‘THE POLE’ IN THE POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN
GOVERNMENT: SEMANTICS AND PRAXIS
IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY*

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ABSTRACT. *The object of this article is to study Russian ‘nationality policy’. It investigates the social content of the concept of ‘the Pole’ in the Northwest Territory in the 1860s, in the interpretation of state officials and influential publicists. The study is also to reveal the treatment of the Lithuanians and Belorussians (i.e., peasants) and to establish whether they were treated as the allies of the regime or identified with ‘the Poles’. A conclusion is reached that in the 1860s a tendency (but not a general rule) prevailed that any Catholic, born in the Northwest Territory and not belonging to the peasant estate, was considered a Pole. That definition was current in the political conception of the nation prior to the modern times. Thus, at least in the 1860s the strategy propagated by Mikhail Katkov and other representatives of the Russian ruling élite to distinguish between Catholicism and Polishness did not gain ground.*

In investigations of the Russian ‘nationality policy’ in the Western Territory¹ it is important to elucidate what kind of discriminatory policy was conducted in respect to the concrete non-dominant nationality groups, as well as the conception of the groups themselves. Up to the present time it has been proved that in the nineteenth century the

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¹ More precisely, this research deals with the Provinces of the so-called Northwest Territory, i.e., the provinces under the control of the governor general of Vilnius – the Provinces of Vilnius, Kaunas, Grodno, and Vitebsk (1862-1869), of Mogilev (1862-1869) and of Minsk (1862-1870), because the archival sources, relating to the Northwest Territory were more easily accessible to the author. The tendencies, discussed in the study, are also to a great extent applicable to the Southwest Territory – the Provinces of Volyn and Podole, in particular with respect to the provisions of ‘nationality policy’ and the definitions of ‘the Pole’ and ‘the Russian’, formulated in St. Petersburg.

Russian authorities considered 'the Poles' as their main enemy in the Western Territory in the nineteenth century.² In the present study an attempt is made to determine the social content of the definition of 'the Pole' in the understanding of the Russian officials and influential publicists in the Northwest Territory in the 1860s. Some aspects of the definition of 'the Russian' will inevitably be discussed, because the authorities usually had to determine whether a particular person was 'a Pole' or 'a Russian'. It is also important to establish whether in determining the belonging of a person to one or another nationality group the officials preferred the categories of political loyalty, social status, etc., characteristic of pre-modern times or used the definitions of modern times, placing emphasis on ethnocultural categories (in the first place, language) and ignored the social differentiation. The stress placed on confession in the contemporary Russian official discourse was also indicative of the traditional conception of nationality.³ Subsequent research (this article is to be considered only as its initial stage) will reveal the treatment of the Lithuanians and Belorussians (i.e., peasants) in the Russian 'nationality policy' – whether they were identified with 'the Poles', or conversely, were treated as a support of the authorities. Thus, the subject of this study is related both to the traditional political history and to *Begriffsgeschichte*.

The choice of this particular decade for the investigation is not accidental. Firstly, at the start of the 1860s as a result of the gradual weakening of the conservative ideology, a part of the Russian political élite proposed to counterbalance the traditional élite of the Western Territory by other non-dominant nationality groups – the Belorussians and the Ukrainians (in the official terminology – the Russians) and the Lithuanians. The very consideration of that, so to say, *divide et impera* policy made the authorities to re-examine more closely the entire ethnocultural and ethnopolitical situation on the fringes of the empire and to revise the categories of the sphere of 'the nationality policy'. Secondly, after the suppression of the Uprising of 1863, the government took radical measures to weaken the 'Polish' influence in the Western Territory. In many fields it had to establish the criteria to distinguish between 'the Poles' and 'the Russians'. This problem

² Several recent publication might be mentioned: Theodore R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia. Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863-1914* (DeKalb, 1996); Zita Medišauskienė, *Rusijos cenzūra Lietuvoje XIX a. viduryje* (Kaunas, 1998).

³ It must be noted that at that time the Russian authorities officially recorded only the belonging of an individual to a particular estate and confession.

was not new, but after the Uprising its topicality increased. By establishing the chronological limits (the seventh decade) it is intended to show that the period after the Uprising was not homogeneous, and that much depended on the local authorities. Therefore, this investigation is not confined to the period of governor general Mikhail Murav'ev's rule (1863-1865). Such a limitation would be impossible merely taking into account the fact that one of the most radical discriminatory measures, aimed against 'the Poles', was the decree of 10 December 1865, adopted after Murav'ev had left the post of the governor general of Vilnius. The decree prohibited 'the Poles' from obtaining land in any other way except by inheritance. On the other hand, it is important to establish how the regulations, issued by the government, were implemented in practice. Therefore not only the period between 1863 and 1865, when the majority of the discriminatory laws were adopted, is analyzed, but several subsequent years as well.

The investigation consists of two parts, each dealing with the interpretation of the term 'the Pole' on two relatively separate planes of the Russian 'nationality policy'. Firstly, the spheres not directly connected with the political practice of determining a person's nationality are analyzed. They are as follows: Russian publicist writings, the preparation for the introduction of the Russian language into the supplementary services of the Roman Catholic Church in the Western Territory and statistical data. Secondly, the study covers the areas of practical activity – the determination of the nationality of particular individuals by the authorities in replacing civil servants and teachers, in accepting young people into secondary and tertiary schools, in applying the decree of 10 December 1865 banning the purchase of land by 'persons of Polish descent' in the Western Territory, and in introducing the so-called percentage taxes. Each of these spheres deserves a separate study. An attempt to analyze this richly documented empirical basis makes the author limit himself to the coverage of the more general tendencies in each of these spheres. Thus, the present study does not pretend to a thorough examination of the issues raised.

Various aspects of this problem have already been dealt with in historical scholarship,⁴ however, many questions remain unanswered.

⁴ Hrabia Leliwa [Anton Tyszkewicz], *Zarys stosunków polsko-rosyjskich* (Kraków, 1895), pp. 7-33; Petras Klimas, *Muravjovo laikmetis Lietuvos žemės ir žemininkų istorijoje* (Vilnius, 1920), pp. 25-26; Raymond Pearson, 'Privileges, Rights, and Russification', *Civil Rights in Imperial Russia*, ed. by Olga Crisp and Linda Edmondson (Oxford, 1989), pp. 94-95; T. R. Weeks, 'Defending Us and Them: Poles and Russians in the "Western Provinces", 1863-1914, *Slavic Review*, 53, no. 1 (Spring 1994), pp. 35-36; Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 33, 51, 52, 56, 68, 100;

Firstly, to our knowledge, broad-ranging investigations have not yet been conducted, i.e., individual authors analyzed the conceptions of ‘the Pole’ in their particular fields of research, and no attempts have been made to investigate and compare the semantics of this term in its various uses. Secondly, previously researchers were usually interested in the definitions, formulated by the highest officials. The present study deals both with the conceptions of nationality devised in St. Petersburg and with the distinctions between ‘the Pole’, ‘the Russian’ or the Baltic German, practically carried out by the local authorities of power, in other words, the interpretation of the concepts of the ruling élite by local officials of lower ranks. Additionally, a number of inaccuracies, noticed in historical studies, can be indicated. For example a question of whether the Lithuanians and Belorussians (whom the authorities identified only with peasants) could be treated as ‘the Poles’. Sometimes this issue is discussed rather superficially.⁵ In other cases it is stated that Catholic peasants were considered Poles.⁶

Publicist Writings

In the post-Uprising period these writings became an influential institution in the formation of the strategy of the Russian ‘nationality policy’. In this article we shall deal only with those texts of the representatives of the Russian intellectual élite, which directly influenced the policy of the government in the Northwest Territory. On the other hand, the selected authors represented various political orientations, respectively their position shows the degree of uniformity of Russian publicist writings in the definition of the concept of ‘the Pole’.

For Mikhail Katkov ‘the Pole’ was a social and political term. It was social inasmuch as it indicated a person’s belonging to a particular social group – to the gentry and the Catholic clergy in the Northwest Territory. The second aspect was the allegiance to a certain

Леонид Е. Горизонтов, *Парадоксы имперской политики: Поляки в России и Русские в Польше* (Москва, 1999) – the latter publication reached us in the final stage of the work on this article.

⁵ Горизонтов, *Парадоксы*.

⁶ Weeks, *Nation and State*, p. 51, However, in this passage the idea is not quite clearly formulated: ‘The restrictive laws since 1863 defined “Polish” too narrowly, preventing Catholic peasants from purchasing land but giving Baltic German nobles privileges as ‘persons of Russian descent’. Possibly the writer intended to express an opposite idea, i.e., that the definition of ‘the Pole’ was too wide, because it included Catholic peasants.

political idea, in this case – the tradition of the former Polish-Lithuanian state. Being of Polish descent was not important.⁷

Katkov often argued that it was important to distinguish between Catholicism and Polishness and that even a Catholic could be a loyal subject of the Empire, i.e., a Russian in the meaning of 'nation' or 'political nationality' (at the same time there could exist ethnocultural nations as well). Language was a more stable guarantee of Russian integrity than confession.⁸

Such were Katkov's theoretical considerations. However, when he examined the practical distinction between 'the Russians' and 'the Poles' in the Northwest Territory in the context of land owning, he also acknowledged that Catholicism was inseparable from Polishness.⁹

Ivan Aksakov, rejecting Katkov's views, also did not consider ethnicity a significant category of nationalism in respect to 'the Poles'. However, he placed emphasis on religion, treating it as a trait, distinguishing between 'the Poles' and 'the Russians' in the Western Territory.¹⁰

Another Slavophile, Aleksandr Gilferding presented a slightly different definition of 'the Pole'. According to him, although nations are characterized by the ethnic basis, and respectively 'the Poles' and 'the Russians' are related, that does not mean that the nationality of the individual is inborn and unchangeable. In the Western Territory 'the Polish nationality' ('*narodnost*') comprises not only the ethnic Poles, but also people connected with this nationality.

With regard to 'the Poles' he proposed a theory of two nations ('*narod*'): that of the people or peasants, which preserved the authenticity peculiar to the Slavs, and of the upper social layers, which gave in to the Western influence and were loyal to the former Polish state, i.e., they sought its re-establishment in the boundaries of 1772.¹¹

⁷ [М. Катков, Москва, 11-го июня, *Московские ведомости*, 1863, № 127; [Idem], Москва, 17-го июня, *ibid.*, 1864 № 134; [idem], Москва, 5-го мая, № 100; [idem], Москва, 21-го декабря, *ibid.*, 1865 № 281; [idem], Москва, 7-го июля, *ibid.*, 1866, № 142.

⁸ [Idem], Москва, 1-го августа, *ibid.*, 1863, № 168; [idem], Москва, 27 ноября, *ibid.*, 1865 № 262, etc.

⁹ [Idem], Москва, 4-го декабря, *ibid.*, 1865, № 268.

¹⁰ Еще о польских притязаниях на Западно-Русский край, Москва, 8-го февраля 1863 г., *Сочинения И. С. Аксакова*, т. 3: *Польский вопрос и Западно-русское дело. 1860, статьи из Дня, Москвы, Москвича и Руси* (Москва, 1886), с. 40, 41; О связи вероисповеданного вопроса с народным в Северозападном крае, Москва, 17-го января 1867 г., *ibid.* с. 417; Католицизм самое могучее средство ополчения, Москва, 10-го сентября 1867 г., *ibid.*, с. 463-466, etc.

¹¹ А. Гилфердинг, 'Польский вопрос', *Собрание сочинений А. Гилфердинга*, т. 2: *Статьи по современным вопросам славянским* (Санкт Петербург, 1868), с. 291-360.

Thus, Lithuanian peasants were not to be treated as 'Poles'. The distinction between the Lithuanians and the Poles was also based on ethnocultural and linguistic criteria. Additionally, he took into account the Belorussians of the Catholic faith, i.e., he did not consider them Poles.¹² Thus for Gilferding, the social category and that of political loyalty were crucial in the definitions of nationality.

Introduction of the Russian Language into the Supplementary Services of the Roman Catholic Church

After the suppression of the Uprising of 1863-64 the Russian authorities planned and carried out some measures, directed against the Catholic Church on the fringes of the Empire. In the context of the present study less significant were the repressive measures themselves which could be short-lived (e.g., the exile of the clergymen, who participated in the Uprising or supported it) than those steps of the government, which could lead to long-term effective consequences. The authorities had two alternatives. First, they could force the Catholics to pass over to Orthodoxy by either joining the Catholic Church of the Western Territory to the Orthodox Church (to our knowledge this project was not seriously discussed) or by forcing/urging individuals and parishes to pass over to Orthodoxy (the change of faith was not extensive). According to the second strategy the Russian language had to be introduced into the supplementary services.¹³ The priority given to one of the two strategies reflected the difference in the concepts of nationality.¹⁴ In the first case confession was considered as an essential characteristic of the nationality, while in the second it was the language.

¹² Idem, 'Несколько замечаний о литовском и жмудском племени', *Сборник статей разъясняющих польское дело по отношению к Западной России*, составил С. Шолкович (Вильна, 1885), с. 121.

¹³ In greater detail on this problem, see D. Staliūnas, 'Kalba ar konfesija? (Sumanymas įvesti rusų kalbą Vakarų krašto pridėtines katalikiškose pamaldose)', *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis*. 1999 (2000), pp. 125–137.

¹⁴ Doubtless, we are not arguing that the choice of one or the other alternative was conditioned merely by different conceptions of nationality. There were other important motives as well – the fear of the authorities to resort to radical measures against the Catholic Church, which could provoke a negative reaction of the population. Therefore the officials of the higher rank were not pleased with the idea of a massive turn-over of the Catholics into the Orthodox faith. On the other hand, there were apprehensions that the supplementary Catholic services, conducted in Russian, could attract Russian Orthodox believers to Catholicism. Thus, in each case there were additional motives for and against in the two strategies.

During the sessions of the Revision Commission on the Problems of the Roman Catholic Clergy in the Western Territory (1866-1868)¹⁵ and of the Petersburg committee led by Prince Pavel Gagarin (1869)¹⁶, the issue of the introduction of the Russian language was often associated with the conception of nationality in the discussions and correspondence of the officials.

The adherents of the introduction of Russian in church services considered language the primary criterion of nationality. The above-mentioned Gagarin committee stated that it was important to eliminate the negative connections between 'the true other-than-Orthodox religion and a particular nationality (*natsionalnost*)'. The contemporary situation was very clearly expressed in the statement that 'to become a Russian means the same as to change one's faith', meanwhile it was necessary to strive 'that in contrast to that the local population [of the Western Territory] should perceive that it is feasible to be a Catholic and a Russian at the same time.'

The opponents argued that the main guarantee of the integrity of Russia was Orthodoxy, and that Catholicism, no matter in what language its services were conducted, meant a link with Poland. The emphasis on Orthodoxy as the main assimilation guarantee actually implied linguistic Russification, at least in the matters of religion. That, however, was not a general rule - in the post-Uprising period a high tsarist official Nikolai Miliutin called for the translation of the Orthodox liturgy into the Lithuanian language.¹⁷ I. Aksakov proposed the use of Polish, Žemaitijan and Lithuanian in the Orthodox services in this region.¹⁸ Confessional assimilation, at least in the initial stage, did not necessarily imply linguistic.

In their attempts to separate Polishness and Catholicism some of the opponents proposed to introduce Latin into the supplementary Catholic Church services. Among them was a general of the Russian army, vice-chief of artillery of the Vilnius Military Region, author of

¹⁵ Information on the activities of this commission can be found in the following files: LVIA, Bendrasis skyrius (BS), 1866, f. 378, b. 1340, 2522; 1867, b. 1372, 2526; RGIA, f. 821, op. 150, d. 384.

¹⁶ The 16 December 1869 journal of the special committee on the use of Russian in the matters of other state religions, RGIA, f. 821, op. 125, d. 277, l. 68-70.

¹⁷ N. Miliutin to M. Murav'ev, letter of 15 (27) April 1864, LVIA, f. 378, BS, 1865, b. 1755, l. 41-42; Vytautas Merkys, *Knygnešių laikai 1864-1904* (Vilnius, 1994), p. 37.

¹⁸ Желательно ли введение русского языка в латинское богослужение? Москва, 12-го сентября 1867 г., *Сочинения Аксакова*, с. 475.

the works about the Uprising of 1863-64 Vasilii Ratch, who made an attempt to differentiate the conception of nationality in the framework of social differentiation: 'The upper Polish-speaking layers are influenced by the Polish language, and by forbidding its use in church we shall not drive it out, and a Belorussian-speaking Catholic from the common people is influenced by the Church, and the Polish language does not rouse any patriotic feelings or fanaticism in him; for in his view the Polish concern is entirely the concern of the Church'.¹⁹

The gradual enforcement of Russian on the Church, begun after the Uprising, showed that the ruling élite of the empire modified the conception of nationality, or to be more precise, revised their priorities. The 1848 ban to use Russian in the Catholic services was an indication that the main support of Russianness was Orthodoxy,²⁰ while the introduction of Russian initially in teaching religion (the Lithuanians of the Kaunas province were an exception), and the 1869 permission to use Russian in the supplementary Church services witnessed that language was the principal instrument of assimilation and the indicator of belonging to 'the Russians'; doubtless, in future that had to revert 'Russian' Catholics to Orthodoxy. It must also be stressed that the definitions of nationality, formulated in this context, were meant mainly for the peasants.

Nationality Statistics

In the Russian Empire it was customary to indicate the estate and confession of the population. In the nineteenth century, however, this practice no longer satisfied the needs of government. The modernization of social structures and the penetration of the state led to the increased interest in the lower social layers, their language, loyalty, etc. The mid-nineteenth-century official and semi-official censuses began to indicate the ethnic origin of the individuals. In these censuses the influence of the ethnographic theory of nationality, proposed by the Austrian scholars could be detected, i.e., nationality was determined by means of objective ethnographic criteria.²¹ It was commonly believed that it was useless to define the nationality by questioning particular

¹⁹ A copy of Ratch's report, RGIA, f. 821, op. 150, d. 384, l. 68-69.

²⁰ It is clear that this prohibition was caused by the fear that the spread of Catholic ideas in Russian could weaken the positions of Orthodoxy, and this fear subsided neither after the Uprising nor in the early twentieth century.

²¹ In greater detail, see E. Brix, *Die Umgangssprachen in Altösterreich zwischen Agitation und Assimilation. Die Sprachenstatistik in den Zisleithanischen Volkszählungen 1880 bis 1910* (Wien, 1982), S. 68-96.

individuals, because illiterate and uneducated people were not nationally matured. Therefore 'experts' were necessary who could determine the nationality by 'objective' criteria. In such censuses deliberate attention was paid to ethnicity, i.e., the belonging to the ethnic group, to the language and other criteria (customs, religion, etc.).²² On the other hand, there were authors, who, following the German ethnographer Richard Boekh, gave priority to the linguistic criterion.²³

Thus, the mid-nineteenth-century censuses almost always indicated the ethnic distribution of the population, however, the tendency prevailed not to exaggerate that criterion, especially in the presentation of nationality statistics. The confessional factor was considered much more important, in particular with regard to Belorussian Catholics or the Catholic gentry. That is evident in Zelenskii's description of the Minsk province,²⁴ in Erkert's booklet,²⁵ in an anonymous letter to the tsar,²⁶ etc. In 1863 the Central Committee of Statistics defined the statistics related to the nine Western Provinces, in which it also stressed that ethnic origin, at least in some estates, e.g., in the gentry, was completely forgotten, and its traces were found only in family names, often modified, while in the lower estates it was replaced by the confessional differences ...²⁷ The same was accentuated in Afanas'ev's statistics of

²² М. Лебедин, 'О племенном составе народонаселения Западного края Российской империи', *Записки Императорского Русского географического общества*, 1861, кн. 3 (Санкт Петербург, 1861), с. 131-160; *Материалы для географии и статистики России*, составил генерального штаба капитан А. Корева (Санкт Петербург, 1861), с. 287; V. Sirutavičius, 'Tautiškumo kriterijai multietninių visuomenių statistikoje. XIX amžiaus vidurio Lietuvos pavyzdys', *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis 1998* (Vilnius, 1999), pp. 74-84.

²³ А. Н. Пыпин, *История русской этнографии*, т. 4: Белоруссия и Сибирь (Санкт Петербург, 1892), с. 81, 107.

²⁴ И. Зеленский, *Материалы для географии и статистики России*, собранные офицерами генерального штаба, т. 3: Минская губерния (Санкт Петербург, 1864), с. 418.

²⁵ Р. Эркерт, *Взгляд на историю и этнографию Западных губерний России* (Санкт Петербург, 1864), с. 65-66.

²⁶ An anonymous letter was handed in to the tsar on 25 February 1862. *Из дел Западного комитета: Свод предложений и выводов*, Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, Russian fond, 18.241.1.8/1-29, Appendix no. 4, sheets unnumbered.

²⁷ Explication and tables: 'The 1861 data of the population of the Western Provinces according to estates', 'Distribution of the population of the nine Western Provinces according to nationality (*narodnost'*)', 'Distribution of the population of the nine Western Provinces according to confession', 'Distribution of the population of the nine Western Provinces according to estates and nationalities (*narodnost'*)', *ibid.*, pages unnumbered.

the Kaunas province, where the majority of the population was Lithuanian.²⁸ Thus, Catholicism implied Polishness.

The ethnographic criteria were an important, though not decisive factor of nationality. Very often the compilers of the censuses preferred confession to nationality.

Introduction of *numerus clausus* for 'the Poles' in the Great Russian Schools

After the closure of the University of Vilnius in 1832 the number of students from the Northwest Territory increased in the Russian universities. Some Russian civil servants considered 'the Poles' the main instigators of student unrest in the early sixties. In Petersburg the idea of limiting the number of 'Polish' students in Russian universities was raised more than once.²⁹ In the discussions of possible sanctions at the end of 1862 the following terms were used: 'young people of Polish descent', 'persons from the Western Provinces' and 'children of estate-owners of the Western Territory'. It could be stated that these terms were more or less synonymous. The third variant was the narrowest and most accurate. Taking into account other aspects of the official policy in the sphere of education (e.g., the grants of the Vilnius Educational District (hereafter – VED) were given only to Orthodox students, respectively only Orthodox believers from that region were favoured at Russian universities), it could be hypothesized that 'the Pole' was a person of Catholic faith, belonging to the social élite of the Western Territory.

The authorities returned to this issue again in subsequent years. At the start of the autumn in 1863, Murav'ev, possibly being sure that the problems of the Northwest Territory would soon be solved, came back to the idea of his predecessor Vladimir Nazimov about founding a university in this area after the full restoration of order. A university or college in Vilnius or in some other city in the Northwest Territory, in Murav'ev's opinion, would protect other universities of Russia from a negative influence of 'the Poles'. In that way Murav'ev intended to protect Russian universities from rebellious youth: 'After the opening of a university in Vilnius young people of *Polish descent* (original

²⁸ *Материалы для географии и статистики России, собранные офицерами генерального штаба*, т. 1: *Ковенская губерния*, составил Д. Афанасьев (Санкт Петербург, 1861), с. 314.

²⁹ The journal of the commission, established on the order of the tsar to revise the 1859 account of the minister of public education, RGIA, f. 1275, op. 1, d. 10, l. 72-74; the 4 December 1862 journal of the Western committee, RGIA, f. 1267, op. 1, d. 12, l. 9-22, etc.

emphasis) in the above-mentioned six provinces would not be accepted to the Russian universities; the exception being only those living with their parents or relatives in the provinces of the Russian interior'. The analysis of the aims of Murav'ev's ethnicity policy and of this project shows that in this case only Catholics of the upper social strata could be attributed to the category of 'persons of Polish descent'. The peasants, both Lithuanian and Belorussian, were not treated as 'persons of Polish descent'.³⁰

Although Murav'ev did not succeed in implementing his project to establish a Russian university in the Northwest Territory, he did not give up the idea of protecting Russian universities from a harmful 'Polish' influence. On his initiative the Western committee introduced *numerus clausus* of 10 per cent for 'persons of Polish descent' at the Great Russian schools in 1864.³¹

How was this measure implemented in practice? Judging by the extant sources, Catholicism was the confessional criterion in determining the pupil's or student's belonging to 'the Poles'.³² This hypothesis is supported by the attempts of the minister of public education at the beginning of 1870s not to apply *numerus clausus* to 'the Žemaitijans', i.e., Lithuanians.

In 1872 the minister of public education, Dmitrii Tolstoi, took measures to exclude Lithuanians from that limitation. In his opinion, the ethnic Lithuanians actively participated in the Uprising because 'the Poles' attracted them to their side. The main tool was the schools, in particular the Spiritual Seminary of Varniai. According to Tolstoi, 'if they [the Lithuanians] were given a chance to graduate from a university, they would undoubtedly acquire the Russian higher

³⁰ In greater detail, see D. Staliūnas, 'Kai kurie Michailo Muravjovo etnopolitinės programos bruožai (1863-1865)', *Praeities baruose* (Vilnius, 1999), pp. 204-205.

³¹ [?], 'Михаил Николаевич Муравьев и его мероприятия в Северо-Западной России. 1864 г. (Приложения к его запискам)', *Русская старина*, 1884, кн. 6, с. 578-581; Murav'ev's proposals of 14 May 1864 were also published in 'Три политические записки о С.-З. крае Гр. М. Н. Муравьева', *Сборник статей разъясняющих польское дело по отношению к Западной России*, выпуск второй, составил и издал С. Шолкович (Вильна, 1887), с. 308-218.

³² A separate journal of the Committee of Ministers of 15 April 1865, RGIA, f. 1263, op. 1, d. 3146, l. 60-61; the decision of 8 July 1869 on limiting the number of Catholic students at the Nemirov (Ukraine) gymnasium [secondary school], *Сборник Постановлений по Министерству Народного Просвещения*, т. 2: *царствование императора Николая I 1825-1855*, отделение первое 1825-1839, издание второе (Санкт Петербург, 1875), с. 1389-1390.

education and stop being Polish allies, because it is only the religion that unites them, and they greatly differ in language and conditions of life.' It is worth noting that Tolstoi distinguishes 'Žemaitijans', i.e., Lithuanians, from 'Poles', who as landowners should not be supported by 'the Žemaitijans', i.e., peasants.³³ Thus, until Tolstoi's initiative it was just confession that served as the indicator for the Russian civil servants to treat Lithuanians as 'the Poles'. Tolstoi, however, indicated the ethnic and social criteria in distinguishing the Lithuanians from 'the Poles'. The tsar approved the proposal to exclude the Lithuanians from the 10 per cent *numerus clausus*.

Replacement of Civil Servants and Teachers

In the Northwest Territory 'Polish' civil servants and teachers were to be replaced in many spheres by 'Russians' already before the Uprising of 1863. In that period confession was the principal criterion distinguishing the two nationality groups (the peasants did not belong to this social category and the corresponding conclusions cannot not applied to them).

In the post-Uprising period the terms implying the categories of descent and confession came into being: 'a person of Polish descent and Catholic faith' and 'a person of Russian descent and Orthodox faith'.³⁴

The analysis of political practice shows that the confessional criterion was the most significant in Murav'ev's rule. In the order to the troops of the military district of Vilnius the terms 'Catholic' and 'Pole' were used synonymously.³⁵ Cases like those were frequent.

Orthodoxy was the mandatory and sufficient condition to attribute anyone to the category of 'the persons of Russian descent'. The cases of the conversion from Catholicism to Orthodoxy confirm this statement. If such converts additionally received favourable political characteristics, they were granted the same rights as 'the Russians'.³⁶

³³ Extract from the account of the minister of public education on the inspection of the VED, LVIA, f. 567, ap. 26, b. 49, l. 2.

³⁴ The 21 July 1864 circular of the governor general of Vilnius *Сборник распоряжений графа Михаила Николаевича Муравьева по усмирению Польского мятежа в Северо-западных губерниях 1863-1864, составил Николай Цылов* (Вильна, 1866), c. 25-26; minister of internal affairs to the governors general of Vilnius and Kiev, letter of 9 November 1865, RGIA, f. 1282, op. 1, d. 248, l. 117-117.

³⁵ The 22 May 1863 order to the troops of the military district of Vilnius, *Сборник распоряжений*, c. 262-263.

³⁶ Vice-governor general of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 1 September 1864, governor general of Vilnius to governor of Kaunas, a rough copy of the letter of 7 September 1864, LVIA, f. 378, bs, 1863, b. 860a, l. 82, 83 (the vice

A question arises if the category of descent was irrelevant in the case of the definition of 'the Russian'. Taking into account the fact that in official Russian discourse there dominated the belief that allegedly all local Christians were of Slav descent (with the exception of a small number of Lithuanians), who formerly had been Orthodox believers, it is possible to surmise that in the definition of 'the Russian' descent was perceived ethnically, while in the case of 'the Pole' – territorially.

True, there were situations when the terms 'persons who arrived from Russia' and 'local inhabitants' were contrasted,³⁷ and then descent would seem to be equally applicable as a territorial category in the definitions of both 'the Russian' and 'the Pole'. In other words, only those Orthodox believers were to be treated as 'Russians' which came from the provinces of the Russian interior, while non-local Catholics were not 'Poles'. Such viewpoints really existed, however governor general of Vilnius Konstantin von Kaufman declared unequivocally: 'The Province of Vilnius is not Poland',³⁸ and that meant that that area was an old Russian land, respectively, any Orthodox believer from the Western Territory was to be treated as the inhabitant of the Russian interior. Previously Murav'ev had also allowed to appoint as civil servants Orthodox believers from the Western Territory. By the way, he had indicated one extra condition – their wives could not be 'Polish'.³⁹

Such statements could have been conditioned not only by the conception of nationality, but also to a great extent by the contemporary situation. In the Northwest Territory the authorities could not find enough 'persons of Russian descent' to occupy posts in government institutions. From local Orthodox believers only those belonging to the estate of the clergy could be employed in such posts, while those of the lower social layers did not enjoy the necessary rights. They could

governor general of Kaunas applied to the governor general inquiring whether the Catholics of the Western Territory having converted to Orthodoxy could work as teachers. Murav'ev answered that in each particular case the application should be sent to him directly).

³⁷ Head of the tax chamber of the province of Kaunas to finance minister, secret letter of 12 July 1863, *ibid.*, b. 124, l. 3; Minister of public education to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 26 September 1863, governor general of Vilnius to the guardian of the VED, letter of 19 June 1864, *ibid.*, b. 860a, l. 18-9, 34-35; the 1864 account of the board of the schools of Šiauliai, *ibid.*, f. 567, ap. 3, b. 1295, l. 657, etc.

³⁸ An undated letter of A. D. Tumanov enclosing the 19 May 1865 resolution of governor general of Vilnius, *ibid.*, f. 378, bs., 1863, 860a, l. 260.

³⁹ Governor general of Vilnius to minister of internal affairs, letter of 10 February 1864, *ibid.*, b. 114, l. 101.

have that right after obtaining a corresponding education. As there was a great shortage of people for the work in chanceries, Murav'ev issued the permission for 'the Orthodox persons of lower estates' to occupy those posts, if they met the necessary requirements and could be released from their communities according to the established order.⁴⁰ That again corroborates the statement that the Orthodox believers of the Western Territory were treated as 'Russians'.

As has been mentioned, Polish descent was understood in the territorial and political senses. That is again attested by the following fact: the term 'a person of local descent and Catholic faith', used before the Uprising, was later replaced by 'a person of Polish descent and Catholic faith'. There were cases when Catholics coming not from the Western Territory were attributed to the category of reliable persons, which to some degree implied their non-attribution to 'the Poles'. Thus, for example, according to the governor of Kaunas, a certain Vatman, a Catholic of 'German descent' was treated as a reliable person and could serve in the executive police.⁴¹ Regrettably, no details are known about his origin.

In accepting 'the Russians' to posts the criterion of political loyalty was of particular importance – information about candidates to various places was gathered even by the third department of the tsarist chancery. However, no data were found which could indicate that loyalty to the government could help 'the Poles' to keep their place of work (that, certainly did not mean that all 'the Poles' were replaced by 'the Russians' in government structures).

Percentage taxes

The percentage tax was levied on the profit obtained from land and on the capital value of the houses in towns.⁴² In respect to the percentage tax, nationality definitions did not pertain to the peasants, since this tax did not relate to them.⁴³ It is also noteworthy that initially there were no formal exceptions in levying these taxes, although it was permanently stressed that this measure was directed against 'the

⁴⁰ A rough copy of the April 1864 letter (no date) of governor general of Vilnius to minister of internal affairs, *ibid.*, ap. 219, b. 784, l. 10-11.

⁴¹ Governor of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 16 May 1864, *ibid.*, bs, 1864, b. 7, l. 44-45,

⁴² The order of tax collection is not discussed in the study due to its limited scope.

⁴³ More about the circumstances of introducing the percentage tax, see Leonas Bičkauskas-Gentvila, 'Privatinės nuosavybės žemėvaldos apribojimai Lietuvoje ir Baltarusijoje (1861-1905)', *Lietuvos TSR aukštųjų mokyklų mokslo darbai. Istorija*, t. XI, 1970, p. 135-136; D. Staliūnas, *Praeities baruose*, pp. 208-209.

Poles'. Later 'the Russians'⁴⁴, the Baltic Germans⁴⁵ and the Tartars were exempted from the percentage tax on land usage, and from 1 per cent – 'the Orthodox clergymen, peasants, Russians, Baltic Germans and persons of Tartar descent'.⁴⁶ This context also dealt with ethnic categories, related to other nationalities, but not 'the Poles'. The fact that the person paid the percentage tax, formally did not mean that he was automatically considered 'a Pole'. However, as has been mentioned, the officials emphasized that this measure was applied to 'the Poles', thus actually it had to do with the conception of 'the Pole'.

In this sphere there were cases when origin (in the territorial sense) was more important in defining a person's nationality than confession: among the estate owners who came from the Baltic Provinces and possessed estates in the Northwest Territory there were Catholics according to the registration lists of the Provinces of Vilnius, Vitebsk and Kaunas.⁴⁷ Thus, Catholicism alone was not an indicator that a person was 'a Pole'.

Sometimes ethnic origin was indicated, but it did not ultimately serve as the decisive criterion. A case of such a situation could be mentioned. The governor of Mogilev noticed that 'the majority of the Catholics of the province of Mogilev were Polonized Belorussians and Lithuanians'⁴⁸, however, in the governor general's request to send him lists of 'the estate owners of non-Orthodox faith and of non-Polish descent',⁴⁹ he delivered a list of 'the estate owners of non-Orthodox and non-Catholic faith'.⁵⁰ That implied the identification of 'the Pole' and the Catholic, and showed the importance of confession.

⁴⁴ Governor general of Vilnius to governors of Vilnius, Kaunas, Grodno, Vitebsk, Minsk and Mogilev, secret letter of 22 April 1864, LVIA, f. 378, bs, 1863, b. 786, l. 65-66.

⁴⁵ Minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 5 March 1865, *Сборник правительственных распоряжений по водворению русских землевладельцев в Северо-Западном крае*, издание 2-ое дополненное по 20 сентября 1885 года (Вильна, 1886), с. 25-26.

⁴⁶ Governor general of Vilnius to governors of Vilnius, Kaunas, Grodno, Vitebsk, Minsk and Mogilev, letter of 28 October 1863, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 303.

⁴⁷ Information about the estate owners of Baltic descent in the province of Vilnius, information about the estate owners of Baltic descent in the province of Vitebsk, information about the estate owners in the province of Kaunas, LVIA, f. 378, bs, 1865, b. 919, l. 17-23, 39-44, 187-205.

⁴⁸ Governor of Mogilev to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 6 June 1865, *ibid.*, l. 6.

⁴⁹ Governor general of Vilnius to governors of Vilnius, Kaunas, Grodno, Minsk, Mogilev and Vitebsk, letter of 6 May 1865, *ibid.*, l. 3.

⁵⁰ List of non-Orthodox and non-Catholic estate owners in the province of Mogilev, *ibid.*, l. 138-141.

There were cases when individual Russian officials considered descent the main criterion of the person's attribution to a particular nationality. Nevertheless, the tendency to prefer religion was dominating. The priorities depended on the very nationality groups between which the boundary had to be drawn. When a dilemma concerned the attribution of a landowner to either Baltic Germans or 'Poles', the aspect of descent in the territorial sense was very important in the viewpoint of some officials. However, when it was necessary to establish whether a person was 'a Pole' or 'a Russian', the criterion of confession was of crucial importance.

Having passed from Catholicism to Orthodoxy a person became 'a Russian'.⁵¹ The attachment of great significance to that confession was illustrated by other cases as well. For example, if the Orthodox children inherited their Catholic father's house, they were exempted from that tax.⁵² The regulations of the percentage tax were similar.⁵³ The same tendency could be illustrated by the synonymous use of the terms 'persons of Polish descent' and 'Catholics' (or 'not Catholics' and 'not Poles'), found in the correspondence.⁵⁴ The solution was also

⁵¹ Governor of Minsk to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 26 October 1865, *ibid.*, b. 1234, l. 1 (the file does not contain any answer to the proposal of the Minsk governor to exempt the converts to Orthodoxy from the percentage tax); governor of Minsk to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 31 October 1868, *ibid.*, b. 1089, l. 923; an alphabetic list of the persons of Polish descent and their estates of the district of Novoaleksandrovsk (now – Zarasai) of the province of Kaunas on the levy of percentage tax to finance the reorganization of the Northwest Territory, *ibid.*, 1868, b. 3452, l. 1-108 (nr. 69; a retired second lieutenant Rudamina was exempted from the percentage tax, because already in 1862 he had converted to Orthodoxy); A list of the owners of houses in Kaunas to be freed from 1 per cent tax, *ibid.*, 1867, b. 732, l. 232 (Collegial registrar Sneshko is exempted from that tax, because he became an Orthodox believer).

⁵² Governor of Vitebsk to the governor general of Vilnius, letter of 8 October 1868, governor general of Vilnius to governor of Vitebsk, letter of 28 October 1868, *ibid.*, l. 203, 204.

⁵³ Governor of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 1 April 1871 (the case of Žilevičius estate of Šaltmariai, district of Telšiai), *ibid.*, 1871, b. 838, l. 1.

⁵⁴ Minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 25 April 1864, *ibid.*, 1864, b. 913, l. 1.; information about the estate owners in the province of Vitebsk, where there were neither persons of Baltic descent, nor Orthodox believers, nor Catholics, *ibid.*, 1865, b. 919, l. 45-51 (the governor general requested the information about 'persons of non-Polish descent', while the answer was about 'non-Catholics'); governor of Vitebsk to governor general of Vilnius, letters of 25 June and 23 July 1863, *ibid.*, 1863, b. 605, l. 21, 22, 36.

the same when some lower-rank officials preferred the criterion of a person's origin in the territorial sense. The governor general of Vilnius used not to exempt from the percentage tax the Catholic persons, who were entered on the lists of 'persons of Baltic descent' by the governors (such a decision was based not only on confessional considerations).⁵⁵ Most clearly that was expressed in the case of the province of Kaunas: only 'persons of Protestant faith in the Baltic Provinces' and Orthodox believers were exempted from the percentage tax.⁵⁶ Political loyalty was a sufficient enough condition to attribute an estate owner coming from the Western Territory to the category of 'Russians'. Already on 23 June 1863 the governor general of Kiev proposed to exempt from that tax all 'Russian estate owners' and those 'Polish landowners' who overtly expressed their support of the government, including those who directly did not support the uprising.⁵⁷ Politically reliable Catholic landowners, in particular those entrusted with various posts, were exempted from the percentage tax by the government, e.g., vice-governor of Petersburg Emerik Czapskii⁵⁸, one of the initiators of joining the Catholic Church to the Orthodox Church Eustachij Prószyński⁵⁹.

Prohibition of Land Purchase

In the decree of 10 December 1865, banning the acquisition of land for 'the persons of Polish descent' by any other ways except inheritance in the Western Provinces, the criterion of faith was not explicitly expressed, but its social content was evident: landowners and townspeople are 'Poles'.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Governor general of Vilnius to the governor of Vilnius, letter of 15 April 1865; governor general of Vilnius to the governor of Vitebsk, letter of 1 September 1866, *ibid.*, 1865, b. 919, l. 36, 52-53.

⁵⁶ Governor general of Vilnius to governor of Kaunas, letter of 30 November 1867, *ibid.* l. 232.

⁵⁷ Governor general of Kiev to minister of internal affairs, secret letter of 23 June 1863, RGIA, f. 1282, op. 2, d. 368, l. 18-19.

⁵⁸ Minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 25 April 1864, governor general of Vilnius to governor of Minsk, letter of 2 May 1865, LVIA, f. 378, bs, 1864, b. 913, l. 1, 3.

⁵⁹ The case 'On the request of Archbishop Antonii to reduce the 5 per cent tax to the leader of the gentry of the province Prószyński', *ibid.*, 1865, b. 853.

⁶⁰ A number of studies are devoted to this decree: Hrabia Leliwa, *Zarys*, pp. 7-33; P. Klimas, *Muravjovo laikmetis*, p. 25-26; L. Bičkauskas-Gentvila, *Žemėvaldos apribojimai*, pp. 129-134.

As was evident from the discussion in the committee working on the preparation of the decree the proposed formula expressed the ethnopolitical conception of nationality, i.e., 'the Poles' could be either people coming from ethnic Polish lands or local inhabitants who took over Polish political ideals. This kind of conception was directed against the identification of Polishness and Catholicism.⁶¹ It was the loyalty to the Russian rule that became the main criterion when Lithuanian Tartars were released from the ban.⁶² However, in contrast to the percentage tax, the political loyalty of local Catholic landowners was rarely heeded in land purchase. Such cases were not frequent, and they might be considered exceptions from the rule. Before 1870 only five 'persons of Polish descent' were permitted to purchase land in the Southwest Territory, i.e., their rights were equated to those of the Russian landowners.⁶³ In the Northwest Territory the number of such cases was seventeen.⁶⁴

In practice, taking into consideration the two social layers (landowners and townspeople) it is evident that Catholicism was the main criterion for the attribution of a person to 'the Poles'. In many documents the civil servants placed the Catholics on the same footing as 'the Poles'.⁶⁵

⁶¹ The 29 November and 7 December 1865 journal of the commission, established by the tsar, to discuss the letter of the minister of state property on the measures to settle the Russian element in the Western Territory, RGIA, f. 1263, op. 4, d. 6, l. 30-39 (The definition of Polishness, proposed by the minority of the committee and supported by the tsar, afterwards was quoted in the correspondence of the officials and published in the 17 October 1869 circular of the governor general to the governors; see *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 208-209.

⁶² The explanatory letter about the rights and privileges of the Tartars living in the Western Provinces; governor general of Vilnius to minister of internal affairs, letter of 9 June 1867; Extract of the 4 and 17 July 1867 of the journal of the Committee of Ministers, addressed to the vice-minister of internal affairs, RGIA, f. 1284, op. 189, d. 4, l. 72-5, 83-84, 89-90; minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 91-92; on the petitions of Lithuanian Tartars, see Tamara Bairašauskaitė, *Lietuvos totoriai XIX amžiuje* (Vilnius, 1996), p. 44-46.

⁶³ On the persons of Polish descent in the Southwest Territory to whom the decree of 10 December 1865 is not applied, RGIA, f. 1284, op. 189, 1865, d. 4, l. 344.

⁶⁴ Governor general of Vilnius to minister of internal affairs, letter of 14 July 1870, *ibid.* l. 345-347.

⁶⁵ Governor general of Vilnius to governors, circular letter of 12 March 1868, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 159-160; governor general of Vilnius to minister of internal affairs, letter of 28 November 1869 (?), RGIA, f. 1284, op. 189, 1865, d. 4, l. 254.

This tendency is best illustrated by mixed marriages. The governor general of Vilnius Aleksandr Potapov presumed that before 1868 'persons of Russian descent, Orthodox and Protestant faith' could not get permissions to purchase land if they were married to 'persons of Polish descent'.⁶⁶ In such cases the authorities had only to get information about the confession of the spouse, which was the main indicator of his/her nationality. Potapov endeavoured to define the confessional principle more clearly and issue permits for land purchase to all Orthodox believers irrespective of the spouse's confession; he, nevertheless, denied that right to Protestants married to Catholics (the children of such families could be both Catholic and Protestant). The committee of ministers, however, indicated in 1868 that the spouse's confession was should not be taken into account.⁶⁷

Later the following tendency could be noticed: when applications to purchase land were submitted by persons of Protestant faith married to Catholics, permits were issued if all the children were Protestant,⁶⁸ and the authorities refused to satisfy the requests if there were any Catholic children in the family.⁶⁹ Single Protestant persons received permission to purchase land without restrictions.⁷⁰

The indication not to identify confession and nationality, contained in the decree of 1865, was observed, however, only in the

⁶⁶ Governor general of Vilnius to the tsar, the report of 10 February 1868, *ibid.*, l. 121-124.

⁶⁷ Minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 30 June 1868, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 161-162; *Исторический обзор деятельности Комитета Министров*, т. 3, ч. 1: *Царствование императора Александра Второго (1855 г. февраля 19 – 1881 г. марта 1)* (Санкт Петербург, 1902), с. 199-200; Hrabia Leliwa, *Zarys*, s. 13.

⁶⁸ Governor of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 30 March 1870 and to the special chancery under governor general of Vilnius for the settlement of Russian landowners, letter of 7 April 1870, LVIA, f. 378, BS, 1870, b. 1330, d. 1, l. 127, l. 58; governor of Minsk to governor general of Vilnius, letter (and a note about the issuance of the permission) of 6 October 1870, *ibid.*, d. 2, l. 198.

⁶⁹ Minister of internal affairs to the state secretary responsible for the applications addressed to the tsar, letter of 2 April 1869, a copy of a copy, *ibid.*, d. 1, l. 90-91; the document published in *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 221; Hrabia Leliwa, *Zarys*, s. 11, 18; governor general of Kiev to minister of internal affairs, letter of 4 November 1869, RGIA, f. 1284, op. 189, 1865, d. 4, l. 246-7.

⁷⁰ Governor of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 26 July 1870 and to the special chancery under governor general of Vilnius for the settlement of Russian landowners, letter of 28 September 1870, LVIA, f. 378, BS, 1870, b. 1330, d. 2, l. 55, 187, etc.

cases when a person passed from the Catholic faith to Orthodoxy. In 1869 it was indicated not to grant the right to purchase estates to such persons,⁷¹ i.e., not to consider them 'Russians'. However, before that time some of them, for example, Feliks Landsberg had already received such permission.⁷² In later years there were cases when local authorities were inclined to refuse permission to purchase land in the Western Provinces for persons having recently converted to Orthodoxy. Thus, the governor of Minsk evidently did not see any obstacles for the townsman of Nowogrudok a sacristan of one of the Orthodox churches Ivan Shishko to purchase land, because his whole family changed the confession.⁷³ The governor general of Vilnius, however, indicated that the aforementioned regulation of 1869 had to be observed, and Shishko was refused permission.⁷⁴ There were more applications of that sort, and all of them were rejected.⁷⁵ The minister of internal affairs also explained to the governor of Mogilev, who considered confession the main criterion of nationality: 'persons of Polish descent, accepting Orthodoxy, do not change their nationality ...'.⁷⁶ It could be suspected that the government made attempts to encourage people to accept Orthodoxy, often mistrusting them and fearing that such steps could be caused by material considerations.

The case of Adam Kniazhishcha explains why the aspect of origin was not important in this context. This person of Catholic faith accepted Orthodoxy, however, the governor of Vitebsk refused to give him permission since Kniazhishcha was 'a direct heir of a person of

⁷¹ Governor general to governors, circular instruction of 17 October 1869, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 208-209.

⁷² Governor general of Vilnius to governor of Kaunas, letter of 14 June 1869; governor of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 30 July 1869, the special chancery under governor general of Vilnius for the settlement of Russian landowners to the police precinct of Novoaleksandrovsk (now Zarasai) district, letter of 18 September 1869, LVIA, f. 378, bs, 1869, b. 1861, l. 3, 4, 5. The fact that Landsberg had come from the Baltic Provinces (no precise place indication) could have helped him.

⁷³ Governor of Minsk to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 31 January 1870, *ibid.*, 1870, b. 1330, d. 1, l. 42.

⁷⁴ Governor general of Vilnius to governor of Minsk, letter of 7 February 1870, *ibid.*, l. 50-51.

⁷⁵ Governor of Minsk to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 13 August 1870, the special chancery under governor general of Vilnius for the settlement of Russian landowners to the police precinct of Igumen, letter of 31 August 1870, *ibid.*, d. 2, l. 107-108, 137.

⁷⁶ Minister of internal affairs to governor of Mogilev, letter of 26 November 1870. RGIA, f. 1284, op. 189, 1865, d. 4, l. 375-376.

Polish descent', he had 'not yet imbibed Russian nationalism', and besides his wife was a Catholic. Even the political reliability of this family did not play any greater role.⁷⁷ That was again a case of the identification of descent and confession.

Although the decree of 10 December 1865 clearly defined the social limits of Polishness, the problem of the attribution of Catholic peasants to 'the Poles' was often raised. Even the opinions of the governors general of Vilnius differed considerably. Konstantin von Kaufman considered that Catholic peasants were not Poles.⁷⁸ Eduard Baranov was inclined to forbid the peasants to purchase land,⁷⁹ and Aleksander Potapov attempted to get a sanction for that prohibition from Petersburg.⁸⁰ The Committee of Ministers decided not apply the prohibition to Catholic peasants.⁸¹ That decision was observed in practice.

The decree of 10 December 1865 indicated that the exiled owners of the sequestrated estates in the Western Territory had to sell their estates in the period of two years to 'Orthodox and Protestant persons of Russian descent'. In this context the concept of 'the Russian' rather than of 'the Pole' is of interest. This concept, which appeared as a result of the political situation,⁸² was treated variously. Its application depended on the particular aspect emphasized in the term. If stress was placed on origin, the term could exclude the Baltic Germans – namely in that way the decree was interpreted by the governor of Kaunas.⁸³ On the other hand, Protestantism was primarily associated by the Russian officials with the Baltic Provinces and their social élite. This ambiguity was eliminated by Aleksander II at the

⁷⁷ Governor of Vitebsk to minister of internal affairs, letter of 19 December 1869, minister of internal affairs to governor of Vitebsk, letter of 31 December 1869, *ibid.*, I. 274, 275.

⁷⁸ Governor general of Vilnius to governors, a confidential letter of 14 April 1866, *ibid.*, I. 147-148.

⁷⁹ Governor general of Vilnius to governor of Vitebsk, a copy of the letter of 7 December 1867, *ibid.*, I. 146.

⁸⁰ Governor general of Vilnius to minister of internal affairs, a copy of the letter of 3 (?) May 1868, *ibid.*, I. 140-141.

⁸¹ An extract from the 14 June journal of the Committee of Ministers, addressed to the minister of internal affairs on 18 June 1868, *ibid.*, I. 157-158; minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 3 July 1868, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 162-163; *Исторический обзор*, с. 197-198.

⁸² *Дневник П. А. Валуева министра Внутренних дел в двух томах*, т. 2: 1865-1876 (Москва, 1961), с. 419.

⁸³ Governor of Kaunas to governor general of Vilnius, letters of 19 and 20 October 1867, LVIA, f. 378, bs, 1866, b. 2381, d. 1, I. 155, 164, 318-319.

end of 1867 by indicating that the aforementioned term implied Baltic Germans as well.⁸⁴

Actually the same tendencies are observed in establishing the individual's nationality in granting privileges for the purchase of land in respect to 'persons of Russian descent'.

Conclusions

Our study, devoted to the analysis of the concept of 'the Pole' in the official Russian discourse in the 1860s, leads to the following conclusions:

1. No great difference has been observed between the spheres which did not require to establish the nationality of a particular person and conditionally defined practical fields.

2. The variety of the definitions of nationality was conditioned by the social polarization of society. Thus, different nationality definitions were necessary for different social groups.

3. In the decade under consideration the definitions of a 'Pole' and a 'Russian' depended on the context in which they were used. The application of different conceptions appeared not only due to the fact that the authorities solved different tasks in different fields, but also as a result of the absence of stable and clear-cut definitions in the outlook of Russian bureaucracy.

4. According to the dominating tendency (but not the rule) 'the Pole' was a Catholic of the Western Territory, not belonging to the estate of peasants. That definition was closer to the conception of the political nation of pre-modern times. At least in the sixties the strategy to differentiate between Catholicism and Polishness, advocated by Katkov and other representatives of the Russian ruling élite, had not gained ground.

5. The loyalty to the regime, or one might say, the Russian political identity permitted the social élite of the Catholic faith in the Western Territory to enjoy privileges equal with 'the Russians' only in the sphere of the percentage tax, i.e., 'the Poles' were not required to give up their ethnocultural and confessional individuality in order to be treated as 'the Russians'.

6. The conversion of a Catholic of the social élite in the Western Territory to Orthodoxy was a condition sufficient enough to earn him the right to work as a civil servant or a teacher and to be exempted from the percentage taxes, but not to purchase land. Thus, only in the two cases confession was treated as an essential attribute of nationality,

⁸⁴ Minister of internal affairs to governor general of Vilnius, letter of 28 October 1867, *Сборник распоряжений*, с. 109.

while in land purchase the formal acceptance of Orthodoxy did not enable the converts to acquire the privileges, equal with ‘the Russians’.

7. After the Uprising of 1863-1864 a tendency prevailed to perceive descent as an ethnic category in the definition of ‘the Russian’ and as a territorial and political one in the case of ‘the Pole’ in the terms ‘a person of Polish descent and Catholic faith’ and ‘a person of Russian descent and Orthodox faith’. This difference was not observed with regard to land purchase.

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„LENKAS“ RUSIJOS VALDŽIOS POLITIKOJE: SEMANTIKA IR PRAKTIKA (XIX A. VIDURYS)

Santrauka

DARIUS STALIŪNAS

Šio straipsnio objektas – Rusijos „tautinė politika“. Čia tiriama, kokį socialinį turinį valdžios pareigūnai, o taip pat įtakingiausi publicistai suteikdavo pagrindinio Rusijos priešo – „lenko“ supratimui Šiaurės Vakarų krašte 7-ame dešimtmetyje. Toks tyrimas turi parodyti, kaip buvo vertinami lietuviai bei baltarusiai (t. y. valstiečiai) Rusijos „tautinėje politikoje“ – ar jie sutapatinti su „lenkais“, ar priešingai – traktuoti kaip valdžios atrama. Nedidelė straipsnio apimtis verčia tyrimą riboti tik 7-uoju XIX a. dešimtmečiu.

Šis tyrimas leidžia padaryti išvadą, jog XIX a. 7-ajame dešimtmetyje oficialiajame rusiškame diskurse vyravo tendencija, bet ne taisyklė, „lenku“ laikyti iš Vakarų krašto kilusį, ne valstiečių luomui priklausiusį kataliką. Tokia definicija artimesnė iki moderniams laikams būdingai politinės tautos sampratai. Taigi bent jau 7-ame dešimtmetyje neįsigalėjo Michailo Katkovo ir kai kurių kitų Rusijos valdančiojo elito narių propaguota strategija atskirti katalikybę ir lenkiškumą.

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