Breaking the Tongue

Language, Education, and Power in Soviet Ukraine, 1923–1934

MATTHEW D. PAULY

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The republic-wide account by Holovsotsvykh noted that although the percentage of Ukrainian-language schools (77.8 per cent) was higher than the ethnic-Ukrainian percentage of the UkrSSR population (75.1 per cent), Ukrainian-language schools enrolled a proportionately low percentage of the student population: 62.9 per cent in 1924.[79] According to the report, the phenomenon was explained by the fact that local authorities had Ukrainized schools in the cities much less than in the villages and, similarly, seven-year schools much less than four-year schools. The addition of half-Ukrainized schools would increase the proportion of students significantly (to approximately 73.2 per cent, just slightly lower than the percentage of ethnic Ukrainians). Proponents of Ukrainization used evidence such as this to argue that Ukrainization was incomplete. Narkomos's aim was to provide Ukrainian-language instruction for all ethnic-Ukrainian schoolchildren first and foremost. It gave only secondary, ad hoc consideration to a student's actual spoken language.

In spite of the experience of Mykolaiv Labour School No. 28, Narkomos hoped that by expanding Ukrainian-language schooling in industrial centres and by improving the quality of language instruction throughout the republic, it would fundamentally strengthen the school's chances for pedagogical success. If the number of students attending Ukrainian-language schools were to increase, it would need to employ more, and better, teachers. Narkomos blamed the slow pace of Ukrainization in the Odesa, Katerynsolav, Chernihiv, and Donets provinces on the Russian-language education of most teachers.[80] Donets province further suffered from the almost complete absence of teachers with the most basic skills in Ukrainian.[81] Narkomos recommended that all local organs use the 1925 summer to campaign for the retraining of teachers, not only in the Ukrainian language, but also in the history, geography, and literature of Ukraine. It viewed the supply of Ukrainian pedagogical literature and the newspaper *Narodnii uchytel* as a necessary part of this retraining. The Chernihiv Provincial Education Section reported to Narkomos that it had included work on the Ukrainian language in its operative plan for general pedagogical training. Teachers had organized circles for the study of orthography and literature and were examining other detailed questions individually.[82] However, the Chernihiv section complained, teachers still lacked needed literature for their study. Especially in these more Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine, teachers willing to take on the challenge of Ukrainian-language instruction would need much greater institutional support.

Chapter Six

Limited Urgency

Although schools had formally converted to Ukrainian-language instruction in numbers proximate to the ethnic-Ukrainian proportion of the children's population, the pedagogical press and local education officials expressed concern that teachers were not achieving the sort of change in schooled literacy that Ukrainizers desired. Teachers did not know Ukrainian enough, were not seeking further training (or being told to do so), and quickly lost whatever knowledge they gained in short-term courses. Some administrators suggested that teachers' use of a "flawed" Ukrainian heavily dependent on Russian borrowings was doing more harm than good for the Soviet agenda of uniting the republic's labouring classes under a common Ukrainian national culture. They claimed that it was a language that could not be recognized by Ukrainian speakers (including the peasantry) and implied its use did little to alter the existing linguistic hierarchy, opening up Ukrainian to further ridicule.

Ukrainizing purists contended that the language in its "corrupted" form seemed very much like the unsophisticated dialect of Russian that some opponents to Ukrainization contended it was. Teachers were relaying such prejudices to children, their parents, and to the wider public. Ironically, it was in the republic's rural Ukrainian-speaking areas where skilled Ukrainian teachers were in short supply. Because the language was not taught well, the teachers' critics charged that peasants would take on urban suspicions of Ukrainian as a language that might be spoken but could not be taught. Teachers were undermining the authority of language, the Ukrainian school, and the objectives of Soviet nationalities policy as a whole.

In order for literacy in Ukrainian to have any meaning, Narkomos resorted to testing as a measure of policing and regulating teacher knowledge. In 1927, in distinction from previous efforts, education officials called for a simultaneous republic-wide perevirka of teacher knowledge. The perevirka would test not just basic knowledge of Ukrainian, but also the teachers' command of a national culture,

defined according to a now-developed Soviet script. Teachers who failed to perform were threatened with remedial study and, ultimately, dismissal. However, Narkomos officials still left it to local authorities to work out the test content, reporting requirements, and individual punitive action. Local officials expressed exasperation at the number of possible criteria for exception from the necessity to take the exam.

In fact, the number of teachers who actually sat for the exam on time was small, and observers charged that the low testing rate and delays undermined the objectives of Ukrainization in schooling. The failure to enact a comprehensive, well-timed perevirka was connected to larger issues involving the policy of Ukrainization generally. Who would test the teachers? If Narkomos did not assure high-quality Ukrainian-studies knowledge among teachers, who, then, would train and test state employees? The whole policy of Ukrainization depended on a ready supply of experts and – at a local level – the chief source was the schoolhouse.

Meanwhile, the goalposts of Soviet nationalities policy were under dispute. The proposed 1927 perevirka can be regarded fundamentally as pressure on the part of Ukrainizers for a determination of what would constitute schooled literacy in Ukrainian. Who needed to be trained in this form of literacy? Who would be excluded? What political meaning would be associated with this literacy? A larger debate within the KP(b)U and between Commissar of Education Oleksandr Shumsky, Ukrainian First Secretary Lazar Kaganovich, and Stalin focused on the question of ethnicity. That is, should ethnic Ukrainians be in control of political authority in the republic; should the requirement to have a command of Ukrainian studies be extended to all citizens of the republic, specifically workers; and what should the relationship of Ukrainian culture be to the largest category of ethnic Ukrainians by class, the peasantry? In the end, the Communist Party could not concede that Ukrainian literacy should be confined to the peasantry or that rural speakers alone determine its content. Stalin, Shumsky, Kaganovich, and the KP(b)U all conceded that this was a real danger.

The question was how to promote, regulate, and lead the drive towards this new literacy if "Ukrainian elements" in the party and working class were weak. The KP(b)U leadership, with Stalin's concurrence, forbade the use of force for the Ukrainization of the working class. The solution seemed to be a campaign of persuasion and promotion of ethnic elites within the party. Such persuasion would not work, however, if real and symbolic authority remained with the Russian language and career advancement to leadership occurred regardless of language ability. In a way, by making this argument, the party was making the same mistake it had credited to Shumsky: an obsession with ethnicity and an automatic equation among ethnicity, national sensibility, and loyalty to the Ukrainization campaign. To return to the perevirka campaign, the KP(b)U leadership insisted that, in spite of Shumsky's criticisms, the party was making progress, particularly in schooling

(ironically under Shumsky's command). However, that failed 1927 perevirka campaign would reveal that teachers were suspicious of oversight, progress was likely not as rapid as hoped, and it was difficult to assess just what was being taught in the schools. School literacy was not neatly reproduced from one school to the next throughout the republic and extended to the working class. The Ukrainian culture that Stalin and the KP(b)U wanted to develop "spontaneously" was, in fact, not under proletarian control and remained the preserve of local regulation, if any regulation existed at all.

Thus, the party faced a dilemma generally. Was the policy of Ukrainization bankrupt without a real growth in Ukrainian culture among the working class? How could the working class (and the party) lead this policy if they did not know the Ukrainian language and were not proficient enough in the basics of Ukrainian studies to direct its content? Schools, for all their problems, were the answer that Narkomos and Ukrainizers within the party looked to as a run against the party's prohibition of Ukrainization of the working class. Schools would teach Ukrainian national culture to the children of Russian-speaking workers. Members of the KP(b)U Politburo Commission on Ukrainization raised specific concerns about the enrolment of ethnic-Russian children (especially children of workers), but education administrators would continue to target children of Russified Ukrainians for Ukrainization.

What "Russified Ukrainians" meant was open to interpretation. Regardless, local education officials stressed that Ukrainian schools must embrace this population, that the need for Ukrainian schools in the "Russified" cities would continue to grow as Ukrainian peasant migrants sought industrial employment. They raised concern that school enrolment (and graduation) of Ukrainian children remained proportionally lower than that of other national groups and that the best schools remained in the hands of Russian speakers, often children of the former bourgeoisie. Parental resistance to Ukrainization was equated with anti-Soviet behaviour and opposition to educational reform. Politically, it was critical that local officials take the Ukrainization campaign to the city core. While acknowledging parental interests, supporters of Ukrainization in the party were willing to override them in order to strengthen the authority of the Ukrainian schoolhouse and tacitly win over the Russified Ukrainian population to their cause (or simply break their resistance if it stemmed from white-collar elements). They conceded the argument of education officials that the working class was beginning to think Ukrainization was just about them. Soviet authorities needed to direct the campaign against the former privileged as well. Ultimately, the Ukrainization of schooling was about shoring up the loyalties of the working class to the objectives of Soviet education and ensuring a calibration of the republic's schooling network to the anticipated growth of Ukrainian elements in this class.

Raising the Bar: Evaluating Teachers' Failures

Teachers in Ukraine faced a daunting task. They had to transfer their instruction to the Ukrainian language, implement a poorly articulated but essentially new methodology, and struggle to achieve authority for themselves and for the school among parents and the wider community. Narkomos considered the first of these tasks – use of the Ukrainian language – to be the principal means for achieving the latter two. However, three years after Ukrainization began in earnest, Ukrainian teachers' knowledge of the language remained poor. Many schools had been Ukrainized in name alone. Narkomos ordered its local sections to make an accurate evaluation (perevirka) of Ukrainization in early 1927 and plan for improvement.

Prior to the beginning of this campaign, regular reports in the teachers' press warned of the poor state of Ukrainization. A January 1927 article in *Narodnii uchytel* argued that claims that schools had been nearly completely Ukrainized were simply false. In fact, "Ukrainian schools are truly much too few and we are very, very far away from 100 percent. In the majority of cases, our schools are hotbeds of Ukrainian semi-literacy."[1] The article insisted the problem was not limited to orthographic mistakes or dialectal variation. Teachers lacked elementary knowledge of the Ukrainian language. Another report maintained that often Ukrainization was doing more harm than good, that schools and other Soviet institutions were sponsoring a distorted form of Ukrainian: "Little by little, but constantly, a so-called 'Ukrainized language' is being pushed into general usage and it is a language that the peasant (that peasant for whom most of the work on Ukrainization is being undertaken) does not want to hear and does not understand."[2] It was difficult, then, to speak of Ukrainization when authorities and teachers alike were using a language that bore little resemblance to the Ukrainian the population recognized and employed.

The pedagogical press spoke often of the "maiming" of the Ukrainian language by teachers. Vasyl Nuzhny, a correspondent for *Narodnii uchytel*, reproduced an excerpt of an official letter by the head of a Dnipropetrovsk railroad school detailing the results of Ukrainian-language study in his school. The excerpt contained numerous borrowings from Russian or slightly Ukrainized forms of Russian words. Nuzhny concluded, "When you read the letter, you ask what language this is in. Language mixing exists among those heads responsible for Ukrainization at the railway."[3] The letter was a lesson in precisely how not to Ukrainize.

Local education sections, then, were desperate not only for qualified teachers who enjoyed the favour and the support of the communities in which they taught and lived, but ones fully proficient in Ukrainian. Remarkably, just as it was easier to find highly trained teachers in urban areas, the pedagogical press and local education sections reported that educators capable, and willing, to teach in Ukrainian were concentrated in the republic's largely Russified cities. *Narodnii uchytel* maintained that, in regard to the Ukrainization of the Dnipropetrovsk railroad schools, there was an overabundance of Ukrainian instructors in large junction centres but that the lack of teachers at small stations severely limited progress.[4] The Odesa Regional Education Section similarly reported in 1926 that a greater proportion of village teachers had no knowledge of Ukrainian compared to city teachers (33 per cent compared to 14 per cent, according to an early perevirka).[5]

Urban areas had greater resources to hire good teachers, as well as to train those they had. However, even this training was limited in scope. The Southwest Railroad administration organized short-term courses in Ukrainian for its various employees, including educators employed in schools along its line. However, the courses were oriented towards the writing of simple letters and business correspondence and offered no job-specific training for teaching. *Narodnii uchytel* lamented this practice, claiming that for teachers, "language is everything, a tool of work."[6] It allowed that teachers of the earliest grades might be able to get by, but not others. They lacked knowledge of orthography, terminology, and the basic literature required to do their job. The books they needed for further study were generally not available in the library, certainly not in outlying areas, and teachers could not afford to buy them themselves. Dnipropetrovsk railway teachers who enrolled in Ukrainian-language courses held in 1924–5 were said to have forgotten what they had learned by the end of 1926.[7] Instruction in the classroom might have been formally in Ukrainian, but daily conversation was in Russian.

In November 1926, Narkomos announced local education sections would hold a series of formal perevirky of Ukrainian knowledge, to begin in January. This announcement caused near-instant anxiety among teachers. According to one account published in *Narodnii uchytel*, a representative of the Bila Tserkva regional education inspectorate announced the upcoming examination at the end of a district teachers' conference. At first, the teachers simply tried to refuse to undergo the perevirka, but the inspectorate representative insisted he would enforce it and dismiss those who failed to demonstrate adequate knowledge.[8] The newspaper detailed how individual schools then formed small, self-study groups (*hurtky*), ostensibly to raise the teachers' qualifications in Ukrainian. In fact, they drew up formal complaints about the lack of Ukrainian literature and the absence of a standard Ukrainian orthography. In response, the regional inspectorate prepared a circular, recommending that teachers actually study, rather than issue protests.

Such sort of passive resistance to the perevirka appears to have been common. The teachers' press acknowledged that although an outline for a preparatory review was widely available, the necessary books and literature were not.[9] Teachers delayed, pleaded for more time and support, or simply claimed that they

did not have to study for the exam. *Narodnii uchytel* related a comical story of a Ukrainian teacher who avoided preparing for the perevirka because he was "fully" Ukrainian, with "ancestors stretching back to the Zaporizhzhian Cossacks."[10] He soon learned that the perevirka tested much more than the ability simply to converse or write in Ukrainian. He could not answer any basic pedagogical questions about orthography and pronunciation. The perevirka commission placed him in the lowest category (third) and threatened him with dismissal if he did not raise his qualifications. The next night, Petro Semenovych was haunted by dreams of a demonic representation of the pre-1917 orthography, "in pince-nez eyeglasses with a black beard and black, greasy fleas covering its body." He awoke committed to learning how to pronounce correctly and "not write like a Russian." The newspaper's message was clear. New Ukrainian teachers had to cast away their mimicry of Russian and its tsarist-era standards. The perevirka would test their understanding and embrace of a Ukrainian language defined distinctly by Soviet linguists and reflected in the new revolutionary literature.

Teachers also sought to avoid evaluation by perevirka commissions by demonstrating proficiency through other documentation. A *Narodnii uchytel* reader asked the newspaper's editors if teachers might be exempt from the perevirka if they submitted proof (*dovidka*) they had taken a test in Ukrainian literature previously as part of a short-term pedagogical course. The editors replied that local commissions for Ukrainization could make this determination, but that Narkomos instructions provided for general exemptions.[11] Officially, the following categories of teachers were not required to undergo a perevirka: 1) graduates of Ukrainian-language institutes, *pedtekhnikumy* (pedagogical technical colleges), or secondary schools; 2) those who placed in the first (highest) category in earlier government employee Ukrainization exams; and 3) those who had taught in the Ukrainian language in older groups for at least two years and in younger groups for at least five years. In fact, according to the head of Kyiv Regional Inspectorate, Lukashenko, an overwhelming majority of teachers in the region belonged to one of these three groups.[12] Thus, the reality was that only a small proportion of teachers actually underwent an examination. The *Narodnii uchytel* reader's question was an attempt to diminish this number even more.

Such exemptions weakened the authority of the perevirka before it even began. Lukashenko expressed frustration to Narkomos that his inspectorate could not test many of its teachers, even when it had evidence that "rural school workers are extraordinarily distorting the language, that in 1927 the graduates of post-secondary pedagogical schools [*pedvyshy*] still do not know the language well and those that graduated from 1920–4 absolutely did not know the language."[13] It could do little to force these "new" Soviet teachers to increase their qualifications if they did not have to undergo the perevirka. Ivan Boikiv, an assistant inspector, argued in an October 1927 report to Lukashenko that no exemption should be given to pedvyshy graduates because their institutes of training had generally given too little attention to writing in Ukrainian, and he further recommended that Narkomos create a special state exam in the Ukrainian language for this category of teachers. He argued that not establishing absolute requirements for Ukrainian-language qualifications was reckless, comparable to allowing a teacher to teach mathematics without knowledge of percentages: "The time has already come to take care of the culture of the native word, to teach the young generation to love it and develop it, but only a person who knows and understands this word can teach it."[14] Inspectors like Boikiv and Lukashenko believed strongly in the task of Ukrainization. They saw little point in holding a perevirka if it could not effect change.

It was a difficult matter to accomplish a perevirka, even in its limited form. A Ukrainization commission in Budaivka (now Boiarka) district (Kyiv region) had earlier chosen not to determine the language level of teachers along with other state employees in 1926, "due to the absence of directives and funds."[15] In Dnipropetrovsk, authorities did not investigate Ukrainization among half the teachers of the railroad as part of a general perevirka of employees. The teachers' union, Robos, had reportedly negotiated an exemption for those teachers attending Ukrainian-language courses.[16] Local officials were undoubtedly financially strapped, but also wary about how to accurately gauge what should be required Ukrainian-language knowledge for a teacher. It was no wonder, then, that local officials approached a republic-wide perevirka of the schools with some trepidation. Teachers had resisted earlier attempts, and Narkomos instructions on how to proceed had been ambiguous.

While some inspectors were worried about the true level of Ukrainian knowledge among teachers, they did not know how to staff the perevirka commissions. One article in *Narodnii uchytel* questioned whether any commission could examine the knowledge of teachers accurately. Inspectorates had to rely on teachers to fill the commissions. These teachers might act to protect their colleagues. Or, worse, "it is no secret that even now there are persons concluding a perevirka of institutions who themselves should be evaluated."[17] The observer recommended that central Narkomos authorities appoint each regional commission with responsible experts. The pool of qualified Ukrainian teachers was too small in the localities. However, it was equally unlikely that Narkomos could have dispatched experts throughout the republic. There were not a great number of so-called experts at its disposal, even in Kyiv. Noting the weak Ukrainization in the city, Boikiv asked Lukashenko, "Why make demands on a province that does not have the ability to use the cultural fruits and achievements of the Ukrainian word, [literature and linguistic material] that is easy to use in Kyiv?"[18] The provinces would, nevertheless, have to find a way.

A delay in the perevirka was perhaps inevitable, then, given the challenges involved. In response to the teachers' demand that they have an additional two months to prepare for the examination, one *Narodnii uchytel* correspondent cautioned, "Almost all teachers believe this and it is necessary to listen to their thoughts."[19] Lukashenko reported that the perevirka in the Kyiv region would take up to two years to complete. As it was, he did not report his concerns about implementation of the perevirka to Narkomos until April 1927, three months after the anticipated date for commencement of the campaign.[20] Faced with the fact that teachers were ill-prepared to undergo a perevirka and that it would likely yield poor and, consequently, demoralizing results, Narkomos allowed individual regional inspectorates to postpone. This suspension reportedly greatly relieved teachers, but *Narodnii uchytel* emphasized that the delay was not intended to remove a "burden," but rather to allow teachers to undertake in-depth study: "The campaign for a perevirka of the Ukrainian language therefore involves systematic study. Short preparation will not bring the anticipated results."[21] The newspaper reminded teachers that the Ukrainian language was "the most essential thing" in their work. Preparation for the perevirka did not mean preparation for a test by rote, but engagement in a cultural struggle.

As will be further discussed, assurance of a high level of Ukrainian knowledge among teachers was also essential to the success of the Ukrainization campaign generally. Teachers not only evaluated other teachers, but also assessed and trained state employees whose knowledge in Ukrainian-language studies was poor. In 1926, the Odesa Regional Ukrainization Commission prepared and requalified some sixty teachers to instruct civil servants in the city: twenty-five for the Ukrainian language, twenty for literature, and fifteen for the history of revolutionary movements in Ukraine.[22] According to the head of the commission, the regional administration regularly monitored these instructors to ensure their Ukrainian knowledge was good and instruction effective.

The Proletariat's Role Debated

The KP(b)U, of course, initiated and determined the course and ultimate future of the Ukrainization campaign. Above all, it was concerned with the development of Ukrainian speakers in the party ranks and state institutions. Two further worries also drove the party's direct intervention: fear that it was losing control over Ukrainization work; and anxiety about how to deal with the Russified and Russian portion of the population, chiefly the "proletariat," the term the party applied to the industrial worker population (although many were recent arrivals to the factories).

The question of Ukrainization of the proletariat had troubled the party since its early debates on nationalities policy and had a fundamental impact on education

policy.[23] In March 1923, Dmitrii Lebed, a high-ranking member of the KP(b)U, argued in a well-known article in the journal *Kommunist* that a battle between Russian and Ukrainian cultures was inevitable in Soviet Ukraine. The line between the two cultures was clear: "In Ukraine, due to historical conditions, the culture of the city is the Russian culture and the culture of the village is Ukrainian."[24] Russian, as the "higher," urban culture, would win. In a KP(b)U Central Committee debate that followed the publication of this article, Lebed conceded that Ukrainian might be used for "cultural enlightenment" in the villages, maintaining in a separate report on the nationality question that "it is sometimes necessary for peasants to educate their children in Ukrainian, sometimes necessary to go to the village and answer questions in a language they understand."[25] However, the party absolutely could not promote Ukrainian in the city. The proletariat had no business learning the language of the "backward" peasantry. Lebed strongly opposed the current trend in Ukrainization, because it promised increased use of Ukrainian in the city among the party and the proletariat, emboldened reactionary elements in favour of further nation building ("nationalization"), and, ultimately, was a waste of time. In the end, the peasantry would have to accede to use of Russian. As long as the party remained neutral, the victory of Russian culture was assured.

Most leading members of the party distanced themselves from the theory of a "battle between two cultures," but Lebed himself escaped personal censure. Nevertheless, his contention that Russian culture in Ukraine had become intrinsically urban was a seductive argument for the party's rank and file. It influenced the party's continued caution regarding the city and prohibition against the forced Ukrainization of the proletariat. Yet, a policy of Ukrainization confined to the party and organs of government serving the peasantry had little value in a proletarian state. Future Commissar of Education Shumsky and other strong advocates of an expansion of Ukrainization argued in 1923 that the proletariat was not, by definition, Russian. In response to Lebed, Shumsky claimed in an essay published in the April 10 edition of *Kommunist* that there was no reason that a battle between cultures should take place. Suggesting that the proletariat in the republic was, in fact, of Ukrainian origin and therefore would not permit a struggle against Ukrainian culture, he asked: "From where is the proletariat recruited for industry? Is a battle to take place within the proletariat itself?"[26] The real battle, he suggested, should be about development of the proper language environment for a "single essential culture of worker-peasant industry." He clearly believed that Ukrainian should dominate this setting in the UkrSSR, because it could best secure a union among labourers in Ukraine. For Ukrainization advocates, this union, touted by party propaganda but often ignored in practice, was essential.

Shumsky was unwilling to concede that the proletariat was wholly Russian or even Russified, although he did not deny that Ukrainian speakers were

concentrated among the peasantry. He argued that the proletariat was already growing because of Ukrainian membership. The future of industry in the UkrSSR would depend on the productive capacity of these and other workers drawn from the peasantry. Shumsky, in agreement with party doctrine, maintained that the proletariat must lead the peasantry. However, he and other Ukrainizers believed that this charge could not mean neglect of the national question or peasant concerns. The proletariat would guide, not combat, the peasantry.

Ukrainizers maintained that Ukrainization was the key for the merger of a single Ukrainian, but distinctly socialist, nation of labourers. Opponents of Soviet power existed: the bourgeois intelligentsia and kulaks. It was these forces that the proletariat must oppose, by robbing them of any opportunity to stir up national dissent. Shumsky insisted that the bourgeois intelligentsia, both Russian and Ukrainian, were in essence battling for their "daily bread" (***khleb nasushnii***), vying to attract segments of the population to their cause. Proletarian neutrality in the national question would only increase their enemies' chances of success. In the village, if the proletariat permitted a struggle over language, it would "give a reason for the peasants to unite under the kulaks, serve kulak interests of an open battle with the proletariat (not just a cultural one)."[27] Shumsky thus acknowledged the potential of a cultural divide and the peasantry's susceptibility to nationalist influence. However, the solution he saw was in engagement. The proletariat needed to assume leadership of the development of national culture precisely because of its "great meaning" to the peasantry.

What divided Lebed and Shumsky, therefore, was not a difference in belief about the possibility of a struggle between national cultures, but divergent views about its inevitability and the proletariat's relationship with the peasantry. Although Lebed spoke about the need to unite the peasantry with the proletariat, the party would accomplish this alliance through the former's submission. The party, he wrote in response to Shumsky's criticism, had to do away with its previous policy of concessions to the peasantry, "who lead the *petliurovshchina* [anti-Soviet nationalism]."[28] The coming fight over Ukrainization would remain coloured by this judgment. Those who opposed it insisted that there was no need for the proletariat to yield to a language predominantly spoken by a backward and politically suspect population, the peasantry. Those who argued forcefully in favour of it maintained that proletarian mastery of Ukrainian would simultaneously fuse the labouring populations, legitimize and strengthen proletarian leadership, and alter the direction of Ukrainian culture. Ukrainian culture would become fundamentally modern, proletarian, and socialist.

In 1925, the new first secretary of the KP(b)U, Lazar Kaganovich, established a Ukrainization commission under the Politburo in an attempt to reassert the party's authority over the campaign. Kaganovich had grown up in a Jewish family

in a Ukrainian village. Upon assuming leadership of the KP(b)U, he polished up his Ukrainian-language skills and demanded that party members learn Ukrainian, use it in official functions, and thereby take on greater leadership of the Ukrainian population. His arrival marked a new campaign for the vigorous Ukrainization of officialdom, yet there was still a limit to the measures he proposed. In March 1926, he suggested that the party reassert its disavowal of the forced Ukrainization of the proletariat in its new theses on nationalities policy. This proposal did not find support by all in the KP(b)U. Shumsky raised strong objections to Kaganovich's management of Ukrainization in a private meeting with Stalin.

According to a letter Stalin wrote to the KP(b)U in April, Shumsky argued that although the intelligentsia was Ukrainizing fast and Ukrainian culture growing, the party and proletariat risked losing influence over the process.[29] In Shumsky's view, one of the greatest "sins" of the party and trade unions was that they had not recruited Communists who had "immediate ties with Ukrainian culture" to leadership positions. Furthermore, the party had permitted incomplete Ukrainization, especially among the working class. He criticized Kaganovich's leadership and urged that the party appoint ethnic Ukrainians to prominent positions in the government and party, recommending, specifically, former Narkmos Commissar Hrynko as head of Radnarkom.

Stalin turned Shumsky's criticisms on their head, agreeing with some of Shumsky's basic contentions but sharply condemning his proposed remedies. Stalin conceded that the party could not allow Ukrainization to fall into foreign hands and that the party needed cadres who both knew Ukrainian culture and understood the importance of the policy. However, he argued that Shumsky's call for greater Ukrainization among the proletariat suggested a policy of forced Ukrainization of Russian-speaking workers. While Stalin allowed that "the population will become nationalized (Ukrainized)" over the long term, he firmly rejected any coercive interference in this "spontaneous" process.[30] Second, he maintained that Shumsky's insistence on ethnic-Ukrainian leadership of Ukrainization had blinded him to the "shady side of this process." Due to the still-weak Ukrainian roots of the party, non-Communist intelligentsia might lead the policy and take on 'the character of a struggle against 'Moscow' in general, against Russians in general, against Russian culture and its high achievement – Leninism." He argued that the writings of Ukrainian essayist Mykola Khvylovy demonstrated the real potential of this tendency. Khvylovy's case for the de-Russification of the proletariat and integration of Ukrainian culture with European tradition represented a 'run away from Moscow."[31] The party had to struggle against this danger. The development of Ukrainian national culture had to be accomplished within the framework of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party, the VKP(b).

Even if taken at face value, Stalin's letter to the KP(b)U reveals something about the limits of proposed Ukrainization. The central party leadership intended for the campaign to serve primarily the needs of ethnic Ukrainians. It would not permit any Ukrainization of the Russian population. Furthermore, it would not aggressively Ukrainize the Russified proletariat, and rejected any measure that set the urgent transformation of this group as its target. Second, Stalin regarded the Ukrainian ethnic elite, non-party or not, with great suspicion. He would not sanction any promotion of Hrynko because of his lower "revolutionary and party status." Although Stalin listed other ethnic Ukrainians already prominent in the party leadership, their numbers were comparatively few. The dilemma the party faced, then, was how to Ukrainize if the Ukrainian element in the party was admittedly weak. The party had to rely on non-party intelligentsia to lead Ukrainization in education, but also, as has been suggested, in the training and evaluation of civil servants and party members. In time, it would grow anxious about the intelligentsia's management of this campaign, even as agents of Soviet power.

The KP(b)U Politburo's reply to Stalin conceded some difficulties in Ukrainization, but emphasized that the party had made considerable gains and, under Kaganovich's leadership, was headed in the right direction. For example, from 1924 to 1926, Ukrainian membership in the party had risen from 33 to 44 per cent and in the Komsomol from 50 to 63 per cent. Furthermore, it insisted that others in the party had "just as much right to be called Ukrainians as Shumsky" and that "we think it is not necessary that 100 percent of the higher leadership be Ukrainian by blood."[32] This latter statement suggests the notion of a supra-ethnic Ukrainian identity. The Politburo did not further define this identity in its letter, but, ethnic Ukrainian or not, the party leadership could not claim to have to large numbers of Ukrainian-speaking cadres to head the largely linguistic campaign of Ukrainization. Its count of Ukrainian membership in the party was based purely on ethnicity and, although there was a rise, the proportion of Ukrainians in the party was still much smaller than their proportion of the republic's population: 80 per cent in 1926.

By the Politburo's own admission, the civil-war legacy of antagonism towards Ukrainian national culture persisted among the party's rank and file. Ethnic Ukrainians such as Shumsky and Hrynko could not join the KP(b)U Central Committee because they "had no influence on the party masses" and still needed to overcome their past "mistakes."[33] The Politburo letter did not specify what their errors were, but suggested that their former membership in the Borotbist party, a Ukrainian communist party that merged with the KP(b)U in 1920, was enough to compromise their authority, although it did not completely exclude the possibility of their eventual advancement. The party had, for a time, sanctioned their management of Narkomos. Yet, even in these positions, the party did not entirely trust Hrynko and Shumsky and acted to remove each, although for very different reasons. For Shumsky, his intervention with Stalin was the beginning of the end; he was ultimately removed from his post as commissar of education in February 1927 for permitting "national deviation" and was replaced by Mykola Skrypnyk.

To compensate for its acknowledgment of low Ukrainian membership in the party, the Politburo offered as evidence of the progress of Ukrainization a description of its greatest success: the expansion of the Ukrainian-language schools. It maintained that primary schools were nearly 80 per cent Ukrainized (consistent with the proportion of ethnic Ukrainians in the republic), secondary schools were Ukrainizing fast, and higher educational institutions had made Ukrainian-language knowledge a requirement for admission. Ironically, then, by the Politburo's own admission, the most dramatic advance of Ukrainization had occurred under Shumsky's watch.

Although the Politburo had sanctioned an increase in Ukrainian education, at the same time, it worried about the development of Ukrainian national culture under party members it did not fully trust. The party had prioritized political consolidation and economic recovery and growth over the educational and cultural fields, but it was in these areas that it found the greatest danger because it did not and could not have complete authority over them. At the same time, education and cultural advancement offered the greatest potential for the party to Ukrainize the proletariat without obvious force. It placed hope in the cultivation of a new generation of Ukrainian-speaking workers. However, the large numbers of Ukrainized schools the party touted also represented a ticking clock. It had to intervene to rein in politically unreliable education administrators, oversee teachers, and ensure the ultimate trustworthiness of school graduates. Otherwise, the party feared, the schools might produce a generation that would undermine its rule in Ukraine.

For the time being, the party attempted to maintain a middle course. A 1926 report given by Secretary of the TsK KP(b)U Fedor Korniushin argued that it was impossible to complete Ukrainization without the active participation of the proletariat. The proletariat and the party needed to head the campaign, completely familiarize themselves with Ukrainian culture, and clean it of its national bourgeois tendency (*pereval*).[34] However, it also recognized that a significant portion of the Ukrainian proletariat was Russified and might react negatively to any ill-considered, hasty campaign. The Ukrainization of the proletariat would take time (the report considered the more than eight years that had passed since the revolution to be brief) and under no circumstances would the party allow the "imposition of Ukrainian culture on workers of other nationalities." Those who argued for an increased pace, the report said, forget "there is not enough strength for this" and make a "fetish" out of national culture. The party had to proceed with

careful deliberation, at a rate correspondent with the number of trusted Ukrainian instructors it had at its disposal, and in a manner sensitive to the concerns of the Russian-speaking population.

As a practical matter, this meant the party would push Ukrainization hardest among officials who served the rural population and administered the schools. A proletarian party could not concede that Ukrainian culture was the preserve of the peasantry. Such an acknowledgment would undermine the rationale and intent of the campaign: the liberation of an oppressed national culture and its orientation towards socialism. However, the Ukrainization of the proletariat had to be accomplished gradually. In addition to those at urban academic institutes, the greatest concentration of instructors for the state-run Ukrainization courses was in the schools. It was here, then, that officials hoped to best manage and form a new Ukrainian, proletarian culture.

The party's principal organization for oversight and advancement of Ukrainized education was its youth wing, the Komsomol. The question of the Komsomol's Ukrainization will be discussed in detail in chapter 8. Here, it is enough to say that the party leadership took a direct interest in the Komsomol response to orders to Ukrainize. A March 1926 meeting of the KP(b)U TsK commission emphasized that the Ukrainian Komsomol had to take a leading role in Ukrainization in children's institutions, and that the TsK would hold Komsomol leadership personally responsible for progress in the campaign. The problem was that the commission also found Ukrainization within the Komsomol itself to be unsatisfactory.[35] Although ethnic-Ukrainian membership in the organization generally had risen to 63 per cent, one commission report found that only 43.5 per cent of its sections in industrial areas reportedly carried out their work in Ukrainian (compared to 86.6 per cent of rural sections).[36] An additional report on Ukrainian membership within the Komsomol confirmed these general figures, noting, however, that Ukrainization of the Komsomol apparat was inadequate. Furthermore, a postscript to this report, added in pen, conceded that "a significant portion of those identified in the report as Ukrainian do not know Ukrainian."[37] A Komsomol with few Ukrainian-speaking members had little authority or ability to press schools to rapidly switch their language of instruction.

Not only had the Komsomol failed to Ukrainize, the TsK commission also doubted the commitment of some members to the policy. It concluded that lower-ranking activists in the organization generally had not learned Ukrainian and, in a few instances, had opposed "the political meaning of Ukrainization."[38] The commission found little leadership in the Komsomol for transfer of official functions to Ukrainian, negligence by regional sections regarding Ukrainization, and wide use of Russian by members in all but the most rural areas. Whether by design or not, the Ukrainian Komsomol was resisting the very nationalities policy set by the party.

While the Ukrainization of the Komsomol itself was important, it was necessary because of the supervisory role the organization was supposed to have over Ukrainian youth. First, the TsK commission mandated that all Komsomol activists take part in the organization of Ukrainian-language schools, specifically in industrial districts.[39] Together with the party's propaganda wing, Agitprop, the Komsomol members had to work to ensure "political literacy" in the second level of newly Ukrainized schools. The organization would find it impossible to accomplish both these tasks and lead "Ukrainian cultural life" in the future if the rank and file did not deepen their knowledge of Ukrainian studies and the language. The Komsomol also assumed a direct role over the Communist children's movement, the Young Pioneers. While the schools would provide political training for students, the Pioneers' chief responsibility was to arrange public activity for children outside the school. As will be detailed below, in almost all urban areas and in many of the few villages where the Young Pioneers had sections, work was in Russian.[40] The Politburo Ukrainization Commission considered it an "especially abnormal phenomenon" that Young Pioneer sections operating in fully Ukrainized schools still spoke in Russian regularly at their meetings. The commission placed blame for the failures squarely on the Komsomol. It is little wonder, then, that some in the party worried about the ability of Communists to manage Ukrainization properly.

Re-Ukrainizing Ukrainians

While the Komsomol found it difficult to keep pace with Ukrainization of schools in urban and industrial centres, Narkomos officials continued to worry about the effect the broader Russian-language environment in these areas had on the capacity of schools to fully transfer to Ukrainian. In particular, they pointed to the harmful influence of Russian chauvinism among civil servants, who adamantly refused to send their children to Ukrainian-language schools, even if they were ethnic Ukrainian. Similarly, according to one newspaper account, some older teachers remained hostile to Ukrainization, having, before the revolution, "with the courtesy of inspectors and cultural trainers, painstakingly implanted a foreign language and foreign culture in our children, crippling their living spirit."[41] A 1927 meeting of Kyiv party and school employees identified at least three schools in the city headed by Russian chauvinists like these.[42] Narkomos officials labelled such attitudes "anti-Soviet" and cited their spread as reason for an even more concerted campaign of Ukrainization.

Narkomos had repeatedly set as its target Ukrainian-language schooling for all ethnic-Ukrainian schoolchildren. In a detailed letter addressed to Arnautov, now head of Uprsotsvykh, the Kyiv regional school inspector, Lukashenko, detailed

the shortcomings of Ukrainization that persisted as late as 1926–7. He specifically raised concern that the overwhelming majority of children not attending school were of Ukrainian origin and came from what he labelled the most "insecure" portion of the city's population: day labourers and the unemployed.[43] The city's schools had to embrace this population, and continued migration of ethnic Ukrainians into Kyiv would also mandate an increase in the number of Ukrainian-language schools operating at the time. A 1926 report of the Kyiv Regional Education Section had indicated that the proportion of ethnic Ukrainians in the city was likely to rise.[44] At the beginning of the 1925–6 school year, 32.5 per cent of the city's students were studying in Ukrainian-language groups, although the proportion of ethnic-Ukrainian children in school stood at 40.5 per cent as a whole and 44.8 per cent in the first grade alone. Significant numbers of Ukrainian children were not enrolled in Ukrainian-language groups or schools.

Lukashenko placed the blame for this gap squarely on the shoulders of Russified Ukrainian parents who wished to send their children to Russian-language schools because they continued to believe that such schools offer "greater perspectives."[45] In doing so, Lukashenko argued, they ignored the "native language" of the child and made their selection on the basis of which school used to be the privileged gymnasium during tsarist times or had a better administrator or facilities. Lukashenko counselled caution in dealing with these parents. Insensitivity to their wishes might only increase their own chauvinism and hostility towards Ukrainization. District school-enrolment commissions needed to take "an approach of propagandizing and convincing [*shliakh propahuvannia i perekonanniia*]" with individual parents. Every increase in the enrolment of Russified Ukrainians in Ukrainian-language schools would strengthen the authority of these schools and the push towards Ukrainization in general. Only when parents could not be convinced otherwise should enrolment commissions assent to their wishes.

However, for Lukashenko, a family's decision to send ethnic-Ukrainian children to Russian-language schools was largely a matter of choice. So, notwithstanding his words of restraint, he condemned the Russophilism he found to be most prevalent among white-collar workers: "In spite of the Ukrainization of the Soviet apparat and his personal work, the Soviet office worker is, en masse, demanding to educate his children in the Russian school."[46] Narkomos officials like Lukashenko must have seen hope in the increasing numbers of working-class children who were attending Ukrainian schools. The KP(b)U and, as a consequence, Narkomos considered the proletariat's embrace of Ukrainization the best determinant of the policy's success or failure. In his letter to the KP(b)U Politburo, Stalin had cautioned against the forced Ukrainization of the proletariat,

both ethnic Russian and Russified. The KP(b)U prohibited the Ukrainization of the former. Its approach to the Russified Ukrainian population was more nuanced. Here, Narkomos encouraged, and the party did not contravene, the Ukrainization of the former bourgeoisie. It ultimately decided on a more gradual approach towards the proletariat, whose Ukrainization the party needed, but could not compel.

It was a school's obligatory transfer to Ukrainian-language instruction in the southern city of Mykolaiv, far away from the cultural capital of Kyiv, that raised the question of the Ukrainization of the Russian-speaking population generally for Narkomos and, eventually, the party. In November 1926, TsKNM (the Central Committee for National Minorities, a subsidiary organ of VUTsVK) requested that Narkomos investigate the "abnormal" Ukrainization of Mykolaiv Labour School No. 15. According to a letter subsequently sent to Narkomos by parents of students attending the school, the regional education inspector had Ukrainized the first grade of the school without regard for the predominantly ethnic-Russian composition of the school.[47] The letter further claimed that parents of five children in the Ukrainized group had removed their children from the school and the parents of the other sixty-five were only waiting to remove their children until their case had been reconsidered. The parents who wrote the complaint justified their petition on the basis of a governmental decree protecting the educational rights of ethnic minorities.

In his defence, the Mykolaiv regional education inspector, Yosyp Podolsky, detailed the reasons for the Ukrainization of the school. He argued that the Mykolaiv inspectorate had concentrated its early campaign for the Ukrainization of primary schools in workers' districts, where the Ukrainian population was highest.[48] However, by 1926–7, it turned its attention to the Ukrainization of the lower grades of schools in the central district of the city, where the majority of the population was 'white collar' or artisan. This move was justified first on political grounds, because workers had come to believe that the inspectorate was targeting only their districts for Ukrainization and not the districts of government employees, "who should in fact be the first to demonstrate a model for the implementation of the directives [on Ukrainization] of the central [republican] organs of power and do not read [in Ukrainian]."[49] Second, the national composition of the district demanded some limited opening of Ukrainian schools. Ukrainization had taken place in three schools of the central district, and parents moved quickly to reserve space for their children in them.

According to the Mykolaiv inspector, any school could have been Ukrainized. The inspectorate chose Labour School No. 15, in specific, because it occupied the building of a former gymnasium, owned by the director of the school. The school had used its reputation as a gymnasium among the population and gathered

around it a group of supporters. Therefore, Podolsky argued, "In taking the path of Ukrainization, the people's education inspectorate intended to simultaneously and definitively destroy the reputation of this school as a gymnasium and to further change the pedagogical staff of this school, to dismantle any remnants of the olden days of schooling [*shkilnoi starovyny*] in it."[50] Of all the schools Ukrainized in the city, this was the only school parents petitioned to remain Russian.

Podolsky argued that it was primarily parents of older students, whose instruction, in fact, remained in Russian, who protested the school's Ukrainization. An overwhelming majority of parents of the students in the Ukrainized first grade registered their children to stay in the school, and a second group was set up in the school to accommodate the number of students. The inspectorate organized another group in a neighbouring Russian school for those students who wished to transfer. In the final analysis, Podolsky claimed, the parents' protest of the Ukrainization of Labour School No. 15 was reactionary: "The parents were not speaking out to defend 'their children,' but the remnants of the olden days of schooling."[51]

Uprsotsvykh had tried to find the middle ground between the Mykolaiv inspectorate and the parents of Labour School No. 15. It affirmed the general thrust of the inspectorate's Ukrainization policy, but recommended that the inspectorate organize a parallel Russian group for the first grade in this school.[52] Both the parents and the Mykolaiv inspectorate rejected this proposal. In the end, Uprsotsvykh sided with the inspectorate, arguing that the first-grade children in the school had ample opportunity to transfer to Russian groups in other schools, and that children of the parents who mounted the protest were in older groups unaffected by Ukrainization.[53] It recognized that the chief motive of the parents appeared to be an unwillingness to let a Ukrainian-language group use a room in a school renovated out of community funds.

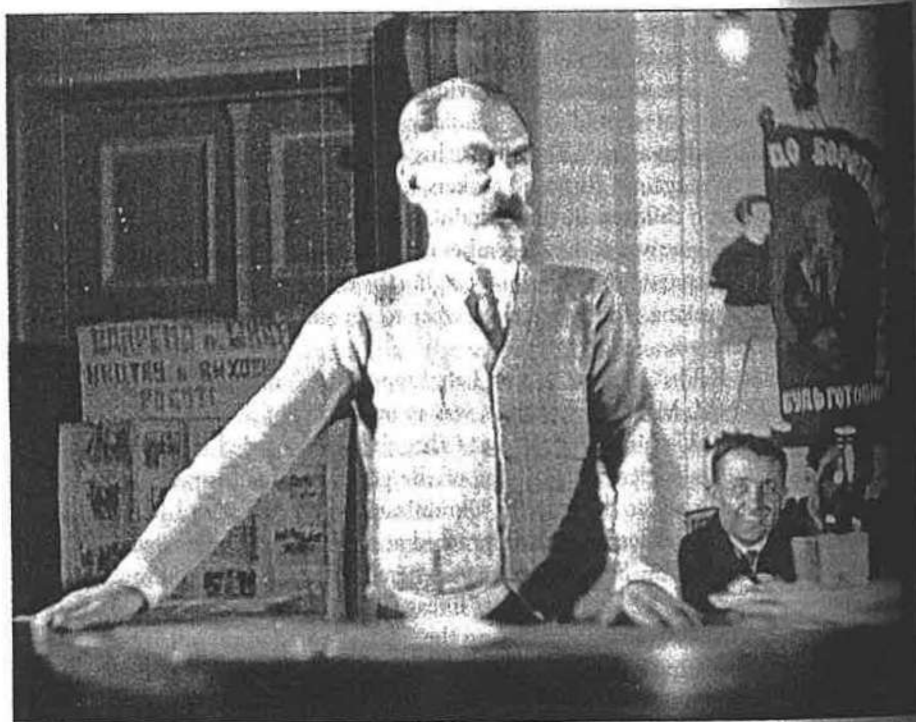
Limits Set

What seemed to be at issue in the Mykolaiv case was the question of whether Russians were an ethnic minority and what sort of protection they deserved. Mykolaiv authorities sought to escape reprimand by arguing that Russian parents still had the option of educating their children in Russian, and that the Ukrainization of Labour School No. 15 served a distinct pedagogical and political aim. However, as Podolsky noted, this school was not the only school Ukrainized in Mykolaiv. Ukrainization proceeded apace in other schools in spite of predominantly Russian student bodies. A December 1926 meeting of the KP(b)U Politburo commission on Ukrainization offered a chance to take stock of the direction of Ukrainization.

The commission met under the veil of criticism mounted by Yurii Larin at an April 1926 session of the All-Union Central Executive Committee (TsIK). At this meeting, Larin addressed the previously taboo question of whether the Ukrainian government should treat Russians as an ethnic minority, arguing forcefully for the affirmative.[54] To support his case, Larin pointed to a series of discriminatory acts against Russian speakers in Ukraine, including the forced instruction of their children in the Ukrainian language.[55] Unlike Larin, however, several representatives at the December meeting of the KP(b)U commission made an effort to separate the question of rights for ethnic Russians versus those of Russified Ukrainians. The problem of what to do about the latter remained open to interpretation.

A June 1926 KP(b)U report by the Left Opposition[56] member and former head of the TsKNM, Mykhailo Lobanov, was an indication of the confusion over what constituted a Ukrainian. He allowed that the party needed to pursue the Ukrainization of its leadership and that of the government and trade unions, but insisted it must reject the forceful Ukrainization of its rank and file. Even Ukrainization of the leadership had to proceed at a rate correspondent with the Ukrainian makeup of the Soviet apparat in general, a figure he insisted must be determined by a survey of language, not "lineage" (*proiskhodzhenie*).[57] The party would not abandon Ukrainization among the general population, but it had to proceed cautiously, supporting Ukrainian cultural institutions in a bid to increase their attractiveness.

Lobanov was trying to walk a fine line. He conceded that the party could simply wait for the gradual re-Ukrainization of the city, yet said it must allow for some amount of coercion: "The Communist Party, having come to power during a revolution, cannot contemplatively, patiently regard the historical process's 'games of power,' observing 'neutrality' towards national relations which are being spontaneously formed." However, the party's "artful forcing of this process" must have limits. Lobanov's report concluded that the present, unbounded policy had allowed for the rise of a competitive struggle among language workers. Its continuation would lead to the growth of Ukrainian nationalism "in some Soviet-protected form" and concealed Russian chauvinism. The party had to act to make the Ukrainian intelligentsia understand the policy had boundaries and to remove any excuse the Russian intelligentsia had to complain of oppression. Lobanov stopped short of demanding "constitutional" recognition of ethnic-minority status for Russians, but demanded that local authorities guarantee access to judicial and cultural services in Russian, especially in workers' districts. The schooling of workers' children was a key element of this requirement. However, Lobanov's stress on language as a marker of ethnicity did not meet with the agreement of current policy.



Mykola Skrypnyk, Shumsky's successor as the Ukrainian People's Commissar of Education, speaks at a meeting of the Communist Children's Movement (Young Pioneers) in Kharkiv, 1930. Courtesy TsDKFFAU.

In the view of many present at the December meeting of the Politburo commission, a certain amount of involuntary Ukrainization of the Russian-speaking population had occurred. Volodymyr Zatonsky, who had previously served as the Soviet Ukrainian state secretary (later commissar) of education during the civil war and then as UkrSSR commissar of education from January 1919 to April 1920 and October 1922 to March 1924, argued that while continued work on Ukrainization was needed among the upper grades of schools, Narkomos had approached the "extreme" of coercive Ukrainization in lower grades.[58] He concluded that continued work in this direction might provoke protest and alluded to the situation in Mykolaiv as an example. The next speaker, Lazovert, was even more specific. He cited the case of Mykolaiv Labour School No. 15 and supported the demands of the parents to reverse the school's Ukrainization, claiming that the

large ethnic-Russian population in Mykolaiv needed more Russian schools. Even Mykola Skrypnyk, a defender of Ukrainization and future commissar of education, acknowledged that the policy had sometimes been inappropriately applied: "I personally believe that the dissatisfaction of the population, which does arise, is due to the fact that the requirements of the population are not being met."[59] In effect, he validated the sort of protests mounted in Mykolaiv, if not their specific motivation.

Skrypnyk led the push to recognize the Russian population as an ethnic minority, playing off the more provocative cries of national oppression by speakers such as Lazovert. He conceded that abuses of Russian interests had occurred in individual cases, and recognized openly that the Russian population in Ukraine constituted an ethnic minority and that the party should secure for it corresponding rights.[60] The very success of Ukrainization mandated such action. Other representatives at the meeting echoed this course. Ethnic Russians would be afforded state protection, and the right to educate their children in their native language, previously guaranteed, would be strictly guarded.[61] The Ukrainization commission refrained from calling for an outright constitutional definition of Russian ethnic-minority status. Protection of Russian rights would instead be a matter of rigorous application.

The meeting was decidedly less clear on the question of the Ukrainization of Russified Ukrainian children. Zatonsky made a convincing case that ethnicity did not determine an individual's native language and argued for cautious Ukrainization among the children of railroad workers. For Skrypnyk, the solution to charting a more appropriate course was stricter management of local organs implementing Ukrainization. Particular sensitivity would have to be paid to the demands of the working class, but Skrypnyk, and those who supported his view, maintained that the party must still push fundamental Ukrainization at the primary-school level: Russification continued to influence parental choice, and Ukrainian school attendance was disproportionately low.[62] In short, Ukrainization among children of the proletariat would proceed, but it would have to be carefully calibrated.

Chapter Thirteen

Conclusion

In early Soviet Ukraine, the republican and Communist Party leadership asked educators and intellectuals to use language as a tool for the radical transformation of society.[1] This study has sought to unpack what this process meant and demonstrate the union between educational and nationalities policy at the level of the classroom, and to go beyond a discussion of language transfer by decree. The KP(b)U entrusted Narkomos to apply an innovative, progressive pedagogy towards the creation of a new generation of Soviet citizens. Russian educators shared this approach, but their Ukrainian counterparts gave it greater attention because of the distinct vocational orientation of the Ukrainian education system. Narkomos aimed to do away with traditional subject divisions and teacher pedantry by integrating lessons into thematic groupings, or complexes, firmly oriented towards instructing students in the value of labour and the role of production. Students would gain a "labour mentality" by acculturation, and more rapidly take their place in the rebuilding of an economy recovering from the civil war.

Narkomos maintained that instruction in the Ukrainian language was absolutely necessary for teachers to achieve this goal. It judged Ukrainian to be the native language for all ethnic-Ukrainian children, and educators stressed the primary role of language in the new methodology. The commissariat also sought to rationalize education by recommending that teachers develop an awareness of production through the study of the familiar, or "local studies" (kraieznavstvo). The curriculum provided for the gradual broadening of this study to an investigation of a region's tie to all of Ukraine. The Ukrainian language and Ukrainian studies were both at the core of a curriculum that allowed teachers and students considerable freedom to innovate. Narkomos's hope was that children would gain the outlook, self-confidence, and decision-making skills necessary to undertake their public duties as young adults.

However, most teachers were ill-prepared for the dual demands of a progressive pedagogy and Ukrainization. They were inadequately paid, generally had a low level of education, and had little training in how to teach in Ukrainian or design a curriculum on the basis of the complex system touted by Narkomos guides. Schools, on the whole, remained in a state of disrepair, and teachers lacked paper, basic school supplies, and, most importantly, Ukrainian-language textbooks or pedagogical guides. Narkomos had pursued a decentralized process for both Ukrainization and curricular planning, leaving the tasks of school reform to local education sections. The general lack of state and community financial support for education meant that these sections could offer teachers few opportunities for retraining. Some returned to a formalistic approach in the classroom or abandoned methodology altogether.

Importantly, evaluations of teachers' language knowledge revealed that teachers had also not made much qualitative progress in transferring to Ukrainian-language instruction. Narkomos correlated resistance to linguistic and pedagogical reform and viewed instances of both as anti-Soviet behaviour. As the experience of Odesa argued, although local education sections occasionally acted to discipline or dismiss problematic teachers, they also made allowances for delay. There were few incentives for real change. Ultimately, this study has argued, the success of Ukrainization must be judged at this level. An increase in Ukrainian-language schooling did not translate into a rapid transformation of the classroom's language environment.

In spite of the problems associated with Ukrainization, this study maintains that the shift to Ukrainian-language schooling was a fundamental aspect of the party's program for galvanizing republic-wide support for its economic programs and assuring urban authority over the village. If industrial workers and the party were to administer the countryside, they would have to master its language: Ukrainian. The Ukrainization campaign would be ineffectual without the Ukrainization of the proletariat. Nevertheless, protests regarding the "forced" Ukrainization of some labourers (and their children) occasioned the intervention of the party. Narkomos did not (and could not) abandon the Ukrainization of the republic's industrial labourers, but settled on a more indirect formula. Ukrainization of the proletariat would occur gradually through children. Although the KP(b)U absolutely forbade the involuntary schooling of ethnic-Russian children in Ukrainian, it gave Narkomos the freedom to continue to Ukrainize children of "Russified" Ukrainians. In effect, Russified Ukrainian parents had to resist a strong Narkomos campaign of persuasion and disprove the identification of Ukrainian as the native language of their children. Narkomos's final objective was the creation of a Ukrainian-speaking, labour-oriented cadre that would alter the linguistic environment of the cities.

The paradox of both the program for Ukrainization and the new Soviet school was that the Communist Party leadership sought a controlled outcome to education, and yet had little day-to-day management over the classroom and the political costs of its activity. Although the shortcomings of Ukrainization among teachers were widespread, there was a group of educators committed to the policy and its improvement. The person of Ukrainizer and pedagogical innovator was often one and the same. The KP(b)U relied on these individuals greatly for Ukrainization's general success. Consequently, the importance of the field of education, often characterized as a "soft-line" concern, should not be minimized. In some areas, educators were creating centres of authority alternative to Narkomos. The KP(b)U monitored the activity of these figures and grew increasingly worried about their potential power. Non-party educators subscribed to a broad understanding of Ukrainian culture's place in the building of socialism and worked to strengthen this role. They hoped that Ukrainization's ultimate agenda would be shaped by their efforts, and put great faith in the ability of education to define behaviour, a faith that the party leadership ultimately shared.

While focusing on the period of so-called High Stalinism, Serhy Yekelchyk has argued that "Ukrainian culture did not result from Moscow's *diktat* and the suppression of the local intelligentsia's 'natural' national sentiment ... It was their interaction with Moscow, rather than simply the centre's totalizing designs, that produced the official line on non-Russian identities and national patrimonies."[2] As this study has made clear, the centralizing aspirations emphasized in conventional histories of the Stalinist period were considerably absent in the 1920s, but the party/state still mandated that the Ukrainian Soviet education system produce a definite result: a loyal citizen prepared to participate in the new socialist economy. The Ukrainian intelligentsia (educational theorists and teachers) assumed a critical role in determining the process to reach this end. To a significant degree, then, this study provides a helpful prelude to Yekelchyk's argument. As Yekelchyk notes, in the 1920s (and for those whose formative experiences were drawn from this period), socialism and Ukrainian nation building were "potentially compatible projects."[3] Indeed, the high numbers of primary schools Ukrainized stand as evidence of this fact. However, teachers still had significant work to do to meet the standards the Soviet state had set for itself.

While participatory space continued to exist in the Stalinist state and the Soviet Union remained committed to national categories of understanding, this study emphasizes that the repression of a leading segment of the Ukrainian intellectual elite that began in 1930 had an essential effect in setting the limits of negotiation. Thus, although Ukrainian educators like Francine Hirsch's ethnographers adjusted to the realities of Soviet power after the cultural revolution and "learned how to show that their nationalism was the correct 'Soviet' kind, devoid of the

'bourgeois' tendencies and ambitions,"[4] this adjustment was fundamental and not foreseen by the Ukrainizers. Furthermore, this was a decidedly uneven "participatory" process, one already undermined by the Communist Party's suspicions of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. This study has argued that the SVU show trial irrevocably damaged future efforts for Ukrainization and suggested that the oft-cited achievements of 1930 to 1933 must be questioned. The SVU show trial was aimed directly at Ukrainizing and progressive educators. The KP(b)U, guided by Moscow, put forty-five members of the intelligentsia on trial, not just because it had little confidence in non-party intelligentsia, but also because it had misgivings about the real consequences of their work (despite the actual deficiencies of a Ukrainian-language education in 1929–30). This anxiety provided the script for the repression against the intelligentsia, if it was not the sole motivation for this action. The signal that the party intended for teachers was that they must place Ukrainization under the party's leadership and wed it to the public campaigns of the Five-Year Plan. The message teachers understood was that it was best not to burden themselves unnecessarily with the goals of the campaign. Although Narkomos achieved full Ukrainization formally, examinations of teacher knowledge continued to reveal a weak grasp of the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian-studies topics. Few were leading the charge for a policy that the republican leaders continued to tout.

Furthermore, the party's move to rein in Ukrainization corresponded with a protracted move to assume management over classroom methodology. By 1930, it was clear that the complex method had not realized Narkomos's academic goals and had created too much opportunity for variant interpretations of curriculum. Soviet authorities politicized progressive education and linked student activism to the explicit goals of the First Five-Year Plan: collectivization and industrialization. The move to conform the Ukrainian education system to all-Union norms foreshadowed the regimentation of the education system generally. The SVU trial ultimately offered an excuse for a full-scale rejection of the complex system. Several SVU defendants had been prominent sponsors of progressive pedagogy. Now, the complex system as a whole was tainted by association, and the pedagogical press blamed Ukrainian nationalists for confusion in the schools.

Narkomos and the KP(b)U continued to pursue Ukrainization, especially in secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. They had declared significant success at the primary-school level in a generalized sense, but left ambiguous the metrics of what this success meant. The archival material on the classroom in the early 1930s is sparse; still, existing reports suggest that considerable work needed to take place "behind the scenes," at the local level. The "complete" Ukrainization of primary schools had not ceased to be a concern, but the priorities of the KP(b)U and Narkomos were elsewhere, and qualitative improvements in

Ukrainian-language instruction stalled. Meanwhile, reports of Ukrainian nationalist and counter-revolutionary activity in the schools and Young Pioneers detachments, and stories of violence directed against activist children and teachers, continued to mount. By early 1933, when Narkomos administrators discussed the Ukrainization of schools, they increasingly talked about it in a negative sense, as a policy that had violated the rights of ethnic Russians and had led to a rise in Ukrainian nationalism. In 1933–4, when the party finally declared "local nationalism" the chief danger, Soviet authorities purged the Narkomos apparat almost entirely of its existing staff and dismissed thousands of Ukrainian teachers. In the years that followed, the number of Ukrainian schools dropped in major urban centres and Soviet authorities no longer consistently compelled the systematic Ukrainization of higher education, opting instead to permit Russian-language predominance.[5] Both these processes would accelerate after the war. In fact, the die had been cast earlier. The SVU show trial had already fundamentally undermined the potential of Ukrainian-language instruction. Repressions against Ukrainian national elites, in particular educators, ultimately robbed the linguistic component of Ukrainization of its vigour and sent a signal to those who might have too enthusiastically taken up the charge: "Now the Ukrainian language stopped being the basic means for modernization. Those who wanted to win respected social status and gain entry to new information, to contemporary scientific thought and knowledge, had to resort to the Russian language."[6] The examples of Odesa Labour School No. 41 and Labour School No. 67, referenced in chapter 9, evoke an intriguing picture of an acceptance of a Ukrainian national category and the strengthening of national identity in this most non-Ukrainian of cities and regions, and suggest a possible alternative course of how Ukrainization might have proceeded.[7] Perhaps few of the children (or their parents) in these or other Ukrainizing schools privileged concerns about national identity, but they acknowledged that a Ukrainian identity existed, maybe on par with a Russian one.

Much of the story that is told here is about challenge and failure. A central point of this study is that the Ukrainization of primary schooling, which other scholars have assumed to be automatic, was a demanding, incomplete, and contested campaign. However, Ukrainization's achievements should not be lost on the reader. The problematic route of contemporary Ukrainization is a reminder that perhaps too much was expected in too short a time in the interwar period. Still, given the large, exclusively Ukrainian-speaking population in the republic at that time, the Soviet government might have accomplished more if its trust in the Ukrainizers had been greater. To repeat, the objective of Ukrainization was a levelling of language hierarchy, a reversal of Russification, and the increased use of Ukrainian in the public space. Primarily, the campaign was directed at ethnic Ukrainians, although it required anyone in a position to service Ukrainians as the largest ethnic group in

the republic to learn Ukrainian, and assumed a "sorting out" of Ukrainians that was never so neat. The UkrSSR, in fact, took the lead among Soviet republics in promoting ethnic-minority cultures, setting up so-called national districts where its leaders claimed a concentration of a particular ethnic group. Political leaders in the KP(b)U and administrators in Narkomos recognized the ethnic diversity of the republic and strongly supported a network of primary schools to educate ethnic-minority children, so much so that some parents who wished to have their children attend a Russian or Ukrainian school felt their choice was constrained. This particular challenge makes the case of education in Ukraine compelling as an examination of the intersection among education, "national" (Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Jewish, etc.) interest, citizenship, and parental choice. Although the study privileges the story of Ukrainian-language schooling and its tie to education reform, it is critical to remember that the state pursued these campaigns in the context of a general effort to satisfy all national communities. If any label is to be applied to the linguistic component of educational policy in Ukraine as whole, it should be de-Russification rather than Ukrainization.

Education was not a daily concern of the leadership of the VKP(b) or even the KP(b)U, but challenges regarding schooling could have an impact on political decisions. A study of nationalities and educational policy reveals much about the individual's relationship with the state. Citizens of the UkrSSR were subjects of policies that were still under development. Thus, they were trying to discover what role the state expected of them, what motive they had to participate, and what the limits of their engagement in the policy should be, if any. Both Ukrainization and progressive education required their involvement, and citizen input inevitably influenced the contours of state policy. At the local level, the Soviet Union created space for civic participation, and activities stemming from, and surrounding, the schoolhouse were critical reflections and stimulants of government. As Odesa's story vividly illustrates, the success or failure of Ukrainization of schools hinged on local initiative and, in the end, the compliance of administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Furthermore, the progressive schooling of the 1920s required children to gather information about their local community, information necessary for the fulfillment of the curriculum and of interest to the state. In the end, the party proved itself much more willing to trust children than teachers or even Narkomos administrators, even as it worried about children's vulnerability. Children and youth were a force for change because their views and positions were not static and were capable of implementing change. Some of the very children who were the subjects of Ukrainization and progressive pedagogy in 1923 conceivably took part in the alteration of both by the early 1930s.

This study is a story about nation building, but also an account of urbanization and the development of a modern sensibility.[8] The Soviet state required children

and their parents to appreciate the world beyond the village or their city, and offered them an opportunity to identify with a larger construct. Given available sources, it is difficult to specify how children understood what they were being told, but Ukrainization undoubtedly brought the nation into the classroom. The language in which children were taught was the same language spoken in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa, and excursions and lessons in Ukrainian studies further reinforced this association. The assignment of children to schools by nationality also promoted a sense of national identity, but not exclusively for Ukrainians, since schools were supposed to be established for each concentration of an ethnic minority, including Russians. To select Ukrainian students for one school meant to exclude and redirect students of different ethnic groups. Thus, children of all nationalities were compelled to recognize a Ukrainian national identity as well as a national taxonomy in general. What mattered in the end was the education system's development of these circles of overlapping association and omission.

Moreover, the increased migration of Ukrainians to the cities changed the character of urban life by altering the ethnic picture of cities as well as increasing their "peasantization." The actual or potential future migration of Ukrainian peasants provoked fears of a crisis of authority, and Ukrainizers spoke out strongly of the need to ensure the establishment of "complete" (full seven-year) primary Ukrainian schools for the children of these migrants, even in the most non-Ukrainian city, Odesa. Migration meant that Ukrainization was a necessity because of a real shift in population as well as anticipated future migration. What appeared to be dangerous was not that this shift was occurring (it was desired), but that it might provoke social and political instability. Schooling in Ukrainian was needed to prevent any rise in national frustration and to train children of recently arrived peasants to be politically responsible citizens. They could educate their parents in turn. Narkomos officials also advocated the establishment of Ukrainian schools in city centres, away from where migrants tended to settle. Their aim was to symbolically alter cultural identity; to de-Russify the most valued establishments in a city, including the best schools and former gymnasiums. This effort negatively impacted children who were not Ukrainian or not Ukrainian-speaking and were already enrolled in schools ordered to Ukrainize, but local education officials insisted any temporary dislocation was necessary. Otherwise, urban populations would believe Ukrainization applied only to districts outside the city's heart, and Ukrainian would remain a language solely associated with peasants and the marginalized. Narkomos would pressure Russified Ukrainians to continue their enrolment and, in time, transfer non-Ukrainians to other schools. Narkomos's post-1933 reduction in the number of urban Ukrainian schools because of the "forced Ukrainization" of Russians (and, implicitly, Russian-speakers) meant an abandonment of one of the key

aims of the policy: a capture of urban space through the conversion of prestigious city schools to Ukrainian-language instruction.

The transformation of Ukrainian culture into the urban and esteemed was meant to alter children's self-identification regardless of whether they lived in the city, but it was the content of a school's instruction that affirmed children's views of modern citizenship. The education offered in Ukrainian schools was revolutionary in its ambition to train informed, active participants in the building of socialism through instruction driven in the first instance by children themselves. The contradiction in Soviet education generally at this time is that Soviet authorities wanted to create citizens capable of independent, self-motivated action and yet, in the end, they feared children's vulnerability to "foreign" persuasion, as material on the Komsomol and Young Pioneers demonstrates. This study is telling, then, about the Soviet state's aspirations as revealed in its education program and the limitations of its expectations. In progressive pedagogy, Narkomos saw the promise of revolution fulfilled and yet ultimately shifted course towards a new conservatism, partly in recognition of the concerns of some parents and teachers that children were not learning fundamental skills and classrooms were in disorder because of the teacher's diminished authority. Furthermore, the flexible instruction that progressive pedagogy embraced introduced unpredictability and a potential for challenges to Soviet political authority.

The turn to a conservative pedagogy oriented around textbook use and a teacher's leadership diminished the pressure of Ukrainization, in part because of this pedagogy's reliance on literature already in print, much of which still remained in Russian. The accompanying unification of the Ukrainian and Russian education systems also required a uniformity and interchangeability of instruction that Ukrainization, through its instruction in Ukrainian studies as well as the language, complicated. None of this is to say that education in the UkrSSR in the 1930s was "reactionary," but it bears repeating that Ukrainization and the progressive pedagogy of the 1920s were mutually compatible campaigns that were consistent with the revolution's liberating and modernizing goals (and not a retreat). The Communist Party believed Ukrainization was necessary in order correct the tsarist oppression of the past, transmit Soviet values, and transform the workforce of the republic. Tension resulted from the effort to define what the limits of this commitment to the Ukrainian language and culture were and what place non-party intellectuals would have in the campaign. Short of some readily apparent extremes, Ukrainization was initially a negotiated process. The UkrSSR was exceptional among the Soviet republics for being a place where intellectuals and individuals in the republican leadership were willing to push the envelope of nationalities policy beyond that imagined elsewhere.

81 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 5, spr. 666, ark. 118.
82 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 5, spr. 680, ark. 36.

6. Limited Urgency

1 V. Sihov, "Het' profanatsiiu," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 12 January 1927, 3.
2 V. S., "Spravy ukraïnizatsiï. Za pidvyshchennia ukraïns'koï hramotnosty," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 12 January 1927, 3.
3 Z. Nuzhnyi, "Iak ne slid ukraïnizuvatysia! (Na Dnipropetrovskii zaliznytsi)," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 12 January 1927, 3.
4 Z. Nuzhnyi, "De-shcho pro ukraïnizatsiiu Dnipropetrovskoï zaliznytsi," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 3 November 1926, 3.
5 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2253, ark. 4–9.
6 M. Mashkivs'kyi, "Do spravy ukraïnizatsiï vchytel'stva na Pivd.-zakh. zaliznytsiakh," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 6 October 1926, 2.
7 Z. Nuzhnyi, "De-shcho pro ukraïnizatsiiu Dnipropetrovskoï zaliznytsi," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 3 November 1926, 3.
8 N. I. K. "Ukraïnizatsiia. Syln'a drama z zhyttia Bilotserkivs'koï okruhy na bahato dii z prolohom ta epilohom," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 30 March 1927, 3.
9 S. Khomenko, "Pro perevirku," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 12 January 1927, 3.
10 Mymra, "Pidmet," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 15 December 1926, 3.
11 "Na vsi zapitannia vidpovidni dovidkovo-konsul'tytsionnoho biura," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 4 May 1928, 4.
12 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 28, ark. 109.
13 Ibid.
14 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 28, ark. 110.
15 *DAKO*, f. R-1212, op. 1, spr. 25, ark. 59.
16 Z. Nuzhnyi, "De-shcho pro ukraïnizatsiiu Dnipropetrovskoï zaliznytsi," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 3 November 1926, 3.
17 "De-shcho pro vykladachiv ta komisii po perevirtsti," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 1 June 1927, 3.
18 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 28, ark. 110.
19 S. Khomenko, "Pro perevirku," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 12 January 1927, 3.
20 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 28, ark. 110.
21 V. S., "Spravy ukraïnizatsiï. Za pidvyshchennia ukraïns'koï hramotnosty," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 12 January 1927, 3.
22 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2253, ark. 1–6.
23 For more background on the KP(b)U debate between 1923 and 1926, Stalin's intervention, and Shumsky's later censure and dismissal as commissar of education (the "Shumsky affair"), see: Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 78–79, 212–28; Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation*, 87–119; Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*, 39–42, 131–40; Jeremy Smith, *Red Nations*, 88–90; Smolii, *"Ukraïnizatsiia" 1920–30-kh rokiv: peredumovy, zdobutky, uroky*, 40–60.

24 D. Lebed, "Podgotovka partiinogo s"ezda. Nekotorye voprosy partiinogo s"ezda," *Kommunist*, no. 59 (1923): 1. Quoted in Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 79.
25 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2255, ark. 11–12.
26 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2255, ark. 13–18.
27 Ibid.
28 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2255, ark. 19.
29 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, 1.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid. To read Khvylovy's original work and some commentary on the political and literary context surrounding their publication, see: Mykola Khvylovy, *The Cultural Renaissance in Ukraine: Polemical Pamphlets, 1925–1926*, trans., ed., and intro. by Myroslav Shkandrij (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986); Iurii Shapoval, ed., *Poliuvannia na 'Val'dshnepa': rozserekrechenyi Mykola Khvyl'ovyi* (Kyïv: Tempora, 2009).
32 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 8–12.
33 Ibid.
34 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2255, ark. 1.
35 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 4.
36 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 13.
37 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 57.
38 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 13.
39 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 18.
40 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 57.
41 "Pereshkody v ukraïnizatsii," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 6 October 1927, 2.
42 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 31, ark. 52
43 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 30.
44 *DAKO*, f. R-761, op. 1, spr. 363, ark. 80.
45 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 33.
46 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 39.
47 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 2255, ark. 36.
48 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 2255, ark. 45.
49 Ibid.
50 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 2255, ark. 46.
51 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 2255, ark. 48.
52 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 2255, ark. 21.
53 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 2255, ark. 44.
54 Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 38–39.

55 Although Larin supported the creation of Jewish soviets, he also objected strongly to the forced enrolment of Jewish children in Yiddish schools regardless of what language they spoke. This issue was discussed along with the question of forced Ukrainization of Russian children by the Politburo Ukrainization Commission. Ibid., 49. *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 95–112.

56 The Left Opposition of the VKP(b) argued that the industrialization policy of the party leadership in the mid-1920s was too slow and that the peasantry needed to be taxed at a higher rate to ensure resources were available for an increase in pace. They feared the growth of capitalism and thought that rapid industrialization was needed to protect the gains of socialism. After consolidating an alliance with forces on the right, Stalin orchestrated the expulsion of its leaders, Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev, in 1927–28, subsequently adopting many of their principles during the First Five-Year Plan. Most of the former members of the opposition were arrested and placed on trial in 1936–7.

57 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20. spr. 2253, ark. 19–25.

58 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 97.

59 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 102–3.

60 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 104.

61 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 96, 107–12.

62 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 104; *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 10841, ark. 136.

7. The Question of the Working Class

1 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 10841, ark. 136. In fact, Skrypnyk was finessing prior policy. In response to additional criticism by Larin that Narkomos administrators were ignoring parental wishes in admitting children to primary schools, Shumksy responded in a January 1927 meeting of the Politburo Commission on Ukrainization that officials took family input as well as the language spoken by a child into account: "To make a different decision, means to rape [*gvaltuvaty*], to maim the child. It is necessary to teach reading and writing in language that he [or she] understands." *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2456, ark. 22. Cited in Borysov, "Ukraïnizatsiia ta rozvytok zahal'noosvitnoï shkoly," 78.

2 Skrypnyk specifically pointed to the need to offer Ukrainian instruction to the majority of the children of the 1.3 million citizens of the republic who claimed Ukrainian nationality, but Russian as a native language in the 1926 census. Schools were to teach the children of the 200,000 citizens who claimed Russian nationality, but Ukrainian as a native language, in Russian. Mykola Skrypnyk, "Perebudovnymy shliakhamy," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, no. 13–14 (1931): 27–34. Quoted in Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 107; H. Iefimenko, *Natsional'na polityka kerivnytstva VKP(b) v Ukraïni 1932–1938 rr. (osvita ta nauka)* (Kyïv: Instytut istoriï Ukraïny, 2000), 7–8.

3 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 13.

4 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 26.

5 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2253, ark. 90–2.

6 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3. spr. 28, ark. 63.

7 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 3099, ark. 59.

8 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 10841, ark. 140.

9 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 10841, ark. 136.

10 Ibid.

11 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 13, ark. 111.

12 *DAKO*, f. R-761, op. 1, spr. 363, ark. 80.

13 Ibid.

14 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 13, ark. 117.

15 *DAKO*, f. R-1043, op. 3, spr. 13, ark. 308.

16 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 8.

17 "A. V. Lunachars'kyi pro rozvytok ukraïns'koï kul'tury," *Narodnii uchytel'*, 1 August 1928, 2.

18 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 137, 180.

19 The document's preceding comments regarding the Ukrainization of the first concentration of school suggest this percentage of Ukrainian children refers to children old enough to attend the first through fourth grades, ages eight to eleven.

20 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2251, ark. 1.

21 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 281, ark. 92.

22 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 38.

23 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 103.

24 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 33.

25 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 5, spr. 671, ark. 468.

26 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2247, ark. 108.

27 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 26.

28 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 24.

29 "Zaochni kursi ukraïnoznavstva," *Narodnii uchytel' - dodatok*, 13 April 1927, 3.

30 Ibid.

31 *TsDAVOU*, f. 166, op. 6, spr. 1978, ark. 26.

32 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 39.

33 Ibid.

34 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 43.

35 *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2248, ark. 46.

36 Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation*, 113.

37 Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 219.

106 Mykola Skrypnyk, *Narysy pidsumkiv ukraïnizatsiï ta obsluhuvannia kul'turnhkh potreb natsmenshostei USRR, zokrema rosiis'koï* (Kharkiv: Radians'ka shola, 1933).

107 Iefimenko, *Natsional'na polityka kerivnytstva VKP(b)*, 13–14.

108 Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 347–50; Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation*, 297–300. Liubchenko had served as a public prosecutor of the accused in the SVU trial in 1930. In 1937, after having been accused of leading a nationalist organization, he shot his wife and committed suicide.

109 Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*, 168–69; Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 356.

110 Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 351; Krawchenko, *Social Change*, 135–6; Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*, 356.

111 Marochko and H'ots, *Represovani pedahohy Ukraïny: zhertvy politychnoho teroru*, 49.

112 A. Khvylia, "Pro reorhanizatsiu aparatu NKO," *Komunistychna osvita*, no. 9 (1933): 60. Following the publication of this article, numerous essays appeared in the pedagogical press, indicting nationalist "sabotage" in the schools, Narkomos, and pedagogical institutions. For example, see: I. Khait, "Za bil'shovytsku rozchystku na fronti pedahohichnoï teoriï," *Komunistychna osvita*, no. 2 (1934); Sobolev, "Zmitsnimo bil'shovyts'kymy kadramy orhany narodnoï osvity," *Komunistychna osvita*, no. 2 (1934); S. Chavdarov, "Cherhovi zavdannia u vykladanni movy v shkoli," *Komunistychna osvita*, no. 10 (1934).

113 *Na fronti kul'tury*, 9.

114 Ibid., 12–13. The book specifically condemned the methodology of what it labelled "the Kharkiv Pedagogical School," a group of scholars whom the pedagogical press associated with republic's leading pedagogues Ivan Sokoliansky and Oleksandr Zaluzhny at the Ukrainian Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy (UNDIP) in Kharkiv. On the purge of the UNDIP and work and fate of Sokoliansky and Zaluzhny, see: Marochko and H'ots, *Represovani pedahohy Ukraïny: zhertvy politychnoho teroru*, 80–92, 111–23, 140–6.

115 *Na fronti kul'tury*, 13.

116 Ibid., 6, 28. Analyzing statistical data of the spring 1933 inventory of schools, Yefimenko presents slightly different numbers: 89.4 per cent of schools provided Ukrainian-language instruction in 1932–3 versus 84.5 per cent in 1933–4. Iefimenko, *Natsional'na polityka kerivnytstva VKP(b)*, 15.

117 Ibid., 6–7, 28.

118 Ibid., 18.

119 For Zatonsky's direct view of the tasks of the new Narkomos, see: V. P. Zatons'kyi, *Itogi noiabr'skogo plenuma TsK i TsKK KP(b)U i zadachi rabotnykov prosveshchennia (Kharkiv: Radians'ka shkola, 1934)*; *Natsional'no-kul'turne budivnytstvo i borot'ba proty natsionalizmu dopovid' ta zakliuchne slovo na sichnevii sesiï VUAN* (Kyïv: Vydavnytsvo Vseukrains'koï akademiï nauk, 1934).

120 *Na fronti kul'tury*, 14, 30. Numerous local party reports sent to the TsK from 1933–4 detail the "exposure" of nationalists and other class enemies in state Ukrainian-studies courses, party schools, pedagogical institutes, primary schools, and libraries. See: *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 6214, ark. 67–70; *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 6424, ark. 1–2; *TsDAHOU*, f. 1, op. 20, spr. 6425, ark. 4–5, 33–8, 61–2, 85–8, 101–6, 109–11.

121 Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*, 167–70; Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation*, 296–301.

122 *Na fronti kul'tury*, 18.

123 Ibid., 28.

124 The publication conceded the existence of nationalist saboteurs among multiple other national-minority populations, but not Russians. *Na fronti kul'tury*, 20.

125 Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 353–5.

126 Ibid., 354.

127 In 1932–3, the study of the Russian language began in the third grade of non-Russian schools for one hour a week. By 1934–5, the time allotted to study of the Russian language and literature had increased by an hour a week in the third and fourth grades and by two hours in the fifth. Iefimenko, *Natsional'na polityka kerivnytstva VKP(b)*, 26, 34. For a broader discussion of Soviet nationalities policy in Ukraine in the 1930s, see: H. Iefimenko, *Natsional'no-kul'turna polityka VKP(b) shchodo radians'koï Ukraïni (1932–1938)* (Kyïv: Instytut istoriï Ukraïny, 2001).

128 In 1933, the number of national minority schools rose as a consequence of the campaign against "forced Ukrainization," but many rural Polish, German, and Yiddish schools were converted to Ukrainian-language instruction already in 1934–5. In his use of the term "Russsification," Yefimenko parts somewhat with the analysis of Peter Blitstein, but makes clear elsewhere that even formal Russification was only "a means for the centralization of power." H. Iefimenko, "Pytannia natsional'noï polityky kremlia v Ukraïni v persh. pol. 1937 r.," *Problemy istoriï Ukraïni*, no. 12 (2004): 292. On the fate of national minority schools in Ukraine, see also: Brown, *Biography of No Place*, 118–33, 160, 187; Veidlinger, *In the Shadow of the Shtetl*, 89.

129 Iefimenko, *Natsional'na polityka kerivnytstva VKP(b)*, 34.

130 Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 355–56.

131 *DAOO*, f. R-1234, op. 1, spr. 1943, ark. 23.

132 *DAOO*, f. R-1234, op. 1, spr. 1943, ark. 23.

133 *DAOO*, f. R-1234, op. 1, spr. 1943, ark. 24.

134 *DAOO*, f. R-1234, op. 1, spr. 1943, ark. 25.

Conclusion

1 Comparisons between language and educational policy of the 1920s and early 1930s and that of the post-Soviet period cannot be easily drawn; however, the place of language is an oft-debated feature of contemporary Ukrainian public

life. There has been a wealth of scholarship produced on recent Ukrainian language politics (and its intersection with the question of schooling). See: Michael Moser, *Language Policy and Discourse on Languages in Ukraine under President Viktor Yanukovych* (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2013); Laada Bilaniuk, *Contested Tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 50–63; Alexandra Hrycak, "Institutional Legacies and Language Revival in Ukraine," in *Rebounding Identities: The Politics of Identity in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. Dominique Arel and Blair Ruble (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006); Richardson, *Kaleidoscopic Odessa*; Abel Polese, "The Formal and the Informal: Exploring 'Ukrainian' Education in Ukraine, Scenes from Odessa," *Comparative Education*, no. 1 (2010); Lowell Barrington and Regina Faranda, "Reexamining Region, Ethnicity, and Language in Ukraine," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 25, no. 3 (2009); Volodymyr Kulyk, "Constructing Common Sense: Language and Ethnicity in Ukrainian Public Discourse," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006); Dominique Arel, "Language Politics in Independent Ukraine: Towards One Or Two State Languages?" *Nationalities Papers* 23, no. 3 (1995); Debra A. Friedman, "Speaking Correctly: Error Correction as a Language Socialization Practice in a Ukrainian Classroom," *Applied Linguistics* 31, no. 3 (2010).

2 Serhy Yekelchyk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 6–7.
3 Ibid., 6.
4 Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*, 12.
5 Although Yefimenko emphasizes that it is too early to speak of Russification as an "organized state policy" in 1933–4, he cites instances of post-secondary instructors switching to Russian-language instruction beginning that year (especially in prestigious educational institutes administered by all-Union authorities) and exclusive use of Russian in extracurricular activities. Party leaders ordered a formal increase in Russian-language post-secondary instruction in 1937–8. Iefimenko, *Natsional'na polityka kerivnytstva VKP(b)*, 36–50.
6 Smolii, *"Ukraïnizatsiia" 1920–30-kh rokiv: peredumovy, zdobutky, uroky*, 183.
7 Serhii Plokhy's reading of autobiographical narratives that discuss the era of Ukrainization in Zaporizhzhia is instructive in this context. The life of Mykola Molodyk, whose memoirs Plokhy examines, is probably most in line with the fates of the numerous schoolchildren referenced in the archival record. Molodyk clearly remembered the role his Ukrainian-language education had on shaping his identity as a Ukrainian, but recognized the value of Russian-language use after the arrests of his fellow local Ukrainizers. Plokhy, *Ukraine and Russia*, 148–62.

8 Liber notably identified this linkage, maintaining that, in the 1920s, Ukrainians "had a vested interest in reaffirming their national origins in light of the rapid urban growth, the huge, unassimilable numbers of compatriots migrating to the cities, the psychological alienation and exhilaration produced by migration, and the party's emphasis on Ukrainianization. Now urban growth and urbanization did not equal Russification." Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*, 65.