

Michael Moser. *Language Policy and the Discourse on Languages in Ukraine under President Viktor Yanukovich (25 February 2010–28 October 2012)*. Stuttgart: *ibidem*-Verlag, 2013. 495 pp. Preface. Introduction. Bibliography. €49.90, paper.

Michael Moser's book under review is most timely in light of recent developments and debates regarding the language situation in Ukraine. It represents a vast collection of primary sources that are directly linked to linguistic policies and ideologies, as well as the politics surrounding language in Ukraine, specifically (as indicated by the title) from February 25, 2010, when Viktor Yanukovich came to power, to October 28, 2012, when parliamentary elections were held.

In the introduction, Moser notes that he tries to be "a critical chronicler and observer of the events" (12)—and he succeeds. The author describes the language situation in Ukraine using hundreds of primary sources, registering major relevant events from various media perspectives. There are copious direct quotes, some several pages in length. Footnotes are plentiful and present raw, unedited data, which is followed by the author's comments (though, at times, the reader must come up with his/her own interpretations). It appears that the objective of the monograph is not to offer an in-depth analysis of the language situation, but, rather, to create a reservoir of important sources and descriptions of key events that can be used, and elaborated on, by others in their own satellite analyses.

The focus of the book under review, as noted by its author, is "on language discourse in Ukraine and the political actions in the field of language policy as practiced by the ruling political forces in Ukraine" (12); there is not so much emphasis on the examination of the actions of forces in opposition to Yanukovich, itself a topic deserving of serious scholarly attention. The author delves further by including debates on the language situation as used by various media outlets. As mentioned above, the primary sources are abundant and utilized to construct a narrative throughout the monograph. Various combinations of this data could most definitely serve as a vital springboard for future analysis of any of the diverse aspects of the language situation in Ukraine. Surprisingly, the author does not provide any detailed methodological justification for choosing particular sources for his discussion. The reader is left to wonder about his process and procedures of data collection and its classification. The rationale for the choice of data remains unspecified, thus somewhat weakening the methodological base of analysis used in the monograph.

The book begins with a brief overview of the history of the Ukrainian language since the split of Common Slavic circa AD 600. Discussion follows regarding the sociolinguistic situation in Ukraine in recent years. Some

important statistical information from various surveys and opinion polls is provided. The focus of the book is well defined as the history of the Ukrainian language over a period of two years—which proved to be a very eventful time with respect to the language question. During that time, President Yanukovich's government pushed a program to promote Russian as the second state language in Ukraine—his efforts marked by manipulations of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The author details the discourse pertaining to the law "On Principles of the State Language Policy," drafted by Vadym Kolesnichenko and Serhii Kivalov (submitted in 2010 and revised in 2011 and 2012), and the propaganda associated with it. He shows the impact that this document had on the language policy landscape in Ukraine. Moser also studies the education sector and how the discourse on language, led by Minister of Education Dmytro Tabachnyk, contributed to debate on the status of Ukrainian in Ukraine and to Tabachnyk's fostering of the Russian language at the expense of Ukrainian. The author discusses the language discourses pertaining to radio and television in Ukraine, specifically the twenty-five percent Ukrainian-content quotas proposed by Member of Parliament Olena Bondarenko.

Moser juxtaposes his discussion of the language situation in Ukraine with the discourses constructed and practiced by the *Russkii Mir* Foundation, a tool of Russian politics that promotes the ideology of Russianness as something that transcends ethnic and geographical boundaries. This juxtaposition is commendable—as is Moser's study of the discourses associated with *Russkii Mir* with respect to the use of Russian in Ukraine and Ukrainian in Russia—as these topics are truly understudied in the field. Moser painstakingly documents the *Russkii Mir* ideology as a tool of Russian politics for the promotion of the Russian language; as a particular view of history; and as a carefully crafted ideology and memory politics specifically pertaining to Ukraine, thus bringing to the fore several important questions that can be further examined by scholars. In the monograph, Moser examines the minority rights of Ukrainians in the Russian Federation—the second-largest minority in that country—and in this way provides a different perspective on the Ukrainian question.

As indicated above, the sources used in the book are abundant. They are referenced in a bibliography that runs over seventy-six pages. These are predominantly primary sources—news media and some relevant scholarly articles. The bibliography would probably have been more conducive to research use if the two categories had been separated for simpler referencing.

The book would also have benefited from an index of key terms, concepts, and sources. Such an index would facilitate referencing, especially

by authors of analytical studies, who are likely to use the book as an empirical base. Furthermore, the publisher may consider offering an electronic version of this monograph, which would make for much easier referencing and searching of the text.

Readers (and, foremost, the publisher) should take note of the fact that the quality of this publication in paperback is rather disappointing. By the time this reviewer had read up to page 130, the pages of the book had begun to fall out, and upon completion of the read, the book had almost entirely come apart.

Overall, Michael Moser's book is a valuable resource for scholars studying language issues in Ukraine, as well as those interested in the questions of language minorities in Russia and beyond. The target audience for this publication are people who are well acquainted with the historical and political background of Ukraine and neighbouring Russia, as well as with the linguistic policies and language situation in the former Soviet Union. The book will be a welcome addition to the library of any Ukrainianist or Slavist, and it will certainly spark interest among other scholars, allowing them to pursue specific analyses of the issues advanced in such detail in the monograph.

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