

Tarik Cyril Amar

LVIV'S MARXISM-LENINISM EVENING UNIVERSITY 1944-1953. RE-EDUCATING THE LOCAL?

Next to brutal and widespread but selective repression, re-educating the old local intelligentsia of postwar Lviv was a key component of Sovietizing the city. While the majority of the Marxism-Leninism University's students were not representatives of the old local intelligentsia, the Marxism-Leninism University's particular contribution to the latter's re-education was time and again highlighted – publically as well as in internal party-state documents – as its most urgent task. This re-education of the old local intelligentsia, in turn, was an indispensable part of Sovietizing the “locals” or “natives” – both Soviet terms – of Lviv and hence of Western Ukraine. While ideological re-education was pervasive in Western Ukraine as a whole, the unrivalled single top institution for ideological re-education was the Marxism-Leninism University of Lviv. For, unlike the plethora of ideology training circles, classes, seminars, and self-study, the Marxism-Leninism University specifically targeted the most difficult elite of the locals. This was an institution meant to remake its old local intelligentsia students into reliable Marxist-Leninists and, in effect, Stalinist believers and multipliers in two year cramming courses. As this paper will show, this intention failed miserably, mostly for reasons of typical Soviet inefficiency, corruption, and low intellectual potential. On the whole, the Sovietizers were academically weak, under-certified, and so obviously corrupt that their behavior clearly discredited their ideological claims. Moreover and more importantly, the party-state was aware of this failure. Yet it would be a grave error to conclude from this – rather ordinary – failure that Sovietization failed. What failed was Sovietization as self-flatteringly imagined by the Sovietizers: Sovietization as the spreading of a new world view, whose new disciples learned to acknowledge its superiority did most likely not take place. Humiliation, fear, cynicism, and dissimulation, however, were taught with much more, if unacknowledged, efficiency. Real Sovietization, as opposed to the Sovietizers' ideal of this process, thus happened: The new subjects of the Soviet order acquired essential features to survive, sometimes even to prosper in it.

According to the 1978 Russian edition of the Lviv volume of the “History of the Towns and Villages of the Ukrainian SSR,” Lviv's intelligentsia was reconstructed ideologically “most of all in the Evening Marxism-Leninism University”¹. An *obkom* decree of 14 October 1944 instructed the *miskom* to set up the Marxism-Leninism University in the House of Party Propaganda and underlined the importance of the Marxism-Leninism University by keeping key positions and decisions under *obkom*

¹ *История городов и сел Украинской ССР. Львовская область*. Киев, 1978. С. 58

control. The *obkom* took this early opportunity to intervene in the first plan for a list of teaching subjects. Asserting the central importance of the party, it decreed that general "History" had to be replaced by "Party History." "Political Economy" needed to be added and the "History of Ukraine" as well as the histories of Ukrainian and Russian literature had to be dropped².

The first students graduated in July 1946 after two years of this teaching and the local press explained the meaning of this important event to the population in several articles, including on page one. The number of graduates was reported as about 400, including 280 representatives of the "worker intelligentsia" and 56 students described as "scientific workers," i.e. academics. The main message was that the Marxism-Leninism University served as a major conduit for transmitting revolutionary Soviet experience to the backward, if willing, locals. Their possession of pre-Soviet knowledge and academic status was clearly irrelevant. What mattered was their acquiring ab initio the new knowledge brought by the conqueror/developers³.

Especially graphic were the descriptions of typical representatives of the Old Intelligentsia, who told "Lvovskaia Pravda" writers about their late revelations. Thus, senior law lecturer at Lviv University, Lutsev, was quoted as recollecting how he had read some Marxist-Leninism classics back then under "lordly Poland," where, as he or "Lvovskaia Pravda" maintained, they could only be obtained illegally. Immediately after "liberation" by the Soviet Union, he had joined the "building of a new life." Yet while he had some prior knowledge of Marxism-Leninism as well as the best intentions, Lutsev admitted that "we did not have enough knowledge and experience, we had not gone through the school of Socialist building and in this manner were lagging behind the intelligentsia of the eastern *oblasts* of Ukraine." The Marxism-Leninism University had helped the locals catch up⁴.

Yet the reality of the first postwar two-year course of the University, celebrated in summer 1946 by Lviv's local press diverged strongly from "Lvovskaia Pravda's" picture. According to later *obkom* as well as Ukrainian Central Committee figures, the number of graduates in 1946 had been between 56 and 70⁵. Moreover, the Lviv *obkom* was aware that these graduates were what remained of 250-300 students⁶. The mood among the

² Державний архів Львівської області (hereafter – ДАЛО). Ф. П-3. Оп. 1. Од. зб. 45.

³ Львовская правда. 1946. 5 июля. С. 1.

⁴ Львовская правда. 1946. 11 июля. С. 4.

⁵ Центральний державний архів громадських організацій України (Київ; hereafter – ЦДАГОУ). Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 662. Арк. 1; ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 473. Арк. 182; ДАЛО. Ф. П-3. Оп. 1. Од. зб. 361. Арк. 175.

It seems difficult to reconcile different sets of figures given in different official documents for the first two years of the Marxism-Leninism University. On the whole, there seems to have been consensus in internal documents that 56 students graduated in 1946. What Lvovskaia Pravda was referring to when it wrote of 400 is impossible to find out. A Ukrainian Central Committee report mentioned 460 students at the beginning of the academic year 1945/46. Then 120 had been transferred to separate courses for military officers, another 120 had "left" or were "expelled" (отсеялось). According to this report 221 students remained at the end of the academic year. ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 573. Арк. 181.

⁶ ДАЛО. Ф. П-3. Оп. 1. Од. зб. 361. Арк. 175.

In a slightly later report, the number of students in these first two postwar years was called "insignificant" and the drop-out rate was estimated as having reached 75%. ДАЛО. Ф. П-3. Оп. 2. Од. зб. 251. Арк. 25. The report also indicated that before late 1946, the Marxism-Leninism University had not really had permanent staff or premises (Там само. Арк. 25 зв.).

students was not enthusiastic and the lecturers lacked commitment. In February 1946 the Ukrainian Central Committee received a copy of a one-page letter sent by Lviv Marxism-Leninism University student Konovalov to the newspaper "Pravda Ukrainy". Konovalov wrote that he attended regularly, "like many other hearers (слушатели) of the University," Affirming his desire to "obtain education (получить образование)", he complained about lectures being cancelled because of the lecturers' repeated failure to show up. There were no timetables, teaching programs or literature. Neither *obkom* nor *miskom* representatives showed up at the Marxism-Leninism University. In a curious passage, Konovalov stressed that "the administration of the University and the female students (студентки)" were not to be seen⁷. One can speculate that women students may at least initially have been scared off by the fact that until the end of 1945, 120 army personnel attended the University and that Konovalov may have been one of them⁸. A later Ukrainian Central Committee report confirmed that Konovalov's complaint was essentially based on facts⁹.

On 18 July 1946, several days after "Lvovskaia Pravda" had delivered its human-interest piece on Lutsev, it quoted *miskom* agitation and propaganda head Menshov speaking at an oblast meeting about "ideology work." Menshov pointed out that there were 7000 intelligentsia representatives in Lviv oblast but only 300 students at the Marxism-Leninism University, which was no more than "a drop in the ocean"¹⁰. A Ukrainian Central Committee report of July 1946 was not public but more precise. It stated that one of the principal tasks of the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University was to educate the local intelligentsia but of 280 intelligentsia members at the University only 56 were (old) locals, including 9 vuz professors¹¹.

In a secret decree of November 1946, the Lviv *obkom* painted a bleak picture of the Marxism-Leninism University. By that time it had expanded but of a total of now 828 students, 92 did not turn up for lectures at all. With 60-65% of students, attendance was made irrelevant by the fact that they were "completely unprepared." These figures amounted to saying that a maximum of 20% of students was participating in any possibly meaningful way. The danger of students dropping out was great. Teaching plans, materials, chairs and all other items imaginable were lacking¹².

The teaching staff was officially complete but in reality the Marxism-Leninism University had to rely heavily on lecturers from Lviv University improving their income

⁷ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 473. Арк. 4.

⁸ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 473. Арк. 86зв, 181.

From the end of 1945, military students were taught separately at the "House of the Red Army". Там само.

⁹ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 473. Арк. 181. According to another report, the course had been taught, or rather hardly, by Ivan Biliakevych. (Там само. Арк. 88).

¹⁰ Львовская правда. 1946. 18 июля. С. 3.

¹¹ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 23. Од. зб. 473. Арк. 16-37. Figures, as often in Soviet documents, are messy to a significant degree. In July 1946, "Lvovskaia Pravda" wrote about a total of 400 students at the Marxism-Leninism University, Menshov spoke of 300, the Ukrainian Central Committee identified 280 out of those 300 to 400 as intelligentsia and 56 as locals, while "Lvovskaia Pravda" counted 280 "worker intelligentsia" and, apparently in addition, 56 "scientific workers." Somewhere, it seems, the categories of local and social stratification got mixed up. There is little one can do now to make up for the oddities of Soviet statistics.

¹² ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 23. Од. зб. 2855. Арк. 199-201

by extra teaching. At least from the *obkom's* point of view, these staff cannot have been satisfactory. Director Berezhnoi was ordered to look for fresh and better personnel¹³.

At the *obkom buro* discussion accompanying the preparation of the decree, *obkom* secretary Zheliak conceded that the Marxism-Leninism University was already working better than in the year before but pointed out severe attendance problems and concluded “if we do not deal with this matter now, than at the end of the academic year half of the [currently] 707 [newly admitted] hearers will remain”¹⁴. The freshly appointed new director of the Marxism-Leninism University Ivan Berezhnoi, according to *obkom* documentation, was Ukrainian and from eastern Ukraine. He had been born in 1902 – thus he was of the same generation as *obkom* head Hrushetsky – and entered the party in 1929, i.e. when “Ukrainization” was being liquidated in Soviet Ukraine and the purges were about to blast a way for “promotee” social mobility. His higher education consisted of undergraduate and two years of graduate studies of agriculture. He had attended the “literature faculty” of the Kharkiv Pedagogical Institute by correspondence (заочно). His work experience as a teacher was put at sixteen years, including ten in an academic setting. Nevertheless, he had no academic degree. What qualified him most for his position as director of the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University was probably the fact that he had spent 1943 at a “military-political school (военно-политическое училище)” in Moscow¹⁵. While the articles of “Lvovskaia Pravda” celebrated the old intelligentsia’s late redemption, Berezhnoi’s description of his work at the *obkom buro* stressed their infantilization and implied their humiliation: “Perhaps, it is like primary school (пошклярськи) but I stand in the hallway before the bell rings for the beginning of the lesson, and check who is late. It is true, there are those who are senior to me in age as well as position but I ask them, why are you late for the lesson. Better you had not come at all, because [now] you are merely interrupting the work”¹⁶.

By May 1947, Berezhnoi, was addressing once more the readers of “Lvovskaia Pravda” in a long article on the “Idea Arming of the Intelligentsia of Lvov.” Having just climbed another step in his personal social upward mobility, he reminded the public of the large context and the roots of Stalinist political education by referring back to the “historic” Union Central Committee resolution of 14 November 1938 on propaganda tasks in connection with the publication of the “History of the All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks). A Short Course.” The resolution, Berezhnoi pointed out, had stressed

¹³ Там само.

¹⁴ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 1. Од. зб. 361. Арк. 149.

¹⁵ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 2. Од. зб. 186. Арк. 61.

¹⁶ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 1. Од. зб. 361. Арк. 174 зв. The impression that they had been sent back to a dilapidated version of their school days may have been reinforced for local Marxism-Leninism students by the fact that the Marxism-Leninism University was located on the premises of a middle school. Там само. In another report, Berezhnoi had boasted of having taken over the best middle-school premises in town and given more details on his truant-catching. After attendance had shown a “significant reduction” between autumn 1946 and spring 1947, the absentees had been called by telephone and pressured through their local *raikoms*. That *raikoms* were not binding for those cadres who were more equal became obvious in the fact that only “a number of students” then returned. They had been skipping “for 2–3 months,” i.e. for nearly the whole first term. Attendance reached 71% again. Moreover, 110 of the initial 764 students had dropped out completely. ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 2. Од. зб. 251. Арк. 25 зв., 36.

the priority of “Marxism-Leninism education of the Soviet intelligentsia” and provided more born-again experiences of the old intelligentsia of Lviv.

The director emphasized the many vuz professors of advanced age attending his set-up and what good students they turned out to be, remarkable for the tidy “konspektus” notes, i.e. mindless but time-consuming and humiliatingly uncreative summaries of the subject matter, their conscientious reports and their active participation in seminars. Only lately, student Pashkevych, from the scientific staff of the remaining Lviv branches of the Ukrainian Academy of Science, had come out with how she had secretly read “Anti-Düring” in her first student days in 1912. But, like Lutsev before her, she had been helpless without a full Soviet environment. She had not understood her reading back then because she had been force-fed by her wicked Austro-Hungarian taskmasters on Kant, Berkeley, and Hegel. Irina Gorskaia from the Lviv Picture Gallery summed it all up. After 32 years under Habsburgs and Poles as well as a degree from Cracow University, it was “only now” that “a new world open[ed] up” before her, which, in some sense, was a statement she may have honestly endorsed¹⁷.

Significantly an internal report on the Marxism-Leninism University on the same academic year 1947/8 tried to sell similar human-interest material to the Ukrainian Central Committee. Thus Lviv University lecturer Mykhail Bilyk, born 1889, graduated from Vienna University in 1914, was reported to have owned up to his prior ignorance and current revelation thanks to the Marxism-Leninism University. Having never understood his subject of Classical Philology properly, he now saw that Homer depicted “the period of transition from primitive-communal to slaveholding society.” Conservatory professor Levytska had been liberated from the legacy of her Vienna Conservatory training as well as long stays in Western Europe to such an extent that she accompanied her re-education coming-out with an attack on formalism complete with a recital of bad examples¹⁸.

According to an *obkom* report for the Ukrainian Central Committee on admissions for the academic year 1947/48, the Marxism-University more than doubled its total student numbers in October 1947, when it admitted 950 new students, including 406 in the history section and 250 in the separate stream for “scientific workers”. The total of students was 1,295 and the total from the “local intelligentsia” in the first and second year of studies was put at 248 students¹⁹.

The report also contained a detailed set of short biographies of the University’s staff²⁰. Of its 22 members eleven were listed as Ukrainian by nationality, including director Berezhnoi and his deputy Mariula Lomova. Five of the lecturers were listed as Jewish and four as Russian. One lecturer’s data lacked the nationality entry. Although place of birth was given only in Berezhnoi’s entry, it seems from the biographical data provided

¹⁷ Львовская правда. 1947. 16 мая.

¹⁸ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 662. Арк. 6 зв.

¹⁹ Another official report on 1948, however, put the student total at 1055 (a near-doubling from 604 students in 1947). ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 70. Од. зб. 662. Арк. 1.

While the difference is not insignificant, there is no way of ascertaining the “real” number – fluctuating, as it must have been. The two reports agreed, at any rate, on the general fact and dimension of expansion.

²⁰ For the following data on the Marxism-University’s staff see ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 2. Од. зб. 186. Арк. 61-64.

that probably none of the staff were locals. All Ukrainians as well as all non-Ukrainians among them were from the pre-1939 Soviet Union.

In terms of education, all staff members had some form of higher education, mostly in the humanities and/or the ideology disciplines. It seems that their overall academic profile low when measured in degrees and titles. Ten were explicitly listed as having no academic title, six held the title of dotsent, for five the list claimed the degree of *kandidat nauk*, i.e. roughly a doctorate in the continental-European sense. Perhaps most significantly in terms of how the Marxism-Leninism University staff appeared to its students, especially those from the intelligentsia, was the fact that there was not a single staffer holding the top academic title of professor. Self-evidently there were no members, corresponding or full, of the Academy of Science, either. Such titles and the corresponding higher degrees were not common but always present at least in small numbers in Lviv's more significant *vuzy*, the University, the Polytechnic or the Medical Institute. Thus, the Marxism-Leninism University in this respect clearly belonged to the junior category of *vuzy*, such as the Pedagogical, Trade or Physical Education Institutes.

At the same time, it was certainly important that the lecturers of the Marxism-Leninism University all officially held their "main occupations (*основная работа*)" somewhere else. Only director Berezhnoi and deputy Lomova were full-time employees. Of the Marxism-Leninism University staff who belonged most of their time to other Lviv *vuzy* some were *kafedra* heads or *dekans* but a roughly equal number was made up of humble lecturers and senior lecturers. All were teaching either ideology subjects or highly ideologized humanities.

The Marxism-Leninism University's students probably registered this fact together with the, of course, very high party presence among the staff, only two of which were party-less – incidentally both Jewish, which meant that the party-affiliation rate among the Jewish members of the Marxism-Leninism University staff was only 60%, whereas it was 100% for the Russians and Ukrainians.

In sum, a discerning observer of the staff of the Marxism-Leninism University at this point would have seen a group of academically junior part-time lecturers, whose main commitment was in other academic institutions, where they were restricted to positions in the ideology and quasi-ideology field. Although several held the positions of *kafedra* heads, many others looked markedly junior even in these contexts – often in spite of quite long professional careers. Yet, nearly all were party members, with one of the longer party careers notched up by the Marxism-Leninism University's director, who did not own any academic title or degree. Not one was a local.

Students, more or less perceptive or interested with regard to their curriculum as well as their environment, also met each other at the Marxism-Leninism University. What effect did these encounters have on them? The University, after all, was the officially designated peak of ideology training in the oblast. Only an elite of party-state officials, professionals, intelligentsia and artists as well as "conscious toilers" were admitted to or de-facto drafted into this institution of political education. Attending the University also offered an opportunity to learn what the Soviet authorities appreciated and who made a career under these conditions. Taken as a group, the students had above-average educational credentials compared with either society as a whole or the party in particular. Thus, even for observers not believing Soviet propaganda the school's students appeared

as an elite selection of the Soviet party-state as selected by the latter. Paradoxically, while the Marxism-Leninism University's staff looked junior and half-committed, the students were visibly the most promising selection as classified by the Soviet party-state. Consider that Lviv's old intelligentsia would have been able to see that this combination contrasted with the pre-Soviet Central European universities many of them had attended, where social exclusivity went hand-in-hand with elite teaching. The Soviet party-state opened the doors to higher Marxism-Leninism training but provided weak teaching.

Until 1950, the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University continued expanding briskly. There is some evidence that it was not easy to find the numbers of applications necessary to feed the expansion. In 1949, the University admitted 856 freshmen and had a total of 1556 students²¹. In the same year admissions in all Marxism-Leninism Universities in Ukraine totaled 10,154 students²². By January 1950, however, the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University came again under heavy criticism. An *obkom* report noted that while its staff had expanded to 35 – including 29 Communists – from 20 in late 1947, its lessons frequently were of low quality. Work discipline was poor and the head of the administration was so overburdened by his jobs at Lviv University and the Printing Institute that there was no time left to organize the Marxism-Leninism University. The *obkom* report also introduced a topic which would soon grow into a large scandal by finding a total of 16,624 roubles in non-legal payments made to staff of the Marxism-Leninism University, of which 2,860 roubles had gone to director Berezhnoi alone. These were not bribes but premiums and extra salaries, which the University's staff had conferred on themselves. The biggest single position were 5,710 roubles to “outside people (посторонние лица)” paid for exams and lectures at the Marxism-Leninism University branch at the Lviv Polytechnic Institute²³.

The *obkom buro* invited Marxism-Leninism University Director Berezhnoi to confront him with the evidence of failure and embezzlement and told him that “the main issue in the work of the [Marxism-Leninism] University” were finances and the need to put them in order. *Obkom* head Hrushetsky summed up the case against Berezhnoi, “as a result of your attitude to the Soviet rouble, dishonorable people have been able to use the Marxism-Leninism University as a feeding-trough (кормушка)” and demanded that Berezhnoi be discharged. Hrushetsky accused the *miskom* of having neglected the University. Berezhnoi offered his “word as a bolshevik” to improve if the *obkom* would only let him keep his job²⁴. In September 1950 Hrushetsky made his criticism party-public telling the oblast party elite that Berezhnoi had reduced the Marxism-Leninism “essentially to ... collapse”²⁵.

On the same day, when Berezhnoi had been given a piece of Hrushetsky's irate mind, the *obkom* passed a decree on how to improve the Marxism-Leninism University. In essence the document was yet another indictment. The “methodology section” was “de facto not working,” plans were lacking, schedules frequently interrupted. Weak teaching in general and especially of Stalin's views on the nationality question was noted once

²¹ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 23. Од. зб. 5654. Арк. 65-87.

²² Там само. Арк. 39-45.

²³ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 3. Од. зб. 410. Арк. 63-70.

²⁴ Там само Арк. 14-16.

²⁵ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 3. Од. зб. 351. Арк. 120, 162.

more. During some of the schedule interruptions, caused by lecturers' failure to show up as agreed – Lviv University historians Osechinsky and Herbilsky were singled out as particularly prone to this – Director Berezhnoi improvised by reading lectures from unauthorized teaching materials, for which he awarded himself 4,405 roubles extra pay. Another 16,000 illegitimate roubles went to the remainder of the staff. Meanwhile attendance was described as “extremely low”, i.e. 65-70% at lectures and 40-50% at seminars. There was no supervision through either the *miskom* or the *obkom*. The decree ordered the *miskom* to discharge Berezhnoi²⁶.

At the time when the scandal broke, the Marxism Leninism University had 1,888 students, divided by *obkom* counting into 988 Communists and 1356 members of the intelligentsia. The University had 55 groups of students organized and three special branches to take care of students from the Railway Administration, the secret police, and the Artists' Union²⁷. Thus, what the *obkom* saw as virtually complete failure combined with corruption coincided with sustained expansion and relevance.

In December 1950, a Ukrainian Central Committee report on the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University was once again negative. The University had kept growing and now had 3,075 students and fifty lecturers. Yet the main problems were still the low level of lectures and seminars, teaching manifold errors, for instance on Stalin's thinking, the circulation among students of informal study-aids with catechism-like lists of questions and answers. These notes, moreover, contained errors, while canonical sources were not being studied. Attendance was slightly better at an average of 80% but still dropped to 50-60% on occasion. Former Director Berezhnoi still cast his shadow. The report mentioned his habit of arranging special private exams with paying customer-students, including the staff of Lvovskaia Pravda and high local cadres²⁸.

Exactly a year later, in December 1951, new *obkom* head Chuchukalo told yet another *obkom* plenum that in spite of repeated criticisms the Marxism-Leninism University still showed serious flaws. Attendance, on the whole, hardly reached 70% and kept dropping to 50%. A particularly consistently undisciplined group of students was made up of *Komsomol* organizers as well as trade union and party officials, whose average attendance was 50-60% and occasionally far lower. The special branch for artists, however, was scarcely any better, notching up 65% attendance on average. A Lviv plenipotentiary of a Union Ministry had recently been excluded for his truancy²⁹.

Chuchukalo's reference to repeated criticism was no exaggeration. Between December 1950 and 1951 and as a direct consequence of the criticism advanced by Hrushetsky in September 1950 and the Ukrainian Central Committee in December 1950, the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University had been subject to another thorough revision. In May 1951, Chuchukalo received its report and the *obkom buro* passed another decree on the University. Together, the two documents conveyed one more bleak picture of the Marxism-Leninism University.

²⁶ ДАЛОФ. П-3. Оп. 3. Од. зб. 361. Арк. 218-223.

²⁷ Там само. Арк. 218-223.

²⁸ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1. Оп. 30. Од. зб. 1847. Арк. 1-12.

²⁹ ДАЛО. Ф. П-3. Оп. 4. Од. зб. 22. Арк. 59.

The report's fundamental message was that the *obkom* instructions on how to improve the Marxism-Leninism University had not been implemented either by the University or by the *miskom*. The latter had in fact discussed the topic five times during the academic year 1950/51 but still failed to make any difference³⁰. The thus unreformed University had 3,075 students, including 2,317 freshmen. Structurally it had differentiated and grown. Nine specialized branches, including several for the major *vuzy* of Lviv, but also for the secret police and the "Trembita" popular folklore band, ran 20 courses with a total of 69 groups of students. Only one course, incidentally, was being taught in Ukrainian³¹.

Even before this report, two waves of expulsions had deprived a total of 232 students of their place at the University. The expellees included many dignitaries, such as a secretary of the *Komsomol miskom*, the head of the *Komsomol* of one of the raions of Lviv city, a *vuz kafedra* head, as well as students who had managed to combine their nominal presence at the Marxism-Leninism University with stays in sanatoria or hospitals. The report's authors were not really happy with these purges and reproached the direction of the University for its quick resort to expulsions instead of looking into the reasons for the students' failures, such as the usual formalism in teaching, weak preparation of the lecturers, rote learning and recitation³². Even Lviv University historian and battle-hardened ideology enforcer Horbatiuk was showing signs of slacking at the Marxism-Leninism University, where he abandoned the official curriculum, neglected several key topics, such as the revolution or the war, and instead taught more fifteenth to eighteenth-century feudalism³³.

This fresh list of principal criticism should have raised the question how the Marxism-Leninism University managed to graduate its students at all. The *obkom*, at any rate, noted that its exams were too easy³⁴. Nonetheless, 670 students had simply not turned up for the final exams. The lingering of Berezhnoi's unexceptional spirit may also have helped. "Crude infringements and incorrect handling" of financial regulations were found once more³⁵.

There is, in fact, no reason to speculate that for once things improved significantly after 1951. It is more plausible to assume that the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University continued its history of failure, occasionally punctuated by ritualized *obkom* whippings. A 1953 *obkom* report still noted the usual array of serious problems³⁶.

In November 1953, the *obkom* also produced one of its regular reports on the intelligentsia of Lviv. Its total number, i.e. locals and easterners, was put at 13,337. Over the preceding years, 4000, again locals and easterners, had graduated from the Marxism-Leninism University³⁷. Thus, eight months after Stalin's death, the *obkom* happened to produce a figure that, in combination with the material on the Lviv Marxism-Leninism

³⁰ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 4. Од. зб. 196. Арк. 92 зв.

³¹ Там само. Арк. 85-86. Number of leading cadres my calculation.

³² Там само. Арк. 86-90.

³³ Там само. Арк. 87.

³⁴ Там само. Арк. 92.

³⁵ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 4. Од. зб. 49. Арк. 7-11

³⁶ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 4. Од. зб. 906. Арк. 199.

³⁷ ДАЛЮ. Ф. П-3. Оп. 4. Од. зб. 861. Арк. 176.

University accumulated in preceding years, allows us to make a fairly precise statement about this institution's effect over the postwar years and the period of high-Stalinism Sovietization of Lviv. Until 1946, the Marxism-Leninism University was hardly relevant in terms of the number of its students and graduates. After that year it expanded strongly under its new director Ivan Berezhnoi. At the same time, as we have seen from a close analysis of its teaching staff, it appeared distinctly mediocre by comparison with Lviv's major *vuzy*. Mediocrity, moreover, went with unsurprisingly large party presence. What the harsh criticisms of the Marxism-Leninism University in 1946, 1950 and 1951, each of them retrospective, show is that even on the authorities' own terms it was a failure. Teaching content, discipline and attendance remained far below satisfying. Nevertheless, by the end of 1953, 4000 of the then about 13,000 intelligentsia representatives of Lviv had received their chief and most authoritative schooling in the ideological orthodoxy at this deeply flawed institution.

In 1946, the Ukrainian Central Committee had complained that only 56 of the University's students were from the "local intelligentsia." In 1947, their number had increased to 248. By late 1953, the *obkom* only noted a global figure for local and eastern Lviv intelligentsia of 4000 over the preceding years, which probably meant over the period of the Marxism-Leninism University's postwar existence. Thus, it is not clear exactly how many local and old local intelligentsia representatives the Marxism-Leninism University processed during Stalin's last years. If the proportions between locals and easterners of the early years set the trend for the later ones, then the local number must have been far below 2000, possibly below 1000.

Yet, arguably the more important meaning of the documents on the Lviv Marxism-Leninism University is not a matter of quantity but of quality. We know that the University had great initial problems in enrolling the local intelligentsia. These may have been solved to a smaller or larger degree, probably the latter. There was, as we know from in this instance plausible party-state statistics, a limited number of local intelligentsia, especially of old local intelligentsia in Lviv so that over the years the University probably did manage to catch most of them.

The irony, however, was that this meant forcing them through an experience which was marked by intellectual mediocrity, corruption and inefficiency combined with some ritual humiliation. It is important to note that there was something special about this case of Soviet everyday life. Corruption and inefficiency were indeed fairly ubiquitous in the latter but the Marxism-Leninism University approached its students with a particularly strong claim to represent the ideologically pure and exemplarily effective. This was the designated top institution of political education and re-education in Lviv city, its oblast and Western Ukraine, a tool which was supposed to remake minds in two-year crash courses, applicable not to simple workers or *kolkhozniks* but to the elite of the old and well as new intelligentsia. It kept failing miserably and obviously. Most importantly, this was also the sense of the party-state, which, nevertheless, proved repeatedly unable to fundamentally improve the situation. In short, Lviv's old local intelligentsia – and, of course, not only they – were effectively forced to undergo a crucial Sovietization experience. They received their re-education and were made to publish their obsequious gratitude for it. Yet what they really learned was an entirely different matter, made up of their own humiliation as well as their constant witnessing of the Sovietizers' mediocrity, incompetence and corruption.