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The evolution of the formation of the Vilna Province as part of the Russian Empire

Abstract: Individual European city historiography research is an urgent area of scientific activity in history as it helps to get a comprehensive understanding of the development of individual territories, their society, ethnography, culture, and economy. Despite political transformations that actively influence views on historical events, requiring constant analysis and revision of the values of historical changes, science is obliged to consider all cause-and-effect variations of relationships. It is a comprehensive and sometimes impartial analysis of the national idea that can present the historical appearance of the city more realistically. The study object was the city of Vilna during its incorporation era into the Russian Empire of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The study subject was the historical, political and socio-ethnological transformations of Vilna's urban environment. The study purpose was to identify the features of the historical, political and socio-ethnological transformation of the urban environment of Vilna. To achieve the purpose and solve the study tasks, comparative historical, logical, problem-chronological and retrospective methods of analysis were applied. The study used materials published during the period of the Russian Empire, just like in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, including publications in Lithuanian Internet resources. The author concludes that for more than 120 years of Vilna's presence in the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire, there was a gradual urban environment integration into the Russian community. The urban population perceived the Russian language and culture of everyday life and relationships, just like technology without any special negative costs, facilitated by the increased level of urbanisation of the territory, unlike neighbouring provinces.

Keywords: Vilna, Vilnius, Vilna province, Vilna Bulletin.

Introduction

Individual European city historiography research is an urgent area of scientific activity in history as it helps to get a comprehensive understanding of the development of individual territories, their society, ethnography, culture, and economy. Despite political transformations that actively influence views on historical events, requiring constant analysis and revision of the values of historical changes, science is obliged to consider all cause-and-effect variations of relationships. It is a comprehensive and sometimes impartial analysis of the national idea that can present the historical appearance of the city more realistically.

The study object was the city of Vilna during its incorporation era into the Russian Empire of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The study subject was the historical, political and socio-ethnological transformations of Vilna's urban environment.

The study purpose was to identify the features of the historical, political and socio-ethnological transformation of the urban environment of Vilna.

Based on the study purpose, the following tasks were developed:

- analyze the historical events that influenced the transformation of Vilna's urban environment in a temporal sequence;
- identify the socio-political features of the change in Vilna's urban society;
- determine the causes and role of Vilna's society Russification process in the post-Soviet period of the city's existence.

To achieve the purpose and solve the study tasks, comparative historical, logical, problem-chronological and retrospective methods of analysis were applied.

The study used materials published during the period of the Russian Empire, just like in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, including publications in Lithuanian Internet resources.

The results of the study

In 1795, after the third partition of Poland, Vilna finally became part of Russia. However, this was preceded by very dramatic events. In 1792, Russian troops occupied the territory of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The following year, 1793, was followed by the second partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Vilna region and modern western Belarus, together with a small territory of indigenous Poland, remained part of what remained of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1794, an uprising led by Kosciuszko broke out against the powers that divided Poland. In 1795, after the suppression of the Kosciuszko uprising, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was abolished. Lithuania and western Belarus became part of Russia. Vilna became the centre of the Vilna province. Officially, the city was still called Wilno in the Polish manner. It was only after the pacification of the Polish rebellion of 1863 that the authorities began calling the city by its historical name Vilna. However, in the townspeople's speech and the newspaper texts, both city names peacefully coexisted at that time.

Having become a Russian provincial centre within the empire, Vilna experienced population and industry growth. In 1799, a new City Hall building was built. Interestingly, this building was often used as a theatre. Gradually, the Town Hall building turned into a theatre. The square where the Town Hall was located became known as the Theater. In 1803, the Vilna University was opened.

In 1811, Vilna, which had 56 thousand inhabitants, became even the third largest city in Russia, after St. Petersburg and Moscow. Although Vilna soon lost the bronze medal to other rapidly growing cities in Russia, it remained a fairly large city. In 1897, Vilna was the 10th largest city in Russia. The city's development was hindered by political events that made Vilna a battlefield.

How the Patriotic War of 1812 took place on Lithuanian territory has already been discussed above. Recall that Napoleon entered Vilna on June 16(28). He managed to proclaim the creation of a local government under French control and tried to attract Litvinov into the ranks of his army. However, Napoleon stayed in Vilna for 18 days. Considering that all matters related to the management of the occupied territories had been settled, he went deep into Russia to his defeat.

Again, in Vilna's vicinity, fighting took place in the spring and summer of 1831 during the next Polish uprising.

After these events, the Vilna region experienced a period of peace and a certain economic prosperity. During the new Polish uprising of 1863-64. The Vilna province was a theatre of military operations, but the city, which housed the Governor-General M.N. Muravyov, was not affected by military operations. Although the Polish insurgent committee operated illegally in Vilna, and a secret printing house worked in St. John's Church, the special services of the Russian Empire knew their business and did not allow a mutiny in the city. Russian patriotic movement finally influenced the city to be called Vilna in the Russian manner (although the Polish version of the name Vilna was still widely used in literature).

But gradually, by the second half of the 19th century, as a result of economic and cultural development, Vileshchyna acquired special features unique to this region.

Greatly declined in 1812, the population began to increase again. Vilna had 58 thousand people in 1859. Vilna already had 84 thousand inhabitants in 1875, 154 thousand in 1897, and 205 thousand in 1909. Vilna began to turn into a modern European city.

However, for the Europeanization of the city, the main obstacle was precisely the position of the ruling regional elite. In the autocratic Russian Empire, the authorities tried to carry out democratic reforms, which caused the rejection of medieval Vilna city institutions. So, in 1811, the Russian administration proposed to greatly expand the circle of citizens who had the right to choose a city magistrate, but the magistrate himself sharply opposed it. In 1817, the Governor-General proposed that two representatives of the Jewish community be appointed to the magistrate. The members of the magistrate declared that they did not agree to sit with Jews in the same hall and announced a boycott. As a result, the Governor-General had to withdraw his decision. It is what the "national liberation movement" against the autocracy looked like. Before the appearance of Count Mikhail Muravyov as Governor-General in Lithuania, the position of the former ruling circles of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania (magnates, gentry) in Vilna, and in Lithuania itself, was exceptionally strong, any imperial administration had to reckon with this. The Lithuanian-Polish nobility stood behind the old, good traditions like a wall (*Vilna, Vilna, Vilnius…, 2016*).

However, Vilna nevertheless turned more into a city of Russia and not the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It started with the fact that the street names were officially approved. Until the end of the 18th century, the names of city streets were not well-established, and the townspeople called them so that they could understand each other. The addresses were indicated by the names of the owners of the houses standing on the street. In 1819, the imperial authorities began to install signs with the street name and house numbers. However, initially, the city owners did not bother to invent new names and simply approved the existing street names. Often, the name of one street peacefully adjoined the name in Russian and Polish. So, Popovskaya Street was simultaneously called Popovshchizna, Myasnitskaya was also known as Yatkova, etc. Some streets had names in the Yiddish language. Sometimes, the names were duplicated in French and German. But there were no Lithuanian names because of the almost complete absence of Lithuanians in the city. In 1864, at the initiative of Count Muravyov, some Polish names of Vilna streets were nevertheless Russified. Bernardin Lane turned into Castle Lane, and St. Anna Street became Suvorovskaya.

After 1812, a large-scale reconstruction of the city began. In the place of the confusing chaos of small medieval streets and dead ends, a chess building has come. However, it is necessary to pay tribute to the architects – the reconstruction did not affect the Old Town, which has survived to our time as a result.

The paving of the streets began, and street lights appeared, working first on hemp oil and then on turpentine. In 1852, there were 2,189 lanterns on the city streets, burning from September 1 to mid-May. By the 1863 Polish uprising, 50 thousand people already lived in Vilna. There were about two thousand houses in the city. There was no large-scale industry – the largest urban enterprises were two paper mills, and even those were located outside the city. But there were many craft workshops. There was one bank office, 65 shops selling clothes and haberdashery there were nine bookstores, 18 hotels, 13 pharmacies, just like 27 wine shops, 12 vodka shops, 43 drinking houses and 43 damask shops. In addition, there were two large inns. Education was provided by a noble institute, a boarding school for noble maidens, five parish schools, nine private boarding schools, and Orthodox and Catholic theological seminaries, just like a Jewish rabbinical school. Three hospitals took care of the mortal bodies, an orphanage for orphans, and finally, there was a madhouse.

Although Vilna University was closed after the pacification of the Polish uprising of 1830-31, the city continued to enjoy a well-deserved reputation as one of the best scientific centres in Russia. Conducting observations at the Vilna Observatory, the pioneers of astrophysics Matvey Gusev (1826-1866) and Egor Sabler (1810-1864) began to perform systematic photographic studies of sunspots for the first time.

Remarkable changes have taken place in urban architecture thanks to architects from St. Petersburg and Moscow. Architect Nikolai Chagin (1823-1909) did a lot to transform Vilna from a medieval dilapidated city into a European city of the 19th century. Some of his architectural solutions for that time were quite bold and new. Chagin (together with A.I. Rezanov) restored the Orthodox Prechistensky Church in 1348. Alexey Polozov (1820-1903) actively restored ancient buildings. Another major architect who greatly decorated the city was Mikhail Mikhailovich Prozorov (1860-1914). More than 50 buildings and structures of various purposes, built by Prozorov, have been preserved in modern Vilna. Alexander Koroyedov built almost fifty buildings in Vilna. August Klein and Otton Krasnopolsky worked in the city. In 1894, a metal bridge was built across the Neris River, designed by Russian engineer Nikolai Belyubsky. Previously, there were wooden bridges at this place, traditionally painted green. Belolyubsky did not break the tradition and the bridge was also painted green. So, Vilna acquired the main recognizable features.

Art developed in the city. The Vilna School of Drawing was headed from 1866 for 40 years by Ivan Petrovich Trutnev (1827-1912), who graduated over 4,000 graduates for that time, 50 of whom later entered the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. In 1904, the Vilna Drawing School was recognised as the best in Russia. Trutnev and his students created an entire local school of academic painting.

Monuments to Muravyov (1898), Pushkin (1900), and Catherine II (1903) were erected in the city. The Muravyov Museum was created. It was not only the Governor General's memorial museum but also the Museum of Local History of the North-Western Region.

The Vilna province developed quite quickly. The Petersburg-Vilna-Warsaw railway passed through the province. However, rivers were still the main means of communication. According to the statistics of the General Staff, on the eve of 1861, weaving, leather, ceramic and jewellery industries were developed in the province. Distillery production was specially developed. There were 287 officially registered distilleries in the province, producing 800 thousand buckets per year (*Korevo, 1861*). A significant part of what was produced was consumed locally. The author of the three-volume history of Vilna, historian Michal Balinsky, who then created a statistical survey of the region, counted almost eight hundred pubs and pubs in the city. It turned out that one such institution accounted for about forty residents, including women and children.

As in its entire history, Vilna remained a multinational city. So, in 1897, there were 61,847 Jews among the inhabitants of the city, 47,795 Poles, 37,998 Russians (of which 30,967 Great Russians, 6,514 Belarusians, 517 Little Russians), 3,131 Lithuanians, 2,170 Germans. As we can see, no ethnic group prevailed. As the editor of the local official newspaper Vilensky Vestnik wrote with the surname Mikhail Fedorovich De-Poulet (de Poulet), which is quite suitable for this cosmopolitan region about the Vilna region after the pacification of the Polish rebellion of 1863, "the region is both polarised and Russified together, i.e., it represents such a moral physiognomy. Such a physiological crossbreed, which neither popular feeling nor state interest can satisfy: there is nothing (or so little) whole, complete, organically typical!" (*De Poulet, 1867*). Gradually, Vilna and the Vilna region became more and more Russian in language and way of life, remaining multinational.

Russian Russians, however, as early as 1868, immediately after Muravyov's reforms, one of the authors of the Vilna Bulletin noted that although the Russian population of the city without troops is less than 10%, it dominates and the ubiquitous Russian speech, Orthodox churches and church life are "external phenomena that inform Vilna of the Russian physiognomy" (*Vilna Bulletin, 1868*). In 1870, the poet Fyodor Tyutchev had every reason to exclaim:

Above the Russian Village of Starodavnaya
The crosses are warm –
And the ringing of the Orthodox brass
All the heights were announced.
The centuries of temptation
have passed, Terrible deeds have been forgotten –
And even the abomination of desolation
It blossomed like a cry of paradise here.

During the first years of the new 20th century, Vilna has not lost its multinational character. According to data collected by the local administration, in 1909, out of 205,250 residents of the city there were 77,500 (37.8%) Poles, 75,520 (36.8%) Jews, 2,453 (1.2%) Lithuanians, 7,158 (3.5%) persons of other nationalities, as well as 37,341 (18.2%) Russian Orthodox Russian Russians, plus 5,236 (2.5%) Old Believers and 42 Russians of other faiths.

In addition to the city itself, Vilna County also differed ethnically from Lithuania and Belarus proper. The Slavs, who spoke Belarusian, professed Catholicism, and on this basis considered themselves Poles, prevailed. It should be noted that the ethnic identity of the majority of the inhabitants of the Vilna region was still uncertain. Religion and language were the basis for the self-determination of the inhabitants of the Vilna region. According to the 1897 census,

935,849 (59%) Catholics, 440,968 (28%) Orthodox and Old Believers and 214,390 (13%) representatives of other denominations, mainly Jewish, lived in the Vilna province. However, there is no data for individual counties. We can only assume that there were more than 59% Catholics in the provincial capital vicinity.

The data on the native language is more representative. In 1897, Russians of all three branches made up the majority – 132,359 people (the majority were Belarusians), 77,224 Jews, 76,030 Lithuanians, and 73,088 Poles. Thus, the Vilna County population differed from the population of the provincial capital by a higher proportion of Russians and Lithuanians. For example, in Troki County, there were 58% of Lithuanians and 16% of Belarusians. In the Sventsyan district, 47.5% of the residents spoke the Belarusian dialect of the Russian language, and 34% spoke Lithuanian as their native language. It is worth noting that, in the absence of a clear border between the Balts and the Slavs at that historical moment, ethnic Lithuanians lived further south, on the lands of modern Belarus, however, not making up the majority. So, in the Oshmyansky district (now the Grodno region), Lithuanians accounted for about 3% of all residents, and the Lithuanian minority was 8.6% in Lida County. If we recall that these lands were the historical Black Russia and the heart of the Soviet Union, then the process of Slavonization of the Balts was very clear.

In religious terms, too, despite the predominance of Catholics and Jews, the number of Orthodox Christians was slowly but surely growing. In addition, many Russian Old Believers of the Vilna province, leading a closed lifestyle and not seeking to get into various statistical reports of the authorities, remained almost unnoticeable, registering as Orthodox, or even as Catholics although their numbers increased rapidly due to high natural growth.

There were a few more Jews since the census did not take into account baptized Jews ("crosses") as Jews. But at the same time, some Jews gradually switched to Russian, most remained faithful to Yiddish, and several Jews spoke Polish. Politically, many Vilna Jews actively participated in the social democratic movement, making Vilna the centre of activity of the Bund party. At the same time, Vilna became one of the centres of the Zionist movement. Hebrew literature began to revive among the Vilna Jews, and Yiddish literature continued to develop. By the end of the imperial period, Vilna Jewry had mostly switched to Russian. As the famous Polish poet and writer Czeslaw Milosz, a native of Vilna region, self-critically acknowledged, "their [Jewish youth – author] craving for Russian culture, however, can also be explained by its attractiveness, because there was no anti-Jewish stereotype in it, as in Polish" (*Miloš, 2011, pp. 29-30*). This fact is interesting. In the elections to the First State Duma in 1906, the Jew Shmaria Levin passed from Vilna. The journalist of the Polish-language Courier Litevsky, who interviewed him, regretfully stated that the new deputy no longer knows Polish. He considered Russian to be his native language, although he spoke it with a specific Jewish accent.

The Poles' position was shaken, although they made up a third of the population and belonged to a fairly educated and prosperous part of the Vilenets. Although the authorities had a biased attitude towards the Polish language in the North-Western Region, there was no persecution of the language. Polish writer Jozef Mackiewicz in his memoirs referred to his experience of studying at Vinogradov's private gymnasium. At that time, at the Russian gymnasiums of Vilna, at the parents' request, the study of the Polish language was allowed. However, despite reproaches for the lack of Polish patriotism, high school students

systematically skipped classes in the Polish language, as this required them to arrive half an hour earlier. As a result, the study of the native language was organised under duress: the gymnasium director personally met students who were late for class, and as punishment for absenteeism left them after classes at the gymnasium (*Mackiewicz, 2010*). Matskevich was a very tendentious writer (in particular, he was one of the main organisers of the fake about the shooting of Poles in Katyn) but there was no point in exaggerating anything in his childhood memories. By the way, the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church catechism and the common prayer for Catholics before the start of classes in all Vilna's educational institutions were also performed in Polish.

Vilna region remained one of the centres of the Polish nationalist movement. It is significant that in September 1908, not far from Vilna, a group of militants of the Polish Party of Socialists (PPP) under the leadership of Yu. Pilsudski committed an armed robbery of a mail train carrying money, killing a guard at the same time. The booty of the raiders amounted to a huge amount – over 200 thousand rubles. It is significant that in the future Pilsudski became the dictator of Poland, and three of the raiders became prime ministers.

Catholic Belarusians continued to join the ranks of the Vilna Poles. However, Belarusians are Catholics, and some Poles and Lithuanians gradually Russified, switching to Russian while maintaining the Catholic faith. As the Vilna Bulletin noted with satisfaction in 1867, "To the question: who are you – a Russian or a Pole – here in Vilna, at least, the answer is: I am a Catholic" (*Vilna Bulletin, 1867*). By the beginning of the 20th century, there were more and more such Russian-speaking Catholics, although, as a rule, due to their religion, they were counted by official statistics as Poles. At the Vilna Catholic Seminary in 1912, 119 students considered themselves Poles, 34 Lithuanians and 25 Belarusians (*Silvanovich, 2014*). However, in this case, the identity of the seminarians was influenced not by ethnicity but by faith (Catholic means Polish), just like territorial identity (Lithuanian – a native of the lands of historical Lithuania, Belarusian – a resident of the western outskirts of Russia). In principle, these Russian-speaking Catholics gradually turned into a kind of ethno-confessional group, which could later join the Russian nation. However, it was more likely that these Vilna Russian-speaking Catholics, who preserve Polish identity, would remain Poles. Due to historical vicissitudes, some of the Vilna Catholics later became "Lithuanians". However, initially, no one could have guessed this in their right mind.

How the ethnic development of the Vilna Region took place can be judged by some facts. Since being a nobleman in a class society meant belonging to the elite, in the Vilna region most of the nobles referred themselves (in this case, it does not matter whether it is fair or not) to the gentry. It is no coincidence that it was in the Russian Vilna province that the issue of official recognition of the nobility turned out to be very painful. Many nobles were declassified, i.e., they were deleted from the nobility lists. However, it turned out that many local natives of very dubious class affiliation turned out to be inscribed in the nobility. A native of Ukraine, the famous Polish memoirist A. Ivansky Jr. tried to solve the issue that had been troubling him for a long time with the help of a professional linguist. "Professor Henrik Ulashin," he recalled, "to whom I once asked to determine whether my last name comes from Ivan or Willow, said: "Absolutely definitely, Ivan. However, if you happen to meet some Vankovich, you can look down on him because you are a full-fledged Ivan, and he is just a Roly" (*Stankevich, 1909, pp. 20-21*). By the way, the noble family of Vankovich existed. Of course, the Vankovichi derived their

origin from the princes of Polotsk. In modern Minsk, there is a Vankovich house museum dedicated to one of the most prominent representatives of the family, the famous artist Valenti Vankovich (1800-1842). Another Vankovich was a deputy of the State Duma of the 2nd and 3rd convocations. Totally, more than 200 representatives of the genus are known.

Russian population growth and the transition to Russian of several ethnic groups of the townspeople of Vilna in the 19th century gradually lost the features of a Polish city, although it remained one of the main centres of Polish culture with the Polish press, publishing houses and theatre.

Polish landlords still dominated the province, owning 73% of the cultivated land in 1910, although from 1864 to 1904. they were deprived of the right to buy land. However, in reality, most of the landlords' lands were mortgaged in various banks. Some of the noble lands gradually passed into the hands of Russian officials and a small number of wealthy peasants. On behalf of Polish nobles, estates were often owned by Jewish bankers.

The Russian Vilna did not represent a single ethnic community, being split politically. It is no coincidence that Vilna has become one of the centres of Belarusian separatism. The founding congress of the first political party, Belaruskai Satsyalystychnai Gramady, was held in Vilna in 1903. It was in Vilna that the first literary works in the modern Belarusian language were published, Belarusian organisations operated, and the first Belarusian newspapers were published – Nasha Niva, Gomon and others.

However, in general, Russians defined the character of the city by the beginning of the 20th century. Russian art was enriched by such natives of Vilna as composer Caesar Cui, a half-Frenchman, half-Lithuanian by birth, a wonderful actor Vasily Kachalov, a native Belarusian, sculptor Mark Antokolsky, a Jew who violated the religious prohibitions of Judaism, architect Lev Kukushev, who built more than 60 Art Nouveau houses in Moscow. The already mentioned Mikhail Fedorovich De Poulet created his own special easily recognizable style of Vilna journalism. Vera Komissarzhevskaya started her way to the big stage at the city Russian Theater, founded in 1864. In 1893, the 9th Congress of Russian Archaeologists was held in Vilna.

However, there were almost no ethnic Lithuanians in the city, who numbered only about 2% of the population. There were much more Lithuanians in St. Petersburg, Chicago and Buenos Aires. However, since Vilna evoked an association with the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which was privatised by figures of Lithuanian nationalism, it was not surprising that Lithuanians wanted to publish their newspapers in Vilna (which had almost no readers in the city itself) and open the headquarters of their organizations. The Russian authorities did not hinder them, considering the Lithuanian movement as anti-Polish, and therefore quite loyal to the empire. A group of 12 activists, modestly calling themselves the Twelve Apostles, decided to achieve Lithuanian service in at least one of the churches of Vilna. In 1901, with the approval of the Russian administration, church services in Lithuania began in the city's smallest church St. Nicholas. Nicholas. Since 1903, Lithuanian publications began to call the city "Vilnius", considering this name to be truly Lithuanian. At the same time, it is worth noting that the name "Vilnius" (Vilnius) was invented artificially because even in the language of the Lithuanians themselves, the city was originally called "Vilnia" (Vilnius). One of the districts of present-day Vilnius is called Novaya Vilnya (Naujoji Vilnius). The use of the word "Vilnius" began when Lithuanian linguist, graduate of St. Petersburg University, professor of Perm and Tomsk

Universities Kazimer Buga introduced the original alphabet of the modern Lithuanian language, taking the alphabet of the Czech language as a basis. At the same time, the first grammatical settings of the Lithuanian spelling of the names of Lithuanian cities with the ending in "AS", "IS", and "US", just like names in general, appeared. At the same time, only one street in Vilna had a Lithuanian name – Zhmudinskaya Street. The first school with Lithuanian as one of the languages of education opened in Vilna in 1907.

The reasons for supporting the Lithuanian movement of the Russian imperial administration were quite understandable – it was an attempt to end the Polish issue. Vilna's Governor D.N. Lyubimov, assessing the political situation in the province in 1907, noted that the Poles "not only did not refuse but hardly ever refuse to see Lithuania and Belarus as an area exclusively within the sphere of Polish influence and Polish cultural and economic conquests, where the Polish nationality interests are worth preferring to the interests of the national". Since the Catholic Church was a stronghold of the Poles, the governor proposed simply introducing Belarusian and Lithuanian into the language of preaching (*Kiselyov, 2023*).

The Lithuanians' patronage by the powers that be did not prevent the city from remaining a cosmopolitan city. It is significant that, in 1911, 69 newspapers were published in Vilna There were 35 Polish, 20 Lithuanian, seven Russian, five Jewish in Yiddish, and two Belarusian. However, many city newspapers published materials in several languages at once, and paid ads were multilingual in all newspapers, so it was difficult to calculate the "nationality" of a particular publication. Russian newspapers were significantly smaller than Polish and Lithuanian newspapers, but the total circulation of newspapers in Russia was the largest. In addition, the residents of Vilna subscribed to many St. Petersburg newspapers and magazines. Publications of various ethnic groups were also printed in Russian (e.g., in 1913-14, the Karaite Word, the first Karaite newspaper, was published).

But if there were almost no ethnic conflicts in Vilna, then the social situation created conditions to increase crime. In particular, in 1899, 4,089 crimes committed by 5,661 persons were registered, and two years later 4,706 offences (an increase of 15%) and 6,675 criminals (an increase of 18%) were recorded (*Kiselyov, 2022*). Only 570 people were registered as legal prostitutes in Vilna in 1902, not to mention hundreds of secret ones. In 1906, eight large and many small "houses of tolerance" officially operated in Vilna. The brothel of a certain Baila Dushanskaya was a real three-storey palace with luxurious interiors, a greenhouse and a restaurant. There was no shortage of clients at the brothel. The earnings of only two establishments – Etka Brezinger and Hai Feigelson, located on Orenburg Street (now Shvitrigailos) in 1906 amounted to 18,603 rubles (*Gladkova, 2020*). It was the income of an average industrial enterprise.

The crime rate in Vilna was very high compared to the cities of the Russian Empire as a whole. However, the police authorities, in the fight against criminal elements, also employed the latest technical achievements. So, at the city police department in July 1903, an Anthropometric Bureau was formed, in which measurements of criminals were performed. On October 1, 1903, the first anthropometric measurement of the offender was performed it according to the Vilna Bulletin newspaper (*Vilna Bulletin, 1905*).

The city was gradually developing, industrial enterprises were growing. So, in just 10 years, from 1890 to 1900, the number of factory workers and industrial enterprises increased fivefold

in the city, reaching 5,380 workers working at 336 factories. Interestingly, the production of "Parisian" products such as lace, gloves, shoes, stockings and underwear were established in Vilna, which was distributed throughout Russia. In 1901, electricity appeared in the city – the first power plant gave current. However, up to the middle of the 20th century, before the establishment of Soviet power, a third of urban dwellings did not have electric lighting.

Vilna increasingly acquired the features of an ordinary European city of medium size at the beginning of the 20th century – paved streets, sturdy houses built in different architectural styles, and a rich cultural life. However, unexpectedly, Vilna lacked the most advanced mode of transport at that historical moment – the electric tram. Interestingly, for completely different reasons, two prominent residents fought against the creation of a tram in Vilna. Lawyer Franciszek Bagushevich opposed the tram, believing, not without reason, that it would rumble unbearably, contradict local architecture, and destroy ancient picturesque alleys (*Venclova, 2018*). However, what guided the Vilna governor in 1906-1912, D.N. Lyubimov. According to his son's memoirs, "It was about replacing the antediluvian Vilna tram with a tram. The city officials approved the estimate, but my father refused to approve it. Once I heard an explanation about this between my parents. "Why do you persist? My mother asked. – Abroad and in smaller cities there is a tram... – And because, – the father answered, – that I am afraid to lead my subordinates into temptation! When the money is collected, someone will certainly whistle for it." … So, Vilna remained with her father without a tram" (*Lyubimov, 1990*). Well, the province was also famous for corruption throughout Russia. And there is no tram in Vilnius to this day.

Conclusion

Thus, for more than 120 years of Vilna's presence in the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire, the gradual integration of the urban environment of the city into the Russian community took place. The population of the city perceived the Russian language and culture of everyday life and relationships, just like technology without any special negative costs, facilitated by an increased level of urbanization of the territory, unlike neighbouring provinces, where life national way was logically preserved, which became some foundation of the national cultural heritage later, during the Soviet period of Lithuania's existence.

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