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## STRENGTHENING OF THE RIGHTS OF UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AS NATIONAL AND SOCIAL POLITICAL VALUE (THE SECOND HALF OF THE XIX EARLY XX CENTURIES)

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### SUMMARY

The article examines the problem of defending the rights of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire as a national and socio-political value of the Ukrainian people. Traces the peculiarities of the socio-political and legal position of the Ukrainian language of the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the main stages of the Ukrainian „linguistic” self-awareness.

**Key words:** rights of the Ukrainian language, the Russian Empire.

### ВІДСТОЮВАННЯ ПРАВ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МОВИ В РОСІЙСЬКІЙ ІМПЕРІЇ ЯК НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ТА СУСПІЛЬНО-ПОЛІТИЧНОЇ ЦІННОСТІ (ДРУГА ПОЛОВИНА XIX ПОЧАТОК XX СТ.)

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### АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті досліджується проблема відстоювання прав української мови в Російській імперії як національної й суспільно-політичної цінності українського народу. Простежено особливості суспільно-політичного та правового становища української мови другої половини XIX – початку XX століть та основні етапи українського «мовного» самоусвідомлення.

**Ключові слова:** права української мови, Російська імперія.

### REZUMAT

Articolul explorează problema respectării drepturilor limbii ucrainene în Imperiul Rus ca valoare națională și social-politică a poporului ucrainean. Caracteristicile statutului socio-politic și juridic al limbii ucrainene din a doua jumătate a secolului XIX - începutul secolului XX și principalele etape ale conștiinței de sine ucrainene "lingvistice" sunt urmărite.

**Cuvinte cheie:** drepturile limbii ucrainene, Imperiul Rus.

**Problem statement.** Since the beginning of 2014, the Russian Federation has led the so-called “hybrid” war. The field of confrontation is not only the territory of the occupied Crimea and destroyed by the Russian “brotherly help” of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions, but also not in a lesser, if not more, brains and souls of Ukrainians. They are trying to convince them that Ukraine does not have its own history that Ukraine can’t exist separately without Russia, that Ukrainians are part of “one (of course, Russian *I. T.*) people”. And one of the lines of this attack is the Ukrainian language as the national and socio-political value of the Ukrainian people. We believe that with the start of the Russian-Ukrainian War, a new stage of defending the rights of the Ukrainian language has actually been initiated, while the origins of this phenomenon are the period of Ukrainian lands within the Russian Empire. Therefore, knowledge of the features and directions of this process should then help its in-depth understanding, and therefore, a thorough organization, now.

**Analysis of the latest researches and publications.** The scientific problem mentioned in the title has a generally respected historiography. We have a multi-dimensional research, often of different generations, philosophers (for example: M. Clever or P. Seligei), historians (for example: V. Verig, F. Savchenko or V. Sklyar), historians of law (for example: V. Markovskiy or

B. Kozmuk), philologists (for example: L. Masenko, V. Lizanchuk, I. Farion, S. Bychko or L. Gontaruk), political scientists (for example: O. Rafalsky), etc. However, the closest, from our point of view, I. Girich approached the coverage of the problem of defending the rights of the Ukrainian language. Ukrainian language is considered to be the main cultural component of the Ukrainian movement in the Russian Empire at the angle of the spiritual separation of Ukrainians from Russian and Polish cultural influences [1]. Separately in the context of our problem one should mention the unique publication of the book “Ukrainian Identity and Language Issue in the Russian Empire: An Attempt of State Regulation. The collection of documents and materials. 1847 1914” [2]. This is the first in Ukraine research of a level where systematically, with the involvement of a huge body of documents (296!), using modern scientific tools, the key issue for our history is considered: who, when, in what way and for what purpose, destroyed the Ukrainian language in Russian Empire. Let’s add that the collection is opened by two conceptually important prefaces: Valentina Shandra “Language as a means of forming a national identity” [3] and Pavlo Gritsenko “Ukrainian language in Russia XIX early XX centuries: the path of affirmation” [4]. In them, scholars express considerations that are important for the comprehension and analysis of almost three hundred documents collected in the book.

**The highlight of the previously unsolved parts of a common problem.** But despite the great historiography, it seems to us that the problem in the title is formally and superficially more familiar than deep-seated and learned. In particular, we do not know any holistic study of the Ukrainian language problem of the past century in the context of the evolution of the socio-political values of the Ukrainian people. Therefore, I am convinced that this problem still has a considerable intellectual resource.

**The aim of the article** to draw attention to the problem of defending the rights of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire as a national and socio-political value of the Ukrainian people and, in general, to the problem of language as a political problem of the Ukrainian national movement. To trace the peculiarities of the socio-political and legal position of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire and the main stages of Ukrainian “linguistic” self-awareness during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

**Presentation of the main material.** From the second half of the nineteenth century Ukrainians, within their own ethnic territory, settled in the two largest at that time European empires of Russia and Austria, had different conditions for their socio-political and cultural development. Taking advantage of the constitutional-parliamentary system, the Western Ukrainians had legislative guarantees of the rights of the Ukrainian language (although many legal norms, which were written in declarations and not backed up by the mechanism for putting into effect). During the same period, the Dnieper Ukrainians lived in the conditions of the Russian absolute monarchy, which, adhering to the doctrine of the triune Russian (“Russian”) nation, did not recognize a separate Ukrainian nationality [5, p. 480], and hence the Ukrainian language.

It was the instructions that were implemented through assimilation measures of the government of the second half of the nineteenth century and the discriminatory normative acts circular Minister of Internal Affairs P. Valuev (Valuev Circular, 1863), so-called The Eminence Decree of Alexander II (1876). In the end, such a language policy was logical. As P. Gritsenko emphasizes, from “the position of Russia as a centralized state any ideas, intentions or actions that could threaten its territorial integrity or the imperial ambitions of” Third Rome, or questioned the dominance of the Russian language as the only and powerful means of integrating multilingual the peoples of the empire and the languages of the Russian Orthodox Church, were recognized as harmful, anti-state, and therefore subject to prohibition. A detailed system of laws was drafted for that, which legitimized various forms of persecution and punitive measures in the current legal field [4, XL]. Therefore, we consider that V. Shandra's rightfulness, when he argues that the most important among the factors that formed the policy of prohibiting Ukrainian language was “a reflection of the fear of imperial power that the creators of the Ukrainian language constantly censure, but they refute the myth of a common Russian nationality, thereby destroying the core of the state” [3, XXXVII].

Assimilation measures of the autocracy, in particular, had to prevent the formation of the Ukrainian political nation. According to V. Shandra, the empire tried to regulate the situation in every possible way so that the language did not involve the unification of the elite and the common people of Ukrainians of ethnic origin [3, X]. And the task of discriminatory anti-Ukrainian laws consisted in the absolute levelling of Ukrainian national consciousness and the inadmissibility of the idea of political self-determination. The previous royal dignitaries (for example, the Kyiv governor-general M. Anenkov) directly said that Ukrainophiles, “Relying on the isolation of the language, they will make claims to the autonomy of Little Russia” [2, p. 61]. Therefore, in a few months

later, the Valuev Circulars stated directly that “... there was no special Little Russian language, there can't be, and that their dialect, used by the common people, is the same Russian language, only spoiled by Poland's influence on it; that the all-Russian language is as comprehensible to the Little Russians as it is to the Great Russians, and even more understandable than the so-called Ukrainian language, now written for them by some Little Russians, and especially by the Poles. The faces of the circle that is intensifying to prove the opposite, most of the Little Russians reproach themselves for separatist plans hostile to Russia and pernicious for Little Russia”; it was advised to take care of seeing the Ukrainian language and the literature [2, p. 74 76]. And when Ukrainian artistic, educational and journalistic literature began to be regarded as a potential threat to the integrity of the Russian Empire, the Ems Decree (May 18, 1876) issued a prohibition on the import of Ukrainian-language publications, printed books and texts into Ukrainian music, the production of Ukrainian plays, as well as the closure of the newspaper “Kiev Telegraph” [2, p. 139 140], which operated until 1906. We will express the opinion that the very appearance of assimilation measures and discriminatory normative acts of autocracy in the aggregate, to a large extent, gave rise to the emergence of a “Ukrainian question” in the Russian Empire.

We agree with the opinion of V. Shandra that in the second half of the nineteenth century the position of the language was an indicator of the social picture of Ukrainian society. It was only constantly used by exclusively representatives of the “lower groups” the Cossacks, townsmen, peasants, and sometimes it could be used by government officials and writers. And if we take into account the role of the army, the church and the railway facilities, then the segment of its use should continue to decrease. The Russian language was dominated by public administration, literature, and education, covering more and more spheres of human communication. An example of this can be the figure of a well-known Ukrainian historian O. Lazarevsky, who was in love with the old days, whose office was decorated with Ukrainian rugs, plaques on the sofa and the hotels, paintings by Taras Shevchenko. At the same time, he did not use the Ukrainian language, and did not even know it well. For most peasants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the language was an indicator of their social status, which they regarded as less attractive in comparison with their own subordination, and saw a direct relationship between social status and language of communication. And so many of them, while changing their social status, neglected their language, considering it “peasant” [3, XV].

At the same time, Ukrainian intellectuals, representatives of the national movement of the second half of the nineteenth century, paid particular attention to the problem of the development of the Ukrainian language. The first in the 1840's this problem was prompted by the Cyril-Methodius, whose main merit was the formulation of ideas of freedom and equality of peoples in the Ukrainian language, which made the center, starting in 1847, resorted to their prohibition at the beginning of the 20th century pointed out by Peter Stebnitsky [3, XXXII].

In the 1860's, in the 90's, the Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainophiles took over the baton to defend the Ukrainian language. Their main merit was the complete understanding that “the social situation and language directly depend on the understanding of the people of their own forces and their own significance. One of the means of achieving social well-being and sovereignty became the language as a factor by which it was possible to restore people's confidence in their own forces, respect for themselves and their own identity ... In the construction of the Ukrainian nation, its founders considered the commonality of culture and language as the cornerstone, essential a sign of a full-fledged characteristic of the people” [3, XVIII].

In particular, the “young-communal” movement and, in particular, the political emigrant M. Drahomanov, were especially attached to the awareness and, above all, popularization of the aforementioned theses. The latter during the last quarter of the nineteenth century the official sphere considered to be too “odious”, from whom “everyone smelled the soul of Malorossian separatism” [2, p. 209]. In particular, M. Drahomanov, in 1874, together with V. Antonovich, published a program for Ukrainian science and public opinion entitled “Historical Songs of the Lesser People”, which, according to I. Girich, belongs to the first ten key publications of the nineteenth century [1, p. 156]. And V. Antonovich's merits in defending the rights of the Ukrainian language were, among other things, also in the appearance of “Notes on the Restrictions of the Ukrainian Language” (1905), one of his recent works, in which the author prepared the ground for the appearance of an official document for the abolition of the prohibitions of 1863 and 1876 to Ukrainian language.

The activity of the magazine “Kievan olden times” (1882–1906) became the stage of defending the rights of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire. It is rightly called the first national scientific and historical monthly, although the magazine was published in Russian, and only in 1907 was converted into Ukrainian-language “Ukraine” [6, p. 6 7]. The initiators and employees of the “Kievan old days” V. Antonovich, M. Kostomarov, M. Storozhenko, P. Zhitetsky, I. Zhitetskyi, D. Bagalyi, M. Petrov and others. had to prove the right of the Ukrainian people to free national and cultural development in the very difficult conditions of the Russification pressure of the tsarist government. The censorship saw the manifestation of Ukrainian separatism in everything: it was forbidden to use such words as “Ukraine”, “Sich”, “Cossack”, “Moskal” (in the sense of soldiers). Also under the prohibition was the use of the letter “I” in the Ukrainian texts. Thus, the college of Kievan antiquity throughout the time of existence of the magazine sought the abolition of this “unnecessary” censorship, but each time faced the opposition of the controlling agency.

Despite the overwhelming pressure from the authorities, “Kievan olden times” tried in every way to uphold the prestige of the Ukrainian language. For this purpose, in 1895, under the editorship of V. Naumenko and E. Timchenko, the “Malorussian dictionary” was published. The Interior Ministry's manager allowed the dictionary to be sent as a free supplement to the magazine for 1886. The result of the active actions of V. Naumenko was the receipt in 1897 of the permission to publish in the month of artistic works in his native language and the establishment of the Ukrainian printing press; and another two years later another national center of the bookstore “Kievan antiquity” was opened [7, p. 177 179]. The merit of the magazine is that, remaining for only a quarter of a century, the only publishing body of national thought in Russian Ukraine, “acted on behalf of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, and at the same time, its circle was a kind of scientific Ukrainian corporation, a scientific institution, the only one of its kind” [6, p. 153].

The period of the first Russian revolution of 1905 1907 pp. brought the Ukrainian (for self-identification) intellectuals the long-awaited achievements of freedom of the press and the freedom of public associations, the organizational design and activation of Ukrainian political parties, and thus the hope for the implementation of the so-called “Ukrainian project”. Under these conditions, the Ukrainian intelligentsia considered cultural work as a struggle to free the Ukrainian word from administrative-police distress and create favorable conditions for further development. Therefore, it is logical that the issue of defending the rights of the Ukrainian language in the context of ethno-cultural preservation of the Ukrainian community during 1905 1907 pp. becomes the leading theme of the bright publicistic performances of prominent figures of the Ukrainian

Democratic-Radical Party (UDFR) Boris Grinchenko, O. Yefremov, P. Stebnitsky, O. Lototsky, M. Slavinsky, D. Doroshenko, E. Chikalenko, G. Kovalenko [8, p. 28].

The Ukrainian language was a marker of Ukrainian national identity, because it was the national language that distinguished Ukrainians from the neighbouring peoples, especially Russians, and thus a marker who could help identify the ethnic boundaries of Ukrainians living. By the way, the magazine *Osnova* declared it the first. Ukrainian researcher A. Kotenko convincingly argues that although this graphic image of Ukrainian national territory was not included in this *St. Petersburg* magazine for a short period of time, but with the help of language, history, customs, and clothing, it acquired a clear spatial definition [9, p. 56]. In addition, we note that the authors of “Fundamentals” began to actively use the name “Ukrainians” for the designation of the people, along with the usual name of Ukrainians “Little Russians” at that time. In the end, already in the early twentieth century in the conditions of the revolution, Ukrainian national identity became the basis for the second requirement (after the requirement of national-territorial autonomy) of the Ukrainian project on the introduction of Ukrainian-language education.

Ukrainian politicians did not deny learning Russian as a state language. According to M. Hrushevsky, the issue of Ukrainian education was the minimum program that could be implemented through cooperation with the Cadets. Issues of education and language were devoted to special collections of articles by M. Hrushevsky “On the Ukrainian Language and Ukrainian Affairs: Articles and Notes” and “On the Ukrainian Language and the Ukrainian School”, published respectively in 1907 and 1912 pp. [10, p. 211 230, 379 412]. It should be emphasized that it is precisely because of the work of M. Hrushevsky in the environment of the Scientific Society. T. Shevchenko in Lviv there was an overturn in relation to the Ukrainian language as evidence of Ukrainian isolation. According to I. Girich, the Ukrainian elite, that enlisted culture and began the stage of political activity in the national movement, rejected bilingualism and tried to pursue its literary activity in Ukrainian. The literary scientific and journalistic language began to be formed. If at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the liberal-centrist forces - the All-Ukrainian organization, the Ukrainian Progressive Society, and the Radical-Democratic Party-were persecuted by it, then after 1905 and the emergence of “Independent Ukraine”, the Ukrainian language received support from the Ukrainian Marxists, in particular the Social Democrats [1, p. 162 187].

In 1906 1907 pp. the linguistic issue in Ukraine was transformed into the problem of the development of the nation as a social organism based on the infrastructure created by the Ukrainian national movement created during the revolution. The successes in the cultural-educational sphere over two years of relative freedom have convinced radical-democrats that, under normal constitutional conditions, the Ukrainian movement has every chance to become a powerful mass force. And it is no accident that in 1913 G. Kovalenko in the reflection on the relationship between society and personality was quite optimistic: “We do not know what will happen to us, with our country. However, we can be sure that after all the possible storms the healthy, strong, created by the social work of whole generations: education, organization, law, ability to obey social discipline and the high culture of the spirit that creates brotherhood, consent, gives strength and hope and wins everything in the world” [quote for: 6, p. 29].

We agree with S. Ivanitskaya that in the period of the First World War in the concentrated form the views of the Ukrainian liberal-democratic intelligentsia on the outcomes and prospects of the process of “constructing a nation”, on the perspectives of cultural protection of the Ukrainian community expressed

in the collection “Ukrainian Question” (St. Petersburg, 1914 1916, three editions), sponsored by O. Lototsky and P. Stebnitsky [8, p. 28]. In particular, the authors considered language as the main element of the Ukrainian national idea and the most significant and “bright feature of national identity”. With the development of the Ukrainian language, they linked the Ukrainian national movement and national achievements of Ukrainians in artistic and scientific literature, press, theater and art. Finally, they identified prospects for defending the rights and developing the Ukrainian language. This is primarily education, the basis of which should be the native language [See. report: 11, p. 287 414].

**Conclusions from the conducted research.** Summing up the above-stated thoughts with several points. First, the problem of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire is a political problem. One of the most characteristic features of the linguistic policy of Russian autocracy on Ukrainian lands, the rigorous interference with any regulated social relations becomes the fact when the appearance of Ukrainian national identity becomes political in colour. *Secondly*, the Ukrainian language in the Russian Empire did not have a definite separate status. At the highest state level, normative acts aimed at its prohibition and eradication were issued. Because of the prohibition of the Ukrainian language, the tsarist tried to prevent the emergence of a national idea outside the narrow circle of intellectuals. *Thirdly*, Ukrainian activists of Russian Ukraine, in difficult conditions of autocratic pressure, first of all considered the Ukrainian language as a key to preserving traditional ethnic culture as a resource for the “designing” of the modern nation, and, finally, as a means of political communication of “nationally conscious Ukrainians” and the people. *Fourthly*, it was through the language that Ukrainian activists were able to put a cultural border with Russia. They reasonably believed that the Ukrainian (in their understanding of the national) state would emerge where people as their own will perceive the Ukrainian language and culture. The awareness of this in the theory began from the Cyril-Methodius and lasted until the beginning of the twentieth century, when the first steps began to be realized in order to realize this idea. *And the last*. Unlike the Russian imperialists who, within the imperial Russian powers of Russia and the USSR, frankly unprincipled, slanderously, overtly or implicitly dragged out their vision of the language absorption of the Ukrainian language, part of which was Ukraine at that time, spread their vision of the language absorption of the Ukrainian language frankly without principle, overt or covert, Ukrainians in their own state under the conditions of today's so-called hybrid, and hence the language war, must act fundamentally differently. Namely, nobly, on an equal and open. Only the moral advantage of the Ukrainian language carriers is able to secure victory in the language war.

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