

Ivanenko, O. A. The educational life of ethnic minorities in Dnipro Ukraine: by example of the Kyiv school district between the mid- 19th century and early 20th century. Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 2021, 280 p., ISBN 978-966-02-9507-0

Marian Gajdoš | [✉ gajdosm@saske.sk](mailto:gajdosm@saske.sk)

Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences of Slovak Academy of Science, the Institute of Social Sciences, Košice, Slovak Republic

Revealing the essence of socio-cultural processes in historical retrospect is impossible without a comprehensive knowledge of the role of linguistic and cultural dialogue, inter-civilizational interaction, and an exchange of spiritual values that determine the diversity and integrity of the historical heritage of each country, civilization, and the world as a whole. ... Addressing current problems ... is unthinkable without the study of their ethnic component, the influence of ethnic, intercultural, confessional, inter-civilizational contradictions, and confrontations.[1]

One of the key issues in European history is the role of national minorities in European cultural diversity. In this context, the monograph by Oksana Ivanenko, Senior Researcher at the Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, brings new insights concerning the knowledge and understanding of the peculiarities of the intercultural dialogue unfolding in the Ukrainian space.

This book focuses on the educational activities of Poles, Jews, Greeks, Czechs and Germans on Ukrainian lands in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. In accord with the administrative division of the time, the study covers the territory of the Kyiv school district, which, starting in 1832, included Kyiv, Podillya, Volyn, Chernihiv and, from 1839, Poltava governorates, then subject to the Russian Empire.

The author's introduction of a large number of archival documents, primarily related to the functioning of the Russian state authorities, has helped to open up new pages in the history of the cultural development of these minorities. Consequently, the educational aspects of the history of ethnic minorities are presented in the monograph through the prism of the Russian Empire's national policy aimed at russification and unification.

The monograph examines important manifestations of the Polish enlightenment activities, namely the establishment of illegal primary schools with Polish as the language of instruction despite a ban by the Russian government, as well as the publication of periodicals in Polish, the creation of national and cultural public organizations and the production of theatre performances. The leading role of the Roman Catholic Church in the educational development of the Polish community is also illustrated.

The largest section of the monograph is devoted to the history of Jewish education. The author emphasizes that the educational activities of the Jews were aimed at preserving Jewish spiritual values and passing them on to the younger generation. At the same time, there was a tendency for Jews to adapt to a different cultural environment and, above all, to integrate into the economic life of the Russian Empire. Overall, this section is of interest in the broader context of the intensification of the Jewish national movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

O. Ivanenko took a particular approach in her assessment of Greek cultural development in the 19th and early 20th centuries, a period marked by the rise of the national movement of this community. Within the Kyiv school district, she focused on the establishment and operation of the Alexandria Greek School in the Low Countries, the study of Greeks at the Kyiv Theological Academy, as well as on outreach work, the development of printing and publishing, and the activities of Greek charitable organizations.

The book covers the history of the Nizhyn Alexander Greek School (1817) as one of the most important pages in the cultural development of the Greeks during the 19th and early 20th centuries, when the Greek national liberation struggle, enlightenment activities, book printing, and charities were on the rise.

The author proves that the activities of Czech colonists aimed at founding primary schools in Volyn' in order to preserve their language and original cultural traditions were under pressure from Russification policies. The Russian authorities resisted the spiritual influence of the Roman Catholic Church on Czech schools and the uniting of Volhynian Czechs and Poles in the struggle for their national-cultural and political rights.

The monograph investigates statistical data from archival documents on the number and territorial location of German colonists' schools and concludes that in Volyn' province the educational institutions of Lutherans existed primarily in the Rivne, Novohrad-Volyns'kyj, Luts'k, Volodymyr-Volyns'kyj, Ovruch counties. The author highlights the activities of the schools founded by Germans and their significance for the national and cultural consolidation of the German community.

In general, it can be stated that the monograph under review is an original scientific study prepared on the basis of an analysis of a large number of archival materials, contemporary press and specialist literature. In this work, Oksana Ivanenko has characterized both the general features and the common features of the cultural development and legal status of several ethnic minorities living within the Kyiv school district, which, despite the pressure of the Russification policy, sought to preserve their identity through educational activities.

The full-text version of the monograph[2] can be accessed at <http://resource.history.org.ua/item/0015859>

[1] Ivanenko, O . A. Kul'turno-osvitnie zhyttia etnichnykh menshyn Naddnyprians'koi Ukrainy..., p. 279.

[2] [Ivanenko, O. A. *Kul'turno-osvitnie zhyttia etnichnykh menshyn Naddnyprians'koi Ukrainy: na prykladi Kyivs'koho navchal'noho okruhu (druha polovyna 19 – pochatok 20 st.)*. Kyiv : NAN Ukrainy. Instyt storii Ukrainy, 2021, 280 s. ISBN 978-966-02-9507-0.]