und nichts vergessen: Sprache in der DDR: Was war, was ist, was bleibt*, ed. by Ruth Reiher and Antje Baumann (Berlin: Aufbau, 2004); *Diskursmauern. Aktuelle Aspekte der sprachlichen Verhältnisse zwischen Ost und West*, ed. by Kersten Sven Roth and Markus Wienen (Bremen: Hempen, 2008); "Sprache und Kommunikation in

pearance of many bureaucratic and technical terms, as well as most of the constituent elements of the *Verlautbarungssprache* related to the previous forty years. Unlike what occurred in 1945, however, voids in naming that resulted from the reunification were remedied by drawing on the linguistic repertoire available in the FRG. Furthermore, the introduction of Western communication patterns also assisted the Eastern speakers in the recovery of a public language, which was free from ideological manipulation.

Eastern Germans, therefore, had to become familiar with a new social and political system accompanied by an associated vocabulary as well as to adjust, even in daily communication, to a large number of terms – many of which were Anglicisms – that had been unknown or at least unusual to them up to that point: *Tiefkühlware* instead of *Feinfrost* ('deep-frozen foods'), *Aerobic* instead of *Popgymnastik* ('aerobics'), *Overheadprojektor* instead of *Polylux* ('overhead projector'), among others.

Nonetheless, there are also lexemes specific to the GDR that can be described as *wenderesistent* ('turnaround-resistant'), or rather lexemes that are still in use today, in particular in informal communication and referring to the sphere of everyday life. Over time, some of these were established as geosynonyms of the Eastern area – *Datsche* as a variant of *Wochenendhaus* ('weekend house'), *Broiler* as a variant of *Brathähnchen* ('roast chicken'), *in Größenordnungen* as a variant of *in großer Zahl* ('in great numbers') – while others were even spread, at least in part, amongst Western speakers – *Lehrling* as a synonym of *Auszubildender* ('apprentice'), *abnicken* ('to nod') in the sense of *befürworten* ('to endorse'), *Poliklinik* ('polyclinic') instead of *Krankenhaus* ('hospital'). Even among the *wenderesistenten* lexemes, there are those that were introduced in the German language through Russian. Amongst others, some examples include the following:

<i>Exponat</i> 'something exhibited in a museum, exhibit'	From the Latin <i>exponere</i> ('to expose'), the term entered East German in the 1950s through the Russian <i>ékspонат</i> as a synonym of <i>Ausstellungsstück</i> , <i>Museumsstück</i> ('exhibition piece', 'museum object').
<i>Kulturhaus</i> 'cultural centre'	Structural calque from the Russian <i>дом культуры</i> , meaning a building where cultural and artistic events take place, and where leisure activities are organised.
<i>Zielstellung</i> 'goal setting, aim'	The compound derives from the Russian collocation <i>stavit' tsel'</i> and is an Eastern variant of <i>Zielsetzung</i> .

Deutschland Ost und West. Ein Reader zu fünfzig Jahren Forschung", *Germanistische Linguistik*, special issue ed. by Manfred W. Hellmann, Marianne Schröder, and Ulla Fix, 192-194 (Hildesheim: Olms, 2008); *Politische Wechsel – sprachliche Umbrüche*, ed. by Bettina Bock, Ulla Fix, and Steffen Pappert (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2011); *Politische Konzepte in der DDR. Zwischen Diskurs und Wirklichkeit*, ed. by Stéphanie Benoiste, Laurent Gautier, and Marie-Geneviève Gerrer (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013).

Today, thirty years after the territorial and political reunification of Germany, it can be said that the linguistic wall has also finally collapsed and that, at least in formal situations, it is no longer possible to distinguish between West and East Germans according to the way they speak. However, there is still an element that partly reflects the differences in communication patterns between East and West Germans especially concerning those who experienced the separation: the influences linked to the respective socio-political contexts by which these speakers were shaped.

The need of East Germans to adapt to Western linguistic standards – through the removal of vocabulary and communication habits related to the totalitarian regime – has created a sense of estrangement that can be observed in specific communicative situations: for example, an uncertainty in the use of the personal pronouns *du* ('you' as a familiar form of address) and *Sie* ('you' as a polite form of address), and in that of the impersonal pronoun *man* ('one, anyone, anybody'),³⁵ as well as in the choice between some lexical variants in use in the rest of the germanophone area – *Krankenhaus/Spital* ('hospital'), *Straßenbahn/Tram* ('tram, tramway'), *Tischler/Schreiner* ('carpenter').³⁶

In general, however, it can be said that the desire to be fully recognised as Germans and, at the same time, the fear of losing their own identity as East Germans have favoured, above all at an informal level, a mixed use of the two varieties that can still be seen today in certain groups within the speech community.

VII. Conclusion

As we have highlighted in this paper, processes of differentiation occurred even in the field of linguistics during over four decades of political and territorial division of Germany. Despite many common features in terms of *Grundwortschatz* ('basic vocabulary'), grammar and rules of *Wortzusammensetzung* ('word composition'), the GDR – under the influence of the Soviet Union and of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine – had chosen to follow an autonomous path, especially concerning the release language.

³⁵ The impersonal pronoun *man* in Eastern linguistic use would often replace the personal pronoun *ich* ('I'), witnessing a spirit of collectivity characteristic of Eastern speakers and affirmed for reasons that were not just ideological. Schlosser, "Die deutsche Sprache in Ost- und Westdeutschland", 164.

³⁶ In this respect, Katelhön (2011, 220) notes that the use of regional variants typical of Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland in the central and northern areas of Germany such as Thuringia, Brandenburg and Saxony is witness of the linguistic uncertainty of local speakers, which was linked to the strong pressure of linguistic adaptation exercised by Western speakers. Peggy Katelhön, "Divisi dalla propria madrelingua: la lingua tedesca vent'anni dopo la caduta del muro", *C'era una volta il muro. A vent'anni dalla svolta tedesca*, ed. by Emilia Fiandra (Roma: Artemide, 2011), 209-224.

In the Democratic Republic, already by 1946, the compulsory study of Russian had been introduced in all schools and universities. Nevertheless, in the German language of the GDR, the number of true and proper Russianisms was, in fact, limited, probably due to the important phonological and structural differences between the two languages. The influence of the Russian language was much clearer in the loanwords from Russian, which originated from Graecisms, Latinisms, Frenchisms and Anglo-Americanisms, as well as in the structural calques and process of semantic adaptation of many terms already present in the German language.

The study of the nature and of scope of the phenomenon of lexical differentiation between the 'two Germanies' is surely of great linguistic and historical interest. Nevertheless, one cannot approach the topic solely in a strictly lexicological sense; instead, one needs to question what role these differences have played in the process of inter-German communication and understanding, while simultaneously taking into account important non-linguistic factors, such as political events, economic changes, cultural climate, living conditions and other psychological and social aspects that were also of influence.

This study of the process of sovietisation of the German language in the GDR, in the context of fundamental historical events, was conducted with the hope of raising attention on the ideological development of language in what was becoming, for all intents and purposes, the fourth standard variant of the German language, and of opening the doors to further detailed analyses of the linguistic development after the fall of the Berlin Wall.