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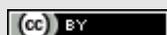
Csernicskó, István and Tóth, Mihály, eds. 2019. *The Right to Education in Minority Languages: Central European Traditions and the Case of Transcarpathia*. Uzhhorod: Autdor-Shark; Csernicskó, István et al., eds. 2020. *Ukrainian Language Policy Gone Astray: The Law of Ukraine “On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language” (analytical overview)*. Törökbálint and Berehovo: Termini Egyesület.

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The volumes discussed in this review, namely *The Right to Education in Minority Languages: Central European Traditions and the Case of Transcarpathia* and *Ukrainian Language Policy Gone Astray: The Law of Ukraine “On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language” (analytical overview)*, are two study-collections that complement each other. Together, they offer readers an overview on how Transcarpathian multilingualism was respected and promoted by the different states that ruled this region from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century, and how as of 2017 this tradition changed for the worse. More specifically, the two volumes address the critical condition of the Hungarian minority in the region in this new reality and their present hardship in maintaining their native-language education and other areas of life. The theoretical postulations expressed in these volumes are backed up by various works of in-depth historical research. The first work, *The Right to Education in Minority Languages*, is introduced by the well-known Finnish linguist and human-rights advocate Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and edited by István Csernicskó, a scholar who has published extensively in English, Hungarian and Ukrainian about the language situation in Ukraine, emphasizing the fragile position of the Hungarian community of Transcarpathia, and by Mihály Tóth, a law specialist from Transcarpathia. The second work, *Ukrainian Language Policy Gone Astray*, counts with the participation of another Finnish academic, Petteri Laihonen of the University of Jyväskylä. This volume is likewise edited by the above mentioned István Csernicskó along with five other scholars, namely Kornélia Hires-László, Zoltán Karmacsí, Anita Márku, Réka Máté, and Enikő Tóth-Orosz.

The region known in English as Transcarpathia (Hungarian: *Kárpátalja*, Rusyn and Ukrainian: *Карпатська Русь*) had been ruled by the Hungarians since their arrival during the ninth century in the Carpathian Basin up until the early twentieth century. In the nineteenth and twentieth century, the region's population comprised of about one quarter of Hungarians living as a block in the region's southern and western plains, and also of Slavs, Jews and smaller groups of

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Romanians, Germans, and others. The end of the First World War divided most of the area and population of Hungary among its neighbors, and Transcarpathia was ceded to the new state of Czechoslovakia (1919-1939). Afterward, the region changed hands several times, first as a semi-independent and later as a non-recognized state of Carpatho-Ukraine (1938-1939), then again as part of Hungary (1867-1918 and 1938-1944), the Soviet Union (1945-1991) and, since 1991, Ukraine. Although the region's ethnic composition has changed notably following these regime changes, it never ceased being a melting pot of nationalities and languages. Therefore, the two volumes focusing on the region's Hungarian minority deal with three interlinked topics: 1) the legal approach towards Transcarpathian multilingualism through modern history as an intrinsic characteristic of the region; 2) The need to provide services, particularly education, in the mother-tongue of each represented ethnicity, according to the people's rights and tradition; and 3) the end of this approach after the adoption of the Law on Education in 2017 and the Law "On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" in 2019.

The Right to Education in Minority Languages: Central European Traditions and the Case of Transcarpathia is a succinct volume containing mostly discussions of legislation regarding bilingualism and relating in particular to the field of education in the period since 1867 to 2017. The articles and acts reproduced in this volume are presented in their original language along with translations into English provided by the authorities or, if those are not available, by unofficial translations prepared by Réka Máté. The work is divided into four main parts. The first part provides examples of the right to mother-tongue medium education from 1867 until the independence of Ukraine in 1991. The second part is dedicated to the first twenty-five years of legislation in Ukraine as an independent country (1991-2016). The third part focuses on the controversial Ukrainian Law on Education No. 2145-VIII, and the fourth part offers a comparison between the current situation in Ukraine and that in three of its western neighbors inhabiting Ukrainian minorities, namely Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania.

It is interesting to note that the first law listed in the book's first part I, namely Act XLIV of 1868 on the equal rights of nationalities of the Kingdom of Hungary, stated that the use of the student's mother-tongue was necessary "for the success of public education" (18). This quote is important because it shows that even over one hundred and fifty years ago, legislators realized that education in the students' mother-tongue was not only a right of the people, but also a resource for the state. Obviously, students had also the right and the duty to learn the majority, or national language, Hungarian in this case. Similar approaches were also followed by the interwar Republic of Czechoslovakia, which stated that, during all the years of compulsory education in elementary public schools, the language of instruction "must be identical to the mother-tongue of the children" (21), as well as by Carpatho-Ukraine, and even under Hungary during World War Two and the Soviet Union following the war. The book's second part shows how after its independence in 1991, Ukraine did not alter its citizens' right for education in their mother tongue. In fact, the Constitution of Ukraine of 1996, in its Article 53, paragraph 5, states that "citizens who belong to national minorities [...] are guaranteed the right to receive instruction in their native language" (36). The Law on Principles of the State Language Policy of 2012 was even more specific in stating that "the free choice of the language of instruction is an inalienable right of the citizens of Ukraine [...] subject to compulsory study of the state language [...]" (42).

The third part of *The Right to Education* is a reproduction and a translation of Article 7 of the controversial Ukrainian law on education No. 2145-VIII, passed on September 5, 2017. This new law establishes the use of Ukrainian as the vehicular language in secondary education. By this law, students are only given the right to study "the language of the respective indigenous people" rather than *in* the language of their minority, which contrasts with the 2012 Article 2 of the Law on Principles of the State Language (42, 50). The book's fourth part establishes a clear contrast between the new Ukrainian law and the legislation on the same issue in neighboring Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania. In Slovakia, by law, citizens belonging to national minorities have the right to learn Slovak and to be educated *in* their ethnic language. In Hungary, minority language-education is ensured in nationality kindergartens, schools, school classes or groups. Romania is even more specific in postulating that "persons belonging to national minorities have the right to studying and training in their mother tongue, at all levels, types and forms of pre-university education, according to the law" (67). This difference between Ukraine and its close neighbors might explain why, in the book's Afterword, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas expresses the worry that the implementation of the 2017 Ukrainian Law on Education will not only break a one-hundred-and-fifty years old tradition of the region but will also create discrimination against hundreds of thousands of citizens of Ukraine by restricting their right to public education in their mother tongue.

The second volume reviewed here, *Ukrainian Language Policy Gone Astray: The Law of Ukraine "On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" (analytical overview)*, focuses on the legal situation of languages in Ukraine. Instead of being written in a regular academic narrative or discursive form, this work is structured in numbered paragraphs. In addition, some points and data in it are illustrated with maps and tables. These two characteristics enable researchers to find information in it much more easily than in traditional volumes and in fact they make this volume a source book no less than a monograph. This work is divided into four parts and a final brief chapter of conclusions. Parts One and Two establish the base for the rest of the consideration. Part Three offers a detailed analysis on the law "On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as a State Language" passed on 25 April 2019. And Part Four offers an international context to this specifically Ukrainian case.

The first part states the base for the discussion, which is the understanding that "In Ukraine, the language issue is highly politicized. This has been repeatedly pointed out by researchers and experts of international organizations" (11). After establishing this point of departure, the authors present an overview, based mainly on data from a 2001 census, regarding the languages spoken in Ukraine, the percentages and total numbers of speakers, and the ethnicities and geographical distribution of bilingualism/multilingualism in the country. The second part focuses on the content and fulfilment of four Ukrainian laws passed between 1989 and 2012. These are: the law "On Languages in the Ukrainian SSR" (1989), the law "On Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992" (1999), the law "On Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages" (2003), and the law "On the Principles of State Language Policy" (2012). Two of these laws, both dealing with the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, were passed due to pressure by the Council of Europe (25). In general, all the above-mentioned laws always caused constant dispute in Ukraine and yet were never totally fulfilled.

The book's third part starts with a review of the circumstances which preceded the adoption of the 2019 law "On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language," when President Poroshenko was defeated in the presidential elections. According to the authors, "passing and enacting the law after the loss of effective political power had the only purpose that Poroshenko pass on to his successor a legacy that divides the entire Ukrainian society" (43). This law aims "to create appropriate conditions for ensuring and protecting the language rights and needs of Ukrainians," but there is no mention in it of the language rights of citizens with non-Ukrainian ethnicity or non-Ukrainian mother tongue. In fact, the implied purpose of this law is to ensure the supremacy of the Ukrainian language over all minority languages, as the only state language (47-48). This law thus infringes a number of minority rights, as pointed out by the Venice Commission, which was an advisory body of the Council of Europe. The same third part continues with an analysis of how this law affects different domains including education, justice and the media. The book's fourth part offers a detailed overview of the fulfilment of Ukraine's international commitments, which turns out to be quite high with regard to Russian, but which does not even reach seventy percent with regard to the other languages. The authors conclude by claiming that the political ruling class, led by Petro Poroshenko, in fact used the language issue for its own domestic political purposes, thus intensifying language issues in order to mobilize its voters. This, in turn, is presently causing the discrimination of a large number of Ukrainian nationals and is putting Ukraine, as a country, in an unfavorable perspective from the point of view of its meeting of international standards regarding minority rights, including their right to maintain, develop and live in and by their age-old language.

The two works reviewed here, *The Right to Education in Minority Languages and Ukrainian Language Policy Gone Astray*, are key works in that they present an accurate and updated view of the sociolinguistic situation of Ukraine with regard, but not limited to, the Hungarian minority of Transcarpathia. The reading in the two volumes is easy even for those with no legal background, due to the clear explanations that they offer. Moreover, the large number of subsections in each part, especially in *Ukrainian Language Policy Gone Astray*, and the many graphs and tables illustrating the findings are an invaluable help. Yet, it would have been advisable to include some very brief introductory notes to each law and act in *The Right to Education in Minority Languages* in order to provide the readers with the appropriate historical perspective. The two volumes are mainly focused on the Hungarian minority, whose problems are quite similar to those of the other ethnicities of Ukraine. In any case, this does not imply that the ideas presented by their authors undermine the security of the state or constitute an attack on the Ukrainian language. Rather, they express their wish as Ukrainian citizens to continue using their languages in all domains, as did their previous generations for centuries.