

The Canadianization of Slavic Surnames; A Study in Language Contact

Part I

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ABBREVIATIONS

a. m. o.	and many others
a. n. o.	and no others
a. o.	and others
Engl.	English
phon.	phonological
pron.	pronunciation
Sl.	Slavic
— (dash)	“is changed to,” “becomes”

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Cyrillic characters have been transliterated here according to the system of transliteration used by the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the United States, Inc. (This system is outlined in full in the *Annals of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.*, 7.1 & 2 (New York: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., Inc., 1959), p. 1708.)

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the Americas have been recognized as one of the most interesting laboratories of linguistic research in the world. Colonization, conquest and migration have brought here many different cultures, and languages into contact; and the relative recency of the events and the rapid changes in linguistic relationships have made it possible to observe and identify phenomena which rarely appear with such clarity elsewhere.

Among the various ethnic groups to arrive in North America are the Slavs. In the process of adjusting themselves to a new environment, they have been exposed not only to new social pressures, but also to new language systems, particularly the English language system as it is found in Canada and the United States. The process of name changing is one of the adjustments resulting from such contact with a new language system.

The Problem. The purpose of this study is to investigate the linguistic behaviour connected with the changes of Slavic surnames in Canada, particularly as evidenced by the large Slavic minority in the Province of Manitoba.¹ The aims have been (1) to give an insight into the background and circumstances of name changing among Canadians of Slavic origin; (2) to describe the linguistic trends, processes and mechanisms evidenced by these changes; (3) to show the linguistic relationship between the old and new surnames, using these trends as our guide; (4) to construct a typological scheme of classification for these changes; and (5) to compile a dictionary of Slavic surname changes in Manitoba.

Present State of Research and Bibliographical Review. — As mentioned above, the problem of language contact in America has received adequate attention only in recent years. Although the subject was touched upon in H. L. Mencken's *The American Language*,² the firm scholastic foundations for research were laid almost simultaneously by two American scholars, Einar Haugen³ of the University of Wisconsin and Uriel Weinreich⁴ of Columbia University, whose works are entirely devoted to the linguistic aspects of language contact. Their works, though broad in scope, serve as

¹ Approximately 15 per cent of Manitoba's total population of 776,541 in 1951 was of Slavic origin. According to the 1951 census there were 149,731 Canadians of Slavic origin in Manitoba: 4,126 of Czech and Slovak, 37,933 of Polish, 8,463 of Russian, 98,753 of Ukrainian, and 456 Yugoslav (Croatian, Serbian and Slovenian) origin.

² H. L. Mencken, *The American Language: An Inquiry into the Development of English in the United States* (4th Ed. Revised; New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1945); see his appendix on "Non-English Dialects in American," pp. 616-697; also his section on surnames in America, pp. 474-505.

³ Einar Haugen, *The Norwegian Language in America: A Study in Bilingual Behaviour* (2 vols; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953).

⁴ Uriel Weinreich, *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems* (Publications of the Linguistic Circle of New York - Number 1; (New York: 1953).

valuable guides regarding name changing and linguistic problems connected with this phenomenon.

Socio-linguistic surveys dealing specifically with name changing among individual ethnic groups in the United States have also been made in recent years, particularly since the founding of the American Name Society in 1951. Mention should be made of J. E. Alatis' "The Americanization of Greek Names,"⁵ Ernest Maass's "Integration and Name Changing among Jewish Refugees from Central Europe in the United States,"⁶ and F. W. Hilbig's "Americanization of German Surnames and the Related Process of Changes in Europe."⁷

In Canada, first mention of the problem was made by J. B. Rudnyćkyj in his "Slavic Linguistic Atlas of Canada and U.S.A." in 1949, followed by a series of related reports in various publications.⁸ Mention of name changing among the French element in Canada has also been made by Robert La Roque de Roquebrune.⁹

Importance of the Study. An extensive study of the patterns of personal name changing in Canada has never before been made. As far as Slavic surnames are concerned, the above reports by J. B. Rudnyćkyj have been based upon limited material and in no case has the evidence presented numbered more than fifty surname

⁵ James E. Alatis, "The Americanization of Greek Names," *Names* III (1955), pp. 137-56.

⁶ Ernest Maass, "Integration and Name Changing among Jewish Refugees from Central Europe in the United States," *Names* 6 (1958), 129-172.

⁷ Frederick W. Hilbig, *Americanization of German Surnames and the Related Process of Changes in Europe* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1958).

⁸ J. B. Rudnyćkyj, "Slavic Linguistic Atlas of Canada and U.S.A. (First Report May, 1949)," *Bulletin of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages*, 7.1 (Philadelphia, 1949) pp. 13-14; J. B. Rudnyćkyj, "Slavic Linguistic Atlas of Canada and U.S.A. (Second Report, May 1952)," *Orbis; Bulletin International de Documentation Linguistique*, 1.1 (Louvain: Centre International de Dialectologie Generale, 1952), 109-112; J. B. Rudnyćkyj, "Problems in Onomastic Bilingualism in Canada and U.S.A.," *Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Linguistics* (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 1958), pp. 148-49; J. B. Rudnyćkyj, "Recording of Slavic Speech in Canada," *Proceedings of the Linguistic Circle of Manitoba and North Dakota*, 1.1 (Winnipeg, 1959), 24, a.o.

⁹ Robert La Roque de Roquebrune, "Études Onomastiques. Origine des Noms Canadiens," *Le Bulletin de Recherches Historique*, 16 (1950), pp. 41-42. For changes of French-Canadian names in New England see Robert E. Pike, "Further Mutations on French-Canadian Proper Names," *American Speech*, 31 (May, 1956), 153.

changes. This method has resulted in undue emphasis on certain types of surname changes, and hypothetical conclusions. In this study an attempt has been made not only to present extensive material of over 2,000 Slavic surname changes, but also to give a thorough methodological analysis and then make proper conclusions.

The Sources Used. As far as the source material is concerned, the *Manitoba Provincial Gazette*, a weekly publication of the Provincial Government, provided material for the present study. Official announcements of name changes are listed in this publication under a section entitled the "Change of Name Act."¹⁰ Together with a record of both old and new names, each announcement includes information especially useful for a sociological study of the problem, such as the exact date, the name changer's occupation, his place of residence, and the name and address of the lawyer or witness. If a family is to be affected by a change in surname, the names and ages of the children, and the name of the wife are also given. However, the name changer's exact address, his place and date of birth, his racial origin and religion¹¹ — which would prove invaluable for any sociological study of the problem — is not given.

Method of Procedure. The majority of Slavic surnames bear a close resemblance to one another, regardless of whether they are of Ukrainian, Polish, Russian or of other Slavic origin. In this connection a recent Soviet work on the morphological features of contemporary Ukrainian surnames includes the following statement:

Just as the majority of words in the Ukrainian language has elements common with those in other Slavic languages, so, in a similar manner, Ukrainian surnames are morphologically formed in the same manner as those in the majority, if not all, of the Slavic languages.¹²

¹⁰ The "Change of Name Act" was assented to February 25, 1938, and came into effect, July, 1938. It is interesting to note that the act provides for "a book called 'The Change of Name Register'," in which name changes are entered by the Provincial Secretary. See Manitoba, *Revised Statutes* (1954), c. 33, "An Act to Provide for a Change of Name."

¹¹ See Appendix B for copies of application forms for a change of name, as authorized by the Manitoba Provincial Government.

¹² Yu. K. Red'ko, "Osnovni slovotvorchi typy suchasnykh ukrayins'kykh pryzvyshch u porivnyanni z inshymy slov'yans'kymy," (Basic Morphological Types of Contemporary Ukrainian Surnames in Comparison with Other Slavic Surnames),

Miklosich, also, in his fundamental work on Slavic personal and place-names,¹³ does not categorize them according to their ethnolinguistic origin, but treats all his material under a general Slavic heading.

Because the *Manitoba Gazette* does not disclose the ethnic origin of the name changer, an attempt to give an analysis of name changing among one specific group of Slavs was impossible. However, since the majority of Slavic surnames are quite similar, then it is proper to discuss them under broad headings. The surname was included here, regardless of whether the name changer considered himself a Slav or not, which latter information is not given by the *Gazette*.

All name changes listed in the *Gazette* for a twenty-year period, from 1937 to 1957, were excerpted. These changes were then processed, and all Slavic surnames undergoing a change of any kind were excerpted. Identical Slavic surnames undergoing exactly the same change were considered as one change and not two instances of the same phenomenon. Slavic surname changes excerpted from the *Gazette* in this manner number over two thousand and these form the "Dictionary of Slavic Surnames," which is included in Appendix A of this thesis.¹⁴

Except where indicated, all changes discussed here are documented and listed in the above-mentioned dictionary.

Since all changes discussed in the thesis are based on written sources and not on personal interviews with the name changer himself, it was impossible to determine the way in which the name changer pronounced his own Slavic surname at the time when the change was made. This is occasionally a handicap in the discussion of phonological changes, as a new surname can suggest itself either on the basis of the Slavic surname, as pronounced in the original Slavic tongue, or on the basis of an Anglicized pronunciation of the same surname. For example, the change of *Bilous* to *Bellows* is made on the basis of Anglicized pronunciation and not on the basis of Slavic pronunciation (Sl. bee-low-oo). On the other hand, the

Filolohichnyi zbirnyk, (Philological Collection), ed. I. K. Bilodid (Kiev, Akademiya Nauk Ukrayins'koyi RSR; Ukrayins'kyi Komitet Slavistik, 1958), p. 112.

¹³ Franz Miklosich, *Die Bildung der Slavischen Personen- und Ortsnamen* (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1927).

¹⁴ See editorial note at the beginning of this article.

change of *Gudz* to *Goodes* coincides with the correct Slavic pronunciation of the surname.

“Part One” of this discussion provides a brief sketch of Canada’s Slavic population, with special attention to the Slavs of Manitoba. Emphasis is placed on the background and circumstances of surname changing: the role of the law, social and public pressure, and resistance to name changing among certain segments of the Slavic population.

“Part Two” is a descriptive analysis of surname changes from the linguistic point of view. The first three sections of this part treat changes that retain all or some of the (Phonological, orthographical and morphological) elements of the original Slavic surname. The fourth discusses changes that preserve none of the orthographical, phonological or morphological features of the original surname.

The fifth section, entitled “Onomastic Analysis,” is an attempt to measure the nature of surname changing among the Slavs, showing the extent of assimilation and conformity from the standpoint of language contact. In the same section the author introduces a typological scheme for the classification of Slavic surname changes, according to the linguistic patterns discussed under Section 4 to 7. This scheme is applied to the “Dictionary of Surname Changes,” which is a compilation of over two thousand documented Slavic surname changes.

Definitions of terms used are given below when the phenomena to which they refer are discussed.

PART ONE
THE BACKGROUND AND CIRCUMSTANCES
OF CANADIANIZATION

I. THE SLAVS IN CANADA¹⁵

1. General Characteristics

Numbering approximately one million of Canada’s total population,¹⁶ the Slavs are divided into different groups as follows:

¹⁵ There are no major works available on Canada’s Slavic settlers and immigrants. The tendency has been to publish works dealing with a specific Slavic group. In this

Eastern Slavs: Russians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians

Western Slavs: Poles, Wends, Czechs, Slovaks

South Slavs: Slovenians, Croatians, Serbs, Bulgarians:

The various Slavic nationalities are united by physical kinship, community of language and community of culture, but are separated by historical experience, national self-consciousness, political aims and religion. Some of them have had no independent political existence in the modern historical period, and today they all form part of the Soviet block of states. In the past, they have lacked aggressiveness and cohesion. There is a division between the East and West Slavs: the East are Eastern Orthodox and use the Cyrillic alphabet; the West are predominantly Roman Catholic and use the Latin alphabet; in between are the Greek Catholics or Uniates, including the Ukrainians of Western Ukraine, Byelorussians, some Slovaks and a few Croatians. The Uniates acknowledge the authority of the Pope at Rome but adhere to much of the ritual and traditions of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

2. Slavic Immigration to Canada

The influx of Slavic immigrants into Canada did not begin until the last decade of the nineteenth century, when, because of the competition offered by the United States with its better known attractions and opportunities, Canada built up an immigration policy founded on encouragement and advertising. With such a vast agricultural territory awaiting settlement, Canada emphasized in its advertising the need of farmers and farm laborers and the opportunities extended to settlers with agricultural tendencies.

connection, the Ukrainians, Canada's largest single ethnic group of Slavic origin, lead the way. However, a short outline on Canada's Slavs is available in V. J. Kaye-Kysilevs'kyj's *Slavic Groups in Canada* ("Slavistica"; Proceedings of the Institute of Slavistics of the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences - Number 12). Winnipeg: 1951. Also mention should be made of the brief but authoritative notes on Canadians of Bulgarian, Byelorussian, Czech, Croatian, Macedonian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, and Slovak, as well as Ukrainian origin, which have been included in the recent *Encyclopedia Canadiana* (Ottawa: the Canadiana Co., 1958).

¹⁶ According to the 1951 census there were 395,043 Canadians of Ukrainian descent, and 219,845 of Polish, 91,279 of Russian, 63,959 of Czech and Slovak, and 21,404 of Yugoslav (Croatian, Serbians and Slovenian) origin. Several thousand Bulgarians, Macedonians, Byelorussians, and other Slavs in Canada were not listed in the census reports.

The majority of these early Slavic settlers were illiterate peasants not long removed from serfdom, which was abolished in Austria-Hungary in 1848, and in Russia in 1861.

When serfdom was abolished . . . a large part of the land was divided up among the former serfs, but the nobles still retained huge estates. The church and the monasteries also possessed large tracts of land. Much of this land-lord and church property was left idle as pasture land or as forest land, to which the peasant had no access on any terms. The land that had been received by the peasants after the abolition of serfdom had been barely sufficient to give them a living. As the years rolled by and the population increased, the farmers were forced to subdivide their land until the plots became too small to support a family. For the rising generation the prospects were indeed very dreary, and its members were forced to look elsewhere for a living.¹⁷

Other reasons for emigration were high rates of taxation, compulsory military service, political unrest, and in some sections overpopulation. Wages were very precarious in the city and more so in certain rural districts.

The steady wave of Slavic immigrants continued to Canada until 1914, when the flow was suddenly interrupted by the events which precipitated the First World War. It was resumed again on a smaller scale upon the termination of hostilities, and lasted until the beginning of the 1930's when the economic depression caused a general restriction of immigration to Canada.

After World War Two, there was again a considerable influx of Slavic immigrants to Canada, especially of the so-called "displaced persons" and "political refugees." This flow lasted approximately from 1947 to 1952, after which the number of Slavic immigrants entering Canada decreased considerably. Practically all the Slavic countries fell within the Soviet orbit which sealed its boundaries and did not permit emigration.

3. The Slavic Community in Canada

The average Slavic immigrant came to Canada with few resources, and was unable to speak English and was unfamiliar with Canadian customs and institutions. As a result he usually settled in the poorer sections of urban communities or took up farm land that was

¹⁷ Paul Yuzyk, *The Ukrainians in Manitoba; A Social History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), p. 27.

considered worthless. His ignorance, poverty and "foreignness" often made him the object of exploitation, suspicion and hostility on the part of the older groups of the population. For status and security the Slavic immigrant turned to his compatriots and the colony where they lived.

Ties of race or kinship, language or culture, and the need of social security inevitably led immigrants of the same nationality to settle in whole blocs and communities, such as the Ukrainian, Polish and Dukhobor settlements in Western Canada. In the urban, industrial centers of Western Canada similar communities or neighborhoods with a predominant Slavic population appeared, the classic example being Winnipeg's "North End."

The basis of these communities lies in cultural differences, and at the same time they serve as a bridge linking the old with the new. The fact that the immigrants from the same village or the same province can settle together and speak their own language, sing their own songs, eat their native food, and follow their old customs, greatly facilitates their adjustment. Without this cultural anchor the immigrant would be demoralized. The ethnic community thus serves the useful purpose of perpetuating social controls amid a new environment and also of preserving the arts and skills of the foreign-born for the enrichment of Canadian life.

The foundations on which these ethnic communities are built are a common language and sometimes a common faith. Schools or classes soon appear where the children can learn the language of their parents; whether published there or not, a foreign-language newspaper circulates in the community.¹⁸ Practically all business is transacted in the common language. With many immigrant groups the parish is the center of all the community activities, social as well as religious. In some instances the church has been for centuries the center of the social life of the group; in others, it has assumed this function after being transplanted; in either case its establishment in the immigrant colony is a stabilizing influence that prevents social disorganization. With its numerous societies and

¹⁸ The Slavic press in Canada is extremely productive. For instance, from 1951 to 1958, there were over 130 Ukrainian periodicals alone published in Canada, ranging from annual almanacs to semi-weekly newspapers. See listing in *Ucrainica Canadiana, 1958*, compiled by J. B. Rudnykyj and D. Sokulsky, (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Canadian Committee, 1959), pp. 30-32.

social clubs, it provides intimate contacts, possibilities of expression, and a feeling of "really belonging."

Besides the parish halls there are other common meeting-places, such as the lodges and dance halls erected by the Slavs. Amusement places where the Slav can enjoy vaudeville and dialogue in his own language are found in every large Canadian community. Numerous recreational forms are transplanted from the native country, such as the Czech and Polish "Sokol" Gymnastic Societies, and the Ukrainian "Prosvitas," though with change in both form and function in response to the new situation. The amusements of many immigrants revolve largely around religious festivals and ceremonies. Weddings and christenings and other celebrations provide further occasions for good times; and Slavic music, drama, and dancing are promoted. The desire to maintain cultural contacts with the homeland produces patriotic societies and leads the foreign-language press to emphasize "old country" news.

II. CANADIANIZATION AND ASSIMILATION

1. The Term "Canadianization"

To "Canadianize" means to render Canadian, to stamp with characteristics of the Canadian environment. As far as the Slav in Canada is concerned, it has meant to bring to a resemblance or conformity in culture with one of Canada's two dominant ethnic groups – the British and the French, to a lesser degree with the latter, however, than with the former. This equation of Canadian with British and French was summed up by the *Canada Year Book* in an outline on Canada's Immigration Policy in 1932:

Canadians usually prefer that settlers should be of a readily assimilable type, already identified by race or language with one or other of the two great races now inhabiting this country and prepared for the assumption of the duties of democratic Canadian citizenship.¹⁹

During the thirties, the Government attempted to keep the immigrant tide preponderantly British or western European. Stringent laws were enacted to guard against a large influx of settlers from Southern and Eastern Europe, who, "however desirable from a purely economic point of view, are less readily assimilated, and the

¹⁹ *The Canada Year Book*, 1932, p. 149.

Canadianizing of the people who have come to Canada from these regions in the present century is a problem in the agricultural Prairie Provinces and in the cities of the East.”²⁰

After World War II, when Canada received a new influx of immigrants, an attempt was made to meet the problem of Canadianization by undertaking an intensified program of integration. The problem was “to grab the new immigrants on arrival to Canada and to successfully educate them in six months.”²¹ Some even wished “to make Canadians out of them between Halifax and Montreal.”²² In 1948, Mr. Frank Foulds, Director of the Citizenship Branch, Department of the Secretary of State, put forward the following proposals:

Let us stress the teaching of the language as completely and quickly as we can after the people come; second, let us tell them that they do not need to wait any five-year period to file their declaration of intention, but encourage them to take that first step of their first papers; third, take that information with the name and address, after they have made that first step, and turn that over to all our teaching agencies; and that is the time to put on the course in Canadian history, government and so on.²³

Canadianization, then, is a social and cultural process involving the modification of sentiments and attitudes and the gradual incorporation of the Slavs into one of the dominant culture groups in in Canada. The Slavs, we are told, may be either completely “assimilated” or “integrated” into the Canadian way of life.²⁴ Regardless of the extent of acculturation, assimilation or integration, the process of adjusting themselves to a new culture goes on wherever contact and communication exist between Canada’s Slavic immigrants and her English- and French-speaking population. Much of it takes place automatically, without formal or official interference, while occasionally it is delayed by ethnic segregation in large cities or isolated communities.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Canada, Parliament, Senate, *Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour*, No. 9, June 15, 1948, p. 229.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 228.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

²⁴ On the problems of assimilation among the Ukrainians in Canada see P. Yuzyk, *The Ukrainians in Manitoba; A Social History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), pp. 205–12; and A. Stearns’ study on Canadianization of Slavic immigrants in *Slavistica*, Number 37–38, Montreal, 1960.

2. The Instability of the Slavic Immigrant Community

While the Slavs help themselves to adjust to the new environment by establishing the institutions and practices of the homeland, they never exactly reproduce the Old World culture. The Canadian environment soon forces change in dress, food, style of domicile, hours of labor, types of work and other aspects of life and behavior. Change also occurs in the non-material aspects of culture. Old forms, customs, and traditions lose much of their meaning and vitality in the changed surroundings; the new life and opportunities call for new methods of thought and action; and such ways as are retained are gradually corrupted by contact with the encompassing culture. Thus language, family life, religion, and other elements of the culture are modified. The children particularly acquire the new ways and abandon the old. The heritage of the group becomes a strange mixture of culture elements; it is neither that of the homeland nor that of the adopted country but partly the one and partly the other.

In fundamental construction the immigrant colony itself is unstable. The great variety in training and outlook on the part of its component members, the wide divergence of political and religious views, the inevitable absence of vital leadership, the weakening of parental authority, these and other characteristics tend to shake the very foundations of the immigrant colony, to destroy whatever solidarity it may appear to have, and to make for its instability. Moreover it is never wholly isolated, and outside influences constantly penetrate into its domain. Based on cultural difference, it tends to dissolve as members of the group acquire the language and customs of the larger community. As the immigrant learns English and rises in occupational status, he leaves the area of original settlement and moves to a slightly better district. If he continues to be successful in his economic activities, he withdraws from this second area of settlement and takes up residence in a more favorable location. The rising generations particularly are constantly on the move. This residential mobility has given rise, at least in the larger cities, to typical first, second, and third areas of immigrant settlement, each progressively farther out from the center of the city where the areas of original settlement are usually located. The continuity of the ethnic community has been maintained only through the constant recruitment of fellow countrymen from abroad, not infrequently

from the same town or village in the homeland. Immigrant colonies established during the period of the old immigration have largely disappeared through lack of new recruits to take the place of the former immigrants who have graduated from the areas of original settlement. With the restriction of immigration, the new immigrant colonies are also tending rapidly to disintegrate.

3. The Second Generation

The most significant role in the breakup of the immigrant community is played by the second generation. The children of immigrants mingle more freely with native Canadians, gain a wider knowledge of Canadian traditions and institutions, and speak English more fluently than their parents. As a result they react against the standards, interests, and attitudes of the foreign colony. A conflict arises not only between the two generations but between two cultures. In a family in which the father and mother were born in the "old country" and the children in Canada, the difference in language, backgrounds, customs and ideals is often too great to make possible comradeship and understanding or even necessary parental guidance. While some members of the second generation conform to the Old World standards and participate in the life of the colony, the majority tend to lose their contact with it and be absorbed by the larger community.

Thus the children of immigrants are in a trying situation. The cultural heritage of their parents is largely lost for them, and at the same time they have not fully acquired the culture of their environment nor been accepted on equal terms by native Canadians. Many are oppressed by feelings of inferiority, which are to some degree extensions of their parents' own feelings as immigrants in a country so drastically different from their native land. The feelings of inferiority manifest themselves variously. Some second-generation immigrants break away entirely from the homes of their parents and eventually repudiate their origin. Some become chauvinistically patriotic; only their chauvinism has no vital basis. Other new Canadians become anti-social. The majority form a mass of neutral citizenry without a vital sense of background, perennially oppressed by the feeling that they will live outside the main stream of Canada's national life. The better adjusted, usually the better educated, know

something of the cultural background of their people and have a sense of continuity. They are aware of the common elements of all cultures and the influence of the Old World on the New. One of the greatest problems of immigrant adjustment is to give the second generation a knowledge of and a pride in their inheritance, to help them understand the problems and achievements of their parents, and to give them a feeling of belonging.

III. ASSIMILATION IN LANGUAGE AND NAME CHANGING

1. The Changing Language of the Slavic Immigrant

It is the common experience of most immigrant groups in North America that their native language is soon modified toward English. This process results in a sort of mixture or Slaviced English, and even this kind of *argot* in a few generations practically disappears. The typical Slavic immigrant, whose native vocabulary is seldom very rich in some respects, finds himself unable to give expression to his new wants and reactions in the new environment, especially when he finds himself in an industrial city in contrast to his rural background. Instead of coining new words to fit the new life, he discovers that the most convenient and natural thing is to borrow the words which are lacking in his vocabulary, according to need, and to fit them as closely as possible into his own tongue. Thus the first English words to creep into his daily speech are those for which a true equivalent in his own language is lacking or remote. Streetcars, ice cream, and cars are new things to European peasants and those words have been adopted into every immigrant language. In this way, without any official interference or force, the language of the Slavic immigrant is soon modified and in the course of time tends to disappear.²⁵

²⁵ For a report on English loanwords in Slavic, see J. B. Rudnyćkyj, "Slavic Linguistic Atlas of Canada and U.S.A.," *Orbis; Bulletin International de Documentation Linguistique*, Vol. I, No. 1, (Louvain: Centre International de Dialectologie Generale, 1952), pp. 109-112. See also, H. L. Mencken, "Appendix. Non-English Dialects in America; Slavic," *The American Language: An Inquiry into the Development of English in the United States* (4th ed. rev.; New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1945), pp. 655-74; W. Kirkconnell, *Common English Loanwords in East European Languages* ("Slavistica"; Proceedings of the Institute of Slavistics of the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences - Number 14), Winnipeg, 1952.

2. Name Changing

A difference in language always has a great bearing in unsettling names. The mixture of peoples in Canada and the melting action of a single language leads inevitably to name changing among a considerable number of Canada's Slavic population.

Just as in the case of the immigrant's everyday speech, name changes take place under social rather than governmental pressure. Automatic adjustment is shown most clearly in the case of the names and surnames of married women. The custom of a married woman taking on the entire name of the husband, including his first or Christian names (e.g., Mrs. John Harold Smith) is completely foreign to Slavic onomastic customs, according to which the woman retains her maiden given name.²⁶ Similarly, although all the Slavs differentiate between the masculine and feminine forms of surnames, in this country the feminine forms usually disappear. Thus, a married woman, whose name in Slavic would ordinarily be Mariya Klymkova, becomes Mrs. Walter Peter Klymkiw. Finally, the patronymic is also no longer used.

In general, name changes are motivated by one or a combination of reasons: the attempt to avoid ridicule and embarrassment; the desire for social prestige; the attempt to hide one's ethnic origin, especially to escape a hostile attitude toward "foreigners" in general or a given group in particular; the Slavic name may be cumbersome and difficult to spell; or it may be lacking in distinction or a handicap in business. One Canadian with a Slavic surname had this to say about his difficulties in a letter that appeared in the *Toronto Daily Star*:

I was born in Canada, but my parents came here from the Ukraine, and we've been having a difficult time with the pronunciation of our surname. I am now 21 years old and I want to change my surname to something that sounds more English. All my life I've been made fun of because of my name. In school, no one pronounced it correctly and they used to call me a "Bohonk."

My father says that my name is just as good as any other surname, and he doesn't want to see me at home if I change it. We argue all the time and this makes my mother cry. I don't want to leave home, but it would be much

²⁶ "Postoronnyi" (An Onlooker). "Deshcho pro deshcho" (Something About Something), *Ukrajins'kyi Holos* (Ukrainian Voice), Winnipeg, September 22, 1954. The article comments on how ridiculous the use of the husband's given names sounds in Slavic.

better for me if I were something like a John Smith. Please tell me what to do.²⁷

The process of name changing may begin when the prospective Slavic immigrant first seeks admittance to Canada, at which time the problem of rendering his name into the English language first arises. The following information from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in Ottawa presents a short outline of the process involved:

All immigrants to Canada are required to be in possession of valid travel documents and it is from these documents that we take the spellings of their names. In the case of immigrants whose native tongues are written in a manner dissimilar to our own, almost invariably their travel documents will be inscribed not in their native languages but in English or French or in some other comparable language. Failing this means of identification, the interviewing officer overseas would translate the immigrant's name phonetically through a qualified interpreter unless the officer himself was fluent in the applicant's language.²⁸

As far as Canadianization of the immigrant's name is concerned, however, there has been in Canada no such official government pressure.

The question of whether or not a newcomer to this country should "Canadianize" his name has always been considered by this Department to be strictly a matter of personal preference in so far as the newcomer himself is concerned. Officers of this Department in no way encourage or discourage immigrants in this respect.²⁹

3. The Law and Name Changing

In the majority of provinces, should the immigrant decide to change his name, he is free to do so, provided he is a Canadian citizen.

In the majority of provinces . . . an immigrant cannot legally change his name until he becomes a Canadian citizen. When citizenship is conferred upon him, the certificate is issued under the name he gave when he came to

²⁷ "Wants to Change Surname," (Letter to the editor signed "V. K."), *Toronto Daily Star*, July 13, 1959. An excellent case study of the psychological and sociological factors involved when a John Sobuchanowsky changes his name to John S. Nichols, is drawn by Louis Adamic in "Alias Mr. Nichols; A Narrative," *What's Your Name?* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), pp. 151-228.

²⁸ Letter from E. P. Beasley, Acting Director, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Immigration Branch, Ottawa, February 3, 1960.

²⁹ Letter from E. P. Beasley, Acting Director, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Immigration Branch, Ottawa, December 4, 1959.

Canada. If subsequent to his arrival he has adopted some slight variation in the spelling of his name, this variation may, upon request, be shown in brackets on the citizenship certificate. In those provinces which permit a legal change in name before citizenship is acquired, only the name under which the person is legally known is included on the certificate.³⁰

Hence, once he has become a Canadian citizen, the Slavic immigrant is free to change his name in accordance with the "Change of Name Act" in his home province. Under British Common Law there is nothing to prevent anyone from using any name he may prefer, and the prospective name changer is free to choose whatever name he wishes. However, the courts may use their discretion when a change might cause confusion or inconvenience to some other party. For instance, one of the classic name-changing cases in Canada was *Rezek v. Rennie*. In this case, a Czech merchant, Jaroslav Rezek, wanted to change his name to Gerald Rennie. The application, opposed by the Rennie Seed family, caused a considerable stir in Toronto.³¹

4. Social Pressure and Counter-Pressure

While on the one hand, there are no official or governmental obstacles in the way of name changing, the Canadian of Slavic origin is, however, subjected to other, more subtle pressures originating in his everyday contact with his fellow Canadians. The following are excerpts from an article that appeared on the editorial page of one of Canada's leading newspapers:

For several months past we have noticed what seemed to us to be an increasing number of foreign names on panel and delivery trucks. *We mean by foreign, that they were not obviously of English, Scottish or Irish derivation. . .*

When people become Canadian citizens we like them to come all the way. We like them to use names which will not strike the bulk of Canadians as foreign. Their original names may be held an honour in the countries from which they come; but they have no historical significance here. To insist on the name they have used in Czechoslovakia is likely to become a barrier to their complete Canadianism.

It is even worse for the children of the truck owners than for the heads of their families. Children are cruel, or if they are not cruel by instinct, they are thoughtless. You cannot persuade me that a boy named Ross does not have a

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Ronald Williams, "How Sacred Is Your Name? Can You Stop Anyone Taking It as Theirs?" *Financial Post*, Vol. XLIII, No. 21 (May 21, 1949), pp. 1 and 7.

pleasanter time at school than the same boy called Roskivitchinoff. Unless his schoolmates like him well enough to give him a nickname like Ross he is decidedly unlikely to win friends and influence people. Pressure will cause him to herd with his own kind, with other boys and girls who come from distant lands with unpronounceable names. As they grow to maturity, they will have a tendency to intermarry, thus further postponing the process of becoming really Canadian.

We have heard a great deal of talk from time to time about our culture being enriched by streams of other cultures which come to us from Europe . . . There may be some advantages, not apparent to us, in this, but they should act as mulch or thinly spread fertilizer. *The main soil ought to be British.* At any rate the foreign unpronounceable names grate on us and, as we have suggested, do a distinct disservice to those who persist in their use. It is true that they might have a commercial appeal to others who have the same national inheritance; but we do not believe that this advantage would nearly offset the disadvantage from cutting themselves off the main strain of the Canadian people . . . (Italics mine.)³²

We see from the above, that "Canadian" is interpreted as meaning "of English, Scottish or Irish derivation." This interpretation is often challenged by spokesmen of the non-British groups in Canada. For instance, Vera Lysenko, in her sociological study of the Ukrainians in Canada, has argued that the Ukrainians, "so different in history and background from the Anglo-Canadian, so handicapped by poverty and illiteracy, *yet managed to strike deep roots into Canadian soil to produce descendants as Canadian in temper and outlook as the descendants of a long line of British settlers.*"³³

Nonetheless, regardless of this opposition to the pro-British interpretation of "Canadianism" and the claims of the Canadian-Slav to his share in the formation of Canadianisms, the process of name changing among the Slavs in Canada is not stopped.

Perhaps the earliest report on name changing among any of Canada's first Slavic settlers is an article in "Ukrayins'kyi Holos," (Ukrainian Voice), March 29, 1911, drawing the readers' attention to the fact that in view of the coming census, "everyone should call themselves Ukrainians." The article goes on to say, that:

it is not good to change one's name, for, although there is no penalty for this, all the same it's not nice. Why should a Hryn'ko change to Harry, and a

³² J. V. McAree, "Plenty in a Name," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), November 18, 1957.

³³ Vera Lysenko, *Men in Sheepskin Coats: A Study in Assimilation* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1947), p. 203.

Danylo to Dan, when it's nicer and pleasanter to keep one's original name. The same with one's surname. In what way is Johnson nicer than Tatsyuk, or Smith instead of Danyl'chuk?

Such changes occur mostly in the cities, and we should get rid of this habit.³⁴

The attempt by spokesmen of the Slavic community to discourage name changing has not been wholly successful, and, with each passing year, more and more drift away from the Slavic community and are absorbed by the predominant Anglo-Saxon segment of Canada's population.

They are ashamed to admit that they are of non-English origin, and therefore many of them even change their ancestral surnames into English surnames: Ivanyshyns become Williamses, Mykhaylyshyns become Michaelsons, Semchyshyns become Samsons, Petryshyns become Petersons, Pavlyshyns become Paulsons, Chornyis become Blacks, Bilyis become Whites, Zelenyis become Greens, and so forth. It is true that there were times in Canada, especially between the First and Second World Wars, when because of the depression, Canadian employers discriminated against foreigners because of their origin, so that a Berezynskyi was in no way able to find a job, unless he rechristened himself Birch . . . the number of these rechristenings increases with each passing day. Often one reads a notice about a change of name and shakes his head in bewilderment, when it is seen that the owner of a surname with which he should be proud because of the glorious role it has played in the history of the Ukrainian people, has changed it to a completely distasteful, foreign surname, simply because it sounds better in English. It is evident, then, that such Anglicized Joes cannot be considered a part of the most solid part of Canada's "third Element."³⁵

In spite of spirited appeals in the ethnic press and other publications such as the above, the practice of name changing continues to proceed rapidly in Canada in the absence of any general bar to the practice, and is likely to continue, for the incentives to adopt familiar and convenient surnames are strong. City life, under whose

³⁴ "Spys Zhyteliv Kanady" (Census of Canada's Population), *Ukrayins'kyi Holos* (Ukrainian Voice), Winnipeg, March 29, 1911.

³⁵ Vasyl' Svystun, *Ukrayins'kyi Patriotyzm v Kanadi na slavakh i na dili; stati* (Ukrainian Patriotism in Canada, in Word and in Deed; Articles), (Kiev: Radians'kyi Pys'mennyk, 1959), pp. 17-18; see also pp. 114-15 of the same book. For other, similar comments on name changing from the Slavic point of view, see "Nie Wstydzic Sie Poskich Nazwick!" (Do Not Be Ashamed of Polish Names!), *Czas*, (Time), number 39, Winnipeg, 1949; Y. P., "Zmina prizvyshoh" (Change of Surnames), *Novyi Shlakh* (New Pathway), Winnipeg, September 14, 1959; "Postoronnny" (An Onlooker), "Deshcho pro deshcho" (Something About Something), *Ukrayins'kyi Holos* (Ukrainian Voice), Winnipeg, September 22, 1954; Stepan Semchuk, *Kanadijs'ka rapsodiya* (Canadian Rhapsody), Winnipeg, 1959; pp. 14-15.

influence the majority of Canada's Slavs are living today, favors the simple and commonplace name over the stranger, unusual name, while the great mobility of the population serves to provide additional incentive for name changing.

PART TWO

A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF SLAVIC SURNAME CHANGING

I. ORTHOGRAPHICAL ADJUSTMENTS

1. Two Slavic Alphabets as a Problem

Although Slavic languages resemble one another in pronunciation, grammar and sentence structure, the use of two scripts, the Latin and the Cyrillic, to express similar sounds complicates the problem of adjusting to a new language system.³⁶ The Slavic immigrant who is familiar only with the Cyrillic script is confronted with the problem of orthography at a much earlier stage than the Slav acquainted with the Latin script. As far as surnames are concerned, the Slavic immigrant using the Latin alphabet has his name transplanted to Canada without any changes. The Slav using the Cyrillic alphabet, however, must produce documents and identification papers in the Latin alphabet.³⁷ It is not surprising, then, that many Ukrainian immigrants to Canada arrived with Polonized surnames, bearing suffixes such as *-czuk* and *-yszyn*. Western Ukraine, and the province of Galicia in particular, is the original home of the majority of Canada's Ukrainian immigrants. From 1921 to 1939 it formed part of the Republic of Poland. Accordingly, identification papers, passports, and other documents would be furnished to the prospective immigrant in both Polish and Latin by local public authorities and clergy. Similarly, in Rumania and Czechoslovakia prospective

³⁶ The Latin script is used by the following languages: Polish, Czech, Slovak, Lusatian or Wendish, Slovenian. The Cyrillic script is used by Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Macedonian and Bulgarian languages. Serbocroatian can be written either in the Latin alphabet or in Cyrillic.

³⁷ *Supra*, p. 15.

Ukrainian immigrants would have their documents made out in the official language of their respective countries.³⁸

2. The Problem of Transliteration

Commenting on "names from the Slavonic" and their influence on European nomenclature, Charlotte M. Yonge, in her *History of Christian Names*, makes the following observation:

Slavonian languages are said to be soft in their own speech, but our letters clumsily render their sounds, and make them of cumbrous length; and the few names that have been adopted have been severely mangled.³⁹

Any attempt to reconstruct a Slavic surname in terms of the English language is complicated by the complete lack of any generally-accepted and adequate system of transliteration. In Great Britain alone there are in simultaneous use at present more than six transliteration schemes, all of which differ among themselves in certain details.⁴⁰ A similar chaos of transliteration schemes exists in the United States. In Canada, the International System is favored by scholars, while most libraries adhere to the system used by the Library of Congress in Washington.⁴¹

Unable to refer to any universally accepted system, the name changer, then, is free to experiment on his own. Depending on his knowledge of English,⁴² the orthographical change may prove successful and leave him with an acceptable surname. Often, however, a change in orthography fails to simplify his surname, at least from the "Canadian" point of view, and he may then resort to more drastic alterations in his surname.

³⁸ Interviews with Mrs. N. Klymasz, Toronto, December 30, 1959; Mr. and Mrs. H. Klymkiw, Winnipeg, January 16, 1960; Mr. and Mrs. W. Kopychanski, St. Boniface, January 18, 1960.

³⁹ Charlotte M. Yonge, *History of Christian Names* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1884), p. 437.

⁴⁰ W. K. Matthews, "The Latinisation of Cyrillic Characters," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Volume XXX (June, 1952), p. 535.

⁴¹ Jaroslav B. Rudnyčkyj, "Slavic (Cyrillic) — English Transliterations as Used by the National Library in Ottawa." Paper read before the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Slavists, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, June 16, 1958.

⁴² The English alphabetic system contains so many inconsistencies in its representation of sounds as to present a real problem. The immigrant is undoubtedly bewildered by the following: *throw, toe, sew, dough, so*.

3. Reasons for Changes in Orthography

Surnames which undergo a revision in orthography are generally motivated by the following circumstances. (1) If the surname has been inadequately or ambiguously transliterated, the name changer may attempt to improve on the transliteration, and conform to conventional spelling practices of the English language. (2) If the Slavic surname is identical in pronunciation to another surname common to the new language system, he may attempt to change the spelling in keeping with the customary spelling of the surname. Similarly, when only a part of the Slavic surname coincides with the sound of an English word, a suitable change in orthography may be made. (3) If a change in spelling will, in the opinion of the individual, enhance the appearance of the surname, or perhaps make it more acceptable, he will make minor changes accordingly.

4. The Sibilants

The Slavic sibilants *cz*, *sz* and *c* are the most frequently revised letters or combinations of letters. In the alphabet of the Poles, these stand for the following sounds in English: *cz* is *ch*, as in "cheese"; *sz* is *sh*, as in "fresh"; *c* is *ts*, as in "meats."

In the following orthographic changes, the above-mentioned sibilants are revised according to spelling, but in all cases the original sound, as it appears in the Slavic surname, is retained:

Adamczuk	Adamchuk
Antoniczuk	Antonichuk
Batenczuk	Batenchuk
Boczar	Botchar ⁴³
Chernisz	Chernish
Dutczyszen	Dutchyshen
Klemczuk	Klemchuk
Korczak	Korchuk
Sobkowicz	Sobkowich
Szefczyk	Shefchyk
Tanczyk	Tanchuk
Tokarczuk	Tokarchuk
Wac	Watts, a.m.o.

⁴³ The slight phonological extension of *ch* by a prefix *t* is highly characteristic of the Slavic languages.

The sibilant *szcz* (*shch*), it may be noted, has in no case been preserved completely, but has been either simplified or completely dropped. An anomaly may occasionally occur, as when the *ts*-sound is represented by *c*, as in *Yachimitz* to *Jackimec*.

5. The Letter *j*

The letter *j*, used to represent a semi-consonant in the international system of transliteration, or to indicate iotized vowels (*ya*, *yo*, *yi*, *yu*), but never the *j* in *Jack*, presents a baffling problem to the name changer. Unless the *j* is intended to take on the sound of *j* in *Jack* (as in the change of *Sajewicz* to *Sedgwick*), the *j* will invariably be either removed or substituted usually by *i* or *y*:

<i>Derij</i>	<i>Derry</i>
<i>Juzwak</i>	<i>Yuzwalk</i>
<i>Marjasz</i>	<i>Mariash</i>
<i>Skwarij</i>	<i>Squarie</i> (<i>j</i> is removed)
<i>Szyjka</i>	<i>Sheyka</i> , a.o.

If the letter preceding the *j* is *a*, the change of *j* to *y* will involve a phonological change:

<i>Baj</i> (pron. buy)	<i>Bay</i>
<i>Buhaj</i> (pron. boo-high)	<i>Buhay</i>
<i>Hajny</i> (pron. high-knee)	<i>Hayny</i>
<i>Szajaj</i> (pron. shah-lye)	<i>Shalley</i>

6. Other Respellings

Other changes in orthography, such as *i-y*, *y-i*, *k-c*, *k-ck*, *ks-x*, the doubling of consonants and similar extensions in spelling, are very common. Some of these changes are almost mandatory because of their similarity to English-sounding words:

<i>Cybak</i>	<i>Cyback</i>
<i>Czop</i>	<i>Chopp</i>
<i>Holyk</i>	<i>Holick</i>
<i>Gulenczyn</i>	<i>Sulenchin</i>
<i>Karpick</i>	<i>Carpick</i>
<i>Kiez</i>	<i>Kieze</i>
<i>Kressock</i>	<i>Cressock</i>
<i>Lozinski</i>	<i>Lozinsky</i>

Maksymchuk	Mazimchuk
Negrycz	Negrich
Petlak	Petlack
Smal ⁴⁴	Small
Toski	Tosky

Respellings occasionally show an attempt to present a more adequate transliteration of sounds as they appear in the Slavic surname. Thus, *u* becomes *oo*: *Gudz* – *Goodes*, *Kubaj* – *Koobay*. The wide Slavic “ah”-sound, represented in Slavic by the letter *a*, is in certain cases more accurately transliterated by the letter *o*: *Babij* – *Bobey*, *Baby* – *Boby*, *Walczuk* – *Wolchuk*.⁴⁵ For similar reasons, *y* will sometimes be changed to *e*: *Szypit* – *Sheppit*, *Fydoryk* – *Fedorick*.

The change of *w* to *v* shows both a closer transliteration, as far as the orthography of the original Slavic surname is concerned, and a more definite alternation of consonants and vowels: *Nowak* – *Novak*, *Sowiak* – *Soviak*.⁴⁶

Polish surnames can present a special problem. Occasionally an attempt is made to preserve the Polish nasal *a*, (pron. as in the French “on”): *Drazek* – *Dronzek*, *Pajak* – *Payonk*.

Changes in orthography are often caused by original faulty transliteration of the Slavic surname. Hence the following revisions, showing an effort to reconstruct the original pronunciation of the Slavic surname:

Badwik	Badiuk
Ballawske	Batlowski
Keyluk	Kyluk
Koteluk	Kotyluk
Kowalszuk	Kowalchuk
Olinek	Olinyk
Shemash	Siemash
Wasyilizyn	Wasylyshyn
Yerema	Yarema

⁴⁴ In Slavic, the *l* in *Smal* is soft. Due to the almost complete absence of soft consonants in English, the *l* becomes hard, and the change to *Small* is almost inevitable.

⁴⁵ However, note the following change: *Wozny* – *Wasnie*.

⁴⁶ This is, furthermore, in accord with the correct labiodental pronunciation of *v* before vowels in Slavic. See J. B. Rudnyćkyj, *Yak hovoryty po-literaturnomu* (Prague, 1941), pp. 17–18.