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# WEST-RUSSIAN PUBLICISTS OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract.** In the Russian imperial discourse of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the North-Western Territory was often integrated with the South-Western Territory – speaking of the North-South-Western Territory region as a cross point of various burning social and national issues, relevant to the Western Russian periphery: such as the Polish question and other related issues, which would eventually turn into the Russian question – that is the issue of the boundaries of Russian political nation. Among the peripheral Russian nationalists, two conditional trends can be distinguished – the “southern” (Kievan) one, which tended to favor Katkov nationalism, and the “Northern” one (Vilna), which favoured the Slavophile version of nationalism. The first belonged primarily to the editorial stuff of the newspaper “Kievljanin” – V.Ia. Shulgin and his associates, including a prominent local public figure M.V. Yuzefovich. The most prominent representatives of the Vilna circle were I.P. Kornilov, M.O. Koialovich, K.A. Govorskii, I.G. Kulzhinskii, P.A. Kulakovskii. Their political outlook was a peculiar combination of “elements” typical of their era: nationalism, democratism, monarchism and a service ethos. By the end of the century, the differences between the two directions had finally levelled out, forming the environment from which Russian political nationalism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century grew: P.A. Stolypin and his followers, “Russian outlying society”, the Kievan club of Russian nationalists, etc.

**Keywords:** nationalism, conservatism, Western Russianism, the Polish question, Slavophilism, Katkov, Shulgin, Yuzefovich, Govorsky, Kulakovskiy, Koyalovich.

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# ЗАПАДНОРУССКИЕ ПУБЛИЦИСТЫ XIX в.<sup>1</sup>

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**Аннотация.** В русском имперском дискурсе второй половины XIX в. Северо-Западный край часто объединяли с Юго-Западным – говоря о Северо-Юго-Западном крае как о месте переплетения актуальных для западнорусских окраин социальных и национальных «вопросов», в конечном итоге «перетекавших» в вопрос русский – т. е. вопрос о границах русской политической нации. В среде окраинных русских националистов можно выделить два условных направления – «южное» (киевское), тяготевшее к катковскому национализму; «северное» (виленское), тяготевшее в славянофильской версии национализма. К первому принадлежала прежде всего редакция газеты «Киевлянин» – В.Я. Шульгин и его окружение, в том числе крупный местный общественный деятель М.В. Юзефович. Наиболее яркими представителями виленского круга были И.П. Корнилов, М.О. Коялович, К.А. Говорский, И.Г. Кулжинский, П.А. Кулаковский. Их политическое мировоззрение представляло собой своеобразное сочетание стандартных для своей эпохи «деталей»: национализма, демократизма, монархизма и служилого этоса. К концу столетия различия между двумя направлениями окончательно стерлись, образовав ту среду, из которой вырос русский политический национализм XX в.: П.А. Столыпин и его окружение, «Русское окраинное общество», Киевский клуб русских националистов и т. д.

**Ключевые слова:** национализм, консерватизм, западнорусизм, польский вопрос, славянофильство, Катков, Шульгин, Юзефович, Говорский, Кулаковский, Коялович.

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Western Russianism is not a new topic for Russian historiography – one can consider, for example, a monograph by Tsikevich [Цыкевич, 1993] or a recent thematic issue of “Workbooks on Conservatism” (No. 2, 2020). At the same time the issues, addressed by specialists in Western Russian studies, were by no means unique. North-Western region often used to be integrated with the South-Western one in the imperial discourse of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with regard to the North-South-Western region as a cross point of various burning social and national issues, relevant to the Western Russian periphery, such as the Polish question and other related issues, which would eventually turn into the Russian question – that is the issue of the boundaries of Russian political nation.

Both the North-Western leaders of Vilna and the South-Western leaders of Kiev belonged to the “old Russian party,” being Russian nationalists in the broad sense of this word. Having emerged in the periphery, they tended to reach for some metropolitan leaders, representing different circles of this movement, with the circle of Vilna embodying in many ways the ideas, close to the conservative-democratic Slavophile trend, while the Kievan circle – the “bureaucratic nationalism” of Katkov [Kotov, 2019, p. 41–90].

The Kievan circle evolved from the editorial staff of “Kievlіanin” (Kiever) journal in the 1860-s. Among its members there were local officials, Zemsky figures, professors of Kiev University – N.K. Rennencampf and N.Kh. Bunge and many others. V.Ia. Shulgin, the editor of “Kievlіanin”, and an important local public figure M.V. Yuzefovich were recognized as leaders of the circle. Tending to favor Katkov’s version of Russian nationalism “the Kievers” supported Katkov’s approach in addressing the Russian and Polish questions: the russification of Catholic and Jewish worship service and the transformation of local Poles and Jews into Russian Catholics and Russian Jews respectively. The motto “This land is Russian, Russian, Russian”, pledged by the journal, became the “Symbol of faith” for its editorial office and the brimstone for the local and central liberal media. The periodical, thus, announced its siding with the “Russian party”, whose recognized herald of that time was Katkov’s newspaper “Moskovskie vedomosti” (Moscow Bulletin). This unity was pointed out by the authorities as well: according to the Kiev individual censor’s report, “Kievlіanin” was “mostly guided by the ideas of “Moskovskie vedomosti”, without specifying the source” [RGIA, f. 776, inv. 11, d. 93, p. 173]. However, under the next editor – D.I. Pikhno – “Kievlіanin” contained more articles, focusing on economy, rather than ideology: depending on the number of subscribers, the newspaper changed focus from “Moskovskie vedomosti” to “Novoe vremia” (New Time), edited by A.S. Suvorin.

The newspaper always described its main objective as the protection of the Russian Cause in the region. In 1868, “Kievlіanin” once again claimed: “We do not advocate national hostility; but have our own view of the so-called ‘reconciliation theory’, based on our deep knowledge of the history of the region and bitter lessons of the past”. According to Vitalii Iakovlevich, all these statements “enjoy considerable support of part of the Russian society with appropriate national education and are propagated by those Russian media, which are honest both in language and spirit” [Kievlіanin, 1868, No. 126].

In addition to Shulgin, M.V. Yuzefovich also became one of the main promoters of anti-Polish agenda in "Kievlainin". He generally shared the views of Slavophiles: the non-violent character of the Russian power, the communality and altruism of the Russian people. However, in contrast to Slavophiles, he viewed the state not as a "bureaucratic link between the tsar and the people", but, like a community, rather as a natural development from the "helm of Varyags to the Monomakh Cap" [Yuzefovich, 1906, p. 14]. Later on, mocking the remark of Decembrist Lorer about Russian "arrogant despotism", Yuzefovich commented: "This arrogant despotism has liberated 20 million of serfs and laid such foundations of Russian life, the Russian Europeans of 1825 could not even dream about" [Lorer, 1984, p. 181]. It was this "natural" and "democratic" character of Russian monarchy that endowed it with Cesarean features: "All the swords of Napoleon can't be compared to the axe of Peter the Great" [quoted from: Nechkin, 1984, p. 31]. Yuzefovich's democratism was, on his own account, of conservative nature: "Our Russian democratism is nothing but genuine, selfless, inborn Russian humanism, and our communal concept of the nation embraces all its elements and members, from the tsar to the humblest person" [Yuzefovich, 1862, p. 35–36].

The writings of Shulgin and Yuzefovich, as of many other nationalists of that time, were directed against class disparity and, in the first place, against the Polish *Szlachta* versus the Polish people: "What is the history of Poland? It is the life of one social class in a state with no people and no government: with a royal puppet above and totally enslaved, powerless people underneath". Having combined Slavic democratism with German aristocracy this caste generated into that unparalleled political anomaly, which was called the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita*)..." [Yuzefovich, 1873, p. 12].

Nevertheless, Mikhail Vladimirovich, following the tradition of Slavophilism, separated the Polish people from *Szlachta*: "We have learnt enough about the history of Poland [...], not to blend together such heterogeneous elements as the Polish people, which did not even exist as a historical factor, and *Szlachta*, parasitizing on it and draining it dry. The present-day Polish people is like a new-born baby, lifted from a baptistery and spiritually adopted by Russia" [Yuzefovich, 1873, p. 25].

Generally speaking, the views of M.V. Yuzefovich were similar to those of Katkov. In this regard his article "Nationality and State", which at its core in many respects corresponded to the national program of Katkov and was enthusiastically cited by a follower of Katkov M.F. De-Pule in "Vilenskii Vestnik" (Bulletin of Vilna), represents an illustrative example of this. In this article Yuzefovich claimed that: "The relevance of Russian nationality can't be confined exclusively to the Russian state, as the state is a political rather than ethnographic system. If it needs some concentration of people's life, the territory serves as the main condition for its existence. Due to this fact, it is not enough to say that the state does not necessarily need ethnic homogeneity, but, on the contrary, within such vast geographical reaches, as Russia, which by their own nature are designed to host states, any call for such homogeneity would jeopardize the very existence of the state. The state needs political rather than ethnographic unity, and conditions for this in Russia are as favorable as anywhere else. These conditions are limited to the so-called political nationality, which doesn't have to penetrate deeply into someone's personality, but is content

with such unifying factors, as a name (of the country), the language and political laws [...]. Every Russian subject, regardless of his ethnicity and faith, is not only entitled, but obliged to consider and call himself Russian. Restricting such demands of the state with respect to nationality or expanding them further, merging two elements – the state and the people, would undermine the very idea of the state unity” [Yuzefovich, 1867].

Yuzefovich also spoke out against the identification of “russianness” with Orthodoxy: “Russian people, living on Russian territory cannot regard themselves as people of other ethnicity [...]. However, according to the theory of Russian Orthodoxy, they are not allowed to be Russians, as they profess other religions. That is to say, that they are not allowed to fill the abyss, which separates us from them. Therefore, we have to make them (Catholics – A.K.), even force them to remain Poles! [...] No matter how fully we are committed to the Orthodox faith, we cannot accept the demands of this theory, which is so merciless in its intention to separate the constituent parts of the state from its national center”. Thus, Yuzefovich supported Katkov’s program of the russification of Catholics: “If only the authorities were brave enough to voice their demands for the ban on the Polish language, customs and names in all spheres of public life here, for many people, who are convinced of their Russian origin, these demands could show the way to an honest solution to their plight [...]. With this end in mind, we shouldn’t care much about religious issues. Moreover, the return of these Russians, accustomed to Polish ways, to their ethnic origin would give Catholicism the only weapon which can hurt us, – the weapon of *polshizna* (Polish influence)”. The publicist believed, that it was enough to delete the words a “Roman citizen” from Catholic church formulae and the rest could be left to time and that irresistible force, every truth contains, especially such truth as Orthodox Christianity” [Yuzefovich, 1867].

However, with respect to the third, critical for the South-Western region issue – the Ukrainian one – “Kievlianin” departed far from Katkov’s approach. While Katkov firmly rejected the concept of the “three Russian peoples” [Kotov, 2014, p. 6–12], Shulgin, on the contrary, tended to accept it: “our editorial stuff examines the relationship of *velikorossy*, *malorossy* and *belorossy* (Great Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians) not exclusively from the perspective of the Great Russian, *Khokhlomano-Lvov* (ironic name for Ukrainian nationalists from Lvov) or *Szlachta*-Polish positions: they consider these three groups to be three siblings, three manifestations of one Russian people. Not only the superficial bonds of the state bring them together, their unity is rooted in the distant past; it got into the bloodstream of one single body with common faith, origin and language, it is a historic unity, and none of these theorists, sitting around in their offices, or unrecognized provincial patriots can ever break this connection” [Kievlianin, 1864, No. 1].

Rightly viewing Ukrainian nationalism as a manifestation of the Russian liberation movement, the newspaper recommended distinguishing between the Ukrainiaphilism of the 1840-s and that of the 1860-s: “There is a huge gap between the Ukrainiaphilism of the 1840s, some worthy representatives of which are still active, and the separatism of these days [...]. Those, who are unfamiliar with our Ukrainiaphile circle, cannot even imagine the perversity of attitudes, typical of this milieu, which definitely deserves a better lot. Most ordinary, common things appear to look quite unattractive in their eyes. They will take any

absurdity at face value, provided this absurdity has a liberal connotation. The saddest thing is that our Ukrainiaphiles put dumb blind faith in the idea, that the truth lives only in *gromada* (Ukrainian community), that they are surrounded by lies, violence, incompetence and backwardness" [Kievlianin, 1864, No. 64].

A distinctive link between Kiev and Vilna circles of peripheral nationalists was "Vestnik iugo-zapadnoi i zapadnoi Rossii" (the Bulletin of South-Western and Western Russia), a journal, edited by a historian and archeologist K.A. Govorskii's. The journal was founded in 1862 in Kiev. In 1864, at the initiative of M.N. Muraviev and I.P. Kornilov it moved to Vilna, where it was published under the name "Vestnik zapadnoi Rossii" (the Bulletin of Western Russia). Govorskii articulated the goals of his periodical: "Having come across various fictional, quasi-historical speculations on Polish identity, imposed by the Polish publicists on purely Russian provinces of Western and South-Western Russia, and having in our possession a large body of archive historical documents, capable of unmasking these fabricated stories, which nobody tried to denounce and which could be considered authentic not only by the peoples of Western Europe, but in the above-mentioned Russian provinces as well, I decided to start "Vestnik iugo-zapadnoi i zapadnoi Rossii" in Kiev with the end of publishing interesting documents as well as historical articles, based on them, and other studies on Russian identity in order to expose Polish attacks against Russia by means of historical records [OR RNB, f. 377, inv. 597, p. 1–1 both sides].

As other periodicals of the "Russian trend", "Vestnik" engaged in heated debates on the theory of Franciszek Duchinsky, who attributed Turanian origin to the Great Russians. A separate text, called "Kolossalnaia nelepost" (Gross Absurdity) was dedicated to this theory. The editors emphasized that "identifying the Great Russian people as Tartars is one of the most common insinuations on the part of our Polish contemporaries..." [An example of international peacefulness..., 1862, p. 79]. The text provides a detailed account of a "new historical program", whose motto was "to serve the cause of universal peace and to appease ethnic rivalry" and which by the design of its founder was supposed to "be introduced into universal history curriculum at secondary schools in France" [Kolossalnaia nelepost, 1864, p. 77].

Mocking the system of the division of peoples "in terms of physiological-psychological and physiological-moral aspects" into Aryans and Turanians, developed by an "eccentric professor", the critic summarized its main message in the following sentences: "the fact that *Moscals* are Turanians is not only proved by science, but should be universally recognized for the sake of all humankind. *Moscals* are recognized as Turanians from the physiological-psychological and physiological-moral points of view, with such factors as facial structure, religion and language not being taken into consideration. *Moscals* are closely related to Chinese and black people. With regard to ideas, legislation, state system and administration they (*Moscals*), like Chinese, demonstrate the same trends as black people and Native Americans in their everyday life. The federal features, intrinsic to Aryans – Latin-German-Slavic peoples – had stopped at the bed of the river Dnieper. On the other side of this river, like at the time of Herodotus, there live the peoples, devoid of any seeds of federalism [Kolossalnaia nelepost, 1864, p. 81].

The methodology of the Polish forerunner of Eurasianism was easily refuted by applying it to a definitely European country: "... Most of the traits, attributed by mister Duchinsky to the so-called Turanian branch, are successfully applicable to France: the all-consuming power, the government, which keeps everything under control and suppresses personal enthusiasm and independence of the society [...]; the idea of equality, annihilating any possibility of freedom; the lack of regional autonomy, and, finally, the main merit of France – inviolable state unity, which rules out any possible elements of federation... One more fact speaks in favor of the Turanian characteristic of France – it was on the French ground, where the doctrine of Turanianism, which denied the idea of property and stigmatized it as theft, developed. "La propriete c'est le vol", – this statement originated in France" [Kolossalnaia nelepost, 1864, p. 84].

To undermine the theory of "Moscow Turanianism" "Vestnik" could not but resort to the concept of Polish "sarmatism": "Quixotic *zuchwalstwo* (bragging), sensual indulgence, vanity, the predominance of imagination over spirituality, the disdain of an Asian satrap for a slave – all this is in perfect tune with the Sarmat origin of the Poles" [An example of international peacefulness..., 1862, p. 94].

The keynote of "Vestnik's" publications was the idea of the backwardness of Rzeczpospolita's political system and political culture as opposed to the progressive nature of Russian autocracy. Poland "had adopted only the superficial aspects of Western education", while Russia, due to the reforms of Peter the Great, managed to "soften" "some of our purely national stupidities". That is why "the struggle of the Poles with Russia resembles the struggle of civilization against barbarism, <...> only the other way round, in the sense that Polish barbarians have confronted civilized Russia" [Russkie, 1863, p. 128].

From the very start the anti-Polish publications of the journal drew inspiration from the anti-class rather than ethno-nationalist rhetoric and continued the enmity between the "old Russian party" and the advocates of class conservatism. The position of Govorskii in this confrontation can be outlined as consistently conservative-democratic. The editor of "Vestnik zapadnoi Rossii" claimed that it was the small-scale landownership that had to play a key role in Western Russian provinces: "for Russian and Belorussian peasants – the richer the lord is, the more suspicious and ironic their feelings towards him are and the less they believe in his good attitude and compassion" [Krupnye i melkie zemlevladeltsy v zapadnoi Rossii, 1866, p. 31] (Big and Small Landlords of Western Russia).

The journal emphasized: "Aristocracy in general easily becomes indifferent to the religious concerns and century-old traditions and legends of its country if its class and clan interests can benefit from this" [Materialy dlia istorii goneniia pravoslavnykh..., 1863, p. 18] (On the persecution of the Orthodox). The editors regarded class conservatives as revolutionaries – as both of them were eager to enslave Russian people. In the 1860s, the authors of the journal saw the alternative to class-aristocratic and revolutionary excesses in the "conservative-progressive trend" [Sakovich, 1862, p. 228], which they believed to be supported by the government.



One of the regular authors of "Vestnik zapadnoi Rossii" was I.G. Kulzhinskii. Both in terms of age and worldview he was a man of Nikolaevskaia era. Famous as one of Nikolai Gogol's tutors, he spoke out as a consistent opponent of revolutionary and republican ideas, at the same time being convinced that their circulation was promoted by the Sacred union ideology with its rejection of the national component [Kulzhinskii, 1919, p. 1–2]. Thus, he criticized the revolutionary movement from the positions of nationalism rather than class conservatism.

As a matter of fact, Kulzhinskii denounced revolutionary ideas not for their progressive character, but for the false progressives, they embodied, dragging human beings down to the level of an animal. "It is clear that these pitiful progressive theorists and practitioners actually hijacked the idea of progress, and the progress they advocate means plunging into the dark days of paganism. It is not surprising, that many of those, who do not see any Christian progress in modern society, but run into these usurpers with their false statements everywhere, speak out against this progress. How can it be otherwise? Regretfully, the reputation of progress suffers without a cause, as there is no progress here, and what presents itself as progress, is nothing more than the most pathetic backsliding, raw animal passions, moral degradation, dullness of mind, true paganism!..." [Kulzhinskii, 1881, p. 3].

In the 1860s, Kulzhinskii joined the anti-Ukrainiaphile oriented debates. In his eyes Ukrainiaphilism was "an illegitimate child of Russianism and Polishness, which was born in the kitchen and grew up in the backyard of human thought and speech" [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 28]. Now Kulzhinskii refers to Ukrainiaphiles getting commercial advantage of the "tendency towards bringing back sad memories", typical of the Malorussian common folk [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 4–5]. With respect to "Malorussian dialect" Kulzhinskii considered it to have been a variant of "ordinary Russian language", with some of its specific features, such as "Polish borrowings" and peculiar misspelling, introduced by local writers, being a "commercial trick" and mostly a distortion, caused by the "change of word endings and specific pronunciation of some words" [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 24].

Hence the need for an appropriate – in the spirit of classicism – policy towards the Malorussian dialect: "any distortion, including a distorted language, should be corrected rather than raised to a fantastical level of normality and independence. Thereby, efforts should be made to encourage the speakers of the Malorussian dialect to speak Russian properly. All rational Malorussians are trying to promote this at their homes and schools. The Malorussians, who have lived in Galicia for a long time, pursue the same goal..." [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 12]. However, even having expressed this opinion, Ivan Grigorievich did not completely break up with his former fascination with Malorussian countryside poetics. While not objecting to the fondness for local Ukrainian distinctiveness, he used to compare it with our love for some household objects – a cap and a dressing gown "which we can consider comfortable, but do not wear in public" [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 24].

In his historical works Kulzhinskii adhered to the concepts, developed by Pogodin and Ustrialov, defining Ukraine, Belorussia and Lithuania as primordially Russian lands. He



identified the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as the “Great Duchy of Russia” with a small number of pagans-Lithuanians, who had already converted to the Orthodox faith. (Regardless of modern trends he distinguished between these people and local “rusiny”, i.e. Belarusians) [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 30]. Consequently, the “Lithuanian Rus’ sooner or later was destined to be reunited with the Muscovite Rus due to the natural attraction of homogeneous elements”. The same was expected to happen to Poland, which had merged with the “Lithuanian Rus’” and “arguing against these developments was like arguing against the laws of nature and history” [Kulzhinskii, 1863, p. 32].

“Vilna circle of the advocates of Russification” was headed by the patron of the school district of Vilna I.P. Kornilov, one of the closest associates of M.N. Muraviev. Under the leadership of a notorious “hangman” and his no less “reactionary” successor K.P. Kaufman Kornilov acted with great enthusiasm: In Vilna he founded a branch of the Imperial Geographical Society, an art school, a public library and an archive, where he accumulated locally found old Russian written artifacts. The patron of the school district of Vilna also contributed to the organization of some parochial brotherhoods in the region.

Anticipating the subsequent idea of history as of past-oriented politics, Kornilov viewed research in the field of Lithuanian and Belarusian history mainly as a tool of political struggle: “Stark ruthless transparency accompanied by broad-based historical research and the findings of archeology, ethnography and statistics will inflict a fatal blow to the doctrine, based on prejudice and self-serving, despotic interests of the moribund *Szlachta*” [Kornilov, 1908, p. 146].

The foundation of the net of public schools also played an important role. However, Lithuanian and Belarusian peasantry was unable to supply local teaching cadres; Kornilov engaged in correspondence with M.P. Pogodin, M.N. Katkov and I.S. Aksakov — as a result — his “stuff departments” were replenished with Moscow university and the most influential “Russian trend” newspapers of the time — “Den” (the Day) and “Moskovskie vedomosti”.

Another centre of the local and invited cultured Russian officials was associated with Kornilov’s “circle of the advocates of russification”. Among its members there were such close associates of the patron of the school district of Vilna as: A.V. Rachinskii, V.P. Kulin, N.N. Novikov, A.I. Zabelin and others. Since the circle conducted weekly meetings on Saturdays at the apartment of district inspector V.P. Kulin, the ill-wishers nick-named the circle “a bunch of Kulin’s and Kaufman’s henchmen” [Komzolova, 2004, p. 125].

With regard to his views, I.P. Kornilov was a nationalist of the Slavophile trend. Engaging in debates “with some people of high rank, who do not attach importance to national and religious differences”, the writer insisted that “...a thousand-year history of the Russian state, the isolation of the Russian people and the very principle of Russian autocracy are preserved not by the outsiders and gentiles, living in Russia, but by native Russians, adhering to the Orthodox faith, which is a cornerstone of Russian statehood”. In order to confirm this statement Kornilov would refer to history: “...If the backbone of our army had been constituted by Poles, Jews and other outsiders instead of Russians, we would

not have had the records of 1612 and 1812 events in our chronicles, would not have known Minin, Susanin, Borodino battle and the Defense of Sevastopol. Talking about the future, it is not outsiders and gentiles, who will support Russia and its autocracy...". Therefore "...Russian state officials, responsible for preserving Russia's integrity, honor, dignity and well-being, should never forget that the Russian state and its autocratic form of government are supported and preserved by the Russian Orthodox people, which constitutes the core element of Russian statehood" [Kornilov, 1897, p. 5–6].

On the other hand, Kornilov was disgusted by Katkov's idea of "*raspoliachivanie kostela*", i.e. the russification of Catholicism and the conversion of Poles into Russian Catholics. As a patron of Vilna district he could not ignore the "importance of the executive order to teach Roman Catholic doctrine at the gymnasiums and local schools of Vilna school district in the Russian language" [LVIA, fund. 439, file. 69, p. 9]. However, in his capacity as a publicist Ivan Petrovich emphasized that "Catholicism will never change its nature, no matter in what language it is preached. It is religious beliefs that define the people's character and form their views rather than sounds and words, they are expressed in". "Herzen published his 'Kolokol' (the Bell) in Russian and count Tolstoy wrote his gospel in Russian, confusing his followers. Stunde is also taught in this language. It is not a language itself that poses a threat, but ideas and teachings, propagated through it. The introduction of Catholic service in Russian will not protect simple-hearted Belarusian peasants, practicing Catholicism, from the cunning sermons of their parish priests" [Kornilov, 1897, p. 4–5].

Kornilov's rejection of "Russian Catholicism" resulted in his falling out with M.N. Katkov in the 1860-s. The conflict is evident in their publications as well and dates back to the summer of 1866, when Zabelin's "Vilenskii Vestnik" published an article by historian M.O. Koialovich, who was closely associated with Kornilov's circle. The article was titled "'Moskovskie Vedomosti' and Western Russia (Russian Catholicism and Russian Judaism)" and accused the newspaper of disregarding Orthodox Christianity. According to Koialovich, due to some specific features of "Moskovskie Vedomosti", "incompatible with the Western Russian lifestyle", "unbelievable things in the matter of the separation of nationality from faith" came about. The historian insisted that "'Moskovskie Vedomosti' in addition to political and civic dimensions has a so-called intellectual dimension. Intelligentsia is their only vehicle, which provides access to politics and state affairs. As for the people... Who are the people in the eyes of 'Moskovskie Vedomosti'? Something they know nothing about and do not want to know". Koialovich viewed the separation of religion from the life of the people as nihilism and pointed out "that the theory of the separation of religion from faith can be legitimized only in such a case ... when intelligentsia has the right and tendency to legitimize things, without asking the people what they actually need...The relationship of our intelligentsia and the people is different. It is not entitled to legitimize things, imposing them on the people [Vilenskii Vestnik, 1866, No. 146]. Obviously, Koialovich considered these publications of Katkov to be the mouthpiece of that very intelligentsia, from which, according to Slavophiles, the "non-national" bureaucracy was recruited. The latter was supposed to pose the same threat to

the common Orthodox people, as Polish gentry (*panstvo*) – as it was for a reason that he characterized some foreign-born activists of the Russian administration of Vilna as the “Germans of this country” [Vilenskii vestnik, 1866, No. 146].

For Koialovich the main criterion for Russianness was Orthodox Christianity, with the local Orthodox clergy serving as its main pillar. The historian argued that with regard to a particular individual priest “his national or ethnic identity made no difference to the Church and congregation; whether he is a Greek, an Arab, a Georgian, a western Slav or a great Russian – they all make Good Shepherds for Western Russian people” [Koialovich, 1863, p. 22]. However, at the national level, a different kind of logic needs to be applied: “Look at this issue at a different angle, imagine that it is not the case of some particular foreign-born priests, doing pastoral service in Western Russia, but all the Western Russian clergy were suddenly replaced by Orthodox Priests of different nationality no matter how worthy they were. Wouldn’t you be convinced that such a change might hinder the progress of Orthodoxy in our country and give rise to a very dangerous for our faith hostility between the clergy and the people? At least history knows many examples of such animosity, Russian history, in particular. More than once the Russians made persistent attempts to overthrow the highest foreign hierarchy, concentrated in the hands of one person, – of Greek origin”. The historian argued that “the clergy *en masse*, in addition to the qualities of a universal shepherd is expected to have other closer bonds with its flock. These are the bonds of historical unity of the shepherd and the people – common origin, way of thinking, feeling, historical traditions and objectives” [Koialovich, 1863, p. 22].

As time went on M.O. Koialovich was becoming more and more pessimistic about the social processes, that took place in the region, emphasizing new serious problems, such as: “separatism between Eastern and Western Russians” and an even more dangerous pursuit of material wealth, nearly all the Western Russian clergy became so infatuated with” [Koialovich, 1882b, p. 380]. Koialovich believed this to be a consequence of an all-Russian evil, which he featured in a quite Slavophile way: “Recently Russia has been consistently loosing young Russian resources at the time when educated people are facing more and more work to be done in Russia, and ...as we are losing these Russian resources, the outside forces and foreign religions are gaining ground. We are convinced that it is not a coincidence. Thus, old Western Europe is deliberately ruining our forces to replace them with those of its own. This tendency has spread to a spiritual sphere as the last barrier; having destroyed it the outside forces and foreign religions will be able to act freely in Russia” [Koialovich, 1882b, p. 381].

This can definitely account for the actualization of the Polish threat: “Powerful propaganda in favor of Catholicism and *polonism* comes from Vilna and extends far beyond it. Pans (Polish lords) and Catholic priests spare no efforts to revitalize what remains from old Poland – Belarusian Catholics. Underground Polish schools are growing in cities and, in particular, in villages like mushrooms after rain; Polish books are being distributed to the people, temperance societies, headed by Catholic priests, have become active. Local Russian residents are amazed at the level of attention Polish activists lavish on the people and suggest that some carefully prepared program is being implemented”

[Koialovich, 1882a, p. 142–143]. Mikhail Osipovich did not forget to say a few words and drop a subtle hint to governor-general of Vilna A.L. Potapov: “He was undoubtedly a friend of the Poles. He is believed (actually it is regarded as common knowledge in Western Europe) to have been swearing on his knees about this friendship in front of a certain Polish lady in one of the Catholic churches in Minsk province. What great evil this friendship has generated! He might have damaged the Russian cause in Western Russia for five decades ahead!” [Koialovich, 1882a, p. 145].

It was A.L. Potapov who eliminated the “circle of the advocates of russification” in Vilna. Its members left for other cities. Later on in 1893 one of I.P. Kornilov’s young associates A. Vladimirov, summing up the results of the “russification” of the region in the journal “Russkoe obozrenie” (Russian Review), sounded even more pessimistic than Koialovich. In his article “O polozenii pravoslaviia v severo-zapadnom krae” (About the situation with Orthodoxy in North-Western region), dedicated to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the unification of Lithuanian and Western Russian lands with Russia, he pointed at the insufficient attention of the authorities and society to the russification of the region. The publicist associated the latter with the propagation of the Orthodox faith and refused to recognize the mission as completed: “Here we witness the mortal combat between two nationalities – Russian and Polish: will the Polish nationality be pushed beyond the Nemanus river or the Russian one – beyond the Dvina and Dnieper? Reconciliation is hardly possible here. The promise of peace, given by a Pole, is filled with deception and hypocrisy. Similar words, uttered by a Russian, attest to betrayal or folly”. However, the main targets of Vladimirov’s criticism fully in line with Russian conservative tradition were not the Poles, but rather “some Russian officials in the region, who successfully minded their own business and did not do their job as the ‘servants of the state’ properly or to be more precise did not do it at all” [Vladimirov, 1893, p. 621].

Another representative of the Western Russian journalism of a later period was Platon Kulakovskii, a renowned scholar and philologist. To be exact, he was a Western Russian both by origin and by self-identification. As a public figure he went far beyond the regional scale – having started as a professor of Russian literature at the Great School of Belgrade, he used to write for “Moskovskie vedomosti”, “Novoe vremia” (New Time) and “Rus” (Rus), then went on to edit the newspaper “Varshavskii dnevnik” (Warsaw Diary) and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was already engaged in the publication of “Okrainy Rossii” (Russian Periphery).

P.A. Kulakovskii by his own account “looked up at the authorities, such as Aksakov and Katkov”. At the same time he was well aware of the gap between himself and the Moscow “generals” of literature. For these reasons Platon Andreevich refused to accept A.A. Kireev’s offer of support with regard to taking up a vacant position of the editor of “Moskovskie vedomosti” after the death of M.N. Katkov and preferred to remain the editor of “may be small, but still significant newspaper ‘Varshavskii dnevnik’”, giving the following reasons for his refusal: “In spirit, education and upbringing and even in habits I am a Muscovite, but originally I come from Western Russia and this fact might be used as a pretext to diminish the importance of my opinion” [OR IRLI, f. 572, f. 50, p. 1–2].

In his democratism Kulakovskii proved to be more radical and at the same time more practical than his older comrades. Thus, in his letters to Aksakov he is indignant with Katkov's removal of some pieces from his article about local self-administration: "With all my due respect for M.N. Katkov, I have to state that his fear of the freedom of press and the free development of self-administration, – even in Serbia, – is quite irrelevant" [OR IRLI, f. 572, f. 14, p. 10]. Consequently, Kulakovskii's conservatism was of a pronounced "national-democratic" nature. The atmosphere, which established in Russia in the late 1880-s–early 1890-s, when Platon Andreevich's position as a publicist finally took shape, can largely account for this. In this period the so-called "Russian trend" of Katkov and Pobedonostsev, which seemed to have taken the upper hand under Alexander III, started to degenerate. Kulakovskii felt this as well. In a letter to A.A. Kireev he argues: "When Katkov took over 'Moskovskie vedomosti', the coast was clear: he had to fight petty egoism, often powerless and deceitful. Getting the lease and handling issues, related to the publication of the newspaper, also did not take much effort. Now the situation has changed, both in domestic and foreign policy, this is the time of troubles. I agree that some checks are needed, some things, which have got out of hand, should be taken under control. However, in times like this it is necessary to be careful not to push too hard, as it can cause damage [...] Now [...] it is time to challenge not only the unscrupulous broken 'liberalism', but also those, who adhere to ultra-conservative views, this is the duty of honest free journalism, which is in the service of the Tsar and the Fatherland" [OR IRLI, f. 572, f. 50, p. 1–1both sides].

At this stage it is impossible to distinguish between the Slavophile and Katkov's trends in Kulakovskii's texts. He supports both approaches and sees their disadvantages: the failure of the "russification of Catholicism" policy and the lack of russification capacity of Orthodox Christianity. At the same time just like his predecessors Kulakovskii criticized class conservatism and the advocates of imperial policy.

Thus, two conditional trends can be distinguished among the nationalists of the Russian periphery – the "southern one" (the Kievan), which favored the nationalism of Katkov, and the "northern one" (that of Vilna), which favored the Slavophile version of nationalism. Their political views represented a peculiar combination of "elements", typical of those times: nationalism, democratism, monarchism and service ethos. By the end of the century the differences between this trends had leveled out, having shaped the milieu, which gave rise to the Russian political nationalism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including P.A. Stolypin and his followers, "Russkoe okrainnoe obshchestvo" (Russian outlying society), the Kiev club of Russian nationalists and others.

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