

UKRAINIAN URBAN POPULATION OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE: ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE LATE 19th CENTURY

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Rezumat: *Populația urbană ucraineană din Imperiul Rus: mutații etnice și lingvistice la finele secolului al XIX-lea.* Articolul analizează structura etnică și lingvistică a populației urbane din Imperiul Țarist. Sunt valorificate datele statistice, inclusiv rezultatele celui dintâi Recensământ general al populației Imperiului Rus, din anul 1897, și ale unor recensăminte locale, organizate în unele orașe ucrainene în anii '70 ai secolului al XIX-lea. Analiza lor comparativă este importantă pentru înțelegerea efectelor politicii de asimilare culturală realizate de autoritățile imperiale, precum și a premiselor mutațiilor din structura populației urbane. Autoarea indică cauzele descreșterii ponderii ucrainenilor în totalul populației urbane la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea.

Résumé: *La population urbaine ukrainienne de l'Empire Russe: mutations ethniques et linguistiques à la fin du XIX-ème siècle.* L'article ci-joint analyse la structure ethnique et linguistique de la population urbaine de l'Empire Tsariste. On y mit en valeur les données statistiques, y compris les résultats du premier Recensement général de la population de l'Empire Russe de l'année 1897 et de quelques recensements locaux, organisés dans les villes ukrainiennes les années '70 du XIX-ème siècle. Leur analyse comparative est importante, aussi, pour la compréhension, des effets de la politique d'assimilation culturelle que les autorités impériales réalisèrent, ainsi que des prémisses des mutations de la structure de la population urbaine. L'auteur y indiqua les causes de la diminution de la part de population ukrainienne du total de la population urbaine à la fin du XIX-ème siècle.

Abstract: *The paper is devoted to the ethnic and linguistic composition of Ukrainian urban population of the Russian empire. It deals with the statistical data, including the results of both Imperial census of 1897 and the local censuses, which were held in some Ukrainian towns during the 1870s. This comparison is important for understanding the consequences of the cultural assimilation policy pursued by the Imperial authorities as well as the social and political causes of the urban population structure transformation. The*

author discusses reasons why the percent of Ukrainians in the total amount of the urban population decreased significantly by the end of the 19th century.

Keywords: Ukraine, urban population, ethnic and linguistic composition, Imperial census of 1897, cultural assimilation.

INTRODUCTION

After the Polish and Lithuanian Commonwealth had ceased to exist in the late 18th century, the lands of today's Ukraine were split between the Habsburg monarchy and the Russian empire. It was nearly the same time, when the last element of the Ukrainian autonomy – *the Cossack Hetmanate* – had been eliminated and the territory of Ukraine was divided into the Russian Imperial governorates. Both central and local Imperial authorities pursued the policy of cultural assimilation of the Ukrainians, Poles and Jews, resisting any attempt to construct their ethnic identities.

It is generally accepted, that in the aftermath of the French Revolution the formation of the modern nations in Europe largely depended on the urbanization, industrialization and mass education. However, in Ukraine even as late as in the turn of 20th century, the majority of population lived in the countryside, being either half-educated or illiterate. The ethnic and linguistic composition of the urban population was by and large heterogeneous. Moreover, most of the Ukrainians considered the urban milieu as something unfamiliar or even hostile to their way of life and values. As H. Binder assumes, the cultural symbols important for the Ukrainian identity belonged rather to the rural area¹.

Under such circumstance, the promotion of the Ukrainian language and culture among the urban area inhabitants as well as the resistance to the cultural assimilation was the task of crucial importance for the Ukrainian intellectual elite. It would be no exaggeration to say that the knowledge of the language and ethnic contacts in the urban environment gives us a clue to understanding the process of the nation building process in Ukraine.

During the last decades, several scholarly attempts to characterize the ethnic and linguistic composition of the 19th century Ukrainian urban population

¹ Гаральд Біндер, *Місто, урбанізація та націотворення в Україні* [City, urbanization and nation-building in Ukraine], in *Україна. Процеси націотворення* [Ukraine: the nation-building processes], Київ, "К. І. С.", 2011, с. 183.

were made. Among them, the above-mentioned monograph by H. Binder as well as the articles by R. Lozynskiy² and F. Klymchuk³ should be noted. The studies by A. Gumeniuk⁴, M. E. Hamm⁵, T. Arzumanova⁶, L. Levchenko⁷, O. Pryshchepa⁸, A. Zadorozhniuk⁹, V. Konstantinova¹⁰ reveal some regional aspects of the

² Роман Лозинський, *Мовна ситуація в Україні (суспільно-географічний погляд)* [Lingual situation in Ukraine (social and geographic perspective)], Львів, Видавничий центр ЛНУ імені Івана Франка, 2008, с. 86-97.

³ Федір Климчук, *Україноязычне городское население конца XIX в. в исторической ретроспективе* [The Ukrainian-language urban population of the end of XIX century in a historical retrospective view], in *Волинь-Житомирщина: історико-філологічний збірник з регіональних проблем* [Volyn – Zhytomyr region: historical and philological collection of the papers devoted to the regional problems], Житомир, Вид-во ЖДУ ім. І. Франка, 2013, Випуск 24, с. 115-133.

⁴ А. О. Гуменюк, *Соціальна і національна структура міського населення Правобережної України (друга половина XIX ст.)* [Social and national structure of the Right-Bank Ukraine's urban population], in “Український історичний журнал” [Ukrainian historical journal], 1993, № 10, с. 77 – 85.

⁵ Michael E. Hamm, *Kiev. A portrait, 1800-1917*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 55-134.

⁶ Тетяна Арзуманова, *Мовні та культурні традиції на Слобожанщині наприкінці XIX ст. (на прикладі Харківської губернії)* [The linguistic and cultural traditions in the Sloboda Ukraine by the late XIX century (on the Krarkiv's province example)], in “Краєзнавство: науковий журнал” [Regional studies: scientific journal], 2010, № 3, с. 154-162.

⁷ Лариса Левченко, *Статистичний аналіз національного складу населення Миколаївського військового губернаторства в XIX столітті (за матеріалами офіційної статистики)* [Statistical analysis of the Mykolaiv military governorate's population ethnic structure], in “Наукові праці: Науково-методичний журнал” [Scientific proceedings: scientific and methodological journal], Миколаїв, Вид-во МДГУ ім. Петра Могили, 2002, Том 17, Вип. 4. Історичні науки, с. 37-42 .

⁸ Олена Прищеп, *Міста Волині в другій половині XIX – на початку XX ст.* [Towns of Volyn in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century], Рівне, ПП ДМ, 2010.

⁹ А. Б. Задорожнюк, *Соціально-етнічна структура міського населення Подільської губернії та її вплив на розвиток регіону в XIX – на початку XX ст.* [Social and economic structure of the Podolia governorate's urban population and its influence on the regional development in the 19th – early 20th century], in “Вісник Кам'янець-Подільського національного університету імені Івана Огієнка, Історичні науки” [Annals of the Ivan Ohienko national university of Kamianets-Podilskiy], 2009, Вип. 2, с. 136-145.

¹⁰ Вікторія Константінова, *Урбанізація: південноукраїнський вимір (1861-1904 роки)* [Urbanization: Southern Ukrainian perspective (1861-1904)], Запоріжжя, АА

problem. In this article, I'll examine all available statistical evidences to determine how deeply the policy of assimilation transformed the Ukrainian urban population by the end of the 19th century.

UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE IN THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL MILIEU

The linguistic situation in the 19th Ukraine was rather specific. The official status of the Ukrainian language differed significantly from other regional languages of the Russian empire, such as Polish or Finnish. The official ideology considered the 'Great Russians', 'Little Russians' (Ukrainians) and 'Belorussians' as certain branches of the unified 'Russian people' as well as their languages were treated just as the dialects of the 'Russian language'. While the Ukrainian speakers of the Habsburg monarchy in Galicia, Bukovina and Trans-Carpathian area enjoyed the relative language freedom guaranteed by the 1867 Constitution, in the Russian empire the standardized Russian language was the only method of communication in local schools, universities, courts and public places. Moreover, until the early 20th century when the Russian Academy of sciences recognized the Ukrainian as a separate language, Imperial authorities had suppressed any attempt of the Ukrainian intellectuals to promote the native language of the vast majority of the Ukraine's population.

From the early 1860s several groups of the Ukrainian *intelligentsia* called the *Hromadas* were formed in major cities of Ukraine such as Kyiv, Poltava, Kharkiv, Odesa, Elisavetgrad and Chernihiv. Their aim was to resist the state Russification policy by means of education, art and the research work in the field of Ukrainian history and language. The most important *Hromada* was the one established in Kyiv by the historians Volodymyr Antonovych and Mykhailo Drahomanov, linguist Pavlo Zhytetskyi, ethnologist Pavlo Chubynskyi, composer Mykola Lysenko and some others. The *Kyiv Hromada* numbered from 70 to 100 members, including the students and professors of St. Vladimir's University, teachers, clerks, artists etc¹¹. While the Ukrainian language was excluded from both basic public and higher education, the *Hromada* launched the so-called *Sunday schools* which provided the elementary teaching in the Ukrainian language. *Hromada's* members organized artistic performances in favor of the

Тандем, 2010, с. 406-425.

¹¹А. М. Катренко, Я. А. Катренко, *Національно-культурна та політична діяльність Київської громади (60-90-ті роки XIX ст.)* [National, cultural and political activity of the Kyiv Hromada (1860-1890s)], Київ, 2003.

Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko, published numerous pamphlets in support of the Ukrainian language etc.

Meanwhile, the Imperial authorities worked against such attempts. On July 18, 1863, the Russian Minister of the Interior Pyotr Valuev in his secret circular denied the fact of the Ukrainian language very existence and banned the publishing of any books and papers in Ukrainian except the belles-lettres¹². The Ukrainian *Sunday schools* were shut down at the same time. The Valuev's circular was followed by the so-called Ems Decree of 1876 in which Alexander II suppressed both publishing activity and artistic performances in the Ukrainian. South-Western branch of the Russian Geographic Society which provided the researches in the Ukrainian history, ethnography and language was closed and many Ukrainian activists were either arrested or forced to emigrate. Being deeply concerned by the Polish ethnic nationalism as well as the policy of rival Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Russian ruling elite considered the Ukrainian language as a threat to the unity of the 'Russian people'. Therefore, they supported further cultural assimilation of the Ukrainians by all means.

RUSSIAN OR 'LITTLE RUSSIAN'?

It is rather difficult to evaluate how effective was this policy of assimilation in the lands of Ukraine as far as the first and only Russian Imperial Census was carried out in 1897. It was preceded by some local censuses held in several Ukrainian towns during the 1870s. Even those censuses which results were carefully processed and published, not necessary reflect the ethnic and linguistic composition of the population. Some of them, i. e. the Kharkiv census of 1873, did not include the question about the native language at all. In the published materials of 1875 Mykolaiv census the speakers of the Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian were not distinguished: all of them were apparently identified as those whose native language is the Russian¹³. Only the results of the censuses in Zhytomyr (1873)¹⁴, Kyiv (1874)¹⁵ and Kharkiv (1879)¹⁶ seem to be correct enough

¹² Johannes Remy, *The Valuev Circular and Censorship of Ukrainian Publications in the Russian Empire (1863-1876): Intention and Practice*, in "Canadian Slavonic Papers", Vol. 49, March-June 2007, no. 1/2, p. 87-110.

¹³ Лариса Левченко, *Історія Миколаївського і Севастопольського військового губернаторства (1805-1900)* [History of the Mykolayiv and Sevastopol military governorates (1805-1900)], Миколаїв, Вид-во МДГУ ім. П. Могили, 2006, с. 160.

¹⁴ В. Рогге, *Отчет Секретаря Волынского губернского статистического комитета*

to characterize the linguistic composition of the population. Their comparison with the results of the Imperial Census of 1897¹⁷ gives a unique opportunity to judge how deeply the Russification affected the urban population of Ukraine.

The so-called All-Russia Census of 1897 covered almost all the Imperial governorates and provinces. The administrative borders of today's Ukraine include the former territories of nine governorates: Kyiv, Volyn, Podolia, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Poltava, Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, Taurida. While Kherson and Chernihiv governorates included some districts of today's Moldova and Russia respectively, some parts of the Bessarabia, Kursk and Voronezh governorates belong to Ukraine now. In the article, we will take into account only those 137 urban settlements that are now located within the administrative borders of today's Ukraine.

The census form of 1897 lacked a direct question about the respondent's ethnic origin or identity. The information fields №12 and 13 contained two standard questions: "native language" and "confession". As far as the vast major-

о деятельности комитета в течение 1874 года, читанный членом-секретарем комитета В. Рогге в годичном общем собрании статистического комитета 31 марта 1875 г. [Annual report of the Volyn Governorate Statistical Committee 1874 given by the secretary member V. Rogge at the annual general meeting of the Statistical Committee on March 31, 1875], Житомир, 1875, 50 с.

¹⁵ *Киев и его предместья Шулявка, Соломенка с Протасовым Яром, Байкова Гора и Демиевка с Саперною слободою по переписи 2 марта 1874 года произведенной и разработанной Юго-Западным Отделом Императорского Русского географического общества* [Kyiv and its suburbs according to the census of March 2, 1874 held and processed by the South-Western Branch of the Russian Geographical Society], Киев, 1875, с. 20-23.

¹⁶ *Население г. Харькова по родному языку* [Kharkiv's population by the native language], in "Харьковский календарь на 1883 год". Статистический отдел. Таблицы, составленные на основании переписи 29 апреля 1879 г. [Kharkiv calendar 1883. Statistical section. Tables according to the census of April, 29 1879], Харьков, Типография Губернского Правления, 1883, с. 144-159.

¹⁷ *Первая всеобщая перепись населения Российской империи 1897 г.* [The first general census of the Russian Empire 1897], Т. III. *Бессарабская губерния*, с. 70-73; Т. VIII. *Волынская губерния*, 1904, с. 86-89; Т. XIII. *Екатеринославская губерния*, 1904, с. 74-75; Т. XVI. *Киевская губерния*, 1904, с. 88-91; Т. XX. *Курская губерния*, 1904, с. 102-105; Т. XXXII. *Подольская губерния*, 1904, с.98 -101; Т. XXXIII. *Полтавская губерния*, 1904, с. 100-103; Т. XLI. *Таврическая губерния*, 1904, с. 94-97; Т. XLVI. *Харьковская губерния*, 1904, с. 102-105; Т. XLVII. *Херсонская губерния*, 1904, с. 90-95; Т. XLVIII. *Черниговская губерния*, 1905, с. 112-115.

rity of Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians called themselves Orthodox, only the information about the native language seems relevant enough to characterize the ethnic composition of the population of Ukraine. The census takers were instructed to point the Cyrillic letters "Р.", "М. Р." or "Б. Р."¹⁸ to identify the Russian, 'Little Russian' (Ukrainian) or Byelorussian languages. In fact, much depended on the census maker's personal views on the linguistic matter, whereas the Ukrainian and Byelorussian were still officially considered as the dialects of the unified Russian language. Moreover, many Ukrainian native speakers, especially those who graduated Russian schools, are supposed to point their mother tongue as Russian because of the higher social prestige of this language at that time¹⁹. There are numerous testimonies of the contemporaries according to which even in turn of the 20th century the 'Little Russian' language was frequently associated with the lower classes (see below). Therefore, the share of the Ukrainian speakers in the total population of Ukraine indeed may be a bit larger than the one shown by the census. On the other hand, one can suggest that those surveyed who pointed their native language as the 'Little Russian' more or less clearly identified themselves with the Ukrainian ethnic group, instead of the respondents who presented themselves as the Russian speakers.

URBAN POPULATION OF UKRAINE BY THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY

According to the 1897 All-Russia census results, the Ukrainians were the second largest ethnic group of the entire Imperial population (17,81%) after the Russians (44,31%). Three Ukrainian cities – Odesa, Kyiv and Kharkiv, were ranked among the 10 largest urban centers of the Russian empire. Among 52 cities with the population more than fifty thousand, there were 12 cities located within the borders of nowadays Ukraine. Only about 13,5% of the Ukraine's population lived in urban area. The Kherson and Taurida governorates, which

¹⁸ А. А. Сафронов, *Из истории подготовки первой всеобщей переписи населения Российской империи 1897 г.* [Excerpts on the history of the First All-Russian census 1897], in "Документ. Архив. История. Современность" [Document. Archive. History. Modernity], Екатеринбург, Изд-во Урал. ун-та, 2001, Вып. 1, с. 211-231.

¹⁹ А. Личков, *Юго-Западный край по данным переписи 1879 года* [The South-Western Region according to the 1897 census], Киев, Типография Императорского университета св. Владимира, 1905, с. 11; see also: А. Котельников, *История производства и разработки всеобщей переписи населения 28-го января 1897 г.* [The history of holding and processing the general census of January 28, 1897], Санкт-Петербург, Типография Акционерного Общества «Слово», 1909, с. 11.

territories were incorporated into the Russian empire by the end of the 18th century, had the highest degree of urbanization (28,86% and 19,98% respectively). At the same time, only 7,35% of Podolia and 7,8% of Volyn population lived in the urban area. By the end of the 19th century, Ukraine remained a country with mostly rural population. The 1897 census confirms that the Ukrainian speakers still were the predominant linguistic group of the Poltava (92,98%), Podolia (80,93%), Kharkiv (80,62%), Kyiv (79,21%), Volyn (70,09%), Ekaterinoslav (68,90%), Chernihiv (66,41%) and Kherson (53,48%) governorates. However, the ethnic and linguistic composition of the urban population differed significantly (see Tab. 1 and 2).

Only in the towns of the Poltava governorate, the speakers of Ukrainian were in majority. The only exception was Kremenchuk with its large Jewish (46,94%) and Russian (19,25%) communities. Similar situation occurred in the Kharkiv governorate where only Kharkiv and Chuguev were mostly Russian speaking towns, while in other 15 urban settlements the Ukrainian language prevailed. In Chernihiv governorate, which included the lands of both today's Ukraine and Russia, the Ukrainian speakers were in majority of those urban communities which are now located within the borders of Ukraine. Other towns in which the speakers of Ukrainian comprised the largest linguistic group are listed below:

Bessarabia governorate: Akkerman (53,73%), Izmail (37,1%), Kiliya (39,21%);

Volyn governorate: Kremenets (47,01%);

Ekaterinoslav governorate: Aleksandrovsk (today's Zaporizhia, 42,98%), Bakhmut (61,75%), Verhnodniprovsk (56%);

Kyiv governorate: Vasylkiv (54,13%), Zvenyhorodka (49,26%), Kaniv (65,16%), Tarashcha (49,75%), Cherkasy (43,58%), Chyhyryn (66,63%);

Kursk governorate: Myropillya (98,27%);

Podolia governorate: Verbovets (55,47%), Olhopil (59,47%), Salnyk (74,56%), Stara Ushytza (59,58%), Yampil (49,69%);

Taurida governorate: Orikhiv (70,43%);

Kherson governorate: Ananyiv (43,18%), Beryslav (72,86%), Bobrynets (66,72%), Ochakiv (48,25%), Olviopol (today's Pervomaisk, 72,95%), Oleksandria (54,67%), Ovidiopol (53,69%).

Generally, in 72 of 137 urban settlements of today's Ukraine the Ukrainian speakers dominated over other ethnic and linguistic groups of population. However, by the end of the 19th century most urban communities in Ukraine were more or less multi-lingual. It is not surprising that the Russian speakers formed a subsequent part

of almost every urban community of the empire. The Russian language dominated in Kyiv, Ekaterinoslav as well as in the newly colonized Kherson and Taurida governorates. The results of 1897 census show that the Russian and Ukrainian languages divided the majority of the Ukrainian urban population in almost equal halves. The Yiddish speakers composed the third largest group of the urban area inhabitants. This was partly caused by the creation of the so-called Pale of Settlement in 1791, which allowed the residency by the Jews only in the Western regions of the Russian empire, such as Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. Roughly, all the territory of today's Ukraine was included into the Pale of Settlement, with an exception of the Kharkiv governorate. The Yiddish speaking population dominated in the towns of Volyn and Podolia. The Poles remained one of the largest ethnic groups of the Ukrainian urban population, despite the anti-Polish sentiment officially implemented by the Tsarist Russia after the January Insurrection of 1863-64 in the lands of Ukraine.

The urban population of the Taurida governorate was the most heterogeneous one. The inhabitants of the urban area used to speak Russian (49,10%), Crimean Tatar (17,16%), Ukrainian (10,44%), Polish (2,21%), Yiddish (11,84%), Greek (3,56%), Armenian (2,21%), German (1,42%) etc. The Russian speakers dominated in 13 towns of the governorate while only the town of Orikhiv was mostly Ukrainian speaking. In some settlements of the Crimean Peninsula either Crimean Tatar or Greek speakers dominated.

As it is mentioned above, the results of the local censuses held in Zhytomyr, Kyiv and Kharkiv during the 1870s make possible to trace back the cultural assimilation process, whereas only those three enumerations fully reflect the linguistic diversity of the urban area in the late 19th century Ukraine.

IMPERIAL MELTING POTS: A CASE STUDY OF KYIV, ZHYTOMYR AND KHARKIV

The most part of the Volyn, Podolia and Kyiv regions had been incorporated into the Russian empire by the end of the 18th century as a result of the Partitions of Poland. From the early 19th century the Imperial administration provided a policy aimed to overturn the influence of the Polish aristocracy and intellectual elite in the local urban area as well as to encourage Russian merchants, entrepreneurs, students and civil servants to settle there²⁰. With the foundation of the St. Vladimir's University

²⁰ Райнер Лінднер, *Підприємці і місто в Україні, 1860-1914 рр. Індустріалізація і соціальна комунікація на Півдні Російської імперії* [Entrepreneurs and City in Ukraine: 1860-1914's. Industrialization and Social Communication in the South of the Russian Empire], Київ, Донецьк, Промінь, 2008, с. 50.

in Kyiv (1834), which replaced the Polish Kremenets Lyceum as the most prestigious educational institution of the South-Western governorates, the cultural assimilation of the local upper class society intensified substantially.

However, even by the early 1860s such towns as Kyiv or Zhytomyr remained largely under the Polish cultural influence. When young Ukrainian students Mykhailo Starytskyi and Mykola Lysenko moved to Kyiv from Kharkiv in 1860, both were deeply impressed by the Polish domination in the local social environment. They had seen the majority of the St. Vladimir's University students wearing the Polish clothes, the Polish performances in the local theaters, the Polish dishes in the restaurants as well as the Polish speech on the streets²¹.

The things started to change after the suppression of the January Insurrection in 1863. It was the year when the Polish language teaching was banned in schools of the Russian empire. At the same time, the Orthodox religious instruction was implemented, while the history and literature appeared to be taught from the biased anti-Polish and anti-Catholic point of view. In 1869 all the Polish descendants were dismissed from both schools and civil administration; their positions were filled by loyal Russian clerks and teachers. During the last quarter of the 19th century the Russification of Kyiv and Zhytomyr continued, as it is seen from the censuses' results. Thus, it is evident that the cultural assimilation affected mainly the Ukrainian speaking community which declined by 8% in Kyiv (see Tab. 3) and in 5,6% in Zhytomyr (see Tab. 4). The number of the Russian speakers increased by 8,49% and 6,89% respectively. One should note that while in the middle of the 19th century the Imperial administration fought against the Polish influence in the lands of the Western governorates, by the end of the century its efforts were directed first and foremost against the 'Ukrainian separatism'.

In Kharkiv there was no influential Polish or Jewish minority, so after the Cossack Hetmanate had been incorporated into the Russian empire, the assimilation policy was directed strictly towards the Ukrainians. In 1805 the Russification of the local elite was enforced by the foundation of Kharkiv University. By the end of the 19th century, merely 26% of Kharkiv's inhabitants recognized the Ukrainian as their native language (see Tab. 5). According to the contemporary accounts, the Ukrainian language lacked any social prestige in the town. Professor Mykola Sumtsov regretted that the history of Ukraine was eliminated from the school curriculum as well as the

²¹ Михайло Старицький, *До біографії М. В. Лисенка* [Excerpts on the biography of M.V. Lysenko], in *М. В. Лисенко у спогадах сучасників* [M.V. Lysenko in the memoirs of contemporaries], Київ, Музична Україна, 1968, с. 34.

Ukrainian language²². 'Foreign primary school deformed the children's speech, while secondary and high school transformed them into the Russians or the so-called Little Russians, who sometimes appeared to be hostile to their own parents' language and traditions', argued Sumtsov²³. The Ukrainian historian Dmytro Bahaliy admitted that the young inhabitants of Kharkiv who had graduated the local schools, indeed felt themselves ashamed of their parents' Ukrainian language²⁴. One of the leading Ukrainian activists Olena Pchilka noted that some local inhabitants of the Ukrainian origin proudly claimed that 'our Kharkiv is a canton of Moscow'²⁵.

CONCLUSIONS

By the end of the 19th century the Ukrainians comprised the second largest ethnic group of the entire Russian empire's population, while the Ukrainian language was the native one for one in six of its inhabitants. The speakers of Ukrainian dominated in the majority of the population of today's Ukraine. At the same time, in the urban area of Ukraine the most common native languages were Russian (33,36%), Ukrainian (31,32%) and Yiddish (26,46%). One can assume that such a modest number of the Ukrainian speaking population in the urban area should be viewed as a consequence of the specific policy provided by the Imperial authorities. Until the serfdom was abolished in 1861, the vast majority of the Ukrainians lacked the freedom of movement, so their shift from rural to urban area was restricted from the very beginning of the urbanization. The government encouraged the migration of the civil and military servants, merchants and clergymen from the inner Russian regions to the Western provinces. The Imperial authorities set the Russian as the only official language in Ukraine and implemented numerous actions to limit the usage of the Ukrainian and Polish languages. Nevertheless, by the end of the 19th century the Ukrainian was still widely spoken in the urban area of the lands of today's Ukraine. It

²² М. Ф. Сумцов, *Слобожане. Історично-Етнографічна Розвідка* [Sloboda Ukrainians. Historical and ethnographic survey], Харків, Видавництво "Союз" Харківського Кредитного Союзу Кооперативів, 1918, с. 185.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁴ Д. И. Багалей, Д. П. Миллер, *История города Харькова за 250 лет его существования (1655-1905)* [The 250 years history of the Kharkiv city (1655-1905)], Т. II. XIX – начало XX века, Харьков, 1993, с. 131-132.

²⁵ Олена Пчілка, *Микола Лисенко: життя і праця (Спогади і думки)* [Mykola Lysenko: life and work (Memoirs and thoughts)], in *Микола Лисенко у спогадах сучасників* [M.V. Lysenko in the memoirs of contemporaries], Київ, "Музична Україна," 2003, Т. 1, с. 74.

dominated in 72 of 137 urban settlements of Ukraine, however in the largest towns of the country the Russian language was the most widespread. Between the 1870s and 1897 the number of those urban inhabitants who called the Ukrainian as their native language reduced significantly. Only the decline of the Russian empire in 1917 slowed the process of the Ukrainian urban population cultural assimilation.

Table 1. The urban population of Ukraine by native language (according to the Imperial census of 1897)

| Governorate | Number of towns | Total number of inhabitants | Language | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| | | | Ukrainian | Russian | Polish | Yiddish | German | other |
| Bessarabia (districts of today's Ukraine) | 6 | 99810 | 33661 | 22978 | 907 | 21592 | 366 | 20306 |
| | | | 33,73 | 23,02 | 0,91 | 21,63 | 0,37 | 20,34 |
| Volyn | 12 | 233847 | 46060 | 44351 | 17834 | 118727 | 2009 | 4866 |
| | | | 19,70 | 18,97 | 7,63 | 50,77 | 0,86 | 2,07 |
| Ekaterinoslav | 9 | 241005 | 65166 | 98047 | 4394 | 62602 | 2378 | 8418 |
| | | | 27,04 | 40,68 | 1,82 | 25,98 | 0,99 | 3,49 |
| Kyiv | 12 | 459253 | 129354 | 152190 | 21581 | 142222 | 4767 | 9139 |
| | | | 28,17 | 33,14 | 4,70 | 30,97 | 1,04 | 1,98 |
| Kursk (Putyvl and Myropillya towns) | 2 | 20056 | 10899 | 8881 | 29 | 206 | 4 | 37 |
| | | | 54,34 | 44,28 | 0,14 | 1,03 | 0,02 | 0,19 |
| Podolia | 17 | 221870 | 72188 | 33353 | 10866 | 102204 | 464 | 2795 |
| | | | 32,54 | 15,03 | 4,90 | 46,06 | 0,21 | 1,26 |
| Poltava | 17 | 274294 | 156752 | 31246 | 2941 | 80491 | 1092 | 1772 |
| | | | 57,15 | 11,39 | 1,07 | 29,35 | 0,4 | 0,64 |
| Taurida | 17 | 289316 | 30197 | 142062 | 6387 | 34248 | 4100 | 72322 |
| | | | 10,44 | 49,10 | 2,21 | 11,84 | 1,41 | 25,00 |
| Kharkiv | 17 | 367343 | 198774 | 145504 | 4657 | 11795 | 2809 | 3804 |
| | | | 54,11 | 39,61 | 1,27 | 3,21 | 0,76 | 1,04 |
| Kherson (Ukrainian part) | 15 | 737650 | 128606 | 338498 | 23537 | 209043 | 12449 | 25517 |
| | | | 17,43 | 45,89 | 3,19 | 28,34 | 1,69 | 3,46 |
| Chernihiv (Ukrainian part) | 13 | 163611 | 101925 | 19597 | 1115 | 39416 | 330 | 1228 |
| | | | 62,30 | 11,98 | 0,68 | 24,09 | 0,20 | 0,75 |
| Total | 137 | 3108055 | 973582 | 1036707 | 94248 | 822546 | 30768 | 150204 |
| | | | 31,32 | 33,36 | 3,03 | 26,46 | 0,99 | 4,84 |

Table 2. Inhabitants of the governorate capitals and the largest cities of Ukraine by native language (according to the Imperial census of 1897)

| Settlement | Total number of inhabitants | Language | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| | | Ukrainian | Russian | Polish | Yiddish | German | other |
| Berdychiv | 53351 | 4395 | 4612 | 2741 | 41125 | 154 | 324 |
| | | 8,24 % | 8,64 % | 5,14 % | 77,08 % | 0,29 % | 0,61 % |
| Elisavetgrad (nowadays Kropyvnytskyi) | 61488 | 14523 | 21301 | 1180 | 23256 | 425 | 803 |
| | | 23,62 % | 34,64 % | 1,92 % | 37,82 % | 0,69 % | 1,31 % |
| Zhytomyr | 65895 | 9152 | 16944 | 7464 | 30572 | 677 | 1086 |
| | | 13,89 % | 25,71 % | 11,33 % | 46,40 % | 1,03 % | 1,64 % |
| Kamianets- Podilskiy | 35934 | 9755 | 7420 | 2160 | 16112 | 106 | 381 |
| | | 27,15 % | 20,65 % | 6,01 % | 44,84 % | 0,29 % | 1,06 % |
| Ekaterinoslav (nowadays Dnipro) | 112839 | 17787 | 47140 | 3418 | 39979 | 1438 | 3077 |
| | | 15,76 % | 41,78 % | 3,03 % | 35,43 % | 1,27 % | 2,73 % |
| Kyiv | 247723 | 55064 | 134278 | 16579 | 29937 | 4354 | 7511 |
| | | 22,23 % | 54,20 % | 6,69 % | 12,08 % | 1,76 % | 3,04 % |
| Mykolaiv | 92012 | 7780 | 61023 | 2612 | 17949 | 813 | 1835 |
| | | 8,46 % | 66,32 % | 2,84 % | 19,51 % | 0,88 % | 1,99 % |
| Odesa | 403815 | 37925 | 198233 | 17395 | 124511 | 10248 | 15503 |
| | | 9,39 % | 49,09 % | 4,31 % | 30,83 % | 2,54 % | 3,84 % |
| Poltava | 53703 | 30086 | 11035 | 1076 | 10690 | 302 | 514 |
| | | 56,02 % | 20,55 % | 2,00 % | 19,91 % | 0,56 % | 0,96 % |
| Sevastopol | 53595 | 7322 | 34014 | 2753 | 3679 | 907 | 4920 |
| | | 13,66 % | 63,46 % | 5,14 % | 6,86 % | 1,69 % | 9,19 % |
| Simferopol | 49078 | 3399 | 22426 | 1471 | 7808 | 706 | 13268 |
| | | 6,93 % | 45,69 % | 3,00 % | 15,91 % | 1,44 % | 27,03 % |
| Kharkiv | 173989 | 45092 | 109914 | 3969 | 9848 | 2353 | 2813 |
| | | 25,92 % | 63,17 % | 2,28 % | 5,66 % | 1,35 % | 1,62 % |
| Kherson | 59076 | 11591 | 27902 | 1021 | 17162 | 426 | 974 |
| | | 19,62 % | 47,23 % | 1,73 % | 29,05 % | 0,72 % | 1,65 % |
| Chernihiv | 27716 | 10085 | 7985 | 374 | 8780 | 111 | 381 |
| | | 36,39 % | 28,81 % | 1,35 % | 31,68 % | 0,4 % | 1,37 % |

Table 3. Kyiv: linguistic composition changes between 1874 and 1897

| Year | Total number of inhabitants | Language | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | | Ukrainian | Russian | Polish | Yiddish | German |
| 1874 | 127251 | 38553 | 58173 | 7863 | 12917 | 2583 |
| | | 30,29 % | 45,71 % | 6,18 % | 10,15 % | 2,03 % |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1897 | 247723 | 55064 | 134278 | 16579 | 29937 | 4354 |
| | | 22,23 % | 54,20 % | 6,69 % | 12,08% | 1,76 % |

Table 4. Zhytomyr: linguistic composition changes between 1873 and 1897

| Year | Total number of inhabitants | Language | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | Ukrainian | Russian | Polish | Yiddish |
| 1873 | 43047 | 8392 | 8104 | 6454 | 19119 |
| | | 19,50 % | 18,82 % | 15 % | 44,42 % |
| 1897 | 65895 | 9152 | 16944 | 7464 | 30572 |
| | | 13,89 % | 25,71 % | 11,33 % | 46,40 % |

Table 5. Kharkiv: linguistic composition changes between 1879 and 1897

| Year | Total number of inhabitants | Language | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|---------|
| | | Ukrainian | Russian | Polish | Yiddish |
| 1879 | 102049 | 29673 | 61529 | 1375 | 5135 |
| | | 29,08 % | 60,29 % | 1,35 % | 5,03 % |
| 1897 | 173989 | 45092 | 109914 | 3969 | 9848 |
| | | 25,92 % | 63,17 % | 2,28 % | 5,66 % |