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Constructing Lithuania: Ethnic Mapping in Tsarist Russia, ca. 1800-1914



# Constructing Lithuania

Ethnic Mapping in Tsarist Russia, ca. 1800-1914

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To my Father, Mother and  
brothers Juozas and Algir-  
das



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# Abbreviations

ARGO	– <i>Arkhiv Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva</i> (Russian Geographical Society’s Archive).
GDL	– The Grand Duchy of Lithuania.
GDF	– The Grand Duchy of Finland.
IRGS/RGS	– The Imperial Russian Geographical Society/ Russian Geographical Society.
LNМ	– Lithuanian National Movement.
LLC	– The Lithuanian-Latvian Commission.
LSS	– The Lithuanian Scientific Society.
NWS IRGS	– The North Western Section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, Vil’na (Vilnius).
PLC	– The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.
PSZRI	– <i>Polnyi Svod Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii</i> (1830), or <i>Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii</i> (all later editions).
SWS IRGS	– The South Western Section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, Kiev (Kiiv).
VED	– The Vil’na Educational District.
VUBRS	– <i>Vilniaus Universiteto Biblioteka Rankraščių Skyrius</i> (Vilnius University Library’s Manuscript’s Department).
ger.	– In German language.
lv.	– In Latvian language.
lt.	– In Lithuanian language.
pl.	– In Polish language.
rus.	– In Russian language.

## Note on Transliteration and Dates

In transliterating Russian names and titles, I have used the Library of Congress system. The same has been done with most of the Belarusian, Ukrainian and other names, which were originally written in Cyrillic. Moreover, titles published in the old Russian spelling were left unchanged, for example, in the phrase “Imperatorsk*ago* Russk*ago* Geografichesk*ago* Obshestva.”

In order to avoid confusion between the present-day and historical geographic nomenclature, I will use the names that can be found in 19<sup>th</sup>-century official Russian parlance. Some well-known geographic names, such as Moscow or St. Petersburg, are not altered and are left in their westernised forms.

Dates are given according to the Julian calendar, which in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was eleven, in the 19<sup>th</sup> – twelve and in the 20<sup>th</sup> – thirteen days behind the Western Gregorian calendar. This system existed until 31 January, 1918, when Russia adopted the Western calendar.

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Vytautas Petronis,  
October, 2007

# 1. Introduction

Each one of the Central European nationalities had its own bagful of statistical and cartographical tricks. When statistics failed, use was made of maps in colour. It would take a huge monograph to contain an analysis of all the types of map forgeries that the war and the peace conference called forth. A new instrument was discovered – the map language. A map was as good as a brilliant poster, and just being a map made it respectable, authentic. A perverted map was a life-belt to many a foundering argument.<sup>1</sup>

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a map can be worth a million – but beware. All maps distort reality.<sup>2</sup>

These impressions from the Paris Peace Conference recorded in 1919 by Isaiah Bowman, member of the American Geographic Society and Chief Territorial Adviser to the American Peace Commission, illustrate the symbiosis between nationalism and cartography. The Versailles conference was but an epilogue, however, to the long and arduous process that many nations had been required to undergo in order to conceive and subsequently map the territories that they considered to constitute their “fatherland,” and for which they needed the acknowledgement of the Great Powers. In this sense, the maps that were brought to Versailles were not merely illustrations of particular ethnic lands; they were also at the same time potent arguments in promoting a group’s national space.

The object of my study is to discover and describe the maps that prior to World War I presented the Lithuanian ethnic distribution or the broader outline of an imagined Lithuanian territory. Here I have employed an interdisciplinary approach, which includes current work in the fields of history, intellectual history and historical geography.

Moreover, a source-critical analysis of the maps will be used, treating them as historical documents. This analysis will be based on contextualising the production of the maps, which will encompass a detailed study of the

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah Bowman, “Constantinople and the Balkans,” in: Edward M. House, Charles Seymour (eds.), *What Really Happened in Paris: the Story of the Peace Conference, 1918-1919* (New York: 1921), p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> H. J. de Blij, “Foreword,” in: Mark Monmonier, *How to Lie with Maps* (Chicago and London: 1996), p. xi.

cartographer/ethnographer, the situation in which the map or investigation was made, the organisation or institution that sponsored the map, the public reception of the map and the use or interpretation of the map by administrators and politicians.

Therefore, in order to contextualise the maps this study presents considerable background information on the development of geographic science and geographic societies in the Russian Empire. This is especially necessary as Russian scientists dominated the map-making of Lithuanian ethnic territory for a long time.

My main research objects are the Lithuanians and the gradual definition of their ethnic territory. The novelty of this analysis lies in its usage of previously unexamined cartographic source material in the context of national territory building. Most previous historical works have explored this theme by focusing on the emergence of Lithuanian statehood, usually examining sources through the prism of political discussions and diplomacy – and primarily through the analysis of written sources.<sup>3</sup> However, the contours of the national space as such were discussed only in passing. Therefore, it remains unclear as to whether the Lithuanian nationalists actually knew at all where the Lithuanian ethnic/national territory was before and during the First World War. These doubts become even stronger when we examine the maps from this period, each of which depicted Lithuania with different borders. Even after the declaration of Lithuania's independence in 1918, and during the Peace conference in Versailles, some of the Lithuanian maps depicted a very abstract territory.<sup>4</sup>

Such inconsistencies led to the initial research questions posed by this thesis: how and when did Lithuanian ethnic territory appear on maps? What was the process of its emergence? During the different stages of collecting research material and inspecting cartographic sources, the list of questions expanded. It would appear that ethnic cartography is still for the most part an unexplored scientific field, with perhaps the sole exception being H. R. Wilkinson's book on the ethnographic maps of the Balkan region.<sup>5</sup> Generally speaking no such investigation has been undertaken on any other country or region, let alone on the territories that made up the Russian Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This challenging task therefore necessitated the development

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example: Česlovas Laurinavičius, "Dėl Lietuvos buržuazinės Laikinosios vyriausybės politikos Lietuvos teritorijos klausimu 1918-1919 m.," *Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijos Darbai. A serija* (1986), vol. 4 (97), pp. 57-69; by the same author: "Lietuvos buržuazinės vyriausybės politika valstybės rytinės sienos klausimu," *Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijos Darbai. A serija* (1989), vol. 1 (106), pp. 115-127; Raimundas Lopata, *Lietuvos valstybingumo raida 1914-1918 metais* (Vilnius: 1996), "Lietuvos Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos - LAIS," vol. 9.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the map published by Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis, *Carte Ethnographique de l'Europe, avec Dédicace au président Wilson, Préface et Bibliographie* (Lausanne: 1919).

<sup>5</sup> H. R. Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics: A Review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia* (Liverpool: 1951).



and use of methods that would allow large amounts of information to be structurally analysed.

In the first instance it is necessary to give a brief overview of the formation and specific features of the territories that will be analysed in this study – the so-called Western region or Western provinces of the Russian Empire.<sup>6</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Western region consisted of those territories, which until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century had formed part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). The growth of the GDL territory was a long process which began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and continued until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1569, the GDL formed a union with the Kingdom of Poland thus creating a huge new state – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (PLC). Territorially, this commonwealth occupied most of Eastern Europe, bordering in the north and east the Grand Duchy of Moscow, in the south – the Ottoman Empire, and in the west – the Habsburg territory and the German states – i.e. the Holy Roman Empire.

Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Commonwealth managed to pursue a balanced foreign policy, maintaining its position in the region. However, the PLC began to stagnate and lag behind during the Enlightenment, i.e. during the period of rapid development in the sciences, the modernisation of warfare and the appearance of more efficient systems of state governance, etc. This was not true of the neighbouring states, which actively began to modernise and reform. The Muscovite state became the Russian Empire in 1721, while on the western border another powerful state emerged – the Kingdom of Prussia. Along with the Habsburg Empire, these neighbouring states gradually turned into strong and centralised monarchies. As a result of this, the Commonwealth rapidly lost its regional significance, becoming a mere transitional space for foreign political intrigues and marching armies. It was soon divided and appropriated by its neighbours (1772, 1792 and 1795) with the Russian Empire receiving the largest territorial share, including much of present-day Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Latvia.

Before the partitions the PLC was a state with a unique political structure. In terms of its governance it was a so-called “noble democracy,” where the king was elected by the nobility. This reliance on the nobility subsequently resulted in the king becoming a relatively powerless and nominal political figure, with the rule of the state being increasingly left to the local and State diets. However, this “noble democracy” was far from efficient. Laws such as the *liberum veto* (where the vote of one opposing nobleman was enough to halt the passage of any law) hindered the state’s functioning. In time the PLC slowly sank into political chaos.

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<sup>6</sup> The emergence and conceptualisation of the Western region occurred only after the 1830-1831 Polish uprising; however, for the sake of clarity this geopolitical name will also be used when talking about the earlier periods, primarily referring to the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania without the Kingdom of Poland.

The pre-partitioned PLC also had a specific social and ethnic structure. It is in relation to this that the perception of the term “nation” is of utmost importance. The ruling elites of these lands comprised the only nationally conscious socio-political group. Irrespective of the ethnic origin of a nobleman (be it Belarusian, Lithuanian, Polish, Ukrainian or other), he belonged to the same common “political nation” of the Commonwealth. At the same time, from around the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, most of the nobility became bearers of the Polish language and culture, which was also the main unifying element in the dual Polish and Lithuanian state.

Moreover, many different peoples inhabited the PLC. Belarusians, Germans, Lithuanians, Jews, Poles, Ukrainians and others nourished their traditional ethnic cultures and confessions, and basically led segregated lives, which were mostly confined within the borders of their own separate communities.<sup>7</sup>

It is also worth mentioning that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Grand Duchy consisted of three distinct regions. The most western, “Samogitia,”<sup>8</sup> constituted an individual administrative-territorial unit – the Samogitian Palatinate. The second region was called “Lithuania,” but the name did not correspond to the present-day geopolitical entity. This territory was bigger and was inhabited by both the Lithuanian and Belarusian ethnic groups. The third region was located in the south of the GDL. It was made up of largely Ukrainian provinces and was called *Rus*’.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Russian Empire annexed all of these lands and peoples. The old administrative divisions were immediately abolished and new imperial governmental institutions were introduced. With time the former lands of the GDL were transformed into the Western region of the Russian Empire and disappeared from the map.

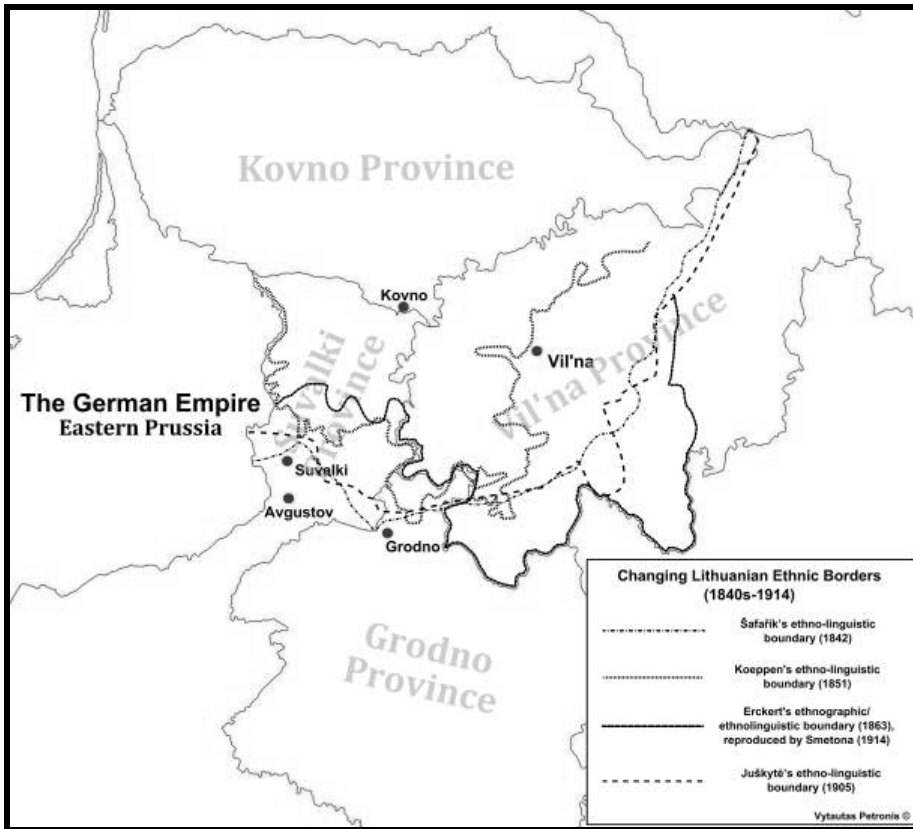
## 1.1. Formulation of the research problem

The main object of this study is the conceptualisation of Lithuanian ethnic space on Russian imperial maps, and its later transformation as a result of the influence of Lithuanian nationalism. The core of the problem resides in revealing the process of how ethnic territory was identified and subsequently mapped in the period up to the First World War (Figure 1).

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<sup>7</sup> For the general history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, see, for example: Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven & London: 2003); Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė, Albinas Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795* (Vilnius: 2000); Zigmantas Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania* (Vilnius: 2002); Norman Davies, *God's Playground: a History of Poland in Two volumes. The Origins to 1795* (Oxford: 2005), vol. 1.

<sup>8</sup> “Samogitia” – in Lithuanian is known as *Žemaitija*, in Polish – *Żmudź* and in Russian – *Zhmud*.



**Figure 1.** Changing Lithuanian ethnic borders during the period from the 1840s-1914

The delimitation of the main object might allow one to proceed by following a narrow geographic path, i.e. by investigating only the Lithuanians. I have adopted, nevertheless, a broader geographical perspective. Thus, the investigation begins (in Chapter Two) by analysing the structural development of the whole Western region through its administrative-territorial divisions, topographical mapping and surveying, as well as by examining several plans for imperial spatial reform, which were conceived during the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By doing this, one of the most significant and specific phenomena of Russia's geopolitical construction will be highlighted – regionalisation and the formation of an “empire of regions.”<sup>9</sup> As will be discussed later in this chapter, shaping the administrative-territorial configuration of the state also contributed to the “vertical” integration of the Empire.

<sup>9</sup> The term is borrowed from: Leonid E. Gorizontov, “In Search of Internal Balance: Debate on Changes in the Territorial-Administrative Division of the Russian Empire in the 1830s and 1840s,” in: *Imperiology: From Empirical Knowledge to Discussing the Russian Empire* (Saporo: 2007), no. 13, pp. 179.

The Western provinces (Figure 9) at first comprised a rather stable administrative-territorial structure. However, I would argue that in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, against a backdrop of more general reforms and political turmoil, but especially because of recent scientific investigations, it becomes possible to introduce a new notion, which allows Gorizontov's term to be expanded into the "multi-ethnic empire of regions."<sup>10</sup> Thus, a process of (unofficial) ethnic regionalisation began. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Western region was perceived as being split into the Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian ethnic lands. This process was clearly revealed in the proceedings of the ethnographic expeditions and ethnographic maps of the time, which will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four of this study.

With the rise of national movements, the local intelligentsia began searching for the territories of their own ethnic groups. They repeatedly they drew maps and discussed borders, while introducing a nationalistic perspective to the perception of ethnic space. The development of the Lithuanian ethnic territory will be presented from this perspective in Chapter Five.

Therefore, to put it in more concrete terms, I shall start by looking at the growth and subsequent administrative regionalisation of the Russian Empire, i.e. its "vertical" integration. Later the focus will shift to the development of Russian science and in particular, to the ethnographic explorations of the Western provinces, which were organised and conducted by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. My main argument will be that as a consequence of these scientific endeavours, Russia rediscovered itself and was subsequently perceived by others as being a multi-ethnic state made up of regions. Moreover, the mapped ethnic territories (Belarusian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian) gradually became recognised as proper constitutive parts of the Western region. Finally, by narrowing the focus, I will examine the formation of the national space of Lithuania from the perspective of the Lithuanian national movement. This will be done by examining the political discussions that took place at that time and by describing the national geographical education that was prevalent during this period. In particular, a strong emphasis will be laid on the cartography and mapping that occurred during these years, which, in my opinion, offers the best illustration of the interplay between politics, science and the construction of territorialities.

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<sup>10</sup> Francine Hirsch has demonstrated that such a perspective was prevalent in the late Russian Empire and later passed to Soviet Russia (Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge & the Making of Soviet Union* (Ithaca and London: 2005)). One of the goals of this work is to therefore establish when it is possible to talk about the emerging image of a multi-ethnic Russia.

## 1.2. Delimitations and terminology

The investigation of the chosen problem has given rise to several methodological and terminological delimitations.

First, as indicated above, this study concentrates on the interplay between the Russian imperial and Lithuanian national perspectives,<sup>11</sup> which has subsequently delimited the choice of sources, secondary literature and the general structure of my text. Thus, Polish cartography plays an insignificant role in this work for several reasons. The main reason for my decision derives from the strong anti-Polish perspective of the Lithuanian nationalists, which conditioned their wide use of imperial source material and much lesser use of Polish material. This was mostly because of the competition over the territories around Vil'na (Vilnius), which were claimed by the Poles, Lithuanians and Belarusians. Moreover, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was the Russian imperial ethnographers, geographers and statisticians who organised expeditions and actively investigated and mapped the Lithuanian ethnic group, thus becoming the leaders in this field. Furthermore, as Russian policy predominated in this region, the centre's point of view (both scientific and political) is used as the frame of reference for this study and thus considered to be more important than the Polish. I have nonetheless examined some of the Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian cartographic sources, including their analyses and general discussions on the territoriality of particular ethnic groups during this time.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the incorporation of this material, which is undoubtedly important, would have significantly increased the volume of the text.

Another conscious narrowing concerns the abandonment of any discussion of ethnic statistics. Generally speaking, all Russian statistical sources are quite problematic because before the 1897 all-imperial census the collection of statistical data was an unsystematic task undertaken by several separate institutions, organisations and individuals. This problem was well understood by the Russian statisticians working during this period; throughout the whole second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were looking at ways of introduc-

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<sup>11</sup> The sub-chapters on the Belarusians and Ukrainians in the third part provide a basic illustration of but do not reveal the specificities of their territorial evolution. A more detailed discussion or attempt at comparison would require additional research.

<sup>12</sup> Zygmunt Gloger, *Geografia historyczna ziem dawnej Polski* (Warsawa: 1991, 1<sup>st</sup> edition: Kraków: 1903); Evgenii E. Shiriaev, *Belarus': Rus' belaia, Rus' chernaia i Litva na kartakh* (Minsk: 1991); Bolesław Olszewicz, *Kartografia Polska XIX wieku (przegląd chronologiczno-bibliograficzny)* (Warszawa: 1998), vols. 1-3; Piotr Eberhardt, *Polska i jej granice, z historii Polskiej geografii politycznej* (Lublin: 2004); Ryszard Radzik, *Między zbiorowością etniczną a wspólnotą narodową. Białorusini na tle przemian narodowych w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej XIX stulecia* (Lublin: 2000); Rostislav I. Sossa, *Istoriia kartografuvannia teritorii Ukrainy, vid naidavnishikh chasiv do 1920 r.* (Kiiiv: 2000); Iaroslav Dashkevich, Pavlo Sokhan, Oleg Shablii et al. (eds.) *Istoriczne kartoznavstvo Ukraini, zbirnik naukovikh prats/Historical Cartography of Ukraine, a Collection of Scholarly Papers* (Lviv: 2003).

ing a more systematic and uniform system for the collection of statistical data for the whole Empire.<sup>13</sup>

Admittedly, statistical information was the main data used in the creation of ethnic maps. However, the purpose of this investigation is not to verify the ethnic boundaries by comparing them with the statistical sources, since that would be a circular argument. Rather, the main idea here is to present ethnic mapping as a process. Nevertheless, these sources were present in a different – cartographical form, i.e. the numbers were visualised. Ethnic statistics (on the Lithuanians and more generally on the whole Russian Empire) have already received extensive scholarly attention.<sup>14</sup> The consequence of not dealing with ethnic statistics means that I will have little to say about non-autochthon groups that had no strictly definable territory, but were spread all over the area, such as the Jews and the Roma (Gypsies).

The terminology employed in this work also needs to be explained briefly. When talking about geographical constructions, terms such as “territory,” “area,” “land,” “country,” etc., are used. The difference between them rests in their connotations as regards the delimitation of space. Therefore, terms such as “territory,” “country” or “area,” indicate delimited or bordered political territory (state, province, district etc.). When talking about an undefined or abstract geographical space, “land” is used.

A specific problem is related to the use of such terms as “borders,” “boundaries” or “frontiers.” The analysis of their particular connotations has also received considerable attention from scholars,<sup>15</sup> and in this work I have therefore not attempted to devote space to any specific reflection on this, generally using them as terms to describe only mapped lines of separation.

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<sup>13</sup> To illustrate this, see the discussions in: Artur Bushen [Arthur von Buschen], *Ob ustroistve istochnikov statistiki v Rossii* (St. Petersburg: 1864), *passim*, especially pp. 59-86; Petr P. Semenov, *Istoriia poluvekovoi deiatel'nosti Imperatorskago Russkago Geograficheskago Obshchestva, 1845-1895* (St. Petersburg: 1896), vol. 1, pp. 123-139; 409-444; vol. 2, pp. 897-922; vol. 3, pp. 1293-1296.

<sup>14</sup> Boris V. Tikhonov, *Pereseleniia v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIX v.: po materialam perepisi 1897 i pasportnoi statistiki* (Moscow: 1978); Petras Gaučas, Aloyzas Vidugiris, “Etnolingvisticheskaia situatsiia litovsko-beloruskogo pogranič'ia s kontsa XVIII po nachalo XX v.,” *Geografiiia* (1983), vol. XIX, pp. 26-73.; Petras Gaučas, “Lietuvos gyventojų skaičius 1897-1914 m.,” *Geografija* (1983), vol. XIX, pp. 74-92; V. M. Kabuzan, *Narody Rossii v XVIII veke. Chislenost' i etnicheskii sostav* (Moscow: 1990); Petras Gaučas, “Lietuvių-gudų kalbų paribio etnolingvistinė situacija 1795-1914 m.,” in: Kazimieras Garšva (ed.), *Lietuvos Rytai* (Vilnius: 1993), pp. 42-100; Aloyzas Vidugiris, “Etnolingvistinė pietryčių Lietuvos padėtis XX a. pirmojoje pusėje,” in: Kazimieras Garšva (ed.), *Lietuvos Rytai* (Vilnius: 1993), pp. 115-131; Vladas Sirutavičius, “Tautiškumo kriterijai multietnių visuomenių statistikoje. XIX a. Vidurio Lietuvos pavyzdys,” *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis/The year-book of Lithuanian history. 1998* (Vilnius: 1999), pp. 74-84; Darius Staliūnas, “Nationality Statistics and Russian Politics in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Lithuanian Historical Studies* (Vilnius: 2003), vol. 8, pp. 95-119. Eugeniusz Mironowicz, Siarhiej Tokć, Ryszard Radzik, *Zmiana struktury narodowościowej na pograniczu Polsko-Białoruskim w XX wieku* (Białystok: 2005)

<sup>15</sup> A review of the latest developments can be found in: Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border* (Chichester: 1996), pp. 23-31; Hastings Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson, *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State* (Oxford, New York: 1999).

A very important distinction should be highlighted between the terms “historical Lithuania” and “ethnic (or national) Lithuania.” The first term refers to the vast historical region that was a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and was predominantly inhabited by a Belarusian- and Lithuanian-speaking population. The latter term describes ethnic Lithuanian territory, which was much smaller than that belonging to the historical region, and where the majority of its inhabitants were Lithuanians according to their language and culture.

Furthermore, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Lithuanian nationalists divided “ethnic Lithuania” into “ethnic” or ethno-linguistic, and “ethnographic” Lithuania. This division resulted in a differing size of Lithuania: “ethnic” (*etninė*) Lithuania was primarily identified as lying within its linguistic boundaries, which were represented by Verbickis’ map (Figure 28), whereas “ethnographic” (*etnografinė*) Lithuania was much larger, because the main criterion for its identification was not the spoken language, but the relics of the Lithuanian material culture in the linguistically non-Lithuanian territories. This distinction is particularly important in the fifth chapter, where I analyse Lithuanian cartographic works.

Finally, the biggest delimitation of this study is that it is not a work on Lithuanian or Russian nationalism, at least not directly. It is more a history of cartography that employs historical contextualisation and source-critical investigation, which would appear to be particularly valuable in the Lithuanian case because no agreement was ever reached among the Lithuanian intelligentsia as to where the ethnic/national border actually was. Therefore, many maps depicted many borders. This can be confusing; however, the source-critical approach presented here suggests ways to solve this problem and to explain some of the cartographic differences. In the following section, I shall briefly discuss certain theoretical and methodological points that have proved helpful in focusing on the specific relation between nationalism and territory, as well as the latest developments in cartographical analysis, especially the relation between cartography and politics, or the “propaganda” cartography.

## 1.3. Theoretical and methodological trajectories

### 1.3.1. Nationalism and territoriality

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century ethnic mapping and the change of ethnic boundaries was dependent on two major competing ideological perspectives: the imperial and the national. Regardless of the many aspects that each of them involves, the main focus in this study will fall on their relation to territoriality and the empowering of territorial space.

In this regard, “territory” can be seen as a “distinct terrestrial area, which is meaningful and influential in human social activity,” while “territoriality” signifies “not a mere tool of social power, rather it is constitutive of the power itself.”<sup>16</sup> In an extensive analysis of the rise of a specific modern state, the Finnish scholar Jouni Häkli developed two models of territorial unification: “system integration” and “national integration.” The first refers to a ruler’s consolidation of his administrative power over a particular region. The second primarily describes the cultural homogenisation of a territory through a process of standardisation and rationalisation using the introduction of laws, norms, rules, etc., to achieve arbitrary control over local life.<sup>17</sup> By applying this model the links between the state/empire, nationalism(s) and territory can be established.

The relation between a nation and its territory has been crucial in earlier interpretations of political “nationalism.” More than twenty years ago, Ernest Gellner stated that “nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent” and that “nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state (...) should not separate the power-holders from the rest.”<sup>18</sup>

Anthony D. Smith defined nationalism more widely as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity of population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation.’”<sup>19</sup> The notion of autonomy, which is one of the constitutive parts of nationalist ideals, can be understood as “self-regulation, having one’s internal laws or rhythms, listening to one’s own inner voice, free of every external constraint,” or as “political freedom and collective self-rule of and by the ‘people’ as a result of national self-determination of the collective will and a struggle for national self-government.” Autonomy can be, but does not need to be identical with a territory and should thus be separated from the idea of state sovereignty, which then allows a discussion of national autonomy for minorities within certain federations,<sup>20</sup> such as, empires or the Soviet Union, or India.

The struggle for the legitimation of national space allows nationalist leaders to direct their perspective both inwards and outwards. When looking inward they focus on their own national group, attempting to ideologically inculcate and establish a common worldview (a similar process to the afore-

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<sup>16</sup> Jouni Häkli, “Territoriality and the Rise of Modern State,” *Fennia* (1994), vol. 172, no. 1, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Häkli, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, New York: 1983), p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge, Oxford: 2001), p. 9.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26; also by the same author: *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: 1979), pp. 3-4.



mentioned Häkli's "national integration"). When looking outwards, nationalists guard their national territory from any "others." Therefore, following Anssi Paasi's definition, "nationalism is primarily a territorial form of ideology and one part of the hierarchical structure of regional consciousness. It aims at 'circumscribing' and signifying territories in space, at creating feelings of belonging and of producing and reproducing social order."<sup>21</sup>

However, as many theoreticians of nationalism have noticed, in the European context it is possible to separate a Western and Eastern European development of nationalist thought, which are based on "voluntary" and "organic" principles of national identification respectively.<sup>22</sup> Despite the conditionality of such a distinction and the specificities of each national movement, the Western European "voluntary" model is based on the person's individual choice as regards his or her national belonging, while in the Eastern European context a person is assumed to be "naturally born" into a nation, thus limiting the possibilities for individual choice.

The categories introduced by Charles Tilly relate both definitions to state building: the *state-led* nationalism and the *state-seeking* nationalism.<sup>23</sup> The "organic" (or "ethnic-collectivistic," as Liah Greenfeld and Daniel Chirot term it<sup>24</sup>) perception of belonging to a nation allegedly facilitates the process of "national integration;" however it also gives birth to aggression, or the feeling of *ressentiment*.<sup>25</sup>

The use of Häkli's "system integration" (administrative unification) for an analysis of the Russian Empire provides an additional perspective for understanding the function of an empire that has been recently subsumed under the notion of "imperial rule." The main proponents of this term, the historians Alexei Miller and Alfred J. Rieber, have stated that the term "has the advantage of being both broader and more flexible and embraces different examples of the unequal relationship between the imperial centre and peripheral polities, whether by direct or indirect rule and with or without formal inclusion into an imperial structure."<sup>26</sup> The formation of the regional

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<sup>21</sup> Paasi, pp. 51-53.

<sup>22</sup> Theodore R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification of the Western Frontier, 1863-1914* (DeKalb: 1996), pp. 5-7; Smith, pp. 36-42.

<sup>23</sup> Charles Tilly, "States and Nationalism in Europe, 1492-1992," *Theory and Society* (February 1994), vol. 23, no. 1, p. 133.

<sup>24</sup> Liah Greenfeld and Daniel Chirot, "Nationalism and Aggression," *Theory and Society* (February 1994), vol. 23, no. 1, p. 83.

<sup>25</sup> As Greenfeld and Chirot explain, as a term coined by Nietzsche and later developed by Max Scheler, "*ressentiment* refers to a psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility to act them out, which in many cases leads to the 'transvaluation of values.'" (Ibid., p. 84). Furthermore, according to these scholars, *ressentiment* was a major category in Russia, which determined the definition of the national identities of the peoples (Ibid., p. 85). Thus, the striving of nationalists for "national integration" and the cultural homogeneity of a particular territory was driven among other factors by a strong feeling of negativity and aggression.

<sup>26</sup> Alexei Miller and Alfred J. Rieber, "Introduction: Imperial Rule," in: Alexei Miller, Alfred J. Rieber (eds.), *Imperial Rule* (Budapest, New York: 2004), pp. 1-2

Russian Empire will be discussed later, nonetheless it may be said in advance that the policies of the central authorities were not identical as regards the regions or peripheries. Among the many reasons for this was the inability of the authorities to achieve a full-scale (i.e., both Russian “system” and “national”) integration of the ever-expanding space of the state.

In Häkli’s model of territorialisation, the state’s appropriation of space is accomplished through the transformation of the geographical perspective: from “vertical” rule to “horizontal” administration. “Vertical” rule develops as a first step and is manifested as a direct subsuming of a conquered space, while “horizontal” administration develops as the second step involving the “integration and compartmentalisation of space brought about by the formalisation and rationalisation of administrative power.” The “vertical” stands for “system integration” and the “horizontal” – “national integration.” In practice the former is generally achieved through the use of sheer power, by using, for example, the military, while with the latter, control is achieved through the introduction of sets of laws, administrative practice and other restrictions. Therefore, as Häkli notes, “the coincidence of the two forms of geographical reflection has resulted in the archetypal social formation of modernity: the territorial nation-state.”<sup>27</sup>

In nationalist ideology, territorial detachment from the common multinational space is essential, because every nation has to have its own bordered territory. Therefore, these bordered territories play a significant role in the process of unification and the subsequent formation of the nation and with it the establishment of a common “imagined community” through certain institutions and practices, such as museums, censuses or the visual expressions of geo-commonness – i.e. maps.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, as Miller remarks, “nationalists inevitably ask what space their nation should occupy in terms of political control and as ‘national territory.’ In the case of non-imperial nations it can be said that a national territory encompasses what the nationalists believe to be ‘their’ state ideally or ‘rightfully.’ That is, a ‘national territory’ and the space of political control are congruent.” Therefore, Gellner’s definition of nationalism presented above is applicable only to those nations that attempt to separate themselves from existing empires by “cutting out” part of the imperial territory and establishing boundaries for their nation. Miller argues that such a definition is somewhat problematic for those national movements that aim to use the entire existing imperial state as their “own,” as was the case with Great Russian nationalism.<sup>29</sup> The Great Russian projects of state construction, centralisation and Russification revolved around the struggle against other potent national groups (such as the Poles, the Germans and to

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<sup>27</sup> Häkli, pp. 42, 43-54.

<sup>28</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, New York: 1991 – 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition), pp. 163-185; Alexei Miller, “The Empire and the Nation in the Imagination of Russian Nationalism,” in: Alexei Miller, Alfred J. Rieber (eds.), *Imperial Rule* (Budapest, New York: 2004), p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> Miller, “The Empire and the Nation,” pp. 11-12.

some extent the Jews). This conflict was followed by the emergence of smaller non-Russian national movements, such as the Lithuanian.

As Rieber points out, there is some similarity in the way nationalists conceive borders between national states and empires.<sup>30</sup> They tend to maximise their territory at the cost of other peoples. The importance of political and administrative borders acquires more than symbolic value, and the perceived ethnic boundaries of its “own” territory reflect more of a group’s attitude than a proper geographical division. Thus, boundaries tend to become highly contested areas, with competing groups and sometimes competing minorities claiming the same space.<sup>31</sup>

Häkli’s system of state-driven territorial integration to some extent explains and opens up new perspectives on the administrative territorial integration and unification of the Russian Empire, which may be regarded as an example of “vertical” integration. The “horizontal” integration however, was much more complicated, especially in the non-Russian regions. In the case of the Western provinces, in addition to the attempts of the Russian authorities to introduce their own “horizontal” integration of the space through a policy of Russification and de-Polonisation there were also other “horizontal” processes of spatial homogenisation at play, notably, the Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian (during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), as well as the Belarusian (at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century). The rise of non-Russian cultural (national) projects of territorial homogenisation benefited greatly from the existence of a common imperial infrastructure, manifested in terms of transportation, education, and printing (after 1904 permission was given to print in the Latin alphabet). All this formed a solid framework which allowed further cultural distancing from the common imperial space to take place, which in turn, naturally led to national separatism.

One of the primary sources for revealing this shifting process of territorial appropriation by nationalist groups is the cartographical works produced in this period. However, the analysis of this specific source material is problematic. The following section discusses the development of cartographic interpretation, laying the main emphasis on the ideological/propagandistic construction of maps and their susceptibility to differing interpretations.

### 1.3.2. The development of theory and methodology in cartographical analysis

During the past two decades geography and cartography have undergone a transformation as a result of the growing importance of postmodern philosophy and critical theory. Some scholars have viewed it as a paradigmatic

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<sup>30</sup> Alfred J. Rieber, “The Comparative Ecology of Complex Frontiers,” in: Alexei Miller, Alfred J. Rieber (eds.), *Imperial Rule* (Budapest, New York: 2004), pp. 198-200.

<sup>31</sup> John Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: 1982), pp. 7-11.

shift, which occurred during the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, postmodernist philosophy has divided geographers, cartographers and historians of cartography into two streams – the Traditional and the New – each determined primarily by their attitude towards “critical theory.” According to Matthew H. Edney, “traditionally, historians of cartography have not espoused theories about the nature of maps. They have not had to, because in modern society the nature of maps is self-evident.”<sup>33</sup> In Edney’s view, traditional cartographers tend not to use theory implicitly, because the modernist perception of a map as an objective representation of reality does not require a critical view, while the New geographers, cartographers and historians of cartography tend to think otherwise and therefore question this notion of “objectivity.”

The postmodernists have introduced a new, relativist point of view to cartography, which opens wider vistas in understanding and interpreting cartographical sources. Above all, it opens the door to questioning the very basis of scientific neutrality in cartography. Each map must be subject to historical source criticism in order to establish the degree to which, and in what way, it distorts the available information.

### 1.3.2.1. Specificity and Structure of Thematic Maps

Historically, maps evolved into two distinct groups: the so-called “general” (“reference” or “topographical”) maps and “thematic” maps.<sup>34</sup> The former depict topographical data based on surveying and triangulation, while the latter usually emphasise specific aspects of nature, human activities, social, political, economic, and cultural life, ethnic distribution, etc.

Thematic mapping evolved rapidly during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1800-1860), primarily as a result of technological advances that occurred in cartography, especially in relation to the improved methods of engraving and printing. In parallel to these technological achievements, cartographers became more skilled at standardising the encoded information on the map, in particular, at using cartographic symbolism (isopleths, dots, colours, shadings and so on), scale and perspective.<sup>35</sup>

Some scholars tend to see a slightly different developmental trajectory in thematic cartography. Henry W. Castner argues that the thematic map had a

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<sup>32</sup> Catherine Delano Smith, “Why Theory of the History of Cartography?” *Imago Mundi* (1996), vol. 48, p. 201.

<sup>33</sup> Matthew H. Edney, “Theory and History of Cartography,” *Imago Mundi* (1996), vol. 48, pp. 186-187.

<sup>34</sup> Barbara B. Petchenik, “From Place to Space: the Psychological Achievement of Thematic Mapping,” *The American Cartographer* (1979), vol. 6, no. 1, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Arthur H. Robinson, *Early Thematic Mapping in the History of Cartography* (Chicago and London: 1982); Gilles Palsky, *Des Chiffres et des Cartes. Naissance et Développement de la Cartographie Quantitative au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1996).

predecessor in the “special purpose map.”<sup>36</sup> He states that, “some maps may seem to be thematic in nature in that they appear to have been drawn to illustrate a specific distribution, concept, relationship, or event, but from a visual or graphic design point of view may seem to us to be more of a reference map. It is in this grey area that the term ‘special purpose map’ is useful, it can refer to a map which attempts to illustrate something more specific than the principal features of a region and yet falls short of expressing the impact of the idea in modern design terms.”<sup>37</sup> The main difference between the “special purpose” and “thematic” maps was in their scale and application. The former were usually made in large scale and targeted at a relatively narrow audience of specialist map-users (such as, the cadastral, geologic, soil or navigation maps and charts), while the “thematic” represented one specific feature of a particular subject, such as, for example, the maps that visualised population distribution.<sup>38</sup>

Technologically, thematic maps consist of two parts: a “base map” and a “thematic overlay.” The base map serves as a template, showing the basic picture of the chosen area with only minimal additional information. The cartographer then inscribes the main information – the thematic overlay – on a sheet of paper.<sup>39</sup> The amount of information, which the overlay may contain, is vast.

Leaving aside a broader discussion of the development of thematic maps and concentrating specifically on ethnic maps, it could be said that, generally speaking, any cartographic work might be sorted into these arbitrary “scientific” and “propagandistic” groups. The dividing line between the two is practically invisible. Nonetheless, the current investigation will attempt to achieve a separation between these two notions while looking at the processes of map-making, by examining what scientific standards were adhered to in their production. At the same time, the focus will be on how susceptible maps were to the political demands and pressures that were being exerted at that time – i.e. on their ideological purpose. This political/ideological aspect of ethnic maps becomes particularly important with the rise of nationalism. Bearing in mind de Blij’s statement, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, it is necessary to determine the background to the so-called “propaganda” maps, their construction, purpose and function.

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<sup>36</sup> Castner identifies a developmental chain that started with the “inventory” types of map through to “special purpose” maps and then finally to “thematic” maps. Henry W. Castner, “Special Purpose Mapping in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Russia: a search for the beginnings of thematic mapping,” *The American Cartographer*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1980, p. 163; for a short explanatory discussion of the types of maps, see: Judith Tyner, *Introduction to Thematic Cartography* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: 1992), pp. 8-10.

<sup>37</sup> Castner, p. 164.

<sup>38</sup> Tyner, *Introduction*, p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> For more, see: Mark Monmonier, “Thematic Maps in Geography,” in: *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2001, pp. 15636-15641.

### 1.3.2.2. The Basis for Ideological Cartography

For a long time maps were considered to be objective representations of the real.<sup>40</sup> Cartography was a specific scientific field, occupied primarily by professional geographers and cartographers. Strict rules of mathematical and geometrical calculation and the specificity of the work meant that the map-makers became something of a closed guild. Moreover, the change in scientific paradigms has been slow. More than a decade ago, J. B. Harley stated, “it would appear that we are still working largely in either a ‘premodern,’ or a ‘modern’ rather than in a ‘postmodern’ climate of thought.”<sup>41</sup>

The postmodern approach to cartography and its history is primarily concerned with the interpretation of the “representation and territorialisation of space.”<sup>42</sup> Instead of providing an objective representation of reality, maps started to be seen as something else: a “window on the world”,<sup>43</sup> a “language of geography”,<sup>44</sup> a “refracted image”<sup>45</sup> and so on.

Most of the postmodern scholars of the history of cartography<sup>46</sup> have engaged in the metaphorical distinction of maps, and maps have become for them primarily “texts” and/or “images.” This newfound (con-) “textuality” of a map opened the gates to critical theory, which brought in the theoretical and philosophical elaborations of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Although neither of these scholars elaborated much on the meaning and place of maps and geography, the principle of spatiality nonetheless existed in their discourse and theoretical models.<sup>47</sup>

The emancipation of cartography from its scientifically determined objectivism has led towards a subjective understanding of the meaning of maps – of the power/knowledge stratagems binding not only maps and map-readers/-interpreters but also cartographers.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> J. B. Harley, “Historical Geography and the Cartographic Illusion,” *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1989, pp. 82-83.

<sup>41</sup> J. B. Harley, “Deconstructing the Map,” in: John Agnew, David N. Livingstone and Alisdair Rogers (eds.), *Human Geography: an Essential Anthology* (Oxford, Cambridge: 1996), pp. 422; reprint from: *Cartographica*, vol. 26, no. 2 (Summer), 1989, pp. 1-20.

<sup>42</sup> John Pickles, *A History of Spaces: Cartographic Reason, Mapping and the Geo-Coded World* (London, New York: 2004), p. 20.

<sup>43</sup> Dennis Wood with John Fells, *Power of Maps* (New York, London: 1992), p. 19.

<sup>44</sup> Alexei Postnikov, *Russia in Maps: a History of the Geographical Study and Cartography of the Country* (Moscow: 1996), p. 9.

<sup>45</sup> J.B. Harley, “Maps, Knowledge, and Power,” in: Dennis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (eds.), *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments* (Cambridge: 1992), p. 278.

<sup>46</sup> J. B. Harley has warned about the difference between “historical cartography” (the compilation of maps from historical data sources, e.g. atlases) and the “history of cartography” (the history of maps). J. B. Harley, “Historical Cartography,” p. 89 (endnote).

<sup>47</sup> For example: Michel Foucault, “Questions on Geography” and “Truth and Power” in: Collin Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977* by Michel Foucault (New York: 1980), pp. 63-77; 109-133.

<sup>48</sup> This discussion of the relation between the cartographer, map and map-reader is not new. It can be found in the earlier discussions on the subjectivity of maps, especially covering topics such as cartographical (i.e. technical) representation/misrepresentation and the subjective

In a recent book, *A History of Spaces*, John Pickles attempts to summarise the achievements of the so-called paradigmatic turn in cartography and demarcate the directions of recent cartographic research. The crisis in cartographical representation derives from three contested notions: “objectivism”, “subjectivism” and “distortion”. All three comprise the battlefield between the “traditional” and the “new” understanding of cartography, and all three are specifically related to the interpretation of representation. In the traditionalist perspective “objectivism” depends on the understanding that maps do represent reality.<sup>49</sup> From a postmodernist point of view, however, the map and the map-reader are dependent on a map-maker and his/her projection, which is encrypted in the map’s textual, iconographic and symbolic composition. While some critical theories try to omit the role of *mens auctoris*, i.e. the author, cartography can never become authorless; hence there will always be a subjective element. In part, this is because maps are a special kind of “text” – or as David Harvey termed them, “time-space compressions”<sup>50</sup> – compiled not only from narratives, but also images, geometrical figures, numbers, specific and meaningful colourations etc. The cartographer cannot present everything on a map, thus the map-reader must be warned about the invisible subjective and interpretive nature of the work. Therefore, as Pickles remarks, “this easy tendency to see maps as naïve representations of reality has also meant that the map has been easily adaptable to nationalistic and propagandistic purposes.”<sup>51</sup> The illusion of cartographic objectivity, which in fact masks the subjective nature of maps, enables distortion.

Distortion in maps can manifest itself in at least two main distinctive types of fault: *error* (a misprint, inaccuracy etc.) and *deception*. While the former results from accidents, the latter is a conscious act of distortion. Detecting distortion then becomes of the utmost importance when dealing with (and perceiving) ideologically biased cartographical works, more generally known as “propaganda” maps. Therefore, “the propaganda cartographer is seen as one who deliberately selects information to support an argument, distort information, and display it in ways that seek to persuade the map-reader of a particular viewpoint.”<sup>52</sup>

### 1.3.2.3. The “Propaganda” Maps

The possibilities for cartographic manipulation were noticed and discussed during and after the Second World War; the technique was predominantly

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elements in ideologically biased propaganda maps. To illustrate the former, see: Max Eckert and W. Joerg, “On the Nature of Maps and Map Logic,” *Bulletin of the American Geographic Society* (1908), vol. 40, no. 6, pp. 344-351; for the latter: John K. Wright, “Map Makers are Human: Comments on the Subjective in Maps,” *Geographical Review* (October 1942), vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 527-544.

<sup>49</sup> Pickles, *A History of Spaces*, p. 33.

<sup>50</sup> David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: an Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge: 2000), *passim*; especially pp. 240-259.

<sup>51</sup> Pickles, *A History of Spaces*, p. 35.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

developed in Nazi Germany.<sup>53</sup> The construction of ideological or “propaganda” maps depends on the intention of the cartographers. To be effective propaganda maps have to be planned strategically. There has to be a balance achieved between established facts (such as, for example, the topographical data) and the distorted symbolism of the intended message. The better the propaganda map is, the less possibility it offers the ordinary map-reader to discover the subliminal level of the message. In this sense, it would seem that propaganda maps could be thought of as “stratagems,” i.e. as elaborated schemes that are contrived to deceive; they are carefully planned acts to achieve specific goals. The metaphor of a stratagem can be better understood when it is remembered that until the present day, most cartographic production was and still is owned and controlled by state authorities and that therefore, not every object (for example, one that is of national security importance) appears on ordinary country maps. Moreover, in the case of the present investigation, 19<sup>th</sup>-century Russian cartography was almost exclusively in the hands of the imperial authorities and military.<sup>54</sup>

While discussing the technological side of cartographic distortion and making a distinction between “propaganda” and “perfect” maps, John Ager argued that the “propaganda cartographer’s main aims are to produce a map which has visual impact and is not only believable, but goes a stage further – is convincing.”<sup>55</sup>

Cartographers begin the process of creating both “propaganda” and “perfect” maps, as Ager has termed them, in the same way. The “perfect-map” cartographer collects data about the area that he intends to map. Naturally, the amount of information on any territory is vast and therefore the cartographer has to select and catalogue only that information which will allow maximal clarity. In parallel, the scale, colouring and the exact data that will be used have to be carefully considered, excluding those things that for one reason or another it is not possible to map.

The “propaganda” cartographer performs the same sequence of actions. However, in addition, a secondary selection is made – the material that is needed to support the hidden message. Therefore, information that contradicts the main message needs to be excluded. Later, the cartographic variables are added accordingly – symbols, projection, colour and shadings, typography, statistics, nomenclature and so on. For the cartographer of the

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<sup>53</sup> Hans Speier, “Magic Geography,” *Social Research* (1941), no. 8, pp. 310-330; Wright, pp. 527-544; Louis O. Quam, “The Use of Maps in Propaganda,” *The Journal of Geography* (January 1943), vol. 42, pp. 21-32; S. W. Boggs, “Cartohypnosis,” *The Scientific Monthly* (1947), vol. 64, pp. 469-476.

<sup>54</sup> Examples can be found in: Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, pp. 82-173. Fyodor A. Shebanov clearly distinguished Russian cartographical production in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, as being either “academic” or “military” respectively. Fyodor A. Shebanov, “Studies in the History of Russian Cartography (part 2),” *Canadian Cartographer* (Toronto: 1975), vol. 12, supplement no. 3, p. 135.

<sup>55</sup> John Ager, “Maps & Propaganda,” *Bulletin of the Society of University Cartographers* (1977), vol. 11, p. 1.



“perfect” map these variables play a significant role in achieving maximum precision. But his ideologically inclined colleague marks only those cartographical variables which convincingly support the main message.<sup>56</sup> Hence, differences appear between the two cartographical works.

In the end, despite the fact that science and ideology have often gone hand-in-hand, such cartographical differences can be discerned when maps and the various contexts of their creation are examined closely. As will be discussed later, the susceptibility of cartography to political ideology in Russia revealed itself especially during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It occurred both in the imperial and national contexts, although while the official state cartographers were bound to higher standards of scientific mapping, the cartographic interpretations of the nationalists (both Lithuanian and Russian) usually followed quite different agendas.

In order to determine the particular distribution of maps, I shall attempt throughout my analysis to concentrate on several of their comparable characteristics. These features will constitute the focal point of my investigation and the findings from this analysis will be subsequently discussed in the conclusion, where they will be presented in the form of a “science vs. politics” graph.

<b>More scientifically oriented</b>	<b>More politically oriented</b>
1. <i>Extent of scholarly orientation (cartographer)</i>	1. <i>Extent of political orientation (cartographer)</i>
2. <i>Representativeness</i>	2. <i>Maintenance of a polemical discourse</i>
3. <i>Map as denotive message</i>	3. <i>Map as connotive message</i>
4. <i>Comprehensible, logical and balanced presentation of information</i>	4. <i>Visual impact, persuasive and unbalanced presentation of information</i>
5. Subject of “ <i>secondary propaganda</i> ”	5. Subject of “ <i>primary propaganda</i> ”
6. Reception/perception: scientific	6. Reception/perception: political

**Table 1.** Characteristic features of “scientifically” / “politically” oriented cartographic work

It should be noted at the outset that this division between “scientific” (also termed “perfect” or “good”) and “political” (“propaganda” or “persuasive”)

<sup>56</sup> Ager, pp. 1-13.

maps and map-makers is somewhat arbitrary.<sup>57</sup> However, the distinction can be best understood by employing Ager's description of the opposite ends of the same cartographical spectrum. This also indicates that there can be no "purely" scientific or political cartographic works.

In the table above I have attempted to determine several characteristic features, which are based on a contextual analysis of the specifics of map creation, the role of the cartographer and the extent of his/her scholarly/political orientation at the time of making the map, as well as the wider historical, political, social, cultural, etc. impact/reception of a particular cartographic work.

It is evident that these features encompass both the map-maker and the map. An investigation into the intentions of the cartographer serves as the starting point, because all map-making is driven by a certain idea or programme. For example, it can come from an order passed down from the authorities, by a scientific institution or as a result of the cartographer's own personal initiative. To use Ager's description, this "employer" or "client" conducts the work of the cartographer.<sup>58</sup> If the main objective is to increase scholarly knowledge then the map-maker will attempt to achieve a higher degree of *representativeness* – i.e. will try to obtain optimal results by using an established scientific methodology.

However, when the "client" wants the map to provoke or reflect a particular polemic, the goal of the cartographer becomes the conscious omission of relevant information or data so as to strengthen the main (client's) position. It should be noted however, that the omission of data could also occur in "scientific" map-making. As mentioned earlier, the exclusion of specific data is unavoidable for the sake of achieving greater clarity or because of specific limitations on the final product.

Some postmodern cartographers have a tendency to interpret maps as a conjuncture of text and image. Such a perspective allows one to employ to a certain degree Roland Barthes' analysis of the photograph, especially when it comes to explaining the process of communication between the map-maker, map and map-reader. This communicative process depends on two types of message: the denotive and the connotive.<sup>59</sup> The denotive message can be described as a "realistic" kind of imitation (or as Barthes terms it, the *analogon*) – a message that is without a code, while the connotive message indicates a reverse process: the manner in which a society "treats" the im-

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<sup>57</sup> Ager, p. 3; Judith A. Tyner, "Persuasive Cartography," *Journal of Geography* (1982), vol. 81, no. 2, pp. 140-144; John Pickles, "Texts, Hermeneutics and Propaganda Maps," in: Trevor J. Barnes, James S. Duncan (eds.), *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape* (London: 1992), pp. 193-230.

<sup>58</sup> Ager, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," in: Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text* (London: 1977), pp. 15-31.

age.<sup>60</sup> The latter is influenced to a lesser or greater degree by such variables as the politics, culture, economy, etc. which predominate at a particular point in time. Therefore, the map's way of communicating with the reader is a complex process, which, I would argue, can be partially revealed within the frame of this study by examining the wider historical context. It should also be noted that in traditional cartographic theory, the map is perceived as a denotive message.<sup>61</sup>

The distortion of a map can also be understood as presenting different kinds of "propaganda." Pickles distinguished two types of propaganda - "primary" and "secondary", where the latter appears as a result of the fallibility of technical objectivity, while the former is indicative of a conscious attempt at distortion.<sup>62</sup>

The analysis of a map can be taken further by looking at the general discourse surrounding its reception in a given society and historical period. Ager has argued that the main question that should be asked about a propaganda map is, "to what extent has a viewpoint [on the map] been favoured?"<sup>63</sup> Did the misinterpretation of the map-reader occur because of the cartographer's incorrect use of methodology, or was it intentional? Alternatively, was it rather the map-reader who had insufficient skills and/or a lack of relevant knowledge, so as to be able to read and understand the map's (or cartographer's) message correctly? What resonance did the particular cartographic work have in the wider society; and to what degree was it perceived as being political or/and scientific? I will try to look for the answers to these and other questions during the course of this investigation.

Finally, it is important to emphasise once again that this system of distinction is ultimately experimental. It is the first attempt to introduce a constructivist approach into the contextual analysis of historical (ethnic) maps. It is thus probable that the criteria used above will need to be refined and elaborated further, which itself could become an important part of any future research undertaken in this field.

## 1.4. Sources and historiography

A large part of this study has consisted of an examination and discussion of the work of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society (IRGS) and its North Western Section (NWS), based in Vil'na (Vilnius). The main research material used can be divided into two blocks: archival sources and other publications.

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<sup>60</sup> Barthes, pp. 17-18.

<sup>61</sup> Pickles, "Texts, Hermeneutics and Propaganda Maps," pp. 220-221.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>63</sup> Ager, p. 14.

The main archival material is held in the Archive of the Russian Geographical Society (ARGO) in St. Petersburg.<sup>64</sup> The archive of the NWS is split into two parts: one is kept in ARGO, while the other is stored in The Department of Manuscripts of Vilnius University Library (VUBRS). Both archives contain documents relating to the opening of the Section, the correspondence between its members, directives from the Society's centre in St. Petersburg as well as drafts of presentations and projects. The documents cover both periods when the NWS was active: 1867-1876 and 1910-1914.<sup>65</sup>

Since the perspective employed in this work deals with a wide range of the Society's activities, the investigation of archival materials has been extensive. During the course of this research several archives (those of Iulian Kuznetsov,<sup>66</sup> Eduard Vol'ter and The Lithuanian-Latvian Commission<sup>67</sup>) have also been inspected. These provided a great deal of information on the ethnographic expeditions that occurred during this period, and in particular, on the IRGS research into the Lithuanian ethnic group. Moreover, additional information was also retrieved from the IRGS periodical publications.<sup>68</sup> There is still no comprehensive study of the Society that covers the period from its establishment in 1845 until the present-day. Without doubt, such a work would greatly enhance our understanding of the process of how the scientific image of the Russian Empire developed.

Nevertheless, several useful histories of the Society have been written, which cover specific periods. The proceedings of the IRGS during the 19<sup>th</sup> century were well described in Petr Semenov Tian'-Shanskii's *A History of Half a Century of Activity of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, 1845-1895*.<sup>69</sup> One of the advantages of this three-volume history is that its author was an active scholar, a long-time member and, at the time of writing, also vice-president of the IRGS, which meant that he was well acquainted with the inner life of the Society. Later, during the Soviet period, two books appeared which celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> and 125<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Russian Geographical Society. The Society's acting chair, Lev Berg, wrote the first book, which basically presented the period from the RGS's establishment until the Second World War. It was written in an easy documentary style, and presented a vivid picture of the people that were involved in the Soci-

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<sup>64</sup> ARGO, F. 1-1886, op. 1, no. 15.

<sup>65</sup> VUBRS, F. 34.

<sup>66</sup> ARGO, F. 11, op. 1, no 1-36; op.2, no. 1-27; op. 3, no. 1-6; op. 4, no. 1-24.

<sup>67</sup> ARGO, F. 1-1882, op. 1, no. 13 – E. Vol'ter's archive together with the archive of the "Lithuanian-Latvian Commission;" also: F. 49, op. 1, no. 26; F. 54, op. 1, no. 9.

<sup>68</sup> *Zapiski IRGO* (1846 – 1864); *Izvestiia IRGO* (1865 – 1917); *Ezhegodnik IRGO* (1890 – 1899).

<sup>69</sup> Petr P. Semenov Tian'-Shanskii, *Istoriia poluvekovoi deiatel'nosti Imperatorskago Russkago Geograficheskago Obshchestva, 1845-1895* (St. Petersburg: 1896), vols. 1-3. Earlier a collection of articles was published to commemorate the 20-year anniversary: *Dvatsatiletie Imperatorskago Russkago Geograficheskago Obshchestva, 13 ianvaria 1871 goda* (St. Petersburg: 1872).

ety's activities.<sup>70</sup> To celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary a collection of articles appeared in 1970.<sup>71</sup> This overview of the IRGS activities accorded with the Soviet historiographic tradition, the specificity of which can be seen in the way that descriptive methods and the ideological interpretation of facts are prioritised. Finally, in 1995, a new collection of articles appeared, which aimed at presenting an overview of the RGS's activities during the Soviet period and up to the present time.<sup>72</sup>

There is much less literature on the proceedings of the North Western Section and it remains quite neglected within contemporary historiography. The first person to write a comprehensive historical overview of the Section was its acting head during the second period, Dimitrii Dovgiallo, who published several articles describing its establishment and activities in the period leading up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>73</sup> Later, several articles were published, which basically reproduced Dovgiallo's texts, although some additional material was presented based on archival sources.<sup>74</sup>

The cartographical works used in my study were obtained from the Russian Geographical Society's Cartographical Department in St. Petersburg, the cartographical collections of Vilnius and Helsinki Universities, as well as the Austrian National Library and the David Rumsey online map archive.<sup>75</sup> The latter is a particularly valuable source of high-quality digitalised historical cartographical material.

Among the various studies that have made a contribution to the general understanding of 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century developments in Russian cartography and the related fields of geography and surveying, it is worth mentioning the works by Leo Bagrow, Mark Bassin, Sergei E. Fel', Valerie Kivelson, Alexei Postnikov, Rostislav I. Sossa and others. Questions concerning surveying, geographical exploration and cartography are also touched upon in more general works that discuss regionalisation and the administrative division of the state in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Konstantin Arsen'ev, Mikhail Bogoslovskii, Iu. V. Got'e, Vladimir Grigor'ev, P. Mrochek-Drozdovskii, Postnikov, S. D. Rudin, Fyodor A. Shibanov). Nevertheless, despite the

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<sup>70</sup> Lev S. Berg, *Vsesoiuznoe Geograficheskoe Obshchestvo za sto let* (Moscow, Leningrad: 1946).

<sup>71</sup> *Geograficheskoe Obshchestvo za 125 let* (Leningrad: 1970).

<sup>72</sup> A. G. Isachenko (ed.), *Russkoe Geograficheskoe Obshchestvo. 150 let* (Moscow: 1995).

<sup>73</sup> Dimitrii Dovgiallo, "K istorii Severo-Zapadnogo otdela," *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1910), vol. 1, pp. 10-32; (1911), vol. 2, pp. 17-46.

<sup>74</sup> K. Bieliukas, "Geografinių draugijų veiklos Lietuvoje apžvalga," *Geografinis Metraštinis* (1958), vol. 1, pp. 11-14; M. B. Iakover, "Severo-Zapadnyi Otdel Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva i ego rol' v izuchenii Litvy i Belarussii v kontse XIX i v nachale XX v.," in: *Izvestiia Vsesoiuznogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva* (1971), vol. 103, issue 1, pp. 63-68; Eglė Tamulevičienė, "Rusijos Geografų Draugijos Šiaurės Vakarų Krašto Skyrius," in: *Mokslo Draugijos Lietuvoje* (Vilnius: 1979), pp. 32-65; Leonas Mulevičius, "Rusijos Geografų Draugijos Šiaurės Vakarų Skyriaus surinkta medžiaga apie žemės ūkio padėtį ir jos panaudojimas," in: Leonas Mulevičius, *Kaimas ir dvaras Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje* (Vilnius: 2003), pp. 23-35.

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.davidrumsey.com>.

many works and articles that have been produced, the history of Russian geography and its related disciplines remain an extensive area for future research.

Research on the Lithuanian history of cartography is practically non-existent. This being said however, several historical works have appeared during the last fifty years.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, the present study will contribute, I hope, to the field of Lithuanian cartography, primarily by presenting general trends, rather than a deeper analysis.

There are several full-length studies in existence that analyse the development of Russian ethnography in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Perhaps the best general history of ethnography, which covered both centuries in depth, is Aleksandr Pypin's four-volume *History of Russian ethnography*.<sup>77</sup> It is worth mentioning that in this study Pypin demonstrated a liberal and at the same time critical attitude towards the restrictive imperial policies in the non-Russian provinces. In addition, the development and rise of ethnography in late-imperial Russia has been covered in numerous articles, which have dealt with theoretical and practical notions of ethnography and ethnographic research.<sup>78</sup> During the Soviet period ethnography remained a significant field of research, although it did not escape censorship and ideologisation.<sup>79</sup> In the more recent historiography, fresh attempts have been made to analyse the late-imperial and early-Soviet Russian ethnographic investigations, as well as to answer fundamental questions concerning the formation of the state.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Povilas Rėklaitis, "Lietuvos senoji kartografija," in: *Tautos Praeitis* (Chicago: 1964), vol. 1, book 1, pp. 64-76; Stanisław Alexandrowicz, *Rozwój kartografii Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego od XV do połowy XVIII wieku* (Poznań: 1971); Jonas Deksnys, "Lietuviški žemėlapiai per pirmą dvidešimtmetį (1900-1920)," *Geodezija ir Kartografija* (1994), no. 1, pp. 71-78; Aloyzas Samas, *Žemėlapiai ir jų kūrėjai* (Vilnius: 1997); Piotr Eberhardt, *Polska i jej granice, z historii Polskiej geografii politycznej* (Lublin: 2004); Algirdas Gliožaitis, "Lietuvos administracinis skirstymas XIX ir XX a. Rusijos žemėlapiuose," *Geodezija ir Kartografija* (2006), vol. XXXII, no. 2-4, (online).

<sup>77</sup> Aleksandr N. Pypin, *Istorija Russkoj etnografii* (St. Petersburg: 1890-1892), vols. 1-4.

<sup>78</sup> For example: Dmitrii Anuchin, "O zadachakh Russkoi etnografii," *Etnotograficheskoe Obozrenie* (1889) no. 1, pp. 1-35; N. Mogil'ianskii, "Predmety i zadachi etnografii," *Zhivaia Starina* (1916), vol. XXV, issue 1, pp. 1-22.

<sup>79</sup> P. I. Kushner (Knyshhev), *Eticheskie territorii i eticheskie granitsy* (Moscow: 1951); M. K. Azadovskii, *Istoriia Russkoj fol'kloristiki* (Moscow: 1963), vol. 2; S. A. Tokarev, *Istoriia Russkoj etnografii (dooktiabrskii period)* (Moscow: 1966); Mikhail Ia. Grinblat, *Belorusy, ocherki proiskhozhdeniia i eticheskoi istorii* (Minsk: 1968).

<sup>80</sup> The previously mentioned study by Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations* stands alone as a unique example of an interesting and productive combination of ethnography and political and social history. Also, see: Wladimir Berelowitch, "Aux Origines de L'ethnographie Russe: la Société de Géographie dans les Années 1840-1850," *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* (avril-septembre 1990), vol. XXXI (2-3), pp. 265-274; Nathaniel Knight, "Science, Empire, and Nationality: Ethnography in the Russian Geographical Society, 1845-1855," in: Jane Burbank, David L. Ransel (eds.), *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: 1998), pp. 108-141; Steven J. Seegel, "Beauplan's Prism: Represented Contact Zones and Nineteenth-Century Mapping Practices in Ukraine," in: Dominique Arel, Blair A. Ruble (eds.), *Rebounding Identities: the Politics of Identity in Russia and Ukraine* (Baltimore: 2006), pp. 151-180.

This brief overview of the sources and literature used in this study will be expanded further in the following chapters.

## 1.5. Main questions

Finally, it is necessary to pose those questions that will be answered consecutively during the progression of this work. The central question is: How was Lithuanian ethnic territory portrayed on imperial maps and subsequently on the nationalist maps, and how did the transformation from one kind of cartography to another affect its appearance and meaning?

Furthermore, when and how was the Russian Empire consolidated “vertically,” i.e. in terms of its territorial integration of national minorities? When and how did Russia become perceived as a “multi-ethnic empire of regions”? What were the patterns of the “horizontal” integration (the attempts to achieve a cultural homogenisation) of the state? How complementary/problematic were the scientific explorations to the policies of the imperial authorities? How and when did a specific Lithuanian ethnic territory appear on the imperial maps? And finally, how did the Lithuanian nationalists create their own cartographic representations of Lithuania? At the end of this study a section devoted to general conclusions will summarise its findings.

To begin, the following chapter will examine the regionalisation of the Russian Empire from the 18<sup>th</sup> until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by looking at the administrative-territorial consolidation of the Russian Empire and the annexation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

## 2. Building the “Empire of Regions:” the Shifting Administrative Divisions of the Russian Empire

The provincial division is a framework where local life is enclosed, in which the life of the provincial institutions flows and evolves.<sup>81</sup>

Each modern state establishes its own logical inner divisions. These divisions are necessary for the better distribution of power and for achieving control over the inhabitants and the territory they occupy. In turn, each administrative-territorial unit forms a particular cluster, which may be singled out, restructured or abolished. It is also the place where the policies of the state are implemented. Although all administrative units constitute the body of the state, the state’s political, economic or cultural approach to any particular cluster can vary greatly from its approach to other neighbouring units. Therefore, a single administrative-territorial unit can be sometimes perceived individually or even autonomously. Moreover, the borders of these clusters can be fluid, arbitrary and/or imaginary. As a totality they can be visualised only on maps, where their partial physical reproduction is ascribed to natural phenomena (rivers, mountains, marshes and so on) or their existence is made manifest in artificial constructions (clearings in forests, fences, erected border posts or other specially crafted markers).<sup>82</sup>

As a rapidly expanding multi-ethnic state, the Russian Empire had to struggle for a long time to construct and establish a logical system for its territorial organisation. The general reforms of the state implemented at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Peter I, started an ongoing process in constructing a matrix for the Russian administrative units: *gubernii*, *uezdy*, *okrug*i and so on. These reforms continued right up until the demise of the Russian Empire. As part of the Empire, the peoples of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were directly affected by the changing boundaries imposed

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<sup>81</sup> Iu. V. Got’e, *Istoriia oblastnogo upravleniia v Rossii ot Petra I do Ekateriny II* (Moscow: 1913), vol. 1, p. 102.

<sup>82</sup> Paasi, pp. 23-38. Paasi presents a much wider perspective on the problem of borders, boundaries and frontiers. Even though he was primarily concerned with the appearance and meaning of modern inter-state borders, some of his argumentation can nevertheless be applied to the inner division of any state.



by the imperial authorities, which seldom paid attention to the integrity of ethnic settlement.

Many factors impeded an effective resolution of the geographic administrative reform. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and especially during the reign of Catherine II, Russia, following the acquisition of much territory, became fragmented administratively. A multiethnic and multiconfessional population inhabited these newly acquired lands. The so-called “Western region,” was a term that appeared in official parlance during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After 1843 it consisted of nine *gubernii*, or provinces. It was also merged into two large *general-gubernii*, or general-provinces – Kiev and Vil’na (Figure 9). Even when parts of Russia’s administrative legal system were introduced in these lands, these regions nonetheless managed to retain for a long time their own specific social and cultural practices, which undermined the ideal of a fully unified imperial space. Problems appeared if ethnic diversities were not taken into consideration when attempts were made to implement an imperial administrative structure in the incorporated territories.

Administrative boundaries frequently divided lands that were inhabited by the same ethnic group. Imperial ethnographic research and ethnic mapping are the subjects of the third and fourth chapters of this study. Here it suffices to say that the rise of ethnographic research resulted in the delimitation of ethnic borders and the subsequent appearance in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Russia of various nationalisms, which sharply collided with the established administrative divisions.

Moreover, some imperial policies were applied only within the boundaries of particular provinces, which meant, for example, that restrictions imposed on one province and its inhabitants did not necessarily apply to the neighbouring administrative unit and were not affecting that population. Hence, there were many occasions, when a divided ethnic group received different treatment from the central authorities.

This negligence of the relation between ethnic and administrative boundaries meant that in this respect, imperial policy became incongruous, thus complicating its own attempts to integrate the non-Russians. Nevertheless, in some cases there was a correlation between administrative boundaries and the development of local (national) identity, the best example being the establishment of the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland (1809) within almost exactly the same boundaries occupied by the Finnish population.

The following presents an overview of the development of the administrative-territorial system in Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and highlights the process of “vertical” integration and regionalisation of the state. Narrowing the scope of the investigation, my main focus will rest primarily on the North Western provinces, i.e. the lands of the former Grand Duchy of

Lithuania (the so-called “historical Lithuania”), territories inhabited by Belarusian, Jewish, Lithuanian, Polish, Ukrainian and other peoples.<sup>83</sup>

Alongside the focus on shifting administrative borders, another no less important process will be discussed – that of surveying and mapping. Many 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century geographers, cartographers, surveyors and explorers contributed to what was known (i.e. to the knowledge) *about* the territory of the Empire, created topographic and thematic maps based on their research, and introduced new divisions of the imperial space. The outcome of these endeavours was a visualisation of the imperial space, making it more susceptible to imperial control, administration and the establishment of power relations between the peripheries and the centre. These investigations improved the standing of Russian scholarship and contributed to a greater understanding of the Russian Empire.

## 2.1. The first steps in organising the imperial space (beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to 1762)

In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia entered a new era of state administration. The reforms of Peter I aimed primarily at establishing a *regulatory state*, similar to that found in Western Europe, which had been conceptualised and analysed by political philosophers, such as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) and Christian Wolff (1679-1754).<sup>84</sup>

For a long time the Muscovite state had been on the periphery of Europe, however that did not mean that Western cultural and political influences were completely alien to 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russia. During earlier historical periods fragments of Western culture and science had found their way to the Muscovite state, usually via the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (PLC). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century however, Peter I (1682-1725) went much further: he consciously began importing aspects of the Western world, forcing them on traditional Russian society and issuing decrees that persecuted the disobedient. Russia rapidly grew into a “police state.”

A similar strategy was adopted when Peter designed the new imperial administrative structure. The Swedish system, which at that time was considered to be one of the most efficient administrative systems in Europe, became an exemplary model for Peter’s reforms.<sup>85</sup> A restructured and ex-

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<sup>83</sup> The division of the Western region into the North Western and South Western parts occurred after the 1863-1864 uprising; however, for the sake of clarity this geo-political and territorial distinction will also be used when talking about the earlier periods.

<sup>84</sup> Mikhail M. Bogoslovskii, *Oblastnaia reforma Petra Velikago. Provintsiia 1719-1727* (The Hague, Paris: 1970 (reprint of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition – 1902), pp. 14-19.

<sup>85</sup> The Russian historian Vladimir Grigorev has indicated that one of the major features of the Petrine reforms could be called “borrowing” (*zaimstvovanie*). Vladimir Grigorev, *Reforma mestnago upravleniia pri Ekaterine II (Ucherizhdenie o guberniakh 7 noiabria 1775 g.)* (St. Petersburg: 1910), pp. 51-52.

panded bureaucratic machine was used to achieve a more effective and rational control of the Russian population as well as of the state's space. Hence, the Great Northern War (1700-1721) between Sweden and Russia was more than just an ordinary military conflict: in many ways it was a learning experience, where Peter not only fought against the Swedish enemy, but also acquired an understanding of the Swedish state structure and organisation. In this regard the occupation of the Baltic provinces was not merely an expansion of Russian state territory. The Baltic (*Ostzeiskie*) provinces became, so to speak, a living textbook of the functioning Swedish administrative system. Soon after the annexation, many Swedes and local Baltic Germans were promoted to run the Petrine chancelleries, provinces and other high imperial institutions. The Baltic provinces acquired a privileged status.<sup>86</sup>

The 17<sup>th</sup>-century Muscovite state had a rather complex administrative-territorial structure, which consisted mainly of *prikazy* and *uezdy*. *Prikazy*, or chancelleries, "were special organs of central authority combining the functions of local estate, and territorial administration."<sup>87</sup> *Uezdy* as territorial divisions evolved naturally into administrative units, comprising a city and the economically dependent surrounding areas.<sup>88</sup> In the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century special territorial units called "military districts" (*voennye okrugy* or *razriady*) were formed in the border areas. Subsequently, these military districts became the foundation of the first Petrine *gubernii*. Besides these military administrative units, the Muscovite state was also subdivided into financial districts (*cheti*), but these were less well organised than the military districts.<sup>89</sup>

The first attempt to reorganise the state in a more rationally structured manner began in 1708, when Peter I introduced a new territorial unit – the *guberniia*, or province, which replaced the military district.<sup>90</sup> As the Russian historian Miliukov noted, the Tsar did not intend to abolish the old Muscovite system, rather the old system had already collapsed under pressure from Peter's internal and external policies. In this context the Tsar's need for greater financial resources was extremely important. During the early reform years, when the old system was still used to collect taxes, Peter I was not concerned about the level of his financial expenditure. However, when state expenditure started to exceed income, Peter focused on optimising tax col-

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<sup>86</sup> Bogoslovskii, pp. 29-31; Ia. Zutis, *Ostzeiskii vopros v XVIII veke* (Riga: 1946), pp. 57-58; 88-104; Claes Peterson, *Peter the Great's Administrative and Juridical Reforms: Swedish Antecedents and the Process of Reception* (Stockholm: 1979).

<sup>87</sup> Aleksandr B. Kamenskii, *The Russian Empire in the Eighteenth Century: Searching for a Place in the World* (New York, London: 1997), p. 25.

<sup>88</sup> Bogoslovskii, p. 42.

<sup>89</sup> Pavel Miliukov, *Gosudarstvennoe khoziaistvo Rossii v pervoi chetverti XVIII stoletia i reforma Petra Velikago* (St. Petersburg, 1905), pp. 221-255.

<sup>90</sup> "Ob ucherizhdenii gubernii i o rospisanii k nim gorodov" (December 18, 1708), PSZRI (1830), vol. 4, no. 2,218.

lection, which was directly related to the transformations in the administrative sector.<sup>91</sup>

The reorganisation of the internal structure of the military districts began during the second decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. From 1710 until 1715 a new sub-unit – the ober-commandant province (*ober-komendantskaia provintsia*) – functioned as a smaller division within a *guberniia*. No official decree defined this particular structure. However, Bogoslovskii presents it as a logically developed scheme. It appears that groups of towns, governed by commandants (*komendanty*), were subordinated to the central towns of each *provintsia*, where the ober-commandant resided. From an administrative-territorial perspective, in the old *uezd* system each major city had its own territory and a cluster of such towns formed the territory of the *provintsia*. In practice, even after the reform, the lowest administrative unit remained the *uezd*. The difference between the old and the new structures was most noticeable in terms of the bureaucracy. The *uezdy* administrators, known as *voivodes*, were replaced by the Petrine military *komendanty*. This system, however, was not implemented everywhere. Many of the border provinces, such as the *Malorosiiskaia* Kiev province, were divided into *polki*, which were administrative units representing military territory controlled by one regiment (*polk*).<sup>92</sup>

The structure of the Petrine state was highly complex and was reminiscent of the organisation that had been in place in the previous century. Dissatisfied with the failure of his plan to secure more taxes, Peter continued to improve the state's administrative sector. For a brief period (1715-1719), before the second wave of administrative reforms, he introduced an intermediate structure, which fragmented the Russian *provintsii* into administrative-fiscal units called *doli* ("lots"). Each *dolia* comprised an average of 5,536 taxable households (*tiaglye dvory*). But the number of households per *dolia* varied, sometimes reaching as high as 8,000. The *dolia* was a completely new and artificial invention, which had no direct relation to any previous Russian administrative construction.<sup>93</sup>

The experiment with the *doli* was not successful either in bringing in more taxes. It led to the second wave of administrative reforms, which began in 1719.<sup>94</sup> This time the Tsar implemented a modified version of the Swedish model. Territorially, he reduced the basic size of administrative units by changing the *gubernii* into *provintsii*, and *doli* into *distrikty*. Thus, the main principle of the second reform was to reduce the size of the territorial units in order to achieve a greater ability in controlling the taxed population. While a *dolia* comprised approximately 5,500 households, a *distrikt* did not

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<sup>91</sup> Konstantin Arsen'ev, *Statisticheskie ocherki Rossii* (St. Petersburg: 1848), pp. 60-67; Miliukov, pp. 219-221.

<sup>92</sup> Bogoslovskii, pp. 46-48.

<sup>93</sup> Miliukov, p. 288; Bogoslovskii, pp. 48-49; Peterson, pp. 242-243.

<sup>94</sup> "Ob ustroistve gubernii i ob opredelenii v onyia pravitelei" (May 29, 1719), PSZRI (1830), vol. 5, no. 3,380.

exceed 1,500-2,000. In this way the ten *gubernii* were converted into fifty *provintsii* in 1719 (Figure 1). This time the Tsar decided to use the geographical method of division: the ascription of a city or a town to one or another province rested on its geographical proximity to the central city of the *provintsia*. Factors such as the quality and availability of roads (as well as waterways) were also taken into consideration. Governors-general, governors or *voivodes* became the heads of the new *provintsii*. Although the titles of these officials differed, the functions they performed were similar.<sup>95</sup>

The second provincial reform, however, did not function as smoothly as was expected. The decree of May 29, 1719, initiated the replacement of the *gubernii-doli* structure with the new *provintsii-distrikty* model. In practice, however, the old *gubernii* retained their status as the highest provincial institutions. This meant that the *provintsia*, unexpectedly for the initiators and executors of the reform, became an unofficial constitutive part of the *guberniia*. Such confusion, according to Miliukov, demonstrated once again the inertia of the old Muscovite system and the weakness of the central authority in trying to replace the traditional structure of the state.<sup>96</sup>

The first political attempts to provide Russia with a new modern administrative-territorial division went hand-in-hand with the rapid development of geography, cartography, surveying and other related fields, which had been necessitated by the reorganisation of the state's territory. However, at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the development of these disciplines in Russia was still quite rudimentary. Moreover, there were few personnel that could perform the necessary surveying and mapping tasks competently.

Confronted by this problem, Peter I began searching for new means to conduct surveys and cartographical work. As a result, Russian cartography (in its broadest sense) developed and evolved in several directions: first, special schools or classes for the preparation of geodesists were established; second, a state organisation of surveying was established; third, print shops capable of engraving and publishing maps were opened. Moreover, while travelling across Europe the Tsar established contacts with several prominent Western specialists, such as the Amsterdam publisher Jan Tessing (died in 1701), who was granted a monopoly in 1700 to publish official maps of the Russian state.<sup>97</sup> The Tsar also took lessons in engraving from another Dutch specialist Adrian Schoonebeck, who later became a teacher of Russian engravers.<sup>98</sup> Peter's energetic endeavours soon resulted in the opening of several new print shops, such as V. Kipriianov's print shop in Moscow (opened in 1705), which facilitated the evolution of Russian cartography.

The training of the Russian geographers and cartographers proceeded in two ways: dispatching Russian students abroad to study, and through the

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<sup>95</sup> Arsen'ev, pp. 67-80; Bogoslovskii, pp. 50-52.

<sup>96</sup> Miliukov, pp. 463-464.

<sup>97</sup> D. M. Lebedev, *Geografiia v Rossii Petrovskogo vremeni* (Moscow, Leningrad: 1950), pp. 182-183; 188-189; 336-337.

<sup>98</sup> Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, p. 38.

opening of specialist schools within Russia. The *Mathematical and Navigational School*, based on the British model, functioned in Moscow during the period 1701-1752. Its first teachers were specialists from Scotland: Henry Farquharson (d. 1739), Stephen Gwyn and Richard Gries. In 1715 the *Naval Academy* in St. Petersburg was opened, which from the time of its establishment until 1752 contained a “class of geodesists.” The geodesists, alumni of the *Naval Academy*, were the first Russian surveyors. Their work was reflected in the production of the most significant Russian cartographic publication at that time: *The Atlas of the Russian Empire*, published in 1745.<sup>99</sup> Finally, in 1725 the Imperial Academy of Sciences was opened. The Academy’s main objective was the investigation of the Russian Empire, which at that time primarily meant a broad geographic and cartographic depiction of the state.<sup>100</sup>

One of the largest projects was the undertaking of the first survey of the European part of the Russian Empire. Following a decree issued on December 9, 1720, a group of geodesists was dispatched to compose the first *land-karty* – maps of the lower administrative units called *distriky*.<sup>101</sup> The Emperor himself wrote the instructions concerning the methodological and practical aspects of the project. Although the first geodesists had begun their work as early as 1715, the project nevertheless required a colossal amount of time and effort. This surveying continued from 1720 until 1744. Exceptionally difficult working conditions, a lack of instruments, a shortage of funding, and the very small number of geodesists especially (in contrast to the vast size of the state territory) aggravated the already difficult task they had been given. In 1725 there were only thirty geodesists in the field, in 1731 there were seventy-one, while throughout the entire period only about two hundred geodesists participated in the mapping process. The progress of the work was slow: before 1721 only three *uezds* out of one hundred and ninety had been mapped, and by 1725 the Senate had received thirty maps. The last maps reached St. Petersburg only in 1744.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> *Atlas Rossiiskoi, sostoiashchei iz deviatnadsati spetsial’nykh kart predstavliaiushchikh Vserossiiskuiu Imperiiu s pograničnymi zemliami, sočinennoi po pravilam Geograficheskim i noveišim observatsiiam, s prilozheniui pri tom general’noiui kartoiiu velikiia vseia imperii, staraniiami i trudami Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk* (St. Petersburg, 1745).

<sup>100</sup> Sergei E. Fel’, *Kartografiia Rossii XVIII veka* (Moscow: 1960), pp. 7-21; Alexei Postnikov, “Contact and Conflict: Russian Mapping of Finland and the Developments of Russian Cartography in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” *Fennia* (1993), vol. 171, no. 2, pp. 64-65; by the same author, *Russia in Maps*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>101</sup> Alexei V. Postnikov, *Razvitie kartografii i voprosy ispol’zovaniia starykh kart* (Moscow: 1985), pp. 140-150.

<sup>102</sup> From 1720 until 1734 the Ober-Secretary of the State Senate Ivan K. Kirilov (1689-1737) supervised the work of the Russian surveyors. Some of the maps and plans that were made during this period were used in the Atlas of Russia, published in 1734. From 1735 supervision was taken over by the Geographical Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Based on the results of surveys undertaken up to 1745, the Academy published the first scientific atlas of the state (see footnote 99), which depicted the structure of *gubernii* and *provintsii* in detail. V. M. Kabuzan, “Obzor istoriko-geograficheskikh istochnikov po administrativno-



**Figure 2.** The administrative division of the Russian Empire 1720-1727. Fragment from: Iu. V. Got'e, *Istoriia oblastnogo upravleniia v Rossii ot Petra I do Ekateriny II* (Moscow: 1913)

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territorial'nomu deleniuiu Rossii v 1720-1770 gg.," in: V. I. Buganov (ed.), *Istoriicheskaia geografiiia Rossii* (Moscow: 1981), vol. 2, pp. 44-51.

Unforeseen circumstances, however, such as the implementation of further administrative-territorial changes, impacted on the usefulness of the earliest maps. Before the completion of the general survey, new groups of geodesists started to verify and correct the old *gubernii* and *uezdy* borders.<sup>103</sup> Thus, the first cartographic depiction of the Russian Empire, which began in the 1720s, was an ongoing process, as the imperial space required new mapping with each territorial gain, loss or administrative reform.

The administrative reforms and radical modernisation of the state began to crumble even before Peter's death. The problem was not only their internal fragility, artificiality and rather unsystematic character, but also because they were unable to replace the traditional structure of the *uezdy*. Thus, the new divisions were built on older foundations, which subsequently created a conflict between the traditional Russian system and the new semi-Swedish model.<sup>104</sup>

The short life of the second provincial reform was also partly a result of the constant corrections that occurred. Yet perhaps Peter's biggest failure was that he did not create the conditions where successors would be in place to continue the work, i.e. a social group, which would have been interested in the functionality of the structure. A lack of competent personnel as well as the general demographic decline following the wars and the severely overstretched financial situation of the state, resulted in the persistent appearance of vacancies within the expanded local administrative institutions.<sup>105</sup>

Yet the reforms that had been undertaken during the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were not completely erased. The system of bureaucratic hierarchy, as well as the network of *guberniia-provintsiia-uezd* (or *distrikt*) remained in place and the local administrators – the *voivodes* – retained their posts. Finally, the interdependency of the vertical power structure that emanated from the imperial centre, via governors down to the *voivodes* remained in existence and continued to function.<sup>106</sup>

Another tendency, which began during the reign of Peter I, was the separate treatment of the Russian and the annexed non-Russian lands, which also indicates at the growth of regionalism. For most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Russian Empire had two active ethno-political minority elites: the Baltic German and the Ukrainian (also called the Little Russian – *Malorossy*) nobility. Although ethnic Russians and non-Russians comprised a common imperial socio-political sphere, the non-Russians continued their separate existence. However, some of the non-Russian territories did accept partial forms of imperial rule. These were: the Finnish province of Vyborg, the Baltic provinces, the Little Russian *Slobodskaiia-Ukraina* province, Siberia and the

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<sup>103</sup> Lebedev, pp. 204-207; Fel', pp. 81-112; Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, pp. 38-46.

<sup>104</sup> Miliukov, pp. 457-460; Peterson, *passim*.

<sup>105</sup> Miliukov, pp. 184-218; 375-382; Grigorev, pp. 75-83; V. M. Kabuzan, *Narody Rossii v XVIII veke. Chislenost' i etnicheskii sostav* (Moscow: 1990), pp. 55-62, *passim*;

<sup>106</sup> Bogoslavskii, pp. 519-521.



southern lands of the Empire, which by this time had been intensely colonised.<sup>107</sup>

The further development of the imperial administrative-territorial divisions, prior to the fundamental reforms of Catherine II, can be perceived as a continuation of Peter I's policies despite the repudiation of most of the Petrine administrative institutions.<sup>108</sup> The following decades may be divided into several stages. During the first period, which comprised the rule of Catherine I (1725-1727) and Peter II (1727-1730), the imperial authorities focused mostly on simplifying and reducing the bureaucratic apparatus. This resulted in the partial restoration of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Muscovite system. During the second period (the rule of Empress Anna Ivanovna 1730-1740) the major concern was restoring the state's fiscal strength, which had been severely undermined by the previous wars. Nevertheless, Russian rulers continued to participate actively in foreign politics, which also required substantial expenditure. Local administrators during the reign of Anna Ivanovna were predominantly preoccupied with improving the state budget. In the minds of the Russian people this resulted in the local authorities being equated with tax collectors.<sup>109</sup>

The reign of Elisabeth (1741-1762) was relatively liberal in comparison with that of her predecessor. Foreign politics predominated and the Empire played an active role in the major political events in Europe: the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years War (1756-1763). During this period the state's financial standing was gradually improved. Moreover, the Russian nobility received more privileges. The downside of Elisabeth's "liberalism" was that the greater freedoms granted to the nobility resulted in a decline in their wish to participate in the imperial governance. They preferred to take care of their own property and businesses. At the same time the authorities could not recruit people from other social classes, because the nobility's monopoly on appointments to administrative posts prevented the participation of non-nobles in the bureaucratic apparatus of the imperial state.<sup>110</sup>

The imperial administrative-territorial divisions did not change significantly between 1725 and 1762, although the territory of the state expanded and the number of provinces with non-Russian populations increased. However, important changes did occur in the structure of provincial governance. It should be noted that the breakdown of the 1719 administrative reform was related to a malicious tendency to issue special individual decrees for each newly appointed local *voivode*. In time, the local administration became overloaded with such individual decrees, and each time a new administrator entered the *uezd's* office, he had to follow the instructions given to his predecessors as well as his own. This situation hampered the smooth func-

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<sup>107</sup> Got'e, p. 6; Zutis, pp. 49-104.

<sup>108</sup> Miliukov, pp. 524-525

<sup>109</sup> Got'e, pp. 9-11.

<sup>110</sup> Arsen'ev, pp. 80-90; Got'e, pp. 11-13.

tioning of the state; therefore in the early years of her reign, Catherine II prepared to undertake reforms of the imperial administration.

## 2.2. The territorial and ethnic fragmentation of the Russian Empire (second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)

### 2.2.1. The Provincial Reform (1775) and territorial expansion (1762-1796)

In 1762 Catherine II ascended to the Russian imperial throne where she remained for the next thirty-four years. During her reign Catherine II fundamentally restructured the Russian imperial administrative organisation. Several important distinctions can be drawn between the reforms that took place at the beginning and during the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Firstly, Peter I searched for models and methods, skipping sporadically from war to imperial reorganisation, but seemed to have no underlying plan. In contrast, Catherine II was well prepared by her extensive study of the Enlightenment philosophers and her investigations into the political structures of the European states. All this resulted in a set of laws usually identified as a triad – the Provincial Reform (1775) and the decrees for the towns and nobility (both in 1785) – which endured until the very end of the Empire.

Another special feature of Catherine's reign was the strengthening and growth of the politically active non-Russian elites, primarily the Baltic German and Ukrainian nobilities. As the historian Thaden has noted, research on Catherine II's policies towards the non-Russian western borderlands is inseparable from the all-imperial reforms that occurred at that time.<sup>111</sup> After the incorporation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (PLC), a new administrative-territorial structure was put in place in the annexed lands. The restructuring of the imperial territory and administration during and after the period of the partitions indicates the first step towards the above-mentioned "vertical integration." At the same time, one of the outcomes of Catherine's territorial reforms can be indirectly related to the difficulties encountered by the Belarusian and Lithuanian nationalists at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when they tried to surmount the administrative borders and promote their ethnic territories. This was connected to the fact that the administrative boundaries that were established in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were made without any consideration of the ethnic distribution of the lands.

The first decrees, which indicated the Empress's interest in reforming the provincial administration, were issued in 1764. One concerned the gover-

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<sup>111</sup> Edward C. Thaden, *Russia's Western Borderlands, 1710-1870* (Princeton, New Jersey: 1984), p. 18.

nors<sup>112</sup>, another the towns<sup>113</sup> – the so-called “small administrative reform.”<sup>114</sup> The first decree described the duties of the highest representatives of imperial power in the provinces, while the second presented a new structure for the towns, which were to be divided into *shtatnye* and *zashtatnye*, thus introducing a system that would continue to exist until 1917.<sup>115</sup> The same decree also enumerated the towns and cities that were to remain or were to be deleted from the imperial *shtat*. The document presented fourteen provinces (*gubernii*) subdivided into *provintsii*, the *shtatnye* towns and suburbs.

While preparing the Provincial Reform, the Empress began with the reorganisation of the *uezdy* and towns. She ordered that those *uezdy* which contained less than 10,000 “revision souls” (i.e. taxed male population), were to be dissolved and their territories attached to neighbouring districts. The towns that had been centres of the abolished *uezdy* were erased from the imperial table of ranks and became *zashtatnye*. The new *uezd* could not exceed 30,000 revision souls. In special cases this rule could be ignored, however, and in such cases the governors, who participated directly in the process, had to inform the imperial Senate about this deviation. Alongside its statistical criterion, the reorganisation also had a geographical criterion. In this way, the *shtatnye* towns became rather like magnets, each attracting the surrounding lands. The settlements that were included within the orbit of such a town (depending on their distance from it) also belonged to the same *uezd*. Despite this separation, the *zashtatnye* towns were not completely abandoned: they received special commissars who administered and ensured their continued development.<sup>116</sup>

The first signs of the ethno-political regionalisation of Russia can be seen during this period, especially in the partial reorganisation of the non-Russian provinces prior to the Provincial Reform. The extensiveness of the reform depended on the willingness of the local gentry to participate in and accept the integrative processes of the state. Better positions within the imperial governmental structures increased the opportunities for non-Russians to ac-

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<sup>112</sup> “Nastavlenie gubernatoram” (April 21, 1764), PSZRI (1830), vol. 16, no. 12,137; also in: *Zakonodatel'stvo Ekateriny II* (Moscow: 2000), vol. 1, pp. 338-343.

<sup>113</sup> “Ob uchinenii gubernatoram, kazhdomu v svoei gubernii, raspisanii o pripisnykh gorodakh i o vsekh uezdakh i ob opredelenii, s kakoiu vlastiiu kommissarstva, magistraty i ratushi ostat'sia dolzhny” (October 11, 1764), PSZRI (1830), vol. 16, no. 12,259; *Zakonodatel'stvo Ekateriny II*, vol. 1, pp. 343-351.

<sup>114</sup> Got'e, p. 16.

<sup>115</sup> “*Zashtatnyi* town – non-provincial (*ne gubernskii*) and non-district (*ne uezdnyi*) town, which did not have its own *uezd* as an administrative centre, however it enjoyed all the privileges of a city” (L. V. Belovinskii, *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' Rossiiskoi zhizni i istorii XVIII – nachalo XX v.* (Moscow: 2004), p. 249). The terms *shtatnyi* and *zashtatnyi* indicated the relation of the administrative or social institutions to the official imperial structure and its table of ranks (*tabel' shtatov*). In this way, units such as the towns with *shtat* were closely supervised and funded by the state, whereas not having such a status usually indicated that a town remained outside the state system.

<sup>116</sup> Robert E. Jones, *Provincial Development in Russia: Catherine II and Jacob Sievers* (New Brunswick: 1984), p. 83.

quire more privileges for themselves as well as their lands. Therefore, from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the two major groups of non-Russian elites at that time – the Ukrainians and the Baltic Germans – competed with each other to improve their standing in the imperial system. This was not an open rivalry based on a strong national identity, but rather an attempt to retain their former high status.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Ukrainian gentry, as part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, were one of the main mediators between the Muscovite state and Western Europe.<sup>117</sup> This guaranteed them a somewhat exceptional status in pre-Petrine Russia. However, the forging of direct links with Europe by Peter I resulted in the Ukrainian elites gradually beginning to lose their old position. Instead, the Baltic Germans rose as favourites, primarily due to their usefulness and familiarity with the Swedish administrative model. Moreover, the general level of education among the Baltic Germans was higher than that among Russians. This also allowed them to become Russia's representatives in the European political arena. Consequently, the Baltic Germans occupied many high imperial positions.<sup>118</sup>

The administrative structure of Russia's western borderlands was unstable. In 1764 the administration of Left-Bank Ukraine was assigned to the Little Russian Department (*Malorossiiskaia Kollegiia*), headed by Count Petr A. Rumiantsev (1725-1796). Only later, in 1780, did the Provincial Reform reach the Ukrainian lands. It established not only a new territorial division, but also reformed the administration of the provinces.<sup>119</sup>

Before beginning the process of provincial reorganisation, Catherine II studied the potential avenues of the reform intensively. Considering and analysing different practical and theoretical models (mostly favouring the English system and projects proposed by the French political philosophers), she also reviewed previous reform efforts in Russia.<sup>120</sup> Having done this, in 1767 Catherine composed a draft of the new imperial structure and issued a special *Nakaz*, or *Instruction*, created for its discussion.<sup>121</sup> Her idea was to call an all-imperial assembly of the estates, entitled the "Commission for the composition of a plan for a new Code of Laws" (*Komissiia dlia sochineniia proekta novogo Ulozheniia*).<sup>122</sup> The Commission's major function was to

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<sup>117</sup> Zenon E. Kohut, *Russian Centralism and Ukrainian Autonomy: Imperial Absorption of the Hetmanate, 1760s-1830s* (Harvard: 1988), pp. 18-19.

<sup>118</sup> Thaden, pp. 5-17; on the Ukrainians, see: Kohut, pp. 81-103.

<sup>119</sup> Thaden, p. 24; N. A. D'iakova, M. A. Chepelkin, *Granitsy Rossii v XVII-XX vekakh. Prilozhenie k "Istorii Rossii"* (Moscow: 1995), p. 29; Matvei K. Liubavskii, *Istoriiia tsarstvovaniia Ekateriny II* (St. Petersburg: 2001), pp. 67-68.

<sup>120</sup> Jones, *Provincial Development*, pp. 16-20; 86-87; Kohut, pp. 77-81.

<sup>121</sup> "Nakaz dannyi Komissii o sochinenii proekta novogo Ulozheniia" (July 30, 1767), PSZRI (1830), vol. 17, no. 12,949; "Dopolnenie k bol'shomu Nakazu" (April 8, 1768), *Ibid.*, no. 13,096.

<sup>122</sup> "Ob ucherizhdenii v Moskve komissii dlia sochineniia proekta novogo Ulozheniia o vybore v onuiu deputatov" (December 14, 1766), *Ibid.*, no. 12,801; and "Manifest" (December 14, 1766), *Ibid.*, no. 12,945; "Obriad upravleniia komissii o sochinenii proekta novogo Ulozheniia" (July 30, 1767), *Ibid.*, no. 12,948; and "Dopolneniia k obriadu upravleniia komissii o

present its opinion on the project. Subsequently, Catherine II, together with her advisors Semen Desnitsky (1740-1789), Prince M. Volkonsky and Jacob Sievers (1731-1808), would profit greatly from the work of the Commission.<sup>123</sup>

However, during the proceedings of the Commission, perhaps for the first time in Russian imperial history, the non-Russian delegates worked together to express their strong opposition to the imperial authorities. The representatives of the Baltic German and Ukrainian nobilities rejected the geographic divisions presented by the new *Ulozhenie*. They refused to accept the new legislation being imposed in their provinces.

The first signs of trouble appeared with opposition to the elections to the Commission. The *Nakaz* contained an appendix, which regulated the procedure for elections to the assembly. The Russian provinces followed the rules closely, but the elections in the Baltic provinces and the Ukrainian lands did not take place because the local gentry ignored the decree. Initially, the Empress considered the idea of not introducing the new system in the Baltic Provinces, Little Russia and the Finnish Vyborg province. The local elites in each province would instead choose whether they wanted to participate in the Commission and whether they would send delegates. Later, however, she reconsidered and the new code of laws was subsequently designated to apply to the whole Russian Empire. However, the Baltic Germans in particular were reluctant to follow the election procedures. Some towns in the Baltic provinces made excuses, stating that they did not have enough money to hold the election. The Ukrainian provinces argued similarly that sending their delegation and even discussing the common imperial laws was a violation of their traditional privileges. Rumiantsev, the head of the Little Russian College, had difficulty in persuading the Ukrainian nobility to participate. The Senate even released a decree that resulted in several rebellious nobles being taken to court.<sup>124</sup> Nevertheless, an agreement between the imperial authorities and the non-Russian nobility was finally reached and local elections took place in both regions.

The gathering of the delegates and initial sessions began in 1768. Catherine soon realised that it was hard to make the representatives focus exclusively on her *Nakaz*. Many of them were eager to instead present demands from their home areas. According to Liubavskii, this was partly because the

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sochinenii proekta novogo Ulozheniia” (August 13, 1768), *Ibid.*, no. 13,159; also in: *Zakonodatel'svo Ekateriny II*, vol. 1, pp. 153-188; for the English translation see: Paul Dukes, *Russia under Catherine the Great: Catherine the Great's Instruction (Nakaz) to the Legislative Commission, 1767* (Newtonville, Mass.: 1977), vol. 2, pp. 42-129.

<sup>123</sup> Robert E. Jones, *The Emancipation of the Russian Nobility, 1762-1785* (Princeton: 1973), pp. 213-220; by the same author: “Jacob Sievers, Enlightened Reform and the Development of a ‘Third Estate’ in Russia,” *Russian Review* (Oct., 1977), vol. 36, no. 4, pp. 424-437.

<sup>124</sup> Paul Dukes, *Catherine the Great and the Russian Nobility: a Study Based on the Materials of the Legislative Commission of 1767* (Cambridge: 1967), pp. 59; 66; 68; 71-74; Kohut, pp. 125-168; [S. M. Kazantsev], “Komissiia dlia sochineniia proekta novogo Ulozheniia,” in: *Zakonodatel'svo Ekateriny II*, vol. 1, p. 140.

*Nakaz* was far too abstract to discuss and, which was more important, was considered to be too western.<sup>125</sup> The Baltic German and the Ukrainian elites also raised their own demands about securing their old freedoms, and at the same time, about becoming equal to the privileged Russian nobility. Even before the beginning of the assembly, Rumiantsev wrote to Catherine II to inform her that the Little Russian representatives had boasted that they had an agreement with the Baltic Germans about establishing common demands.<sup>126</sup> However, during the assembly the non-Russian delegates faced strong resistance from their Russian counterparts. The Russians were reluctant to grant the Baltic Germans and the Ukrainians equal rights with the Russian nobility and at the same time allow the non-Russians to maintain their special privileges. That would have raised the status of the non-Russian elites over the Russians. Having failed to achieve an agreement, the Baltic Germans attempted to use a backdoor strategy by submitting a separate *Ulozhenie* directly to Catherine II, which dealt exclusively with the Livonian province. Catherine dismissed the project stating that she was the Empress of the whole of the Russian Empire, not just the ruler of Livonia.<sup>127</sup>

The commentaries and suggestions of the Commission did not achieve any significant results during this period, and with the beginning of the Russo-Turkish war in September 1768, the Commission was disbanded. Nonetheless, Catherine II had received invaluable feedback directly from the provinces across the whole Empire. Moreover, although most of the delegates returned to their home provinces, a part of the Commission was reorganised into smaller and more specialised sub-committees, which continued to work until 1774. One such sub-committee, active from 1767 to 1771, discussed the possibility of implementing new administrative-territorial divisions.<sup>128</sup> However, the committee was faced with some fundamental problems. Its members soon realised that the surveying of the state was still an ongoing process and that the borders of some provinces were not yet delineated or had been drawn incorrectly. Even greater confusion was caused when the officials could not identify centres for several *uezdy*, or when they found several locations with the same name. Finally, in 1771, the committee members announced the findings of their project. They argued that to ensure better administration, the Empire should be divided into *uezdy* consisting of 25,000-40,000 revision souls, while provinces would contain 70,000-120,000 and *gubernii* 450,000-600,000 revision souls.<sup>129</sup> Finally, in 1775 after much preparation and planning, Empress Catherine II signed a decree

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<sup>125</sup> Liubavskii, pp. 80-82.

<sup>126</sup> Dukes, *Catherine the Great*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>127</sup> U. L. Lehtonen, *Die Polnischen Provinzen Russlands unter Katharina II: in den Jahren 1772-1782* (Berlin: 1907), pp. 218-222; Duke, pp. 156-157; Kohut, pp. 169-187; [S. M. Kazantsev], "Komissia dlia sochineniia," p. 147.

<sup>128</sup> Arsen'ev, pp. 103-111.

<sup>129</sup> Jones, *Provincial Development*, pp. 86-87.

entitled “The Establishment of the Administration of Provinces in the Russian Empire” – a fundamental reform of the imperial space.<sup>130</sup>

The reform established a new system of provincial administration, which separated judicial and administrative power. At the same time however, a new administrative structure was constructed.<sup>131</sup> Basically, the reform introduced a two-level administrative division into *gubernii* (also called viceroyalties – *namestnichestvo*) with 300,000-400,000 revision souls, supervised by the governors-general or viceroys (*namestniki*), governors and the collegial institution – the Provincial Administration (*gubernskoe pravlenie* or *namestnicheskoe pravlenie*).<sup>132</sup> Additionally, §§ 15-17 stated that if necessary, the provinces could also have a middle layer, i.e. an additional division into *provintsii* or *okrugi*, leaving the *uezd* as the lowest and main provincial subdivision unit, which contained 20,000-30,000 revision souls (see the new structure in Figure 2).<sup>133</sup>

The establishment of the new administrative territorial division, however, progressed slowly. The new *gubernii* borders were demarcated with border signs that carried the provincial insignia, while cartographers updated the maps of each province. For this purpose special groups of officials were sent to monitor the progress of the delineation process as well as to observe the formation of the new institutions of the provincial administration.

In 1781 many towns and provinces still retained their old structure. In one of her decrees, Catherine II stressed:

The division of the [new] viceroyalties (*namestnichestva*), provinces (*gubernii*) and regions (*oblasti*) has been undertaken for the greater ease (*blagoustroistva*) of their governance; to this end the [new] distribution of settlements and their lands to each *guberniia*, region (*oblast'*) and district (*okrug*) will allow more precise information on the matter [of their statistics]; and the inhabitants [of these settlements] will know exactly to which district (*okrug*) they belong, where they should seek justice and whom they should address with their needs, as well as where their taxes will be paid.<sup>134</sup>

Thus, the province (*guberniia*), also called a viceroyalty (*namestnichestvo*),<sup>135</sup> became the main administrative-territorial unit of the Russian Em-

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<sup>130</sup> “Uchrezhdeniia dlia upravleniia gubernii vserossiiskii Imperii” (November 7, 1775), PSZRI (1830), vol. 20, no. 14,392; also in: *Zakonodatel'stvo Ekateriny II*, vol. 1, pp. 380-469; abbreviated English translation in: Paul Dukes, *Russia under Catherine the Great. Volume One: Select Documents on Government and Society* (Newtonville: 1978), pp. 140-157.

<sup>131</sup> “Ucherizhdeniia Upravleniia Gubernii,” pp. 381-383; Arsen'ev, pp. 111-132.

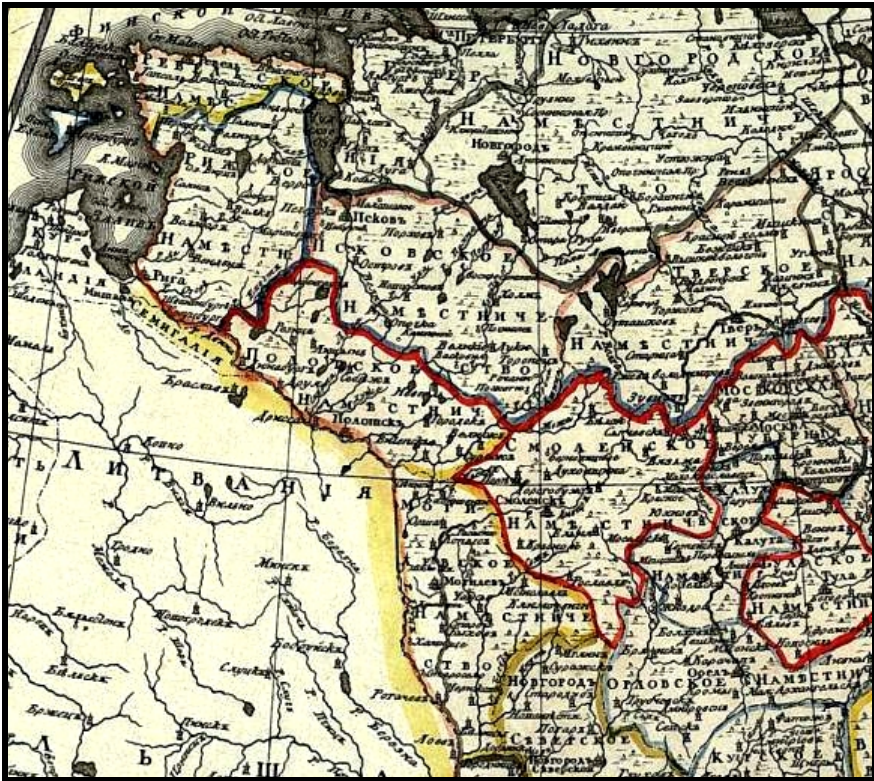
<sup>132</sup> “Ucherizhdeniia Upravleniia Gubernii,” § 1-5, p. 383.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 384.

<sup>134</sup> “O polozhenii granits mezhdru namestnichestvami i mezhdru uezdami kazhdogo namestnichestva” (May 19, 1781), PSZRI (1830), vol. 21, no. 15,160, pp. 125-126.

<sup>135</sup> The distinction between the two was rather vague. Catherine II used both terms interchangeably, calling the same territorial unit either a province (*guberniia*) or viceroyalty (*namestnichestvo*), as did subsequent emperors. For example, in the decrees concerning the restructuring of the Mogilev and Polotsk provinces in 1773, both were referred to as *namestnichestvo*. After five years, in 1778, Catherine II issued a decree, which transformed both

pire. The lower territorial units were also under intense scrutiny. However, the size of the state's territory required the joining of *gubernii* into larger clusters. Thus, the provincial reform introduced a general-province (*general-guberniia*). By 1781 twenty large general-provinces had already been established. Usually *gubernii* were paired (in 1781 there were 15 *general-gubernii*), but some general-provinces consisted of three (the triple *Malorossiiskie* provinces) or even four *gubernii* (*Saratovskaia*, *Astrakhanskaia*, *Azovskaia* and *Novorossiiskaia*). Several provinces remained unpaired, although their status resembled that of a general-province (*Moskovskaia*, *Revel'skaia* and *Rizhskaia*).<sup>136</sup>



**Figure 3.** The new administrative-territorial division of the Russian Empire after the 1775 reform. Fragment from: *Novaia karta Rossiiskoi Imperii razdielennaiia na namestnichestva* (1786) (Courtesy of David Rumsey cartographic collection)

administrative units into *gubernii*, without giving a description of any territorial or administrative change (“Ob ucherezhenii Mogilevskoi i Polotskoi gubernii” (January 10, 1778), PSZRI (1830), vol. 20, no. 14,691). However, when the administrative apparatuses for each province were assigned (these decrees were issued on the same day), they were still referred to as *namestnichestva* (Ibid., no. 14,692; 14,693).

<sup>136</sup> “O novom raspisanii gubernii s oznacheniem general-gubernatorov” (June 13, 1781), PSZRI (1830), vol. 21, no. 15,171.



The Pskov<sup>137</sup> and Mogilev provinces, incorporated after the First partition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1772, were among the first territorial units organised according to the new structure, even before the beginning of the Provincial Reform.<sup>138</sup> Here for the first time the new offices of the governor-general and governor appeared; the number of local state officials increased significantly. However, on the lower administrative level, the *uezdy* were deprived of their direct representatives to the imperial authority. These functions were given instead to the estate courts elected from the local nobility and the appointed commissars. Some of these changes were, however, abolished after the beginning of the official Provincial Reform.<sup>139</sup>

With time the procedures for establishing a new province were determined and even acquired the form of a political ritual. Before the appearance of a new province, a special decree was issued followed by the establishment of an imperial administrative table of ranks, which enabled the process of recruitment to the new administrative positions to begin. After several months of analysis and the preparation of staff, the Senate issued an official statement about the appearance of a new province. Besides giving the names of all the new institutions, details concerning their functions and staff, the document also described the territory of the new administrative unit by listing the constitutive *uezdy* and indicating their borders. The constitutive decree also highlighted any structural deviations from the original *Ucherizhdeniia* of 1775. Moreover, the planning of a province was also followed by the collection of statistical data and mapping. Each governor was responsible for ensuring that the required census and cartographic work was completed for the whole of the province and for each *uezd*. Depending on the size of the province, and its bureaucratic staff and so on, the budget for maintaining the administrative unit varied. The approximate expense was calculated to be 5,000 roubles annually, although in reality the cost of some provinces grew to 20,000 roubles. Eventually, following the preparatory work, the birth of the new province was announced with accompanying festivities.<sup>140</sup>

Returning to the bureaucratic structure, the *Ucherizhdeniia* described only vaguely the relation between the offices of the governor-general and the governor. With time governors became responsible for their separate prov-

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<sup>137</sup> In 1778 this province was divided into two: Pskov and Polotsk. Later the administrative centre was moved to Vitebsk, thus renaming the Polotsk into the Vitebsk province.

<sup>138</sup> “Vysochaishe utverzhdennii doklad Belorusskago general-gubernatora, s prilozheniem shtata gubernskoi kantseliarii Pskovskoi i Mogilevskoi gubernii” (September 18, 1772), PSZRI (1830), vol. 19, no. 13,866; additional chapters: PSZRI (1830), vol. 44 (*Kniga shtatov*), part 2, no. 13,866; “O razdelenii Belarusskikh gubernii na uezdy i ob ucherezhdanii v onykh uezdakh kommissarstv” (July 22, 1773), PSZRI (1830), vol. 19, no. 14,014; additional chapters: PSZRI (1830), vol. 44 (*Kniga shtatov*), part 2, no. 14,014.

<sup>139</sup> “Ob ucherezhdanii Mogilevskoi gubernii iz 12, a Polotskoi iz 11 uezdov” (March 22, 1777), PSZRI (1830), vol. 20, no. 14,603; Grigorev, pp. 102-105; Jones, *Provincial Development*, p. 90.

<sup>140</sup> Grigorev, pp. 313; 317-318; 346-348.

inces, while the governors-general administered several *gubernii*, i.e. a general-province. The new system indicated a strengthening of the vertical integration with clearly defined responsibilities for each office assigned by the Emperor. At the same time the structure had a distinct decentralising tendency, especially with the expansion of local governance, which meant the delegation of more power to the provincial authorities.<sup>141</sup>

The process of the establishment of a province reveals one tendency in particular: the initial step, without which the reform could not be undertaken, was mapping. Therefore, the priority for each new governor was to obtain knowledge about the exact borders of his entrusted territory. In addition, the local authorities had to submit maps in five copies to the imperial chancelleries and the Senate.<sup>142</sup> The Empress personally oversaw the progress of the reforms. She ordered the governors to send her reports twice a month about the changes that had occurred in their provinces.<sup>143</sup>

After the 1775 Reform the inner structure of the state became denser, the provinces smaller and similar in size (the change is clearly seen in Figures 1 and 2). The *uezdy* were also standardised: some were reduced or dissolved, while others were enlarged. It took from 1775 until 1785 to complete the full territorial and administrative reconstruction. The introduction of the first general-provinces signalled the beginning of the new regional constellations of the state, the best examples of which were the Little Russian and Belarussian *gubernii* clusters. The two Baltic provinces were even more specific in this respect, because their individual status resembled that of a general-province.

Still, even after the Provincial Reform was officially complete, the territorial restructuring of the state did not stop. With further successful annexations, new territories had to be integrated and transformed in accordance with the rules of the Russian Empire. In this respect, the integration of the lands acquired through the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth presented a major and long-term challenge to the Empire.

### 2.2.2. The annexation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania

One of the greatest territorial acquisitions of Catherine II was the annexation of the eastern regions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (PLC) (Figure 4). These densely populated lands with a well-developed infrastructure and unique institutions were related to the “western” cultural and political hemisphere.

At that time the administrative division of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) consisted of eight palatinates (*województwa*) subdivided into districts

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<sup>141</sup> [G. M. Davidian, O. I. Chist'iakov, P. L. Polianskii], “Organy mestnogo upravleniia,” in: *Zakonodatel'stvo Ekateriny II*, vol. 1, p. 318.

<sup>142</sup> [G. M. Davidian, O. I. Chist'iakov, P. L. Polianskii], p. 369.

<sup>143</sup> “O dostavlenii Eia Imperatorkomu Velichestvu dvazhdy v mesiatz kratkikh donesenii o blagopoluchnom sostoianii gubernii” (August 24, 1783), PSZRI (1830), vol. 21, no. 15,821.

(*powiaty*) and with the capital in Vil'na. This administrative system had been established in 1565-1566 (Figure 3). Some scholars have argued that this division resembled to some extent the ethnic and religious distribution of the population.<sup>144</sup> However, the borders of the state had changed many times as a result of numerous wars with Muscovy, Sweden and other countries. As a consequence of the Union of Lublin (1569), the southern palatinates (Bratslav, Volhynia, Kiev and Podliashia) had been transferred to the Polish crown. At the same time, the administrative-territorial structure of the GDL was standardised according to the Polish model. After 1569 four large geographical provinces evolved, which (irrespective of the palatinates) were unofficially referred to as “Belarus,” “Lithuania,” “Polesie” and “Samogitia.” The latter was a rather specific construction. Situated in the western part of the GDL, it did not undergo any major administrative reforms, thus preserving its specific territorial integrity – a subdivision into bailiffs or elderships.<sup>145</sup>

The existence of the same administrative structure for a long period of time helped establish strong local political and cultural styles in each palatinate. The nobility elected their representatives to the local diets, which in turn sent their representatives to the diet of the PLC. Before the First Partition, the GDL enjoyed a relatively stable territorial structure (not taking into consideration the border changes) for two hundred years. It could be said that this political-administrative structure became part of the culture and identity of the elite of the GDL. However, as suggested earlier, the political system of the PLC did not go hand-in-hand with the general modernisation of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which resulted in a decrease in its political and military power.

Some years before the Provincial Reform, Catherine's foreign policy resulted in the First Partition of the PLC in 1772.<sup>146</sup> Russia, together with the Habsburg Empire and Kingdom of Prussia, appropriated parts of their weakened neighbour.<sup>147</sup> The Russian Empire profited by acquiring a great part of the GDL, incorporating 87,000 square kilometres with a population of approximately 1,300,000, which was predominantly Belarusian-speaking.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Kazys Pakštas, “Gudijos santykis su Lietuva,” in: A. Liekis (ed.), *Lietuvos sienų raida: mokslo duomenys apie lietuvių tautą, jos valstybę ir sienas* (Vilnius, 1997), vol. 2, p. 318.

<sup>145</sup> Jerzy Ochmański, *Historia Litwy* (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk, Łódź: 1982), p. 131; Viacheslau Nasevich, “Teritoria, administratsyiiny padzel,” in: *Vialikae Kniastva Litouskae, entsyklapedyia u dvukh tamakh* (Minsk: 2005), pp. 34-39; Kotljarchuk, pp. 28-30.

<sup>146</sup> “O prisodinenii k Rossiiskoi Imperii ot Rechi Pospolitoi Pol'skoi zemel' i o razdelenii onykh na dve gubernii: Pskovskuiu i Mogilevskuiu” (October 23, 1772), PSZRI (1830), vol. 19, no. 13,888; Herbert H. Kaplan, *The First Partition of Poland* (New York and London: 1962); Petr V. Stegnii, *Razdely Pol'shi i diplomatia Ekateriny II, 1772, 1793, 1795*, (Moscow: 2002).

<sup>147</sup> For the texts of the conventions between Russia, Austria and Prussia on the First Partition, see: A. A. Pazukhin (ed.), *Sbornik gramot i dogovorov o prisoedinenii tsarstv i oblastei k gosudarstvu Rossiiskomu v XVII-XIX vekakh. Chast' pervaiia* (Peterburg: 1922), pp. 349-358.

<sup>148</sup> Thaden, p. 42. Lehtonen gave different numbers: 108,750 sq. km. and 1,227,000 inhabitants (Lehtonen, pp. 173-174).

With her first decrees concerning the annexed lands, Catherine demonstrated her desire to integrate the new territories and to gradually transform them into a part of the imperial realm. In her instructions to the governors of the newly formed Pskov and Mogilev provinces, the primary concern was to keep the local population “calm and quiet.” The governors had to ensure that no oppression, injustice, robbery or other provocation occurred during the annexation: “we hope, that these provinces will be conquered not only by the power of weapons, but that the hearts of the people who live there, will regard the rule of the Russian Empire as kind, decent, just, lenient, benign and loving, so that they themselves will have reason to consider their removal from the anarchy of the Republic of Poland as the first step to their well-being.”<sup>149</sup>

Initially, the new authorities were not to interfere in local life: people were allowed to practice their religions freely, the law courts continued working in the traditional ways (only imperial matters were brought to the imperial courts and resolved with reference to imperial laws), the provincial towns retained their privileges, etc. Perhaps the greatest interference occurred with policies relating to the collection of taxes: the governors were ordered to undertake local censuses and register all taxpayers. All this indicated that the new imperial inhabitants were given time to acclimatise and Catherine proceeded cautiously. At the same time, the Russian army, which was stationed in the newly acquired provinces, acted as a pacifier.<sup>150</sup> Thus Catherine II employed rational, moderate and yet systemic means of integration.

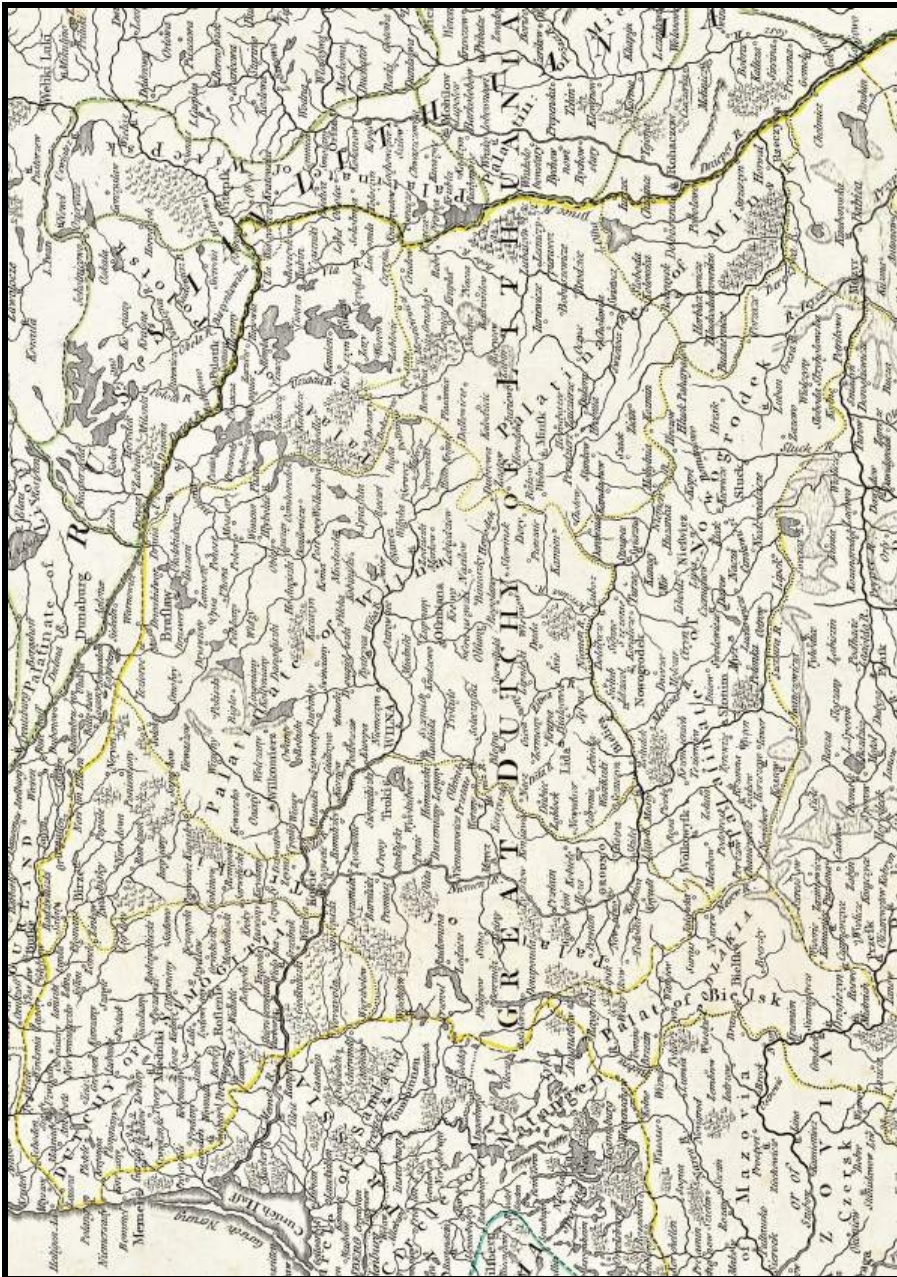
Despite the initially cautious approach, the changes soon started to intensify. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the *Imennoi ukaz* given to the Pskov and Mogilev governors Mikhail Kakhovskii (1734-1800) and Mikhail Krechetnikov (1729-1793) revealed the Empress’s desire to further integrate the new territories by establishing trade routes between the interior regions of the state and Russia’s Baltic harbours. This also highlighted the importance of the cartographical demarcation of the new lands, establishing their new administrative-territorial composition, as well as ensuring the quick establishment of border control posts. Catherine took this useful opportunity to experiment with the newly annexed lands before undertaking the Empire-wide provincial reform.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> “Imennoi ukaz, dannyi general-maioram Kakhovskomu i Kretchetnikovu” (May 28, 1772), PSZRI (1830), vol. 19, no. 13,808; also in: *Zakonodatel’stvo Ekateriny II*, vol. 2, p. 821.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 822-823.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 823.



**Figure 4.** The administrative division of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Fragment from: Thomas Kitchin, *A New Map of the Kingdom of Poland with its Dismembered Provinces* (1787). The yellow lines indicate borders of palatinates (Courtesy of David Rumsey cartographic collection)

Following the incorporation, Catherine II took care to consolidate the new external borders of the Russian Empire. In August 1772 the Governor-

General of the Belarusian provinces, Field Marshal Zakhar Chernyshev (1722-1784), received personal instructions to demarcate the new border between Russia and the remaining territories of the PLC. His task was, first, to deploy the Russian army in the newly annexed territories in order to secure their peaceful takeover and then to immediately erect border-posts bearing the imperial insignia, thereby preventing future territorial conflicts. Later, when ratifying the peace treaty between Russia and Poland (September 18, 1773), Russia officially called for the demarcation of the border, asking that groups of commissioners be dispatched from Russia and the Commonwealth.<sup>152</sup>

Apart from the erection of border-posts, Governor-Generals also had to issue a public poster, which declared the name of the annexed administrative unit (thus highlighting the transformation from a Commonwealth to a Russian administrative system). A special attachment to the poster contained additional tables that allowed a prompt census of the local population to be performed to satisfy fiscal requirements.<sup>153</sup>

The Pskov and Mogilev provinces (entitled the “Belarusian” provinces) were the only territories of the partitioned Grand Duchy that went through a process of full reconstitution in accordance with the legislative paragraphs laid out in Catherine’s Provincial Reform. Therefore, their administrative integration, in comparison with the territories annexed after the Second and the Third Partitions, was the most thorough and most complete.

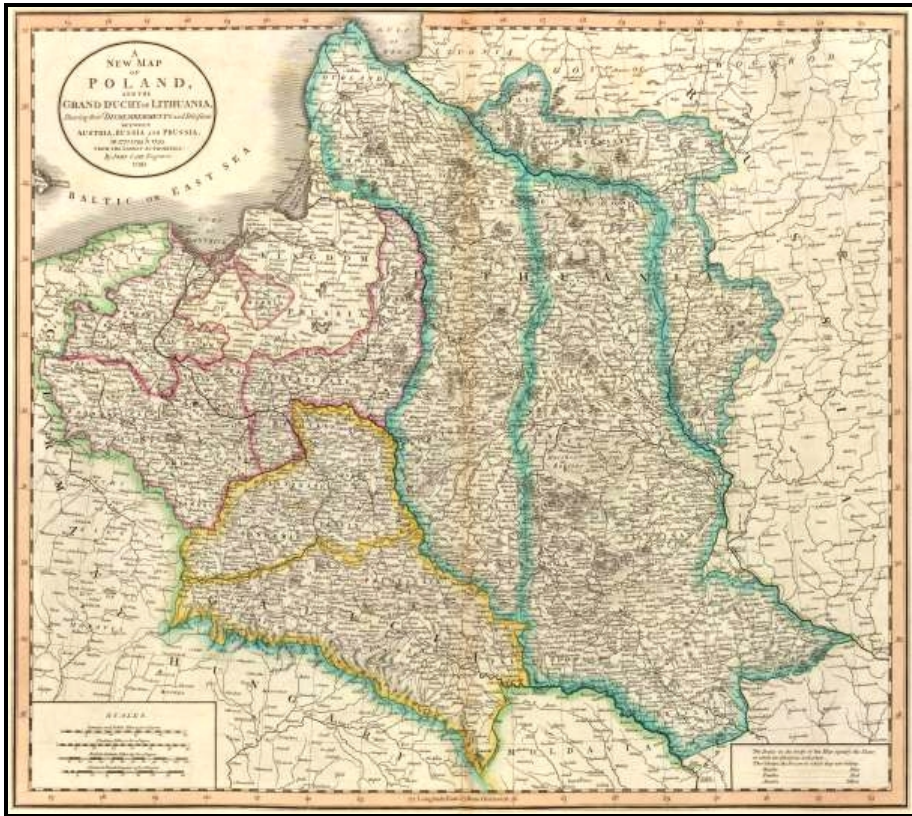
In 1791, what remained of the semi-independent Polish-Lithuanian state attempted to reform itself. The general political situation in Europe, however, was not favourable. Revolution was raging in France and opposing conservative monarchies diminished the chances of success of any liberal reforms. The Commonwealth’s neighbours regarded the reforming state as a potential new source of revolution in Eastern Europe. Thus, in 1793, as a preventive measure, the Second Partition was executed by Prussia and Russia (Figure 4). This time the Russian Empire gained an additional 339,975 square kilometres and increased its population by 3 million inhabitants. The annexed territories were divided into three parts by the establishment of the Minsk, Iziaslav and Bratslav provinces. They were united into one general-province administered by General Krechetnikov, who was the first governor of the Belarusian Pskov province. In accordance with the system already established, the authorities were requested to map the new territories, re-

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<sup>152</sup> § 10 of the “Traktat mezhdru Rossieiu i Pol’sheiu, - o vozstanovlenii mira mezhdru obeimi derzhavami, i o prisoidinenii k Rossii nekotorykh ot Pol’shi zemel” (September 18, 1773), in: *Sbornik gramot i dogovorov*, p. 383.

<sup>153</sup> “O priniatii pod Rossiiskuiu derzhavu ustuplennykh ot Pol’shi provintsii; o naznachenii zhiteliam sroka dlia priniatii prisiagi; o postanovlenii stolbov na novykh granitsakh; o sbore v kaznu vsekh publichnykh dakhodov, i o proizvodstve suda i raspravy v nastoiashchikh sudebnykh mestakh po tamoshnim pravam i obychiim” (August 16, 1772), PSZRI (1830), vol. 19, no. 13,850; also in: *Zakonodatel’stvo Ekateriny II*, vol. 2, pp. 825-827.

structure the lesser administrative units, and also to carry out a census.<sup>154</sup> Again amid declarations of eternal peace, the partitioner and the partitioned sent their representatives to inspect the new boundaries.<sup>155</sup>



**Figure 5.** The Three Partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. From: John Cary, *Cary's New Universal Atlas* (1799). The purple lines represent the territories annexed by Prussia, the yellow by Austria, and the green by Russia (Courtesy of David Rumsey cartographic collection)

The territory annexed after the Second Partition was gradually restructured in accordance with the regulations of the provincial reform. The Minsk, Iziaslav and Bratslav provinces constituted relatively large units, which did not correspond with the other Russian *gubernii*. Subsequently in 1795, Catherine

<sup>154</sup> “O raspорizheniiakh v Pol’skikh obl’stiakh, zaniatykh Rossiiskimi voiskami” (December 8, 1792), PSZRI (1830), vol. 23, no. 17,090; also in: *Zakonodatel’svo Ekateriny II*, vol. 2, pp. 860-863; “O prisoedineniji k Rossii ot Pol’shi nekotorykh oblastei i o ucherizhdenii iz onykh gubernii: Minskoi, Iziaslavskoi i Bratslavskoi” (April 23, 1793), PSZRI (1830), vol. 23, no. 17,112; also in: *Zakonodatel’svo Ekateriny II*, vol. 2, pp. 863-864.

<sup>155</sup> §§ 2 and 7 from: “Traktat zakliuchennyi v Grodno mezhdu Eia Velichestvom Imperatritseiu Vserossiiskoiu i Ego Velichestvom Korolem i Iasneisheiu Rech’iu Pospolitoiu Pol’skimi” (July 11, 1793), in: *Sbornik gramot i dogovorov*, pp. 428; 437.

II ordered that a new Minsk province should be established,<sup>156</sup> and later also restructured the Bratslav,<sup>157</sup> Volhynia and Podolia<sup>158</sup> provinces.

Dissatisfied Polish and Lithuanian nobility started an uprising that was led by the Polish General Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746-1817). Its failure led to the final Third Partition in 1795. However, even before this annexation, Russia had set up its own bureaucratic apparatus for the partitioned lands of the GDL. Prince Nikolai Repnin (1734-1801), in a decree dated October 30, 1794, had already been given the title of Lithuanian Governor-General.<sup>159</sup>

The initial plan was to transform the remaining territory of the GDL into one general-province. The decree ordered Prince Repnin to “divide the Grand Duchy of Lithuania into three parts, with the main central cities in Vil’na, Grodno and Kovno or Keidany.”<sup>160</sup> Administrative power was to be delegated to the heads of the Russian military corps. Grodno was to become the capital of the whole general-province, and the place where the main governmental institutions were to be established, and where General-Governor Repnin was to reside. Local courts and judicial institutions were to remain unchanged. Grodno province was to receive parts of the Novogrudok, Brest-Litovsk and Troki palatinates; and Kovno province was formed from the Samogitian palatinate and parts of Troki voivodship; Vil’na province – from the Vil’na palatinate.<sup>161</sup>

However, the established territorial structure differed from that in the initial plans. The whole territory gained as a result of the Third Partition was divided into two viceroalties named *Vil’na* and *Slonim*.<sup>162</sup> Both provinces were divided into *uezdy*. Vil’na province consisted of eight and Slonim of

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<sup>156</sup> “O sostavlenii Minskago namestnichestva iz trinadtsati okrugov” (May 3, 1795), PSZRI (1830), vol. 23, no. 17,325; “O raznykh rasporyazheniiakh kasatel’no ustroistva Minskoi gubernii” (May 3, 1795), *Ibid.*, no. 17,327.

<sup>157</sup> “O sostavlenii Bratslavskago namestnichestva iz 13 okrugov” (May 22, 1795), *Ibid.*, no. 17,334; “O ustroenii gorodov v Bratslavskoi gubernii i o naznachanii summy na gubernskie raskhody” (May 22, 1795), *Ibid.*, no. 17,336.

<sup>158</sup> “O ucherezhenii Volynskoi i Podol’skoi gubernii pervoi iz 13, a poslednei iz 12 uezdov” (July 5, 1795), *Ibid.*, no. 17,352; “O raznykh rasporyazheniiakh kasatel’no ustroistva Volynskoi i Podol’skoi gubernii” (July 5, 1795), *Ibid.*, no. 17,354.

<sup>159</sup> “O razdelenii Velikago Kniazhestva Litovskago na tri chasti i o obraze upravleniia onymi s prilozheniem manifesta, obnarodovannago kniazem Repninym” (October 30, 1794), *Ibid.*, no. 17,264; also in: *Zakonodatel’svo Ekateriny II*, vol.2, pp. 865-881. At the same time the Russian Empire annexed Courland, Semigalia and the district of Pilten, i.e. the southern parts of the Baltic provinces (“O prisoedinenii na vechnye vremena k Rossiiskoi Imperii kniazhestv Kurliandskago i Semigal’skago, takzhe okruga Pil’tenskago” (April 15, 1795), PSZRI (1830), vol. 23, no. 17,319).

<sup>160</sup> *Zakonodatel’svo Ekateriny II*, vol.2, p. 866; Arsen’ev, pp. 132-136.

<sup>161</sup> “O razdelenii Velikago Kniazhestva Litovskago na tri chasti” (October 30, 1794), no. 17,264; also in: *Zakonodatel’svo Ekateriny II*, vol.2, p. 866.

<sup>162</sup> “O prisoedinenii k Rossiiskoi Imperii vsei chasti Velikago Kniazhestva Litovskago, kotorai po prekrashchenii miatezhei v Litve i Pol’she zaniata byla voiskami” (December 14, 1795), PSZRI (1830), vol. 23, no. 17,418; “O razdelenii Kniazhestva Litovskago na dve gubernii” (December 14, 1795), *Ibid.*, no. 17,417. In the appended manifesto, following the same pattern that was used after the first two partitions, the Russian authorities described the new structure of the enlarged Russian state borders.



eleven lower administrative units.<sup>163</sup> Imperial cartographers started mapping their borders. The authorities also established the necessary administrative apparatus, judicial institutions, tax collectors' offices and so on. Additional funding was granted for the support of the Orthodox Church.<sup>164</sup>

A lack of Russian administrative personnel forced the imperial authorities to cooperate with the local *szlachta*. As mentioned above, the territories contained diverse ethnic, religious, social, political and cultural structures. Therefore the "calm and peaceful" takeover, to which Catherine II constantly referred, could be achieved only by reaching an agreement with the local nobility. This meant agreeing to the preservation of their rights and privileges and, generally, allowing them to live as they had done before, hence continuing with the already established pattern of ruling non-Russians in the Baltic provinces and in the Ukrainian lands.<sup>165</sup>

The mapping of the Russian state continued against the backdrop of political events and the expansion of imperial territory. Soon after the first instrumental survey of imperial Russia (1720-1744), a second large-scale project was undertaken. In 1765 the General Land Survey began. It was conceived in order to obtain a detailed cartographic description of land ownership, and it continued for the next 75 years, until the 1840s.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, it was especially intensified after the introduction of the new administrative-territorial reforms and the restructuring of the provinces. For this purpose each reconstructed *guberniia* had its own land surveyor and cartographic office. The investigation of land ownership became one of the Empire's greatest priorities.

The main goal underlying the General Land Survey was to resolve conflicts between landowners. The official description and depiction of lots, as well as the identification of private and state owned lands served as both a preventive and a cartographic tool.<sup>167</sup> In 1765, Catherine II established the "State Survey Commission" (*Kommisiia o Gosudarstvenom Mezhevanii*), headed by P. Panin. Soon, however, the name was changed to "The Land Survey Expedition of the Senate" (*Mezhevaia Ekspeditsiia Senata*) and later, in 1794, it became the Department of Surveying (*Mezhevoi Departament*

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<sup>163</sup> "Ob ucherezhdanii Vilenskago i Slonimskago namestnichestv, o razdelenii onykh na uezdy" (August 8, 1796), *Ibid.*, no. 17,494.

<sup>164</sup> "O raznykh rasporiazheniakh otnosiashchikhsia k ustroistvu Vilenskoï i Slonimskoi gubernii" (August 8, 1796), *Ibid.*, no. 17,495.

<sup>165</sup> Thaden, p. 53.

<sup>166</sup> Postnikov, *Razvitie kartografii*, pp. 150-158. These overlapping surveying projects have caused disagreement between researchers over the date on which the Survey ended. Fel' considers that the surveying within the General Land Survey continued from 1765 until 1888 (Fel', p. 210). Postnikov, however, indicates that it was finished earlier, in the 1840s (Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, p. 52), while Rudin establishes a continuous timeline up until 1915 (S. D. Rudin, *Mezhevoe zakonodatel'stvo i deiatel'nost' mezhevoi chasti v Rossii za 150 let, 19 sentiabria 1765 g. – 1915 g.* (Petrograd, 1915)).

<sup>167</sup> It was forbidden for the surveyors to demarcate private lands that bordered other states as well as the lands that were mixed with the territories of nomadic tribes. In such cases the surveyors had to appeal to the Surveying Expedition of the Senate. Rudin, p. 16.

*Pravitel'stviuishchego Senata*). From the mid-1760s the Expedition acted as the main centre for the survey's organisation. It had its local offices in *gubernii* and *uezdy*. These were just temporary institutions: they existed in each province only during the time the survey was being undertaken and once the work was completed the institutions were disbanded and moved to another *guberniia*.<sup>168</sup>

Using charts of private land ownership, the surveyors compiled general *uezdy* maps. For this purpose, the plans obtained in a particular *uezd* were combined on a map. The large format blueprint was then reduced to the established scale. Such techniques allowed surveyors to avoid the use of complicated astronomical and mathematical projections, while still obtaining accurate results. The plans and the general map together constituted a surveying book (*mezhevaia kniga*) depicting every private and state owned territory in a given *uezd*.<sup>169</sup>

In one of several decrees that described the procedures and goals of the survey, Catherine II indicated that the surveyor's duties included not only measuring the land and making plans and maps, but also collecting economic, geographical and other information about the surveyed territories and their inhabitants. These observations were recorded in special books, called the "economic and cameral notes" (*ekonomicheskii i kameral'nyiia primechaniia*) or the "economic journals" (*ekonomicheskie zhurnaly*). Based on these, notebooks that described the activities of the whole *uezd* were compiled. In her instructions the Empress specified that for the benefit of the state it was necessary that the collected information should be well grounded.<sup>170</sup>

While moving from one province to another, the surveyors encountered new peoples and cultures. This explains why the requirements for the notes included in the "economical journals" expanded over time. In 1771 the Expedition instructed that surveyors were to pay attention to and record ancient barrows, ruins, caves, derelict factories, unfinished canals and other significant and interesting sites, which were worthy of attention. Eleven years later, in 1782, the imperial authorities prepared new instructions ordering that plans of sites, which might have a strategic value for military, religious, educational and medical institutions, should also be recorded. The economic journals also had to contain additional information on the social relations and occupations of local populations, about local fairs, economic specificities, trade routes, roads and so on, as well as provide information concerning archaeological sites. The latter directive was also repeated in the instructions of 1788 with an additional note, stating that whenever the surveyor encoun-

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<sup>168</sup> Fel', p. 210.

<sup>169</sup> Rudin, pp. 97-99; 181-182; 189.

<sup>170</sup> "Nastavlenie pravitel'stviuishchago Senata i Mezhevoi Ekspeditsii opredelennym k gosudarstvennomu zemel' razmezhevaniu zemlemeram" (July, 1766), PSZRI (1830), vol. 17, no. 12, 711; Rudin, pp. 14; 110-111.

tered a significant site he had to immediately inform the Expedition about the finding.<sup>171</sup>

In this way the surveyors acted as unofficial ethnographers, economists, statisticians, archaeologists and so on. The specific nature of their work required that they travelled throughout the Russian Empire, which allowed them to interact with people from different classes and cultures. It was dangerous and tiresome work. There were many incidents in which surveyors were assaulted and sometimes even killed. Nevertheless, as state representatives they were protected by the laws of the Empire. Moreover, strict penalties were introduced for those who impeded the General Land Survey and its employees. At the same time special decrees also punished surveyors who did not follow these rules.<sup>172</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the two so-called “Belarusian provinces” – Polotsk and Mogilev – were formed from the lands that had been acquired after the First Partition of the PLC. In 1782 surveyors began investigating both provinces. Here the imperial General Land Survey encountered its first major problems. The decrees that had been issued in 1765 were not applicable to these *gubernii*, because the system of land ownership had differed from that in Russia. In preparing the initial instructions, Catherine had relied on the Russian tradition, while the land legislation in Polotsk and Mogilev was based on the Lithuanian Statute – the former GDL code of laws, which was still fully functional in these lands. To overcome this obstacle the imperial authorities prepared special surveying instructions exclusively for these two provinces.<sup>173</sup> It is hard to say whether it was a consequence of the fact that there were relatively few land related conflicts among the local nobility, or if it occurred because of the better structure of land ownership, but the survey of the Mogilev province proved to be the fastest survey performed in Russia at that time. It took only one year – 1783-1784.<sup>174</sup>

The evolution of cartographic science meant that the survey material collected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century soon became outdated. Therefore, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century these earlier materials were subjected to extensive scrutiny. From 1849 until 1856, a member of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, the geodesist A. I. Mende (1800-1868), began the semi-instrumental revision of the calculations based on the materials of the General Land Survey. This endeavour later became known as “Mende’s Surveys.”<sup>175</sup>

During Catherine II’s reign cartography was highly prioritised as well as institutionalised and closely tied to the imperial policy of territorial expan-

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<sup>171</sup> Rudin, pp. 14; 110-111; 139; 181; 182.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139; 145-147; *passim*.

<sup>173</sup> “Vysochaishe utverzhdenaia instruktssiia mezhevoi kontore, ucherezhdennoi dlia razmezhvaniia Mogilevskoi i Polotskoi gubernii” (January 30, 1783), PSZRI (1830), vol. 21, no. 15,654.

<sup>174</sup> Rudin, pp. 172-178; Alexei V. Postnikov, “Finno-Russkie kontakty v kartografii (konets XVIII – nachalo XIX vv.),” *Voprosy Istorii Estestvoznaniia i Tekhniki* (1994), no. 2, p. 54.

<sup>175</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 34; 96; 336; Fel’, pp. 210-212; Postnikov, *Razvitie kartografii*, pp. 175-176; *Russia in Maps*, pp. 50-53.

sion. In 1786 a new central cartographic institution – the *Geographical Department of the Cabinet of Her Imperial Majesty* was established, headed by Petr A. Soimonov (died 1800). The most important publication of the *Geographical Department* was the atlas of the new administrative divisions of the Russian Empire, published in 1792. It depicted the new imperial territory in accordance with the 1775 provincial reform. The above-mentioned Department existed until 1800, when Emperor Paul I transformed it into a part of *His Imperial Majesty's Own Map Depot* (*Sobstvennoe E. I. V. Depo Kart*) that had been established in 1797 and which was headed by Karl Opperman (1766-1831). Furthermore, the closure of other scientific cartographical institutions such as the Geographical Department of the Imperial Russian Academy of Sciences (closed in 1800) indicated that the authorities and military were now in control of imperial surveying and cartography.<sup>176</sup>

With the death of Catherine II the integration of the Western provinces came to a halt. The new Emperor Paul I set internal policy on a different course. This resulted in the strengthening of vertical administrative power, but also led to a deeper territorial decentralisation and regionalisation of the state.

### 2.3. The introduction of provinces with a special status (1796-1801)

On November 7, 1796, Paul I ascended the throne of the Russian Empire. The rather short period of his rule (which lasted until his assassination on March 11, 1801) may be regarded as a transitional period, connecting the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, although some have valued it as being far less significant, even calling it “secondary.”<sup>177</sup> Many historians and contemporaries have concentrated mainly on the negative aspects of his policies as well as on the problems in the Emperor's personal life.<sup>178</sup>

Nevertheless, Paul's 1,586 days on the throne were exceptional in comparison with what had occurred during the reigns of previous emperors and empresses. This was especially true as regards legislative work. According to Geller's calculations, during his short period of rule Paul signed 2,179 documents, while Catherine II signed twice as many, although it took her thirty-four years to do it.<sup>179</sup>

Paul's priorities lay in the strengthening of the bureaucratic apparatus. The imperial governmental machine was directed onto a path of greater cen-

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<sup>176</sup> [s.a.] “Zapiski voenno-topograficheskago depa, po Vysochaishemu Ego Imperatorskago Velichestva poveleniiu izdavaemyia. Piatnadsat' tomov. Sanktpeterburg. 1837-1853,” in: *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (1854), no. 8, pp. 46-47; Fel', pp. 196-209; Postnikov, *Razvitie kartografii*, pp. 158-160; 166-175; *Russia in Maps*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>177</sup> Kornilov, p. 50.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-57; Raeff, *Understanding Imperial Russia*, pp. 113-115; Geller, p. 149.

<sup>179</sup> Geller, p. 149.

tralisation. Various administrative reforms, such as the resurrection of the Petrine collegial institutions, and, at the same time, the establishment of new ones (some of which were already headed by “ministers”), became the source for what would later become Alexander’s ministries. The correction of the defects in Catherine’s administrative reforms and the removal of the redundant administrative institutions in the *gubernii* and *uezdy*, allowed Paul to reduce state expenditure and to generally improve imperial governance.<sup>180</sup>

Paul I, according to his biographers, was a peculiar ruler.<sup>181</sup> His personal interest in everything that occurred in the Empire, in each province or district, his wish to participate in even the smallest events, to be above everyone so as to be able to observe, control and yet remain invisible – points, perhaps, to something more than mere curiosity. However such personal traits worked in some ways to the benefit of the state, i.e. the accumulation of power in one person’s hands. For example, it greatly facilitated the process of strengthening the appointed bureaucrats, procurators and other officials – a class totally dependent on the Emperor’s will. By reducing the freedoms of the nobility granted by Peter III (1762) and Catherine II (1785), Paul established a form of equality, where he stood above the peasants and the nobility. A symbolic example of this was the box of complaints, which was placed at the entrance to the palace in St. Petersburg. Anyone was allowed to make a complaint about another person, regardless of rank or estate. Every morning the Emperor inspected the contents of the box. If he thought the complaint was worthy of his attention, then he would launch an investigation, after which the final verdict would be announced. In this way no one felt safe, especially those with a high post or rank.<sup>182</sup> This situation induced a sense of terror, surveillance and forced obedience. It was reminiscent of the *panopticon* system, developed by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham. Jeremy’s brother, the inventor and engineer Samuel Bentham (and for some time Jeremy too), tried to pursue a career in the Russian Empire in the 1780s. After some unsuccessful attempts they left Russia. It was precisely here in Russia, that the philosopher Jeremy Bentham formulated his idea of the *panopticon* – a principle of effective control and discipline.<sup>183</sup> It is not known whether Paul was familiar with the philosophy at that time; however, the style of governance he pursued coincided remarkably with the ideas of Bentham.

Returning to Paul’s administrative and territorial reforms, the Russian historian Mikhail V. Klochkov distinguishes four principal directions in which the Emperor’s ideas were embodied: the change in the administrative divisions; the elimination of the middle layer of provincial institutions, and at the

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<sup>180</sup> Mikhail V. Klochkov, *Ocherki pravitel'stvennoi deiatel'nosti vremeni Pavla I* (Petrograd: 1916), pp. 417; 419-420; 570-571.

<sup>181</sup> See, for example, N. Shilder, *Imperator Pavel I. Istoriko-biograficheskii ocherk* (St. Petersburg: 1901).

<sup>182</sup> Shilder, p. 304; Klochkov, pp. 119-120.

<sup>183</sup> Matthew S. Anderson, “Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779-1791,” *American Slavic and East European Review* (April 1956), vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 157-172.

same time the establishment of new institutions; the replacement of local elective posts by an appointed bureaucracy; and finally the restoration of the pre-1775 privileges for the Southern, South Western and North Western provinces.<sup>184</sup> In this way Paul furthered bureaucratic consolidation and at the same time he proceeded with the territorial decentralisation of the state.

At the beginning of his reign Paul issued a series of decrees, which restructured the administrative division of the imperial territory. The main decree of December 12, 1796, described the Tsar's vision of what the new division should look like in general terms.<sup>185</sup> The particulars were left to the provincial governors, who had to personally arrange the details of the changed provincial borders by submitting their plans to the Senate and through it to the Emperor for his approval. The restructuring continued throughout 1797. Governors were occupied with the allocation of towns and villages in their provinces.<sup>186</sup> After the transformation of the inner territorial structure in 1798, the situation remained relatively stable until Alexander's reforms in 1801. Compared to the 1796 division, the results of the transformation were as follows: nineteen provinces were left unchanged and four received new names (among them the two Baltic provinces: the Riga province became Livonia, and the Revel province became Estland). Eight old provinces were combined, making four new larger units (Polotsk and Mogilev formed the *Belarusian* viceroyalty; Vil'na and Slonim formed the *Lithuanian* viceroyalty (Figure 5);<sup>187</sup> Chernigov and Novgorod-Sieversk became the *Little Russian* (or *Malorossiiskaia*) viceroyalty and *Tobol'sk* was formed from the Tobol'sk and Kolyvan' provinces). Five provinces (including Minsk) were enlarged; seven made insignificant gains or losses (in the Western region: Volhynia, Kiev, Podolia, Sloboda-Ukrainian) and, finally, five provinces were dissolved. After the restructuring, instead of the former fifty provinces and the Don Military *oblast'*, which had continued to exist after Catherine's reign, there were now forty-one provinces and one *oblast'*. It is worth noting that two-thirds of the former provincial territories remained either unchanged or insignificantly altered, which indicates a relatively small degree of territorial alteration.<sup>188</sup>

However, territorial reform was followed by significant changes in provincial administration. As indicated above, in the first drafts of her 1775 plans for administrative restructuring Catherine II had envisioned a three-tier system – *guberniia-provintsiia-uezd*. However, after consultations with her advisors, the system was reduced to a two-tier organisational form with the

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<sup>184</sup> Klochkov, pp. 412-413.

<sup>185</sup> "O novom razdelenii gosudarstva na gubernii" (December 12, 1796), PSZRI (1830), vol. 24, no. 17,634.

<sup>186</sup> "O naznachanii granits guberniiam: Novorossiiskoi, Kievskoi, Minskoi, Volynskoi, Podol'skoi i Malorossiiskoi, i o razdelenii ikh na uezdy" (August 29, 1797), *Ibid.*, no. 18,117.

<sup>187</sup> "Ob ustroenii vmesto naznachennykh prezhde dvukh gubernii Vilenskoi i Slonimskoi, odnoi gubernii, pod nazvaniem Litovskoi" (February 6, 1797), *Ibid.*, no. 17,788.

<sup>188</sup> Arsen'ev, pp. 136-139; Klochkov, pp. 414-415; Erik Amburger, *Geschichte der Behörderungorganisation Russlands von Peter dem Grossen bis 1917* (Leiden: 1966), pp. 50-51.

elimination of the middle – *provintsiia* – link in the chain. Yet, not all of the middle level administrative institutions that had been created were actually eliminated. Consequently they caused additional expense to the state budget, as well as a duplication of functions. Paul attempted to correct these inconsistencies. At the level of the provincial judicial institutions he abolished the upper *zemski* court, the provincial magistracy, the upper *rasprava*, the *sovestnyi* court, and the *prikaz* of the communal welfare system. At the level of *uezd* he abolished the city magistrates and the lower *rasprava*, which were considered mostly redundant judicial institutions established after the 1775 reform. In this way Paul managed to decrease the state's expenditure by reducing the administrative budgets of the provinces. In the final years of Catherine's reign, provincial expenditure ranged from between 76,000 (Riga) to 275,000 (Irkutsk) roubles annually. Paul cut these figures to 51,704 (Pskov) and 100,484 (Tobol'sk) roubles per year. In sum, the annual expenditure on provincial administration was reduced from 8 to 6 million roubles per year.<sup>189</sup> Therefore, these reforms can be seen as a continuation of Catherine's policies rather than as a counter-reform as some scholars have argued.<sup>190</sup>

The most important aspect of Paul's reforms in relation to the annexed Polish-Lithuanian lands was the granting of special status to most of the non-Russian border provinces, partially restoring the order that the provinces and their nobility had enjoyed before the annexations and 1775 reforms. These provinces with special statuses embodied and highlighted the diverse structure of the Russian/non-Russian regional division of the Empire.

Why did Paul make such an exception for some of the former Polish provinces, when greater restrictions were being imposed at the same time on the internal Russian provinces? Thaden argues that the Emperor's benevolence towards the non-Russian lands was a consequence of his experimentation with state governance, which was occurring at this time, and therefore that it was related primarily to the local judicial system.<sup>191</sup> Kamenskii suggests that the partial restoration of the old system was intended to calm dissatisfaction inside the non-Russian regions.<sup>192</sup> Paul's protection of the Roman Catholic Church (as well as all other religions), and his becoming the Grand Master of the Maltese Order, to some extent supports this point, even though it caused negative reactions among the Russian Orthodox elite. Moreover, in 1796 the rebels from the 1794 Polish uprising were released from their imprisonment and even rewarded.<sup>193</sup> Wandycz interprets this as the first step

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<sup>189</sup> Klochkov, pp. 417; 419-420.

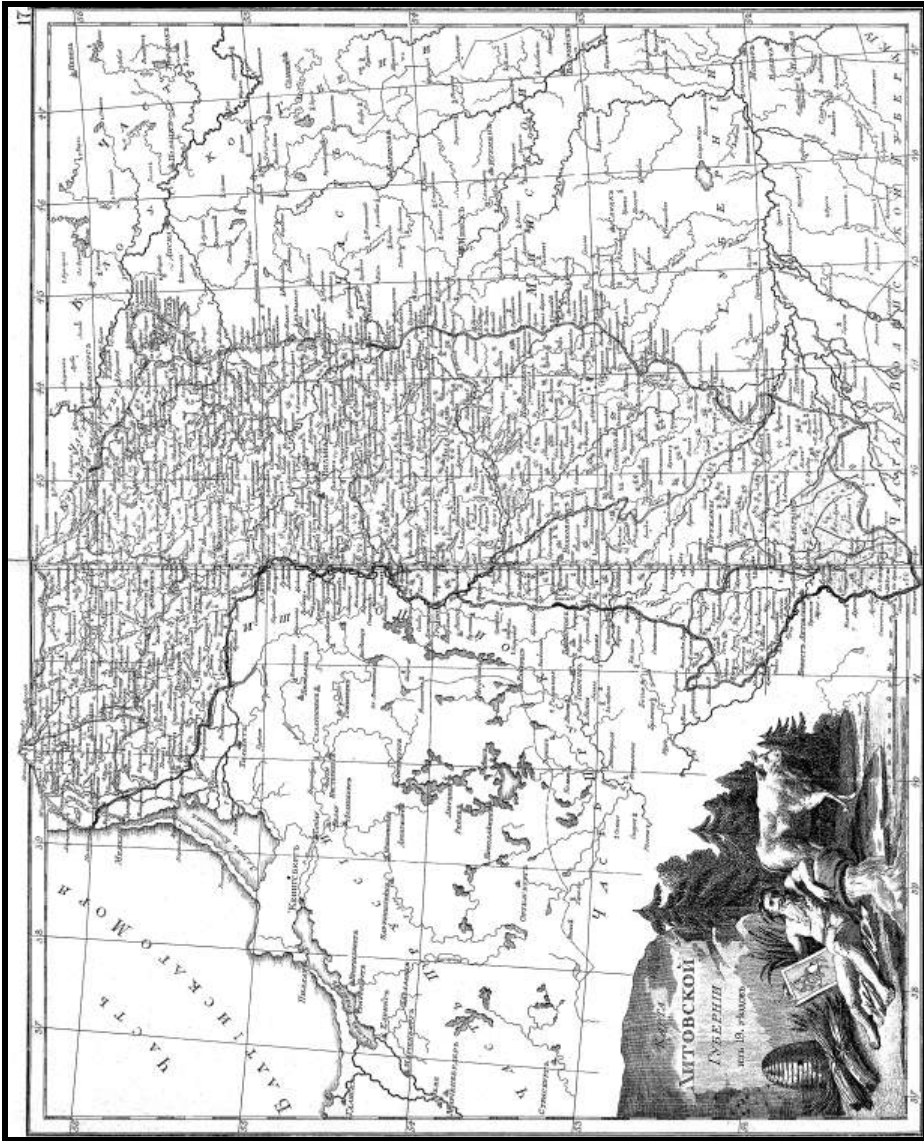
<sup>190</sup> Kamenskii, *Ot Petra I do Pavla I*, p. 499.

<sup>191</sup> Thaden, pp. 59-60.

<sup>192</sup> Kamenskii, *Ot Petra I do Pavla I*, p. 491.

<sup>193</sup> Geller, p. 147.

towards a Polish-Russian dialogue, which would become so well developed during Alexander I's rule.<sup>194</sup>



**Figure 6.** The Lithuanian province in 1800. From: *Rossiiskoi Atlas iz 43 kart sostoiashchii i na 41 guberniiu Imperiiu razdeliaiuushchii* (1800) (Courtesy of the National Museum of Lithuania)

<sup>194</sup> Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland, 1795-1918* (Seattle, London: 1974), p. 33. Contrary to this opinion, Arsen'ev noted that Paul's gesture gave a sense of false hope to the Poles that Russia would be ruling Poland on only a temporary basis (Arsen'ev, pp. 139-140).



Granting special status to the border provinces, no doubt played a significant role in building a dialogue between the Russians and Poles, as well as other non-Russian ethnicities. The first provinces to be awarded special status were Livonia and Estland.<sup>195</sup> Later Little Russia,<sup>196</sup> Vyborg, Belarus, Volhynia, Kiev, Lithuania, Minsk, Podolia, the Don Military *oblast'*<sup>197</sup> and finally Courland all received such status.<sup>198</sup> In total, eleven provinces and one *oblast'* were excluded from the common imperial administrative space. However, this restoration was not full autonomy: the Russian administration – the governors, provincial board and treasury – remained intact, connecting the provinces to the centre.<sup>199</sup> On the *uezdy* level *ispravniki* (heads of the local police) continued their duties of local administration.<sup>200</sup>

The delineation of the border provinces had a two-sided outcome. On the one hand, it meant that the Empire allowed the local elites to participate in local administration thus demonstrating a more liberal perspective regarding the non-Orthodox religions. Paul did not resort to the policies of intensive integration. On the other hand, the exclusion of the Western provinces preserved them as a distinct region, which was judicially and culturally separate from Russia proper. The domination of a Polish-speaking elite, most of whom adhered to the Polish culture was one of the distinguishing marks. The exclusion of these provinces resulted in the greater alienation of the non-Russian nobility from the Russian state and growth of its revisionist feelings. Although they continued to live in their old ways, the identities and loyalties of the local nobility were not static. An ongoing process of transformation resulted in a gradual adaptation to the new state and its structure.<sup>201</sup> For example, the emergence of a Polish-Russian dialogue was later personified in the figure of Prince Adam Czartoryski (1770-1861). His dual loyalty to the Polish and the Russian states was no secret: while serving as a Minister of the Russian Empire during the reign of Alexander I, he was developing at

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<sup>195</sup> “O vozstanovlenii v Lifliandii i Estliandii prisudstvennykh mest, koi po tamoshnim pravam i privilegiiam sushchestvovali do 1783 goda” (November 28, 1796), PSZRI (1830), vol 24, no. 17,584.

<sup>196</sup> “O vozstanovlenii v Malorossii pravleniia i sudoproizvodstva soobrazno tamoshnim pravam i prezhnim obriadam” (November 30, 1796), *Ibid.*, no. 17,594.

<sup>197</sup> “O novom razdelenii gosudarstva na gubernii” (December 12, 1796), vol. 24, no. 17,634; “O vozstanovlenii v Vyborgskoi gubernii prisutstvennykh mest po tamoshnim pravam i privilegiiam” (December 12, 1796), *Ibid.*, no. 17,637.

<sup>198</sup> “O vozstanovlenii v Kurliandskoi gubernii prisutstvennykh mest sushchestvovavshikh po prezhnim pravam i privilegiiam do otkrytiia namestnichestva” (December 24, 1796), *Ibid.*, no. 17,681.

<sup>199</sup> “O postupanii v guberniiakh, osobymi pravami pol'zuiushchikhsia, v otnoshenii k pravitel'stvu i nachal'stvu gubernskomu, po obshchemu gosudarstvennomu ob upravlenii gubernii ustanovleniiu” (December 25, 1799), *Ibid.*, vol. 25, no. 19,230.

<sup>200</sup> “Ob ustroenii vmesto naznachennykh prezhde dvukh gubernii Vilenskoii i Slonimskoi odnoi gubernii, pod nazvaniem Litovskoi” (February 6, 1797), *Ibid.*, vol. 24, no. 17,788; Klochkov, pp. 426-427.

<sup>201</sup> Halina Beresnevičiūtė-Nosálová, *Lojalumu krizė: Lietuvos bajoru politinės sąmonės transformacijos 1795-1831* (Vilnius: 2001).

the same time projects for the autonomy of Poland and securing the Western region by promoting Polish culture in the Vil'na Educational District.

Paul's decision to exclude the non-Russian provinces marked, in Waliszewski's opinion, an indirect return to the old regional and ethnic conflict between Russians and non-Russians, which, as mentioned above, had occurred in 1768 during the proceedings of the *Commission for the Composition of a Plan of a New Code of Laws*, when the Baltic German and Ukrainian nobilities resisted imperial integration.<sup>202</sup> Seen from the perspective of the administrative-territorial reconstructions, Paul's policies certainly pushed the Russian Empire back to being more regionally fragmented even if they did so unwittingly. Arguably this was to play a significant role in the building of complex regional and national identities during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Emperor Paul I was assassinated on March 11, 1801. His son Alexander was aware of the plot, but did not prevent it. The following day he became the successor to the imperial throne and was crowned Emperor Alexander I.

## 2.4. Planning the new "Empire of Regions" (1801-1825)

The first years of Alexander's reign promised great changes. The young Emperor and his friends enthusiastically participated in the so-called "Unofficial Committee," where they started reforming many spheres of the Russian state through actions and policies which appeared to be liberal and guided by Enlightenment ideals. Following the earlier constraints the new political and cultural atmosphere in Russia was perceived as something of a "thaw."

Alexander's reign, however, was not solid; his political preferences changed, mostly as a result of the Napoleonic Wars. Therefore, the period between 1801 and 1825 can be divided into several different parts. Riasanovsky has argued that there was a tripartite distinction: first, the years of the Unofficial Committee (1801-1805); second, the period of the French alliance and Mikhail Speranskii's appearance on the imperial political scene (1807-1812); and, third, the "reactionary half of [Alexander's] reign," which began after the Napoleonic Wars and continued until the Emperor's death.<sup>203</sup> Such a chronology, of course, covers only the main shifts in policy. Whether his political preferences were more reactionary after 1815, or perhaps suggest a deeper level, such as his sincere wish to grant a constitutional charter to the Russian Empire – cannot be proved or disproved. This discussion belongs to

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<sup>202</sup> Kazimierz Waliszewski, *Syn wielkiej Ekateriny. Imperator Pavel I ego zhizn', tsarstvovanie i smert'* (Moscow: 1993 – 1<sup>st</sup> edition: 1912), pp. 169-170.

<sup>203</sup> Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *A Parting of Ways: Government and the Educated Public in Russia* (Oxford: 1976), pp. 67-73.

a different research agenda. The topic analysed here requires the presentation of a relatively narrow perspective concerning the changes in the administrative-territorial divisions, the plans and projects that touched the Western provinces and in particular, the Lithuanian lands.

Immediately after his ascension to the imperial throne, the Emperor introduced a new territorial structure for the Empire. On September 9, 1801, Alexander I issued a decree which re-established five Western provinces that resembled their pre-1796 form. The Lithuanian province was again divided into two *gubernii* this time named Lithuanian Vil'na and Lithuanian Grodno.<sup>204</sup>

This new division was prompted by the lack of efficient control in the large provinces that had resulted from the reforms of Paul I. The local police (*zemskaia politsiia*) complained that they could not supervise the large provinces properly. Therefore, Alexander ordered that some of the pre-1796 administrative units should be restored, among them the Lithuanian and Belarusian provinces. The main task of the governors was to establish a new delineation of the *gubernii* borders. To undertake this work each province had to assemble a group of officials, which included the provincial surveyor, and send them to the province's border. There they had to meet with a similar group from the neighbouring province. Using information obtained from the archives and administrative institutions of the respective provinces, they had to mark the new boundary with border-posts carrying the provincial insignia and, if needed, correct the borderline.<sup>205</sup> Moreover, the provincial surveyors also had to prepare new plans and maps. Three copies of each were sent to the provincial court, the taxation office (*palata kazennaia*) and the Department of Surveying at the State Senate. Furthermore, the internal boundaries of each *guberniia* were scrutinised, which included an investigation of the number of *uezdy*, their borders, the number of inhabitants, and the mapping of the territories of towns and their municipalities.<sup>206</sup>

The same decree also indicated that the three Baltic provinces, Finland, Kiev, Minsk, Podolia, Volhynia *gubernii*, as well as the Little Russian, Lithuanian and Belarusian provinces would preserve their special privileges in accordance with the 1796 decree. At the beginning of this administrative-

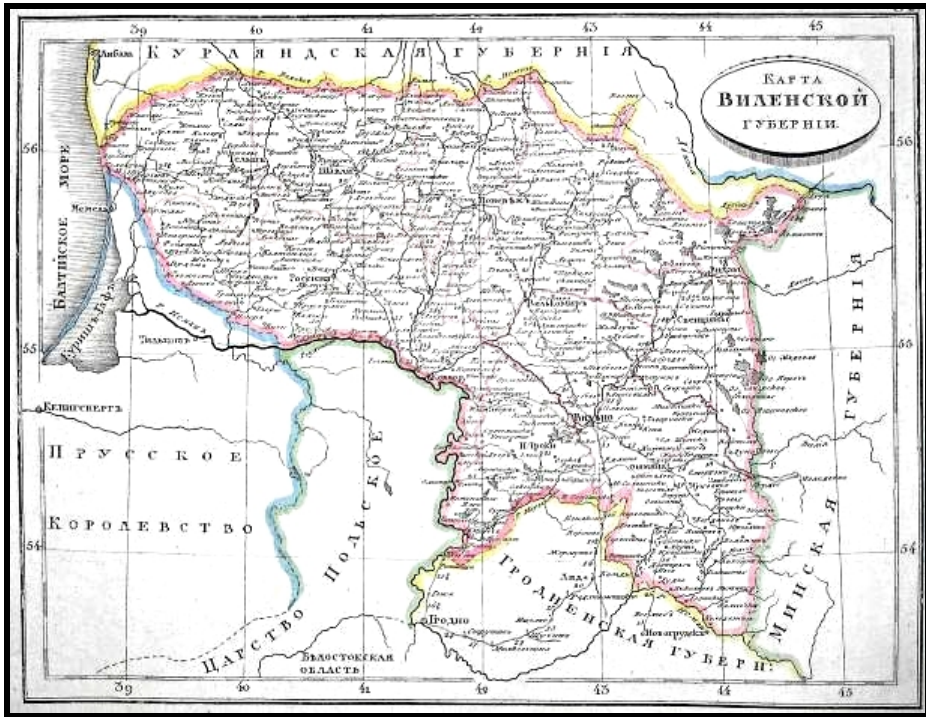
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<sup>204</sup> "O vozstanovlenii piati gubernii i o podchinenii pogranichnykh gubernii voennym gubernatoram" (September 9, 1801), PSZRI, vol. 26, no. 20,004.

<sup>205</sup> For example, while demarcating the border between the Vil'na and Grodno provinces, Oshmiany *uezd* was divided. Parts of it were attached to Vil'na province, while the rest of it (together with the *uezd* centre Oshmiany) was transferred from Vil'na to the province of Grodno. "Ob otchislenii Oshmianskago poveta k Grodnenskoii gubernii" (August 14, 1802), PSZRI (1830), vol. 27, no. 20,369.

<sup>206</sup> It should be noted that the provinces annexed from the PLC had a different name for lower administrative units. In Russia the provinces were termed *uezdy*, however, in the Western region they retained their pre-partition names – *povety* (*powiaty*). Apart from the distinction in terms of their name, *uezdy* and *povety* carried out identical functions. Henceforth no particular distinction will be made between the two while the common imperial term *uezdy* will be used.

territorial restructuring special status was also granted to the three Siberian provinces and to Novorossiiskaia province.<sup>207</sup>



**Figure 7.** The new Vil'na province boundaries in 1801. From: Savinkov, *Atlas Rossiiskoi Imperii* (1829)

Thus, after the redistribution, the Lithuanian Grodno province consisted of the following *uezdy*: Grodno, Lida, Novogrudok, Volkovisk, Slonim, Pruzhany, Kobrin and Brest.<sup>208</sup> The Lithuanian Vil'na province comprised Vil'na, Troki, Oshmiany, Sventsiany, Vilkomir, Kovno, Upita, Telshi, Shavli, Rossieny and Braslav *uezdy* (Figure 6).<sup>209</sup> Later, in 1819, the most western *volost* of Vil'na province with its administrative centre at Polangen was transferred to Courland province. This was done to improve the control of customs, because a significant number of goods were transported through Polangen from Prussia to Courland. This coastal *volost'* was subordinated to

<sup>207</sup> “O vozstanovlenii piati gubernii.”

<sup>208</sup> Pavel Bobrovskii, *Grodnenskaiia guberniia. Materialy dlia geografii i statistiki Rossii sobrannye ofitserami general'nogo shtaba* (St. Petersburg: 1863), p. 101.

<sup>209</sup> A. Koreva, *Vilenskaia guberniia. Materialy dlia geografii i statistiki Rossii sobrannye ofitserami general'nogo shtaba* (St. Petersburg: 1861), p. 89. Initially the Braslav *uezd's* centre was the town of Vidzy. However, later its administrative centre was moved to the town of Ezerosy, which was later renamed Novoaleksandrovsk (present-day Zarasai, Lithuania). It remained the centre of the *uezd* until the First World War.

the Military Governor of Riga and became part of Gobene district. As a consequence Vil'na province was deprived of its coastal area.<sup>210</sup>

One outcome of the decree of September 9, 1801, was that the Little Russian (*Malorossiiskaia*) province was reshaped: in February 1802 it was divided into the Chernigov and Poltava provinces (with the latter being almost identical to the former Novgorod-Sieversk viceroyalty). The same was done with the Belarusian province, which was dissolved into the Mogilev and Vitebsk provinces.<sup>211</sup> In October Novorossiiskaia province was divided into three parts.<sup>212</sup> By the end of 1802 only one of Paul's provinces – Sloboda-Ukrainian – remained intact.<sup>213</sup> The restoration also affected the lower administrative units, as it required smaller *uezdy* territories. The result was an increase in their number. By the time all of these changes had been implemented, the policy of reducing imperial administrative-territorial fragmentation undertaken by Paul I had been reversed.

The significant territorial changes that occurred at the beginning of Alexander's rule were followed by ambitious projects concerning the fundamental reorganisation of the state. The Emperor returned to the question of Russia's constitutional charters on several occasions. The most famous were the proposals composed by Speranskii (1809) and Nikolai Novosil'tsev (1819), and the Constitution Charter, granted to the Kingdom of Poland in 1815.

The Decembrist uprising in 1825, just after Alexander's death, revealed another set of projects that had been developed within Russian liberal circles. The leaders of two Decembrist branches, Pavel Pestel' and Nikita Muravev, had prepared programmes that would have been implemented if the insurrection had been successful. They presented alternative ways in which internal imperial politics could be organised as well as for the Empire's territorial construction. Their perspective was closely related to Alexander's plans, although neither Pestel' nor Muravev knew the contents of Speranskii's or Novosil'tsev's projects, both of which were kept secret.

Another set of projects, discussed later in this chapter, reflect the views of the Belarusian, Lithuanian and Polish nobility and their attempts to preserve the identity of the partitioned Commonwealth. First, Michał K. Oginski's petitions to the Tsar, asking for autonomy for the lands of the Grand Duchy

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<sup>210</sup>“O razdelenii Kurliandskoi gubernii na piat' ober-gauptmanstv” (March 13, 1819), PSZRI (1830), vol. 36, no. 27,718; “Ob opredelenii pograničnago politsmeistera v Polangen dlia sokhraneniia pograničnago ustroistva” (December 22, 1819), *Ibid.*, vol. 36, no. 28,041; Ona Maksimaitienė, *Lietuvos istorinės geografinės ir kartografinės bruožai* (Vilnius: 1991), p. 100. For a short time Polangen district was returned to Vil'na province, however in the 1840s it was again attached to Courland.

<sup>211</sup> “Ob ucherizhdenii gubernii Malorossiiskikh: Chernigovskoi i Poltavskoi i Belorusskikh: Mogilevskoi i Vitebskoi” (February 27, 1802), PSZRI (1830), vol. 27, no. 20,162.

<sup>212</sup> “O razdelenii Novorossiiskoi gubernii na tri gubernii: na Nikolaevskuiu, Ekaterinoslavskuiu i Tavricheskuiu, i ob ustroistve tam sudebnykh mest” (October 3, 1802), *Ibid.*, vol. 27, no. 20,449.

<sup>213</sup> S. A. Tarkhov, “Izmeneniia administrativno territorial'nogo deleniia Rossii za poslednie 300 let,” *Geografiia: ezhenedel'noe prilozhenie k gazete "Pervoe sen'tiabria"* (2001), no. 15, 21, 28 (online).

of Lithuania and, second, Prince Czartoryski's desire to keep the Vil'na Educational District Polish.

It has to be said that none of these projects were implemented in practice, except the one concerning the establishment of an educational district with its own distinct organisation. However, the main reason for presenting these projects here is to show how each one of them, if implemented, might have radically changed not only the administrative division of the state, but also the lives of many ethnic groups that dwelt in the Russian Empire. These projects also revealed the potent idea of regional fragmentation among certain political circles in both Russian and non-Russian society at that time.

#### 2.4.1. Speranskii's and Novosil'tsev's projects – attempts to introduce federalism

The ultimate goal of Alexander I was to grant a constitutional charter to the Russian Empire. His liberal intentions often collided with the conservative attitudes of Russian society, the most prominent advocate of which was the historian Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826). Therefore, Alexander's constitutional projects remained well-guarded secrets. The Tsar, most probably, was waiting for an opportune moment to announce them, while in the meantime undertaking certain experiments in different parts of the Empire. The texts of these constitutional charters are closely connected with the political figures Speranskii (1772-1839) and Novosil'tsev (1761-1836).

Speranskii, the son of a provincial priest, began his career as a secretary in the service of Duke Aleksei Kurakin (1752-1818), the General-Procurator during Paul's reign. While in his service Speranskii was introduced to Alexander and their acquaintance gradually grew into friendship. Both were interested in discussing the future of the state. Subsequently, in 1809, Speranskii, by this time the Imperial State-Secretary, presented his draft on the re-organisation of Russia.<sup>214</sup>

The 1809 plan was not entirely a new endeavour: several years earlier, in 1803, Speranskii had composed a memorandum, which analysed Russia's judicial and administrative institutions in detail.<sup>215</sup> Departing from these earlier attempts, he built a new imperial system based on a rational structure of government and the optimal functioning of law in society. The functioning of these reforms required an improvement in local administration and the

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<sup>214</sup> Mikhail M. Speranskii, "Vvedenie k ulozheniiu gosudarstvennykh zakonov" in: *Plan gosudarstvennogo preobrazovaniia grafa M. M. Speranskago (vvedenie k ulozheniiu gosudarstvennykh zakonov 1809 g.)* (Moscow: 1905), pp. 1-120; Aleksandr N. Pypin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii pri Aleksandre I* (St. Petersburg: 1908), pp. 124-132.

<sup>215</sup> Mikhail M. Speranskii, "Zapiska ob ustroistve sudebnykh i pravitel'stvennykh ucherizhdenii v Rossii (1803)," in: *Plan gosudarstvennogo preobrazovaniia grafa M. M. Speranskago*, pp. 121-229. Historian Alexander Kornilov notes that Speranskii was also given other projects for revision and incorporation into his work, like, for example, Baron Rosenkampff's "Constitutional Cadre." Kornilov, pp. 130-132.

subsequent restructuring and introduction of uniformity into the state's territorial division.

The plan divided the Russian Empire into provinces (*gubernii*) and districts (*uezdy*). The major obstacle to greater uniformity were those marginal and not sufficiently developed administrative units, which were evident only through particular institutions of local governance. For example: in the state-owned districts (*volosti*) this was the *volost'* office; in the privately owned districts it meant the administration of the landlord, and on the peripheries of the Empire – the so-called *prikazy*.<sup>216</sup> One of the goals of Speranskii's reform was to reduce the dispersal of administrative power on the lowest levels of governance which caused inconsistency and which at the same time would hinder the efficiency of the system proposed.

Speranskii indicated that this situation was a consequence of the inadequate methods used when previous reforms were implemented. In particular, the division of provinces into districts according to geographical distance, i.e. connecting the peripheral areas to the main provincial city, resulted in an unequal division of the state. The *uezdy* formed in this way varied greatly in population size and demographic distribution. Another specific obstacle was that some of the *uezdy* (mostly in Siberia) lacked the presence of nobility – the active political section of the local imperial administration, which also complicated the elections to the projected municipal offices as well as to the State Duma.<sup>217</sup>

According to Speranskii, the Russian Empire should be divided instead into regions (*oblasti*) and provinces (*gubernii*) – territorially equivalent in size but different politically and administratively.<sup>218</sup> The division into *gubernii* was to be introduced in inner Russia, while the *oblasti* constituted the administrative-territorial structure of the outer regions, where common imperial law was not fully applicable. The latter would be: Siberia, the Caucasus including the Astrakhan' region and Georgia, the Orenburg region, the Don Cossack lands and Novorossiiia. Each *oblast'* had to submit to general imperial laws, although they could retain their own specific (i.e. traditional) laws. An *Oblast'* would then consist of 100,000 to 300,000 inhabitants. Speranskii regarded the existing imperial administrative divisions as satisfactory and therefore did not foresee greater structural changes. The provinces were to be divided into *okrugi* (2 to 5 per province), the *okrugi* into *volosti* and finally the towns that were ascribed to the *volosti*.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Speranskii, "Vvedenie k ulozheniiu gosudarstvennykh zakonov," pp. 69-70.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., pp. 70-71.

<sup>218</sup> In the memorandum, written in 1803, Speranskii distinguished *odnoobraznyia* (homogeneous) and *inoobraznyia* (heterogeneous) parts of the state, which basically corresponded with the later division into *gubernii* and *oblasti*. Here he also noted that in the case of Russia, the former group resembled the structure of inner Russia and the latter that of the borderlands. Speranskii, "Zapiska ob ustroistve sudebnykh," pp. 172-173.

<sup>219</sup> Speranskii, "Vvedenie k ulozheniiu gosudarstvennykh zakonov," pp. 71-72; Kornilov, pp. 134-135.

Speranskii's plan did not mention the Western provinces. The reason for this may have been that he clearly distinguished between the former lands of the GDL and the Russian provinces proper. The Western provinces would have naturally fallen under the category of *oblasti*.

The plan did not make any reference to the use of ethnic criteria. His mentioning of local laws and specific forms of governance, as well as the introduction of the *oblasti*, concerned those layers of society that held the local political role and power – primarily the nobility. Therefore, if Speranskii's constitutional plan had been implemented, the administrative borders would have fragmented the territories of several large ethnic groups even more. The fragmentation of the state's territory into regions was obvious. Once introduced, such a plan would have facilitated proceeding to the next geo-political reform – the establishment of a federal state. Still, as the Russian historian Pypin remarks, the practical feasibility of the project at that time was doubtful. He therefore considers it an early example of Russian political theory.<sup>220</sup>

The Napoleonic Wars, and especially the French army's invasion of Russia in 1812, became a turning point in Alexander's rule. The Tsar gradually stepped back from his active liberal reforms. Nevertheless, after the wars he still continued making plans to reform the Empire and new constitutional projects subsequently appeared. His greatest achievement occurred on November 27, 1815, when the Congress Poland was granted a Constitution. Russian liberal circles expected that Alexander's next step would be the introduction of the long-awaited constitutional state in Russia.<sup>221</sup>

Soon a new problem appeared – the Poles in the Congress Kingdom began to press the Tsar about the reunification of the provinces of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The issue had arisen earlier, before the Napoleonic Wars, especially in the declarations and policies of Prince Czartoryski. The policy regarding the Vil'na Educational District can be seen as an example of the preparations that were being made for the restoration of the Commonwealth.<sup>222</sup>

Polish expectations were not without precedent: in 1811 the Karelian Isthmus was returned to the Grand Duchy of Finland. The Tsar was ambivalent with regard to the territorial transformation of the Polish lands. His promises to the Polish nobles were not supported by any direct actions, although some have claimed that Alexander I sincerely believed that the Polish-Lithuanian state would reappear on the map.<sup>223</sup> Soon the ruling estates of the former Commonwealth became disillusioned with what they saw as the Tsar's lack of sincerity. At the same time, as rumours spread about the possible transfer of several Western provinces to the Kingdom of Poland, Rus-

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<sup>220</sup> Pypin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, pp. 174-182.

<sup>221</sup> Kornilov, pp. 171-174.

<sup>222</sup> See chapter 2.4.4.

<sup>223</sup> W. H. Zawadzki, *A Man of Honour: Adam Czartoryski as a Statesman of Russia and Poland 1795-1831* (Oxford: 1993), pp. 272-276.



sian public opinion revolted and Alexander decided to maintain the status quo.<sup>224</sup>

An alternative explanation for Alexander's hesitancy could be that the territorial transformations in the Kingdom of Poland were perhaps related to the projects concerning future reforms in the Russian Empire. Therefore, transferring several Western provinces to the Kingdom of Poland would have provoked (and actually did) a more negative reaction from Russian society than it would have done if it had occurred as a part of a more fundamental all-imperial restructuring. This line of argument is supported by the comprehensive plan for imperial reform proposed by Novosil'tsev.

While contemplating Russia as a constitutional monarchy and federal state, Alexander and his advisors realised that the imperial administrative system, introduced with the *Provincial Reform* in 1775, was more suited to the needs of a centralised monarchy. The structure of the territorial division and of local governance was not appropriate to the envisioned federal system. In October 1819, Alexander I secretly ordered Novosil'tsev to prepare a new draft of the Russian Constitutional Charter. However, rumours about this endeavour soon began to spread rapidly.<sup>225</sup> Novosil'tsev with the help of a group of assistants promptly compiled the document using the best examples available at that time: the constitutions of the United States, France, and Poland. The document was entitled *The Constitutional Charter of the Russian Empire*.<sup>226</sup>

The introduction of the new administrative-territorial divisions was covered in the first chapters of the plan. Novosil'tsev's division of the Russian Empire resembled the administrative-territorial matrix proposed earlier by Speranskii. The new state would consist of "large regions" (*bol'shie oblasti*), called viceroalties (*namestnichestva*). Each viceroalty would encompass several provinces (*gubernii*) "depending on their inhabitants, distances, territory and according to the morals (*nravy*), customs and special or local laws that bring the people together." The viceroalties were to be named after one of the constitutive provinces or alternatively after the name of the place where the central administration resided.<sup>227</sup>

The provinces would continue to be divided into districts (*uezdy*), while some of the existing *uezdy* would have to be restructured. The *uezdy* were

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<sup>224</sup> George Vernadsky, "Reforms under Czar Alexander I: French and American Influences," *The Review of Politics* (January 1947), vol. 9, no. 1, p. 58.

<sup>225</sup> Pypin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, p. 359.

<sup>226</sup> Theodor Schiemann (ed.) [Nikolai Novosil'tsev], *Gosudarstvennaia ustavnaia gramota Rossiiskoi Imperii / La charte constitutionnelle de L'Empire de Russie* (Berlin: 1903). Schiemann notes that a comparison between the French and Russian versions of Novosil'tsev's text reveals differences: the French version was more adapted to a Western European audience, and thus lacked some of the detailed explanations found in the Russian text. Schiemann, "Introduction," p. 5.

<sup>227</sup> Articles 1-3, in: *Gosudarstvennaia ustavnaia gramota*, p. 11.

divided into districts (*okrugi*), which consisted of third-rank towns<sup>228</sup> and a number of *volosti*, settlements and villages. The borders of each of them were reshaped in relation to demographic and geographic factors, i.e. closeness to the administrative centre and the density of the population. Furthermore, every town, depending on its rank, was to have its own district, with the exception of the capitals St. Petersburg and Moscow, whose districts were given the status of *gubernii*.<sup>229</sup>

The Charter did not specify the exact number of viceroalties or delimit their borders. However, another draft, composed earlier, in 1818 (on the establishment of the general-provinces), indicated that there would be twelve large administrative units: Riga, Vitebsk, Kiev, Odessa, Arkhangel'sk, Tver', Tula, Orenburg, Kazan', Tiflis, Tomsk and Vil'na.<sup>230</sup>

The federal system of the Empire was to be based on the institution of the monarch and the State Diet. The latter would be composed of delegates elected by the viceroalties' diets. The local administration was to consist of a governor-general, *namestnik*, who would have a wide range of executive powers, and the viceroalty's council. The Charter stated that each viceroalty had to become a miniature imitation of the Empire.<sup>231</sup>

Following the plan, Alexander I created several experimental administrative-territorial units by combining provinces into viceroalties. Thus, in 1819 the provinces of Estland, Livonia and Courland together with the Pskov province formed a single viceroalty governed by the Governor-General Marquis Philip Paulucci (1779-1849). During the period 1823-1831 Prince Nikolai Khovanskii (1777-1837) was the Governor-General of the conjoined Vitebsk, Mogilev, Smolensk and Kaluga provinces. Another test case for a federative system, which continued from 1819 to 1827, encompassed five Central Russian provinces (Riazan, Tula, Orel, Tambov and Voronezh), which were governed by the former Minister of Police General Aleksandr Balashov (1770-1837). Balashov personally organised the local administration, chose and appointed personnel, summoned and introduced the Regional Assembly, prepared regional legislation and so on.<sup>232</sup> The three examples show that Alexander investigated how this plan might function in different,

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<sup>228</sup> The first-rank towns were the *gubernii* centres, the second-rank towns the *uezdy* centres, and the remainder of the towns were assigned to the third-rank, except those that had a special economic or geographical value. These special towns were subsequently raised to one of the higher ranks.

<sup>229</sup> Articles 4-9, in: *Gosudarstvennaia ustavnaia gramota*, p. 13.

<sup>230</sup> Vernadsky, "Reforms under Czar Alexander I", p. 59.

<sup>231</sup> Chapter Four, articles 47-71. Further articles (72-77; 102-113) described the administration of the lower administrative-territorial units – *gubernii*, *uezdy*, *okrugi* and towns as well as local diets. Separate articles concerned the elections to the State Diet, where the Polish delegates received individual legislative instructions (articles 148-158). *Gosudarstvennaia ustavnaia gramota*, pp. 35-97.

<sup>232</sup> Thaden, p. 62.

Russian and non-Russian, provinces. However, these experiments did not last very long.<sup>233</sup>

Following the ascension of Nicholas I the viceroalties lost their significance, because the new Tsar was in favour of the unification of the state's space. At the time of Alexander's death in 1825, the Russian Empire consisted of forty-nine provinces: thirty-two that had been formed in accordance with the 1775 reform, thirteen with a special status and four in Siberia.

It is doubtful that Alexander's plan would have received widespread support in Russian society. The opponents of the reforms argued against the establishment of viceroalties; they wanted the imperial space to remain homogeneous and imperial power to be centralised.<sup>234</sup> Dissuaded by Russian and Western conservatives (such as Karamzin and Metternich), Alexander I did not sign the Charter. The existence of the document remained a well-guarded secret for some time. Later, during the 1830-1831 uprising in the Western provinces, it was discovered among Novosil'tsev's papers (during the late 1820s he was appointed as curator of the Vil'na Educational District) and subsequently published in Warsaw. The text of the project revealed that Alexander's ideas reflected the reforms that had been developed by the Decembrist movement.<sup>235</sup>

#### 2.4.2. The Decembrist plans to restructure the Russian Empire (1825)

One final radical design for the territorial restructuring of the state that relates to the reign of Alexander I was put forward by the revolutionary Decembrists, whose unsuccessful uprising occurred on December 14, 1825.

The Napoleonic Wars left a particular imprint on Russian society. After the victorious outcome, people experienced an increase in their sense of national self-consciousness and with it, a greater hope of liberal and fundamental political reform. However, Alexander's disillusionment, resignation to mysticism, retreat from previous reforms and gradual control of societal life contrasted with public expectations.<sup>236</sup> The political ambivalence of the Tsar stimulated public discussions and considerations of Russia's future and pos-

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<sup>233</sup> Despite Nicholas I's abolition of Alexander's administrative-territorial experiments, the process of searching for the most optimal territorial division continued. During the 1830s and subsequently several attempts were made to find the best way to structurally organise the state's space. Examples of these projects are partially reflected in Arsen'ev's book, *Statisticheskie ocherki Rossii* (1848). For an analysis of these endeavours, see: Darius Staliūnas, "Kaip bandyta keisti Kauno gubernijos ribas. Slapti valdžios projektai," *Darbai ir Dienos* (2001), no. 28, pp. 67-84 and Gorizontov, "In Search of Internal Balance," pp. 179-198.

<sup>234</sup> V. Taki, "Istoricheskaia pamiat' i konstruirovanie regiona posle prisoedineniia k imperii: osobaia forma pravleniia v Besarabii v 1812-1828 gg.," *Ab Imperio* (2004), no.3 (online).

<sup>235</sup> Schiemann, Introduction, in: *Gosudarstvennaia ustavnaia gramota*, pp. 1-6.

<sup>236</sup> Mitrafan V. Dovnar-Zapolski, *Idealy dekabristov* (Moscow: 1907), pp. 3-85; Marc Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: 1966), pp. 1-17; Vladimir A. Fedorov, *Dekabristy i ikh vremia* (Moscow: 1992), pp. 40-45.

sible reforms, which consequentially led to the growth of secret societies. They resembled other European secret societies of the time, such as the Italian *Carbonari*, the Greek *Philikí Etaireía*, and especially the German *Tugendbund*, which likewise aimed at the radical resolution of ambiguous political situations in their respective countries.<sup>237</sup>

The beginning of the Decembrist movement is primarily related to the activities of two secret organisations: The Union of Salvation (*Soiuz Spaseniia*, 1816-1817) and The Union of Welfare (*Soiuz Blagodenstviia*, 1818-1821), which recruited mostly from the young nobility undertaking military service. Both unions imitated the structure and conspiratorial nature of the Masonic organisations. From the very beginning they adopted a radical approach in their attempts to change the status quo: in 1816, members of The Union of Salvation considered assassinating the Tsar.<sup>238</sup>

During 1820-1821 The Union of Welfare went through several transformations and in 1821 it split into the Southern Society (1821-1825), headed by Pavel I. Pestel' (1793-1826) and the Northern Society (1822-1825), led by Nikita Muravev (1796-1844). Both societies kept in close contact, although their plans concerning post-revolutionary Russia differed. The Southern group prepared for a republican form of governance, while the Northern section's ultimate goal was to establish a constitutional monarchy.<sup>239</sup> Their plans also revealed rather different proposals for the post-revolutionary territorial division.<sup>240</sup>

Pestel' codified his vision of how Russia should be reformed in a book entitled "The Russian Truth" (*Russkaia Pravda*).<sup>241</sup> The two surviving drafts present his main ideas concerning the ways in which the government, society and the administration should be reconstructed. Pestel' favoured a political system ultimately based on a unified republican state, but before this could be achieved the Russian state had first to undergo ten years of transitional dictatorship.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Pypin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, pp. 345-380; Kornilov, pp. 196-208. On the Decembrists' attitudes towards the foreign policy of the Russian Empire, see: Ol'ga V. Orlik, *Dekabristy i ikh vneshniaia politika Rossii* (Moscow: 1984).

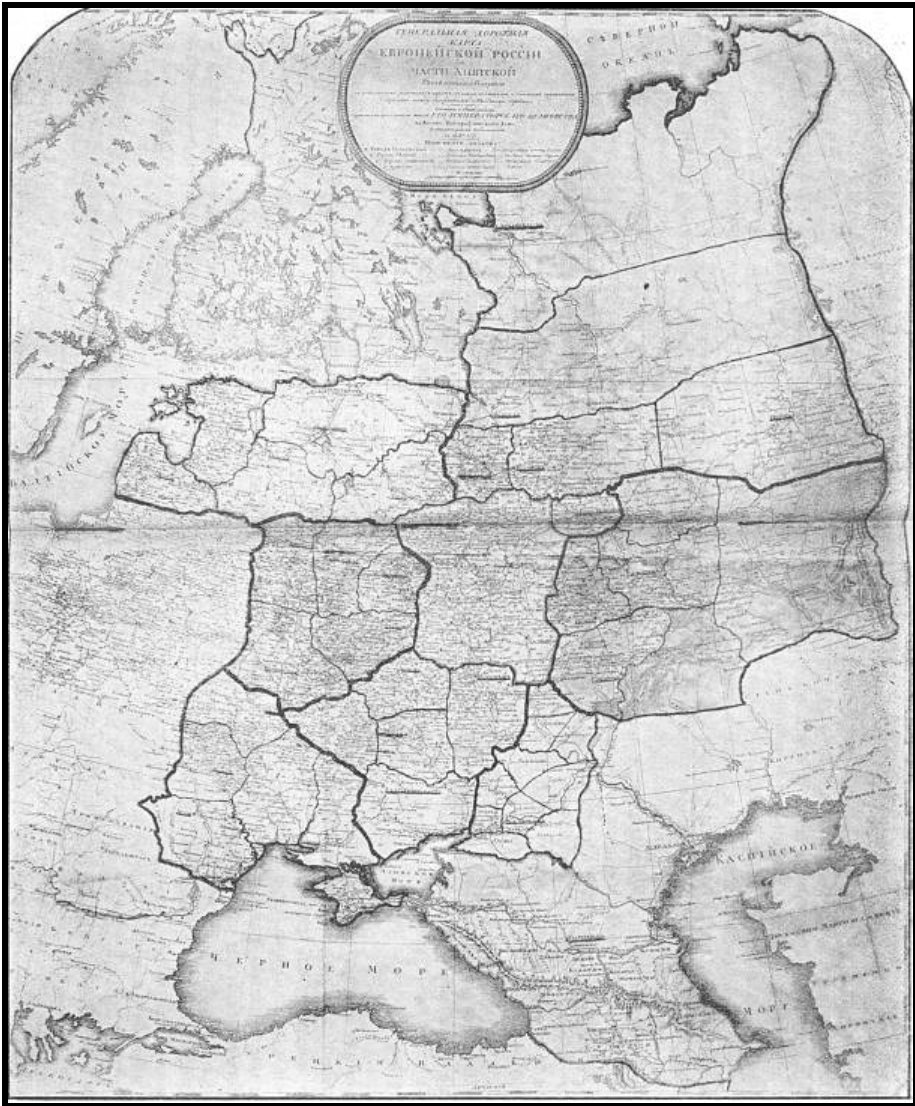
<sup>238</sup> Dovnar-Zapolski, pp. 257-300; Fedorov, pp. 52-76.

<sup>239</sup> Fedorov, pp. 77-103.

<sup>240</sup> Dovnar-Zapolski, pp. 91-253.

<sup>241</sup> Pavel I. Pestel', *Russkaia pravda, nakaz vremennomu verkhovnomu pravleniiu* (St. Petersburg: 1906).

<sup>242</sup> Pestel', pp. 21-24. For an in-depth analysis of Pestel's role in the Decembrist movement and the evolution of his theoretical viewpoint see: Nikolai M. Lebedev, *Pestel' – ideolog i rukovoditel' dekabristov* (Moscow: 1972).



**Figure 8.** A map showing Pestel's division of European Russia. From: Mitrafan Dovnar-Zapolski, *Idealy dekabristov* (Moscow: 1907)

The Decembrists of the Southern Section also planned to restructure the state's territory. To this end, the territory of European Russia was to be divided into fifty-three *gubernii*, fifty of which were called *okrugi*, and three were called "lots" (*udely*). Further, the fifty *okrugi* were to form ten large *oblasti*, or regions, while the three *udely* were to be: the Capital (*Stolichnyi*), Don (*Donskoi*) and Aral (*Aral'skii*) (Figure 7). The smallest territorial unit was the *volost'*, which would carry out political, economic and administrative functions. Each *volost'* was to be comprised of approximately 1,000 male revision souls. The capital of the new state was to be Nizhnii-

Novgorod, renamed as Vladimir, while the existing Vladimir city would be given a new name taken from the river on which it stood – Kliazmin. Pestel argued that moving the capital to Nizhnii-Novgorod should be undertaken for several reasons, such as: the geographical location (the city was situated in the middle of European Russia), the economic situation (several large and important fairs were held there), the ease of communication (the city stood on the Volga and Oka Rivers) and the historical tradition of the city.<sup>243</sup>

The constitutional project also dealt with the question of ethnic relations. In this sense the Decembrists were, perhaps, the first Russian nationalists. Two main principles guided Pestel's perspective on ethnicity: the "right to nationhood" (*pravo narodnosti*) and the "right of convenience" (*pravo blagoudobstva*). In his own words:

If every state were composed of only one ethnicity [*plemia*] or nation [*narod*], its borders would be automatically defined by the area on which this people [*narod*] is settled, but as all great states, and more so Russia, encompass within their borders many different races [*plemen* – ethnicities], it becomes most difficult to define the boundaries. The difficulty arises from two contrary desires. Peoples subjected to a great state and of different origins than its dominant nation [but from other ethnicities (*plemen*)] want independence and a separate political existence for themselves: they base themselves on the right to form separate states and call this the *right of nationhood*. On the other hand, every large state strives to secure boundaries that are strong because of their location and natural defences; at the same time it endeavours to have the power of the surrounding small nations [*narodov*] increase its own might rather than that of some other neighbouring big state: basing this striving and endeavour on its right to security, [the large state] calls it the *right of convenience*.<sup>244</sup>

The main issue in terms of the application of the two rights was the question as to whether an ethnic group or a nation could or could not preserve and defend its statehood. In his definition, Pestel' claimed that it would be more convenient for the weaker nations to become part of the stronger state and then "merge their nationality completely with that of the dominant people [*narod*] to form one nation and stop dreaming uselessly of what is impossible and never to be [...] the right of nationhood must prevail in the case of those peoples who can enjoy their own political independence, whereas the right of convenience must prevail over those nations that cannot themselves make use of their political independence and must of necessity come under the power of some stronger state."<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Pestel', pp. 24-35; Dovnar-Zapolski, pp. 358-368; Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, p. 137-139.

<sup>244</sup> Pestel', p. 13. Translation in: Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, pp. 133-134. Alterations and additions I have made by comparing Raeff's translation with the Russian version of the text have been added and marked with "[ ]."

<sup>245</sup> Pestel', pp. 14-15; Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, pp. 134-135. On alterations to the citation, see footnote 244.

Therefore, the “right of convenience” (in Pestel’s conception) was tied to a historical criterion, which demonstrated the existence or non-existence of a tradition of statehood. This allowed him to determine that most of the ethnicities in the Russian Empire were “weak” and thus not eligible to become independent. Pestel openly demonstrated a strong manifestation of *Realpolitik* ideology.

However, not all ethnic groups were equal. Pestel’s project introduced a hierarchy of three categories, defining the peoples according to their ethnic, historical and geographical conditions: first came the native Russian people; second, the annexed ethnicities; and, third, the foreigners who lived in Russia but were subjects of other states. The Slavs or the “native Russians” were subdivided into five constitutive branches: the proper Russians, the Little Russians or *Malorossiianie* (who inhabited the Chernigov and Poltava provinces), the Ukrainians (Kharkov and Kursk provinces), the *Russnaki* (it is not clear who this refers to, but perhaps he meant the *Ruthenians* inhabiting the Kiev, Podolia and Volhynia provinces), and finally the Belarusians (Vitebsk and Mogilev provinces).<sup>246</sup>

The annexed ethnic groups consisted of ten categories: the Finno-Ugric, the Latvians (Latvians and Lithuanians<sup>247</sup>), the Moldavians (Bessarabia and the Principality of Moldavia; the latter, as a part of the Austrian Empire, in Pestel’s plans had to be annexed in the future), the multi-ethnic colonists who settled in Southern Russia (they were categorised as *Rossiane* who would subsequently have to be Russified), the nomadic peoples, the Tatars, the Caucasian peoples, the Cossacks, the Eastern Siberian peoples and the Jews. Such a multi-ethnic Empire presented a problem for Pestel’s conception of a Russian republic. Therefore, his new government intended to restructure the lives of the annexed ethnicities in order to introduce uniformity. In some cases cultural differences and specificities were specifically targeted. For example, the Finns had to lose their autonomy and adopt the Russian language (for their own benefit, as Pestel’ put it). The Lithuanian ethnic territory had to be divided: part of it would be given to the Kingdom of Poland while another part of it would be joined to the Minsk province.<sup>248</sup>

The ultimate goal was to create a single Russian nation. With time non-Russian ethnic names would be removed, leaving only Russian ones; all non-Russians were therefore subjects for Russification, a means of turning *Rossiane* (indicating political identity) into *Russkie* (ethnic identity).<sup>249</sup> In this respect the Decembrists can be seen as the ideological predecessors of

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<sup>246</sup> Pestel’, pp. 36-56; Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, pp. 139-141.

<sup>247</sup> In *Russkaia Pravda* the Lithuanians were also referred to as *Liakhi*, which in the parlance of the local population in the North Western provinces meant “Polish.” Pestel’ might have heard this name while serving under the command of Field Marshal Prince Peter K. Wittgenstein from 1814 until 1818 in Mittau (Courland). Although he did not elaborate on its meaning, when using *Liakhi*, Pestel’ was referring, most probably, to the local Lithuanian and Belarusian nobility, who spoke Polish and were under Polish cultural influence.

<sup>248</sup> See the western borders of the Russian republic in Figure 8.

<sup>249</sup> Pestel’, pp. 15-18; Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, pp. 139-147.

Nicholas I's and especially Alexander II's policy of Russification, as well as early advocates of the integrative policies that were undertaken in France during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>250</sup>

The Poles were the only ethnicity to be granted an exceptional position among the non-Russians. One of the reasons for this was that the Decembrists had been negotiating for some time with Polish revolutionaries seeking support for their actions. With the beginning of the revolution in Russia, the Poles were to step in and overthrow their ruler – the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich (1779-1831), Alexander I's brother. If they did so, the Poles were promised that they would regain their statehood.<sup>251</sup> Moreover, the new Kingdom of Poland would also receive a part of its lost territory, the provinces of Volhynia and Podolia. This explains the absence of these territories in Pestel's map of Russia. However, from a political perspective, according to Pestel's manifesto, the new Polish state would have been almost completely dependent on the Russian Empire and would have served as a buffer zone for its protection against the West.<sup>252</sup>

Such was the radical and ambitious project composed by Pestel'. In Dovnar-Zapolski's opinion, Pestel's proposed state had an amorphous political form: "if all the distinctive features of Pestel's state are collected together, they indicate three major types of governance: the state of antiquity, the socialist state and the [authoritarian] state of the Napoleonic regime. Although he drew on these political structures taken from different historical epochs with different political goals [i.e. of the respective political systems], Pestel' was not in favour of any."<sup>253</sup>

The Northern Society was directly responsible for the unsuccessful insurrection on December 14, 1825. The poorly prepared and hasty attempt to overthrow the new Tsar Nicholas I ended in suppression, trials and executions. The Northern Society's political programme was based on the constitutional project written by Nikita Muravev. Just like Pestel's, this *Project for a Constitution* was never completed. It has survived in three different drafts, dating from 1822, 1824 and 1826.

As mentioned above, the Decembrists of the Northern Society envisioned the Russian Empire as a federal state with a constitutional monarchy. In many ways it resembled the administrative and constitutional system of the

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<sup>250</sup> Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: the Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: 1976).

<sup>251</sup> Lebedev, pp. 268-279.

<sup>252</sup> Pestel', pp. 18-19; Dovnar-Zapolski, pp. 384-386; Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, pp. 135-136. Pestel' specified that the future Poland's borders would stretch from Polangen on the coast of the Baltic Sea, to Dinaburg; from Dinaburg up the River Dvina to Polotsk; from Polotsk down the River Umach' to Berezina, then to Pripet and from there the line would go along the Pripet swamps as far as the town of Ostrog and then continue further to the Carpathian Mountains (Pestel', pp. 20-21).

<sup>253</sup> Dovnar-Zapolski, p. 378.



United States.<sup>254</sup> Therefore, an immediate territorial restructuring would be one of the first actions following a successful revolution, along with the establishment of specific federal units called *derzhavy*.

The Northern Society had no definitive agreement concerning the territorial division. Each of Muravev's drafts presented different ways in which the state could be divided. The earliest version (1822) divided Russia into fourteen states (*derzhavy*) and two districts (*oblasti*). The second draft (1824) presented thirteen states and two districts, and the last project (1826) depicted the Russian Empire divided into fifteen large districts (*oblasti*). Structurally, the *derzhavy* were subdivided into *uezdy* and the *uezdy* into *volosti* (or *povety*), which had from 500 to 1,500 male revision souls.<sup>255</sup>

Once reorganised as a federal state, each *derzhava* would become a small-scale model resembling the structure of the central government. The state's government (depending on the draft) was to reside in the imperial capital – either Nizhnii-Novgorod or Moscow.<sup>256</sup> In the third version of the constitution, the system of *derzhavy* disappeared. It was replaced by fifteen *oblasti*, which, in Muravev's description, structurally resembled the general-provinces existing at that time.<sup>257</sup>

Each federal state was created according to a specific pattern. The core of the *derzhavy* stemmed either from a particular ethnic group inhabiting the territory, or from a specific economic and geographic characteristic of the territory. Iakhin indicates that in the first draft Muravev used mostly economic divisions, while in the second he combined both economic and ethnic features. Ethnic and historical criteria were manifested rather clearly in, for example, the State of Bothnia (*Botnicheskaiia* – capital in Helsingfors), which covered most of the Finnish lands, and the Western State (*Zapadnaiia* – capital in Vil'na), which consisted of the Belarusian and Lithuanian lands. A geographic-economic perspective was applied mostly to the inner Russian provinces, such as the State of Dnepr (capital in Smolensk), the State of Kama (Kazan') and the Black Sea State (Kiev), which were constructed according to river basins and coastal areas. Some of the *derzhavy* could have been attributed to either category, such as the Baltic State (*Baltiiskaia* – Riga), having territories comprising Baltic Germans, Estonians and Latvians, while also containing important harbours along the coast of the Baltic Sea.<sup>258</sup> It could therefore be argued that each *derzhava* had its own specific ethno-political and partly ethno-economical character.

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<sup>254</sup> Muravev used several models when compiling his Russian constitution. Although he was familiar with the constitutional projects in Western Europe, he nevertheless favoured the constitutional project of the United States. Iakhin, pp. 236-240.

<sup>255</sup> Dovnar-Zapolski, pp. 408-410; Rakhman Kh. Iakhin, *Politicheskie i pravovye vzgliady dekabristov severnogo obshchestva* (Kazan: 1964), pp. 246-248.

<sup>256</sup> Dovnar-Zapolski, p. 408.

<sup>257</sup> Fedorov, pp. 126-127.

<sup>258</sup> Iakhin, p. 248; Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement*, pp. 107-108.

In contrast to Pestel's project, Muravev did not elaborate on the fate of the Polish lands, although this particular question was clearly an important issue. However, the unfinished drafts contained no chapters on the restructuring of the Kingdom of Poland. Still, the fact that it was not mentioned within the system of federative states, might suggest that Poland was considered as separate from it. Muravev's constitution, judging by the territories covered by the *derzhavy*, appears to have envisioned the establishment of an autonomous Polish state approximately within its historical (i.e. the Kingdom of Poland) and ethnic (without the provinces that belonged to the Western region) boundaries.<sup>259</sup>

Dovnar-Zapolski has argued that the supporters of a constitutional monarchy were dominant among the Decembrists of the Northern but not the Southern society.<sup>260</sup> Muravev's drafts, once completed, could have become the imperial code of laws. The new administrative-territorial system of semi-autonomous *derzhavy* would then have come much closer to the approximate ethnic (in the modern sense of the term) borders of the Western region than it had during the reigns of Catherine II, Paul I or even Alexander I. Still, the Decembrists never got past the stage of planning and none of the administrative-territorial schemes they envisioned were ever implemented in practice.

### 2.4.3. Political projects for the restoration of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1806-1815)

As discussed above, from the reign of Paul I the partitioned Polish-Lithuanian lands within the Russian Empire enjoyed a special status, which allowed the local way of life to continue in a fairly undisturbed manner. Paul I's policies opened new possibilities for establishing a dialogue between the local nobility and the Russian authorities. His successor Alexander I openly sympathised with the Polish, Lithuanian and Belarusian nobility. The favour of the Tsar allowed the possibility for manoeuvre, for raising questions concerning the restoration of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.<sup>261</sup>

Before the war with Napoleon, the Tsar was presented with several projects proposing the establishment of an autonomous territory either within the borders of the former PLC, or within the eight Western provinces: the former territory of the GDL. An opportunity for such projects to be realized appeared with the great restructuring of the European geopolitical space that occurred as a result of Napoleon's conquests. The political map of the continent was changing rapidly and Russia became deeply involved in foreign politics.

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<sup>259</sup> Iakhin, p. 301.

<sup>260</sup> Dovnar-Zapolski, p. 418.

<sup>261</sup> Bronius Dundulis, *Napoléon et la Lituanie en 1812* (Paris: 1940), pp. 7-14.

In 1806-1807 the issue of the former Commonwealth lands once again appeared on the grand European political stage as well as on maps. Napoleon's France advanced rapidly, occupying Austria and Prussia and pausing at the Russian border. While in the process of redrawing the map of Europe and founding new vassal states, Napoleon decided to establish the Duchy of Warsaw from the territories annexed by Prussia and Austria after the three partitions of the Commonwealth. The Russian Empire and France officially ratified the establishment of the Duchy at Tilsit (Prussia) in 1807. This act was regarded by the Polish nobility in the Duchy as the first step towards the gradual restoration of the Polish-Lithuanian state. However, in Napoleon's imperialist project the Duchy of Warsaw was to function only as a puppet state. The French Emperor remained elusive about his promises to the Polish nobility concerning the restoration of the Commonwealth. His main interest was to turn the Poles into loyal allies in the forthcoming war with Russia.<sup>262</sup>

In 1807 the territory of the Duchy of Warsaw comprised the Warsaw, Poznań, Kalisz, Bydgoszcz, Płotsk, Łomża departments and also a territory that had belonged to the GDL – the Suwalki (Suwałki) district in the north; altogether the Duchy had 2,5 million inhabitants. In 1809, four new departments were established from the Austrian partitions: Krakow, Lublin, Radom and Siedlce. The number of inhabitants increased to 4,3 million.<sup>263</sup> Thus, the Polish lands became a strong bridgehead for the French eastern campaign.

The loyalty of the Poles to Napoleon troubled Alexander I and he started searching for a way to reduce the growing tension among the Polish inhabitants in Russia's Western provinces. The Tsar therefore decided to play the Commonwealth restoration card.<sup>264</sup>

Napoleon's supporters were slightly outnumbered by local pro-Russian nobles. The general economic situation in the Duchy of Warsaw was no better than in the rest of the Russian Empire. The *szlachta* within Russia enjoyed more political and economic power than their counterparts in the Duchy. The pro-Russian Polish nobility offered their support to Prince Czartoryski, who became the advocate of their goals: autonomous Polish and Lithuanian lands within the imperial realm.<sup>265</sup> Although plans concerning the

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<sup>262</sup> Elena I. Fedosova, "Polish projects of Napoleon Bonaparte," *Napoleonic Scholarship: the Journal of the International Napoleonic Society* (December 1998), vol. 1, no. 2 (online)

<sup>263</sup> Dundulis, *Napoléon et la Lituanie*, p. 39.

<sup>264</sup> Bronius Dundulis, "Projektas atkurti Lietuvos Didžiąją Kunigaikštystę Rusijos Imperijos sudėtyje (1811-1812 m.)," in: *Lietuvos TSR Aukštųjų Mokyklų Darbai, Istorija* (1972), vol. XIII (1), pp. 57-58. Also see: Aleksandr Erashevich, "Palitichnyia praekty adradzhennia Rechi Paspalitai i Velikaga Kniastva Litouskaga u palititsy raseiskaga tsarizmu napiaredadni vainy 1812 g.," in: *Gistarichny Almanakh* (Garodnia: 2002), vol. 6, pp. 84-96.

<sup>265</sup> In his conversations with Alexander in 1809, Czartoryski insisted on the complete restoration of the Commonwealth. Alexander's ideas concerning the restructuring of the Western provinces into something different from the rest of the Empire were received sceptically by the Prince, who believed strongly in the indivisibility of Poland-Lithuania. *Besedy i chastnaia perepiska mezhdou Imperatorom Aleksandrom I i kn. Adamom Chartorizhskim, opublik-*

restoration did not come to fruition immediately, from 1804 Alexander I constantly hinted that different possibilities for the restoration were being considered and that it was just a matter of time before it would occur.<sup>266</sup>

During Czartoryski's discussions with the Emperor, Alexander was the recipient of an alternative project, which outlined the establishment of an autonomous geo-political region that encompassed the former lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The initiative came from the local Lithuanian and Belarusian nobility led by the magnate and composer Michał K. Oginski (1765-1833). In 1810 the Belarusian and Lithuanian *szlachta* decided to send a delegation to Emperor Alexander expressing their loyalty but also suggesting several improvements that could be made in the administration of the Western provinces. Oginski was chosen as the ambassador and the Tsar granted him an audience, expressing his interest in the proposal. Soon after the meeting Oginski was appointed a Senator and Privy Councillor to the Tsar. Furthermore, he was permitted to travel to Paris, where he was introduced to Napoleon. His main mission was to investigate French plans concerning the Poles and the Duchy of Warsaw. After returning to St. Petersburg he presented the Tsar with his observations. The main conclusion was that war with France was inevitable. The senator also took the opportunity to suggest that, in case of war, the establishment of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) would be a good defensive measure.<sup>267</sup>

On May 27, 1811, Oginski presented Alexander with a memorandum, which proposed the re-establishment of the GDL as an autonomous unit within the Russian Empire. The memorandum was prepared in cooperation with Prince Franciszek Ksawery Drucki-Lubecki (1778-1846), Kazimierz Broel-Plater (1780-1848(?)), Ludwik August Broel-Plater (1775-1846) and Tomasz Wawrzecki (1759-1816). The memorandum stated that the people of the Western provinces were loyal to the Emperor, and that an autonomous GDL would serve as an "escarp for the impending threat."<sup>268</sup>

Later that year, on November 3, Oginski delivered the final proposals for the re-establishment project, prepared in the form of a decree that needed only the Emperor's signature. The decree consisted of eleven chapters. It declared that the autonomous GDL would consist of the Vil'na, Grodno, Minsk, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Volhynia, Podolia, and Kiev provinces, together with the Białystok and Ternopol' districts. These latter entities had become a part of the Russian Empire in 1807 and 1809 respectively. Administrative

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*ovannyya kniazem Ladislavom Chartorizhskim (1801-1823) (Moscow: 1912), pp. 93-98, passim.*

<sup>266</sup> In 1806-1807 during the war with Prussia, several prominent Polish magnates such as Stanisław Niemcewicz (1753-1817), and Tomasz Wawrzecki elaborated a project for the restoration of an autonomous Commonwealth together with Prince Czartoryski (on the basis of the Constitution of May 3, 1791) and proposed the Russian emperor as Polish king. The model of such autonomy was the Kingdom of Hungary within the Austrian Empire. Erashevich, "Palitichnyia praekty adradzhennia Rechi Paspalitai," pp. 86-88.

<sup>267</sup> Dundulis, "Projektas atkurti," pp. 61-62.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63; Erashevich, pp. 92-93.

power was to be given to a viceroy of the Tsar, who would reside in the capital – Vil'na. The code of laws – the Lithuanian Statute – would remain in force (it was abolished only in 1840). Depending on the property census, only residents of the GDL would be eligible to occupy administrative offices. Moreover, the GDL would be granted a constitutional charter, which was being prepared and which would be entitled “The regulations of governance in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.” The Tsar received the charter early in 1812.<sup>269</sup>

The recent establishment of the Grand Duchy of Finland (GDF) as an autonomous region suggested that there was cause to be hopeful concerning the outcome of the proposed project.<sup>270</sup> Finland had become the ideal autonomous model for the Lithuanian and Belarusian nobility, since both countries had many common features, one of which was their multi-ethnic character – the GDL contained Belarusian, Lithuanian and Polish elites while the GDF had Finnish and Swedish.

Alexander did not oppose such initiatives. From 1810 he discussed the possibility of this option with Czartoryski. The Emperor also undertook a much deeper investigation into the proposal. He asked the Governor of Finland, a former Swedish general and diplomat, and one of the founders of the GDF, Gustaf M. Armfelt (1757-1814), to prepare an alternative project concerning the autonomy of the GDL. Armfelt together with Gustav A. Rosenkampf (1762-1832) – a Livonian noble, who had also taken part in the development of the GDF project<sup>271</sup> – presented a constitutional project to the Tsar in the autumn of 1811. The proposal stated that Alexander was to proclaim himself Grand Duke of the GDL, and later, after the Duchy of Warsaw had become a part of the Empire, King of Poland. In this way any future Poland-Lithuania would be fully subject to imperial power. Yet regardless of these proposals, Armfelt's project was eventually rejected because it argued for complete liberation of the local peasantry, which would have been introduced according to the Finnish model. The hesitant Tsar forwarded Oginski's and Armfelt's projects for Czartoryski's evaluation. The latter rejected both, because in his conception the GDL was an inseparable part of the PLC. In Czartoryski's opinion, the granting of autonomy to Russia's western borderlands would make it much more difficult to rejoin Poland and Lithuania.<sup>272</sup>

Once rumours surfaced concerning the plan to create an autonomous Duchy out of the Western provinces, it received a negative reaction from the

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<sup>269</sup> Dundulis, “Projektas atkurti,” pp. 63-64.

<sup>270</sup> Juhani Paasavirta, *Finland and Europe: the Period of Autonomy & the International Crisis* (London: 1981), pp. 1-24; Eino Jutikkala, Kauko Pirinen, *A History of Finland* (Helsinki: 2003), pp. 287-298.

<sup>271</sup> Stig Ramel, *Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt fondateur de la Finlandie* (Auribeau-sur-Siagne: 1999), pp. 291-310.

<sup>272</sup> Dundulis, “Projektas atkurti,” pp. 65-66.

conservative Russian nobility.<sup>273</sup> The Poles in the Duchy of Warsaw reinforced this Russian opposition. While the latter insisted on the integrity of the Russian Empire, the former regarded such plans as undermining the goal of a Polish-Lithuanian union. Under these conflicting pressures Emperor Alexander I left the proposal unsigned.

After Russia's victory over Napoleon and especially during the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815), the Polish and Lithuanian questions reappeared. However, the moment of opportunity to achieve autonomy had passed and the situation soon changed radically. Initially, Alexander was still considering the possibility of Lithuania's autonomy or the attachment of several western provinces to the newly formed Congress Kingdom of Poland, which was officially under the protection of the Tsar and joined through this personal union to the Empire. Yet the Russian nobility and intelligentsia continued to resist. Karamzin wrote an open letter defending imperial integrity, protesting against any transfer of "historically Russian lands" to Poland.<sup>274</sup> In these circumstances, both the Lithuanian and Polish nobility became increasingly disillusioned with Alexander's promises of reunification.<sup>275</sup>

As mentioned earlier, one of the reasons for the failure of the Polish and Lithuanian attempts to achieve autonomy within the Russian Empire resulted from Alexander's *idée fixe* about granting Russia a Constitutional Charter. This meant that in practice he was more interested in planning than in actually establishing the autonomous territories.

Czartoryski's rejection of the various projects indicated that the Belarussian, Lithuanian and Polish nobility was not as unified as it had appeared to be. Regardless of the issue of loyalty, there was also the question concerning exactly what territory should be restored: the whole of the Commonwealth or just a part of it? Another important issue was the preservation of a common political culture in the region, and here Czartoryski managed to ensure that the Polish-Lithuanian nobility's political identity would be reproduced in the future. An important tool in this respect was the establishment of the Vil'na Educational District.

#### 2.4.4. A plan to secure Polish identity and the Vil'na Educational District (1803-1831)

In 1802 Tsar Alexander I with the assistance of the Unofficial Committee, consisting of Novosil'tsev, Speranskii, Czartoryski and Viktor Kochubei (1768-1834), began introducing a new system of imperial governance based

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<sup>273</sup> See, for example, Karamzin's perspective on the restructuring of the Empire. Nikolai M. Karamzin, *Zapiska o drevnei i novoi Rossii v ee politicheskom i grazhdanskom otosheniakh* (Moscow: 1991).

<sup>274</sup> Egidijus Aleksandravičius and Antanas Kulakauskas, *Carų valdžioje. XIX amžiaus Lietuva* (Vilnius: 1996), pp. 68-69.

<sup>275</sup> Henryk Mościcki, *Projekty połączenia Litwy z Królestwem Polskiem w okresie 1813-1830* (Warszawa: 1921).

on ministries. The ministries replaced the older collegial establishments and with time they became the cornerstone of the imperial government. This process of substitution had started already during the reign of Paul I. On September 8, 1802, the Tsar issued a decree announcing the establishment of eight ministries: Foreign Affairs, War, Navy (all three had existed previously as collegial institutions), Internal Affairs, Finance, Education, and Justice. Alexander took a personal interest in the establishment of the Ministry of Commerce.<sup>276</sup>

The Ministry of Education received much attention from the Tsar and Prince Czartoryski who was one of the initiators of the educational reform. Petr Zavadovskii (1739-1812) was appointed as the first Minister of Education (1802-1810) and the Vice-Minister was Mikhail Muravev (1757-1807). Alongside the Ministry of Education, a board called the General School Administration was also founded. It consisted of Alexander's close companions: Czartoryski, Count Seweryn Potocki (1762–1829), Aleksandr S. Stroganov (1733-1811), General Friedrich Maximilian Klinger (1752-1831), Vice-Minister Muravev and others.<sup>277</sup> On January 24, 1803 the Main School Administration published the "Preliminary Regulation for Public Education" announcing reform of the school system. Its founding principle was a semi-autonomous role for the educational districts under the supervision of the universities. The administrators of education would be the Minister and the Main School Administration Board together with the curators of each educational district.<sup>278</sup> Across the whole of Russia six curators were responsible for six educational districts: the vice-minister Muravev supervised the Moscow district (Moscow University), Czartoryski the Vil'na' district (Vil'na University), Klinger the Dorpat district (Dorpat University, which was reopened in 1802), Novosil'tsev the St. Petersburg district (St. Petersburg Pedagogical Institute (elevated in 1819 to a university), Potocki the Kharkov district (Kharkov University, established in 1803), and the Livonian baron G. A. Manteuffel (very soon to be replaced by the astronomer Stepan Ru-

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<sup>276</sup> Kornilov, p. 91. Thaden points out that "the ministerial form of government introduced by Alexander I between 1802 and 1811 gave rise to many difficulties in administering the provinces. [...] This confusion, as well as the ineffectiveness of central control over local government, gave Polish, German, and Finnish political leaders in the borderlands many opportunities to defend their autonomy and special rights and privileges during the first quarter of the nineteenth century" (Thaden, p.60).

<sup>277</sup> Thaden, p. 32; Riasanovski, pp. 61-64; James T. Flynn, *The University Reform of Tsar Alexander I, 1802-1835* (Washington, D.C.: 1988), pp. 13-16; Zawadzki, p. 53. Some historians tend to interpret educational reform as an imposition of imperial power over the local population (Aleksandravičius; Kulakauskas, pp. 65-66). While the reforms could be seen as a manifestation of imperial power (and almost certainly were), the active participation of Czartoryski does suggest that the desire to conserve "Polishness" and the remnants of lost statehood was in fact more important. In this sense, the education system could be used as an effective institution for revisionism.

<sup>278</sup> "Ob ustroistve uchilishch'" (January 24, 1803), PSZRI (1830), vol. 27, no. 20,597; "Ob ucherizhdenii uchebnykh okrugov, s naznacheniem dlia kazhdago osobykh gubernii" (January 24, 1803), Ibid., no. 20,598.

movskii (1732–1815)) the Kazan' district (Kazan' Pedagogical Institute, reorganised for this purpose from the local gymnasium; in 1814 it became a university). Four levels of educational institutions were introduced: the parish school (*prikhodskaia*), district school (*uezdnaia*), *gimnasia* (or provincial school – *gubernskaia*) and the highest institution, the university. In accordance with the general reform, in 1803, the Superior School of Lithuania became the Imperial Vil'na University.<sup>279</sup>

This system of educational districts constituted a rather interesting constellation inside the Russian Empire. The curators and universities monopolised the education of particular regions. In a sense, each educational district resembled a federal unit. The Vil'na Educational District (VED) encompassed territories of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, almost entirely dominated by the elite Polish culture. Therefore, it was not difficult for Prince Czartoryski to nourish hopes that someday it would be possible to restore the Polish-Lithuanian state, even in a personal union with the Russian throne. The Vil'na Educational District was therefore a perfect territorial unit for an autonomous or even independent territory.<sup>280</sup> At the same time Czartoryski's priority was the preservation and strengthening of Polish cultural unity in all parts of the VED, i.e. keeping the Polish political nation alive and reproducing its ideals through the schools.

Initially the VED consisted of two Lithuanian provinces, Vil'na and Grodno; two Belarusian provinces, Mogilev and Vitebsk; the Minsk province (which at that time was not yet identified as “Belarusian”); and the provinces of Podolia, Volhynia and Kiev, which covered the Ukrainian lands. Moreover, the VED was enlarged several times. After the French-Russian Tilsit treaty (1807), on December 25, 1810, it acquired the Belostok (Białystok) district. On July 27, 1815, Illukst' district's (Courland province) secondary schools together with the parish schools were also adjoined. This district had previously been a part of the Dorpat Educational District. It differed from the Dorpat district mainly because most of its inhabitants belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, while the remainder of Dorpat Educational District was almost exclusively Protestant. Therefore, for the sake of achieving religious balance, the Illukst' schools were transferred to the VED. These transformations increased the VED's territory to 463.200 sq. km., containing almost nine million inhabitants in all.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> “Akt utverzheniia dlia Imperatorskago Universiteta v Vil'ne” (April 4, 1803), PSZRI (1830), vol. 27, no. 20,701; Meilė Lukšienė, *Lietuvos švietimo istorijos bruožai XIX a. pirmoje pusėje* (Kaunas: 1970), pp. 33-34; David W. Edwards, “Count Joseph Marie de Maistre and Russian Educational Policy,” *Slavic Review* (March 1977), vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 54-58; Flynn, pp. 17-70; Meilė Lukšienė, *Demokratinė ugdymo mintis Lietuvoje XVIII a. antroji – XIX a. pirmoji pusė* (Vilnius: 1985), pp. 107-109.

<sup>280</sup> Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy, 1801-1825* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1969), pp. 120-121.

<sup>281</sup> Lukšienė, *Lietuvos švietimo istorijos bruožai*, pp. 35-36.



The conservation of Polishness had another consequence. After the partitions the educational system in the former Grand Duchy lands was not abolished and actually continued functioning. The previous school system established by the Commission of National Education (*Komisja Edukacji Narodowej* – 1773-1794) continued to operate, although some of the schools were transferred to the monastic (Jesuit) administration.<sup>282</sup> The Jesuit order, despite being officially abolished in 1773, continued to exist inside the Russian Empire. Catherine II instated the Jesuits and other Roman Catholic monastic orders as the supervisors of education in the annexed Western provinces.<sup>283</sup> Later, Emperor Paul I returned the order's possessions. In 1801 Pope Pius VII finally yielded and ratified the exceptional existence of the order in Russia.<sup>284</sup>

The initial structure of the VED changed in the period 1803-1813. Vil'na University's domination over the Western provinces revealed discrepancies in the VED's functioning, one of which was territorial. Located in the northern part of the Educational District, the University was not in a convenient position to administer this large region. Students from the southern parts had to travel a long way to reach the university. Consequently the highly regarded Kremenets (Krzemieniec) gymnasium (a lyceum since 1818) in Volhynia began to gradually transform itself into a significant cultural and educational centre. The gymnasium's curator was the energetic VED school inspector Tadeusz Czacki (1765-1813) – a historian and former member of the National Education Commission. Over time the Kremenets gymnasium evolved into an institution which closely resembled the structure of a university. In Czacki's view, the purpose of the Kremenets gymnasium was to educate the Belarusian and Ukrainian nobility. However, Czacki's aspirations collided with the monopolistic attitudes of Vil'na University. This rivalry did not however, evolve into an open conflict. According to Lukšienė's study, the exceptionally good standing of the VED and Czacki's highly developed understanding of Polish political goals prevented any fragmentation occurring between the northern and southern regions of the Educational District. Czacki's death in 1813 as well as changes in imperial educational policy in 1812 eliminated and resolved this tension.<sup>285</sup>

It is also worth mentioning that the Kremenets gymnasium was not the only institution which intended to undertake the education of the provincial

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<sup>282</sup> *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties istorijos bruožai (ligi Didžiosios Spalio social-istinės revoliucijos)* (Vilnius: 1983), pp. 86-103; Magdelena Karčiauskienė, *Pradinio švietimo raida Lietuvoje XIX a. antroje pusėje ir XX a. pradžioje* (Kaunas: 1989), pp. 3-4.

<sup>283</sup> S. V. Rozhdestvenskii, *Ocherki po istorii sistem narodnago prosveshcheniia v Rossii v XVIII – XIX vekakh* (St. Petersburg: 1912), vol. 1, pp. 627-641.

<sup>284</sup> Lukšienė, *Lietuvos švietimo istorijos bruožai*, pp. 31-32. From 1797 until the time of Alexander's reforms, education in the former GDL lands was supervised by the educational commission, which consisted of 12 members subordinated to the local governor. *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties istorijos bruožai*, p. 115.

<sup>285</sup> Lukšienė, *Lietuvos švietimo istorijos bruožai*, pp. 36-37; by the same author: *Demokratinė ugdymo mintis Lietuvoje*, pp. 125-127.

nobility. Among the many schools in the VED, the Belarusian nobility could choose another centre of education: the Polotsk Jesuit Academy.<sup>286</sup> Its short period of existence (from 1812 to 1820) did not prevent the Academy from growing rapidly. At the peak of its activities, the Academy had about 700 students. Liberal arts and natural sciences were taught there, with students and teachers being able to make use of a rich library, containing 40,000 volumes. The Academy also had its own print shop. As the name indicates, the school was subordinated to the Jesuit order and its last Superior General Tadeusz Brzozowski (1749-1820). Therefore, when the order was exiled in 1820 it resulted in the closure of the Academy. Some students were transferred to St. Petersburg, while the library was distributed among several schools. The Academy's building was given to the Polotsk Higher Piarist School.<sup>287</sup>

Maintaining the integrity of the VED was not an easy task, especially when its curator Prince Czartoryski was preoccupied with diplomatic work. Major European political events required Russia's participation on the international political stage. Nevertheless, the Prince never abandoned investigating possibilities for restoring the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.<sup>288</sup> Nominally, Czartoryski remained the curator of the district until 1819, although in practice he returned to VED matters only in 1816 after the Napoleonic Wars. During his absence the rector of Vil'na University was the acting supervisor of the district.

The changed political situation following the Napoleonic Wars resulted in gradual restraints being imposed on the activities of the Polish-oriented VED. The Russian authorities were not happy with the exclusive situation of the district, especially as it encompassed what were considered "Russian," i.e. the Belarusian and Ukrainian lands. The territorial integrity of the district was therefore dismantled. On September 23, 1818, the Kiev province was transferred to the Kharkov Educational District. Later, on October 31, 1824, the Vitebsk and Mogilev provinces were attached to St. Petersburg Educational District. During the reign of Nicholas I these latter provinces formed the Belarusian Educational District for some time (1829-1850). On January 12, 1831, Nicholas I signed a decree that transferred the Vitebsk and Minsk

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<sup>286</sup> Although the Academy was located in the VED territory, from its establishment in 1812 it enjoyed relative autonomy from Vil'na University's supervision. Jonas Matusas, *Lietuvių rusinimas per pradžios mokyklas* (Kaunas: 1937), pp. 13-14.

<sup>287</sup> Viacheslau Shalkevich, "Polatskaia Ezuitskaia Akademiia," in: *Entsyklapedyia Gistorii Belarusi* (Minsk: 1999), vol. 5, p. 531; Edwards, p. 69. As mentioned above, the Polotsk and Mogilev provinces were the first territories from the annexed GDL lands to go through extensive imperial integration reforms. However, even after the partitions education remained in the hands of the Roman Catholic monastic orders, predominantly the Jesuits. Catherine II supported education and subsequently opened more schools in both provinces. A. Beletskii, *Zaboty imperatritsy Ekateriny II o rasprostraneniі obrazovaniia v Polotskoi i Mogilevskoi guberniakh* (Vil'na: 1905).

<sup>288</sup> Grimsted, pp. 104-150. Also see correspondence between Alexander I and Prince Czartoryski in: *Besedy i chastnaia perezpiska mezhdu Imperatorom Aleksandrom I i kn. Adamom Chartorizhskim [...] (1801-1823)*.

provinces to the Belarusian Educational District, leaving the VED with only the Vil'na and Grodno provinces and the Belostok district.<sup>289</sup>

In 1824 Czartoryski resigned from his post as VED curator. Alexander replaced him with Novosil'tsev, who did not interfere significantly in the functioning of the district, although during his time stricter bureaucratic control was introduced. This structure remained in place until the 1830-1831 uprising.<sup>290</sup>

To summarise, the Vil'na Educational District during the period 1802-1832 may be regarded as an institution which partially preserved and helped to reproduce the traditional political and cultural identity of the PLC. Even later, after the closure of Vil'na University, students from the so-called "Polish provinces" (the term indicated the territories annexed from the GDL) managed to retain their ethno-political identity.<sup>291</sup> Territorially the educational district was solid only until 1818. After this date it was diminished, revealing the change in Alexander's and especially Nicholas' later policy towards the Western region.

It is interesting that the dismantling of the VED followed a peculiar pattern of provincial clustering as, for example, with the establishment of the Belarusian and Kiev Educational Districts (the latter formed a cluster of *Malorossiiskie* Ukrainian provinces). The Vil'na Educational District was reinstated in 1850 (after the abolition of the Belarusian ED). This time, however, the Russian authorities were responsible for its supervision, although schooling in the Polish language was allowed until the 1863-1864 uprising. After the uprising Russian became the primary language of education and the Vil'na Educational District was transformed into an instrument for the administration and promotion of the official policy of Russification.<sup>292</sup> However, in some cases, for example, with scientific, ethnographic, linguistic and other kinds of research, local schools and their teachers played a significant role in acquiring knowledge about the region, thus playing an indirect but nevertheless important role in the building of a local ethnic self-consciousness. The coordination of many of these projects came from the VED in cooperation with other scientific organisations, such as the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. This topic will be discussed in more detail later.

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<sup>289</sup> Lukšienė, *Lietuvos švietimo istorijos bruožai*, p. 37.

<sup>290</sup> Zawadzki, pp. 54-57; *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties istorijos bruožai*, pp. 116-117.

<sup>291</sup> Johannes Remy, *Higher Education and National Identity: Polish Student Activism in Russia 1832-1863* (Helsinki: 2000).

<sup>292</sup> Ivan P. Kornilov, "Vzgliad M. N. Muraveva na kul'turnyia zadachi Vilenskogo Uchebnogo Okruga," in: Ivan P. Kornilov, *Zadachi Russkogo prosveshcheniia v ego proshlom i nastoiashchem* (St. Petersburg: 1902), pp. 427-441; Matusas, pp. 60-143.

## 2.5. Towards administrative centralisation and the uniformity of the state (1825-1855)

The last major administrative-territorial reforms were implemented during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I. The Russian historian Alexander Kornilov has suggested that the Emperor's reign should be divided into three periods: 1826-1831 – the quasi-reformist, 1831-1848 – the conservative, and 1848-1855 – the reactionary periods.<sup>293</sup> The territorial reorganisation of the Empire took place in the early 1840s, when Nicolas I was preoccupied with the systematic unification of the state and its inhabitants. Internal imperial politics, as Kornilov's periodisation shows, can be described in quite negative terms, because of the oppressive tendency towards the non-Russian and non-Orthodox peoples. However, in terms of the evolution of science, especially geography and cartography, this period was marked by a rapid growth in professionalisation and a widening scope of research, which consequently enriched the knowledge about the Empire. Although politics and science were not always complementary they were mutually interrelated. Therefore, during the reign of Nicholas I, the territorial and administrative reforms reached a new level: besides becoming more political, they also involved a much higher degree of scientific input.

During the period immediately after the 1831 uprising the Western region began to lose its privileged status. The imperial authorities started to enforce stricter control, which was manifested in such policies as the closure of Vil'na University (1832), the abolition of the Lithuanian Statute (1840), the introduction of common imperial judicial institutions, and the replacement of the Polish language by Russian in official institutions. The Uniate (Greco-Catholic) Church was prohibited (1839), forcing tens of thousands of Belarusians and Ukrainians to "return" to the Russian Orthodox Church. Furthermore, the Western Committee, established in 1831 and attached to the Committee of Ministers, functioned as the special coordinator of Tsarist policy in the region. The Committee consisted of Nicholas' most trusted associates, among whom were Governors and Governors-Generals such as Prince Nikolai N. Khovanskii (1777-1837), Mikhail N. Muravev (1796-1866) and Dimitrii G. Bibikov (1792-1870).<sup>294</sup>

The imperial administrative-territorial system did not escape extensive reform. The lesser administrative units were made uniform by standardising their territories and inhabitants. The restructuring of the North Western region reflected a much sterner approach. The removal of special provincial status marked the beginning of the introduction of a uniform imperial space.

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<sup>293</sup> Kornilov, pp. 241-310.

<sup>294</sup> Thaden, pp. 122-123.



Figure 9. The administrative borders of Vil'na and Kovno provinces after the reforms of Nicholas I. Fragment from: Brockhaus & Efron, *Europäisches Russland* (1879)

The wide range of reforms in the Western provinces indicated Nicholas' aim towards the full unification and integration of the state. As a background to these events, the Tsar also considered the territorial division of certain provinces.<sup>295</sup> Hence, the Lithuanian Vil'na province was partitioned into the

<sup>295</sup> In a recent article the Russian historian Gorizontov analyses the plans for administrative reform that had been discussed during the 1830s. One of the suggestions was to restructure the imperial administrative division "from the periphery inwards, towards the centre." However, the authorities soon realised that differences between the border and inner Russian prov-

Vil'na and Kovno provinces during 1842-1843. In 1861, Afanas'ev explained that the division had been carried out because of the ethnic diversity of the province and also because it was located close to the imperial border.<sup>296</sup> Although, it is doubtful whether the ethnic factor (except, perhaps, in the case of the Poles, who in this context represented more of a political than an ethnic nation) played any great role in the new division, ethnic considerations were not completely absent.<sup>297</sup> It seems that the division resulted from the pragmatic desire for a more efficient administrative system. The new territorial revision to some extent indicated a return to the 1775 Reform, when the administrative-territorial division was carried out using statistical and geographical methods.<sup>298</sup>

In the initial drafts, the centre of the new administrative unit was to be Rossiény: the town at its geographical centre. However, Rossiény was not situated on any of the major trade routes, highways or waterways, which meant that raising the town's status to the level of a provincial centre required a great deal of finance. Therefore, Rossiény was eventually replaced by Kovno – already a fairly large city situated on two major rivers – the Viliia and the Neman. The downside of this location was its poor strategic position bordering the Avgustov and Vil'na provinces,<sup>299</sup> as well as its closeness to the imperial border with Prussia.<sup>300</sup> Nevertheless, on December 18, 1842, the Tsar signed a decree establishing the Kovno province;<sup>301</sup> the official opening ceremony was held on July 1, 1843. The new province consisted of Telshi, Shavli, Rossiény, Upita (later renamed Ponevezh), Novoaleksandrovsk, and Vilkomir districts and the larger part of Kovno *uezd* (Figure 8). The *uezdy* were initially divided into *stany*, each indexed numerically. In 1843, Kovno, Ponevezh, Shavli and Telshi *uezdy* consisted of four

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inces created many obstacles for such structural unification of the state. Gorizontov, "In Search of Internal Balance," pp. 179-198.

<sup>296</sup> D. Afanas'ev, *Kovenskaia guberniia. Materialy dlia geografii i statistiki Rossii sobrannye ofitserami general'nogo shtaba* (St. Petersburg: 1861), p. 23.

<sup>297</sup> Darius Staliūnas, "Kaip bandyta keisti Kauno gubernijos ribas," pp. 67-70. Related to this, interesting theoretical parallels from the earlier period can be found in Arsen'ev's book (1848), which discussed different possibilities for Russia's regional division.

<sup>298</sup> In 1848 the statistician Arsen'ev argued that the partition of Vil'na province had been based on territorial and demographic considerations. He also indicated that this province consisted of two historical territories: Samogitia and Lithuania. This factor facilitated the division and its territorial restructuring. Moreover, the central administration had to take into account the strategic value of the *guberniia*, which bordered another state: Prussia. Therefore, motivated by the desire to establish a more effective system of control, to make governance more efficient and to equate the density of inhabitants, Vil'na province was divided into two parts. This act also had implications for the functioning of the neighbouring provinces, because some of the *uezdy* from the Minsk and Grodno provinces were redistributed to compensate for Vil'na's losses. Arsen'ev, pp. 148-149.

<sup>299</sup> Avgustov *guberniia* existed from 1816 until 1866. After that it was renamed as Suvalki *guberniia* and remained as such until the German occupation in 1915.

<sup>300</sup> Afanas'ev, p. 23; *Kovenskaia guberniia za vremia 1843-1893* (Kovna, 1893), p. 3.

<sup>301</sup> "Ob otkrytiia Koveskoi gubernii" (December 18, 1842), PSZRI (1843), vol. 27, no. 16,347. By the same decree, Belostok district was dissolved and its territory attached to Grodno province.

*stany*, while Vilkomir, Novoaleksandrovsk and Rossieny consisted of five. The *stany* consisted of parishes whose number varied in each district.<sup>302</sup> After the abolition of serfdom in 1861 the structure of the *uezdy* division changed and various types of peasant community units were introduced, such as the *mirovoi uchastok*.<sup>303</sup>

During this process of adjustment to the size of the territories and to the number of *uezdy*, Vil'na province received the Lida district, which was detached from Grodno province and the Disna, and Vileika districts, which were transferred from the Minsk province. On the western side of the province, the Trakai district was also restored.<sup>304</sup> As a compensation for the loss of the Lida *uezd*, Grodno province received the city of Belostok and its district, which thereby lost its special autonomous status.<sup>305</sup>

Furthermore, the names of the provinces were changed. On August 18, 1840, Nicholas I received the draft of a project which mentioned the names of both the Lithuanian Vil'na and Lithuanian Grodno provinces. Dissatisfied, the Emperor crossed out the words "Lithuanian" and returned the draft for further correction. Soon afterwards he issued a resolution, which stated: "in future never write the names of the provinces in any other way than that to which they are entitled [to be written]."<sup>306</sup>

The policy of territorial restructuring and integration continued after the 1840s. The provinces that belonged to the Western region appeared in a number of different constellations, especially the Belarusian and Ukrainian provinces. Several Western and Russian provinces were also subsequently grouped into military and educational districts with the intention of reducing Polish cultural domination. At the beginning of the 1860s a strong anti-Polish campaign began, which brought Russification to both the Northern and Southern parts of the Western region. Consequently, new plans concerning the rearrangement of the territory appeared.<sup>307</sup> For example, from the beginning of the 1860s a number of high officials, notably the Governors-General Vladimir I. Nazimov (1855-1863) and Aleksandr L. Potapov (1868-1874), proposed changes in the territorial organisation of the North Western provinces. Governor-General Potapov considered either reshaping or even dismantling the Kovno province. It was suggested that this province should be partitioned and attached to the Vil'na and Courland provinces. However, Alexander II was not particularly convinced that this would improve the situation and subsequently reduce the area's level of "Polishness." Moreover, the downside of such a transformation was that once restructured, the

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<sup>302</sup> Afanas'ev, pp. 37-40.

<sup>303</sup> A. M. Sementovskii, *Pamiatnaia knizhka Vilenskogo General-Gubernatorstva na 1868 god* (St. Petersburg: 1868), pp. 1-2.

<sup>304</sup> *Kovenskaia guberniia*, pp. 1-19.

<sup>305</sup> Tarkhov, *Izmeneniia administrativno territorial'nogo deleniia*.

<sup>306</sup> Sementovskii, pp. 5-6.

<sup>307</sup> Leonid E. Gorizontov, *Paradoksy imperskoi politiki: poliaki v Rossii i russkie v Pol'she* (Moscow: 1999), pp. 58-59.

Polish element might be replaced by the Baltic German, which at that time was beginning to lose its privileged position.<sup>308</sup>

The final substantial territorial reorganisation occurred in 1912, when two provinces – Lublin and Sedlets – were separated from the Kingdom of Poland. They were conjoined into one – Khelm province, which was under the supervision of the General-Governor of the South Western provinces.<sup>309</sup>

While attempting to establish imperial uniformity, Nicholas I had a difficult task in appropriating such regions as the Western, which differed in ethnic, religious, linguistic, judicial and other forms from the Russian provinces proper. His predecessors had postponed addressing the problem and had even advocated a further fragmentation of the Empire. Nicholas I took steps to eliminate the differences he regarded as violating the already established system. Arguably, by attempting to unify the Empire in this way he nevertheless destabilised the Western region.

### 2.5.1. The land surveying of the North Western provinces in the 1820s-1850s

Nicholas' administrative-territorial reforms were directly dependant on the progress of the extensive land surveying that had started in 1764. During the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian surveyors and cartographers attained a high level of proficiency and became widely acknowledged for the quality of their work.

As mentioned above, after the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the establishment of the new provinces, the appointed governors were subsequently ordered to begin mapping their provinces. The General Land Survey started in the six North Western provinces at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and continued during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The land surveying in the Lithuanian Vil'na province began in 1810.<sup>310</sup> It was the local nobility who asked that the surveying offices be opened in order to solve local land conflicts. The 1783 rules compiled for the Polotsk and Mogilev provinces were the regulations used in this survey. Later, surveyors moved to the Lithuanian Grodno (1811), Minsk (1812) and Podolia (1814) provinces. Vil'na Univer-

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<sup>308</sup> Staliūnas, "Kaip bandyta keisti Kauno gubernijos ribas," pp. 70-79.

<sup>309</sup> The discussions about this territorial reorganization were carried out during the Third Russian State Duma. Geoffrey A. Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment: Government and Duma, 1907-1914* (Cambridge: 1973), pp. 116-149.

<sup>310</sup> Although the first geodetic works began as early as 1797 when Colonel Bernonvil' (?) measured the Lithuanian province and Colonel Baron Fabian Gotthard von Steinheil (1757-after 1823 – later Governor-General of Finland (1810-1824)) – Vyborg province (1798-1804). This was the initial stage in the carrying out of systematic geodetic measurements of the Russian state undertaken by the imperial military ([s.a.] "Zapiski voenno-topograficheskago depo," p. 47; Postnikov, "Finno-Russkie kontakty," pp. 46-47; by the same author: "Contact and Conflict: Russian Mapping of Finland," pp. 65-80).



sity assisted in these endeavours by supplying competent personnel and instruments.<sup>311</sup>

However, from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century military surveyors and geodesists were increasingly taking the leading role in surveying and mapping. In 1816 they started carrying out the process of triangulation in the Lithuanian Vil'na province. This was also the beginning of triangulation undertaken across the whole of European Russia. The supervisor and mastermind of the project was the Lieutenant General of the General Staff, Carl F. Tenner (1783-1859), who at that time was chief of the military survey corps. The surveying of the Lithuanian Vil'na province continued from 1816 until 1828. Subsequently, Tenner worked for many years surveying European Russia. He contributed greatly in many fields, most notably in the construction of "Struve's Geodetic (Meridian) Arc," named after F. G. W. Struve (1793-1864), a prominent astronomer and the founder and first director of the Pulkovo Observatory.<sup>312</sup>

The first trigonometric points in the eastern part of Vil'na province (by the lake and town of Drisviaty) were established on August 30, 1816. The triangulation proceeded slowly, mostly due to the unfavourable terrain. Large swamps covered the southern part of the *guberniia*, while the central part was flat, but covered by tall forests, which hindered visibility. Nevertheless, the triangulation of Vil'na province was completed in 1821.<sup>313</sup>

In parallel with the recording of trigonometric measurements, topographic mapping was performed between 1819 and 1828. The Vil'na Observatory also provided assistance while these extensive calculations were being made. Thus, while the Shavli–Polangen trigonometric line was being established a temporary observatory was built in Eidintaichi (northwest of Telshi) in 1823. The head of the Vil'na Observatory Piotr Sławiński (1794-1856) marked and confirmed the longitude of this location.<sup>314</sup>

During this ten-year period of surveying forty geodesists worked in the province. Working directly in the field, they produced 663 topographical (*mensula*) large-scale (1:21,000) maps. The field officers, including Tenner himself, thoroughly inspected the quality of these maps, which were later sent to the Cartographical Depot. The chief of the General Staff issued an instruction, ordering that these large-scale maps had to be reduced to a scale of 1:42,000, which resulted in a collection of 182 maps; then *special transportation maps* (scale 1:126,000) had to be created, depicting forests, fertile and infertile soil, meadows, sand and all roads (a set of 24 maps). Further,

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<sup>311</sup> Rudin, pp. 230-235.

<sup>312</sup> Afanas'ev, p. 27; Aloyzas Samas, *Žemėlapiai ir jų kūrėjai* (Vilnius: 1997), pp. 55-56; Rostislav I. Sossa, *Istoriia kartografuvannia teritorii Ukrainy, vid naidavnishikh chasiv do 1920 r.* (Kiev: 2000), pp. 78-80.

<sup>313</sup> Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, p. 94.

<sup>314</sup> Afanas'ev, p. 28; N. I. Nevskaia, "Vil'niusskaia observatoriia v seredine XIX veka," in: P. I. Valeskaln (ed.), *Iz istorii estestvoznania i tekhniki Pribaltiki* (Riga: 1970), vol. II (VIII), pp. 73-81; N. V. Eitmanavichene, S. K. Vaitekunas, "Geodezicheskie raboty litovskikh astronomov v XVIII – nachale XX veka," in: *Ibid.*, pp. 101-108; Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, p. 94.

they also had to compile *maps of the buildings* (scale 1:420,000) in each *uezd*, enumerating the buildings, indicating their ownership (private or state owned), when describing households. This set of maps also contained special notes on military winter quarters. Finally, the surveyors had to prepare extensive statistical descriptions of Vil'na province.<sup>315</sup>

The initial survey maps constituted the basis for the so-called “Schubert maps,” named after the first director of the Corps of Military Topographers, Theodor F. Schubert (1789-1865).<sup>316</sup> For a long time these maps were used exclusively as a military asset and could not be accessed by the wider public. However, between 1844 and 1855 separate sheets became available. The precision of the Schubert maps meant that they provided an excellent cartographic representation of the Empire.<sup>317</sup>

In 1829 the border between Courland and Vil'na provinces was verified by comparing it with the information in various historical sources. This resulted in several corrections being made, although generally the dividing line between the bordering provinces remained intact, almost identical to the historical state border between the GDL and the Duchy of Courland.

The trigonometric and geodetic measurements of Grodno province and Belostok district took place respectively between 1825 and 1828, and between 1843 and 1844. The results served as the basis for a further topographic survey. In 1828 Rokosovskii supervised the topographic work in Grodno province; later, in 1829-1832, it was taken over by Ozerskii, and the surveying was finished by Iakovlev, who was in charge of the geodesists from 1832 until 1838. The Belostok district was topographically mapped in 1844-1846 by a group of military topographers, headed by Colonel Bezkornilovich. The surveying of the Grodno province was thus, in Bobrovskii's description, a continuation of the measurement of Lithuania.<sup>318</sup>

At the same time a large project was undertaken in the Kingdom of Poland, where the entire territory was surveyed and mapped on a 1:126,000 scale. Following the plans and instructions prepared by the Russian General Staff, the Polish officers from the Quartermaster's Staff surveyed and mapped the Kingdom's territory from 1818 until the uprising in 1831. The political situation after the uprising complicated the possibility of any further cooperation; therefore during the years 1832-1843 Russian officers took over the surveying with the assistance of only a few Poles. The joint work of both groups resulted in the publication of a map of the Kingdom of Poland (1843). It also included a multi-volume commentary and a thematic atlas of the lands.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Afanas'ev, p. 29. Afanas'ev's book gives a statistical overview of Vil'na province based on the material collected by these surveyors.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid., p. 29; Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>317</sup> Sementovskii, p. 179.

<sup>318</sup> Bobrovskii, *Grodnenskaia guberniia*, p. 116-127.

<sup>319</sup> Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, pp. 87-94. During the earlier period these Polish-Russian surveyors also worked in the field of hydrographic surveying, for example, by linking the

In early 1845 a new imperial project was launched in the field of astronomy. A large chronometrical expedition was organised to establish the longitude of the cities Moscow and Warsaw in relation to the Pulkovo Observatory. For this purpose a temporary observatory was constructed in the Vil'na province (at Vilkomir), which was an intermediate point on the St. Petersburg–Warsaw line (another observatory was built in Valdai, on the St. Petersburg–Moscow line). Struve, the head of the Pulkovo Observatory, took personal charge of the project and stopped in Vilkomir on his way to Warsaw to inspect and open the observatory. The longitudes were verified by dispatching several specially prepared carriages with 28 chronometers.<sup>320</sup> Later, other astronomers measured the North Western provinces. In 1852 the prominent astronomer Kaspar Gottfried Schweizer (1816-1874), under the supervision of Struve, revised certain astronomical and geometric calculations, and measured the position of particular points.<sup>321</sup>

In Bobrovskii's opinion, these endeavours by the General Staff (as well as by other scientists) produced much valuable statistical material on the provinces, which resulted in a more precise understanding of the imperial space and a greater knowledge concerning the character of the region and the state in general. The maps presented the natural environment, in which different ethnic groups coexisted. In his conception, these geographical surroundings influenced the formation of the character of different peoples and affected their ways of life as well as their spirit.<sup>322</sup> Therefore, the process of surveying and producing maps contained much more than simply a representation of the terrain, locked within a cartographic legend. Bobrovskii talked about what was hidden behind the maps; and that was the people.

### *Concluding remarks*

From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards Russia began its inner construction. Peter I provided the impulse for the modernisation of the state, which was carried on by his successors, but it was Catherine II who lay the foundations for the systemic administrative-territorial and bureaucratic, i.e. the “vertical,” integration of the Empire. Although every subsequent emperor contributed to the improvement of this structure, according to his or her political strategy, the Russian state still continued to function based on its 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century territorial acquisitions, i.e. it was constructed from different non-Russian regions, such as the Western, the Caucasian or even Siberian.

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basins of the Neman and Vistula Rivers (1823). Supervised by Lieutenant-Colonel Reeze on the Russian side and Lieutenant-Colonel Pradzyński on the Polish side, this joint group provided the materials for the building of the Avgustov Canal. This waterway acted as a detour around Prussia, which at that time had introduced high custom duties, thus reducing access to the Baltic Sea for traders from Poland and the Russian provinces. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-120.

<sup>320</sup> Afanas'ev, p. 30; Fyodor A. Shibarov, “Studies in the History of Russian Cartography (part 2),” *Cartographica: Monograph 15* (Toronto, 1975), pp. 157-158.

<sup>321</sup> Sementovskii, p. 179.

<sup>322</sup> Bobrovskii, *Grodnenskaia guberniia*, p. 127.

The incongruity between territorial integration and regionalisation was especially visible in the case of the Western provinces. After the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth the former stable and historically developed administrative divisions were replaced by constantly changing imperial divisions. The policies pursued by Paul and Alexander I prevented the total unification of the annexed territories with the Empire, allowing them to continue with their previous political administrative customs: the non-Russian border provinces with special statuses remained detached not only in political projects during the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also in their actual organisation, social and cultural life. Hence, the Russian and non-Russian regions became distinct parts of the same state. Only with the ascension of Nicholas I was the special status of the non-Russian provinces abolished, and their territory restructured following common-imperial and scientific criteria.

Furthermore, as a consequence of the construction of the Russian state's space in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the establishment of a solid administrative-territorial network occurred. At the same time, the demarcation of the political borders was closely related to surveying and the progress in geographic and cartographic disciplines. Even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it is possible to distinguish two closely related threads – the scientific and the political – which determined the formation of Russian territory. The surveyors and explorers at that time were mostly civilians. However, the integration of the state required that a more dedicated and controlled social group should perform the spatial unification. Therefore, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these scientific fields were subject to the increasing involvement of military and state officials, and in this way geography gradually became a politicised endeavour of the imperial authorities.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the state's territory gradually acquired its inner structure and administration. The “vertical” integration proceeded without further complications. However, from the 1840s onwards Russia began the second stage of its unificatory process – the imperial “horizontal” homogenisation, i.e. turning Russia into the Russian state. This required better knowledge of the population, peoples, cultures, their distribution, etc. Therefore, the disciplines of geography and ethnography became of utmost importance, because they investigated and provided such information.

In the following chapter I shall examine one of the largest and most important organisations – the Imperial Russian Geographical Society – which was at the forefront of ethnographic expeditions during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and which was largely responsible for creating the image of the multi-ethnic Russian Empire.

### 3. The Ethnographical and Geographical Division of the Western Provinces

The administrative-territorial restructuring and regionalisation of the Russian Empire, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, was closely related to general scientific developments. Therefore, the demarcation of ethnic borders was interconnected not only with imperial politics and its organisation of the state's space, but also with the modernisation of Russian science during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Specifically, ethnic demarcation progressed in parallel with developments in the fields of geography, ethnography and cartography. These disciplines introduced a broad spectrum of studies of both Russian and non-Russian ethnicities within the Empire. Along with these first explorations a picture of the multi-ethnic composition of the Empire began to emerge. In acquiring linguistic, religious and statistical data, scholars were able to identify territories dominated by particular peoples. (It should be remembered that this statistical data was not collected according to any unified system; nor were the people who collected it specialists in this particular field. Therefore, the validity of Russian statistics before the all-imperial census of 1897 should be viewed rather critically.) *Language* or/and *religion* became the ultimate indicators for ethnic demarcation: the distinct linguistic and confessional territories were equated with ethnic areas.

Such a logical chain of reasoning was not difficult to establish. However, policies were usually hard to implement, as, for example, in the case of the ethno-geographical demarcation in the North Western part of the Russian Empire, where the lands were inhabited by a mix of Belarusian, Lithuanian, Polish, Jewish, German, Lithuanian Tatar and other ethnicities. The identification of this region's linguistic or ethnographic borders became an important and complex objective for the imperial authorities and as well as for individual scientists, particularly in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, in the Western provinces (former parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) the Polish political nation was struggling to assert its cultural, confessional, linguistic and political dominance.

Since the final partition of Poland-Lithuania, this cultural-political nation had become a chronic "headache" for the Russian rulers. The Poles remained loyal to their vanished state and nourished the idea of its restoration. Nicholas I worried about Polish plots and uprisings and his fears were well grounded: the 1830-1831 uprising in the former PLC territory and the distur-

bances all over Europe in 1848 were taken as a justification for the restrictive measures and anti-nationalist policies which were designed to preserve and increase the integrity of the Russian Empire.

Emperor Nicholas I took steps to contain the perceived Polish threat. The most visible aspect of this was political suppression, which manifested itself in numerous prohibitions and attempts at ethnic integration, as well as the introduction of a policy of Russification – a tool intended to create an imperial Russian (partly political and partly national) identity. There was also another parallel process, which attempted to rationalise and reduce the tension and which resulted from these official policies – scientific research. During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century scientists actively involved in the research of the Western provinces had discovered that what were commonly known as the “Polish provinces” were not Polish at all. Belarusians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians and other ethnic groups constituted the largest part of the population, although most of them were peasants, ruled by Polonised local elites.

A scientific approach with the use of systematic investigation was designed to cut the Gordian knot that constituted the ethnic mixture of the Western provinces. However, ethnic and ethnographic research was a difficult and lengthy task, while at the same time these investigations tended to stimulate the local national consciousness. In this way, the ethnographic research and demarcation of ethnic territories has to be perceived as a double-edged action, which not only brought knowledge to the imperial scientists and authorities, but also provided the local population with a new perception of the “self.” The question “which language, confession or ethnicity do you belong to?” – required, first of all, the understanding of the question and then reflection and self-identification. Therefore, these imperial scientists could be called to some extent the first national awakers. This will be expanded further later in this chapter.

Imperial Russian science in its modern form appeared in the 1840s. It revolved around the work carried out in various official and private scientific institutions. One of the most important and influential was the voluntary Imperial Russian Geographic Society (IRGS).

A brief overview will be presented below of the modernisation of Russian ethnographical science since Petrine times, and the growth of interest in the multinational Empire among its scientists. Later the establishment and activities of the IRGS will be analysed together with its research on the Western provinces, concerning Belarusian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian ethnic groups, their identification and mapping. At the same time the process of ethnographic research and ethnic mapping will be discussed within the general process of imperial “horizontal” unification, which, as mentioned earlier, manifested itself in the Western provinces through assimilatory practices, such as Russification and de-Polonisation.

Furthermore, the main aim here is to reveal how the ethnographical explorations of the lands that had belonged to the former Grand Duchy of Lithua-

nia singled out Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians; how the imperial scientists became interested in these ethnic groups; what was the relationship between the scientists and the politicians (were they supporting or contradicting each other with regard to the ethnic research and ethnic demarcation?); and, finally, what was the contribution of ethnographers to creating the “multi-ethnic empire of regions.”

### 3.1. The rise of Russian science and the first ethnic investigations (18<sup>th</sup> to the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century)

As discussed in the previous chapter, the modernisation and westernisation of Russia began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Peter the Great desired Russia to become a part of the Western world; he began reforms in many spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life. One of these was designed to increase Russia’s scientific potential. For this particular purpose Peter invited foreign scientists to Russia, appointing them to positions in the state apparatus and academic institutions. Their obligations were to conduct research and undertake teaching. Russian students were sent to Europe to study. These two processes therefore prepared the ground for modern Russian science.

Importing western science was intended to enable Russia to catch up with the practical and theoretical advancement that had been going on in Europe as well as ensure the modernisation of the state administration. Yet the greatest achievement was a fundamental reform of and subsequent change in the perception of the importance of education, which gradually gave rise to new social groups – such as the imperial intelligentsia and bureaucracy.<sup>323</sup>

This new social class was small and nationally incoherent; however it was very energetic and dedicated to the state. The first scientists invited to the Russian Empire came mostly from the German lands. Until the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Germans dominated the Russian Academy of Sciences.<sup>324</sup> However, the identity of 18<sup>th</sup>-century scientists was different from that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Those Germans, who had researched Russia since Petrine times, were mostly contract employees. Many of them decided to stay in Russia after their contracts expired and continued working, driven by the understanding that they were employed by the state, a state that did not force them to change their nationality, language, religion etc. Such a prospect allowed them to adapt easily to the new surroundings. Foreign scientists developed an attachment to the Empire and constructed an understanding of political identity in which nationality was not a significant issue, because

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<sup>323</sup> Alexandr Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii* (St. Petersburg: 1890), vol. 1, pp. 3; 51-57; 78-83.

<sup>324</sup> Here I do not distinguish the Baltic Germans from those Germans coming from the German lands proper.

reason, or a “rationalistic and utilitarian” approach to science, guided the scientific work of both Germans and Russians.<sup>325</sup>

There was also a qualitative difference between the perspectives of 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century scientists. Initially a scientist (surveyor, ethnographer, geographer, botanist etc.) was only an *observer*.<sup>326</sup> Encyclopaedically recording nature and human life, he generally did not interfere with society or try to change the environment – that was a function of the Tsar. Therefore, the enlightened monarch decided what was good or bad politically for the people. From the scientific point of view, the Russian Empire was in a state, so to speak, of *nosce te ipsum* – where the modernisation of the state and its administration required knowledge about many things. Even such prominent organisations as the IRGS had as one of its priorities the acquisition of all possible *collections* – a trait inherited from the 18<sup>th</sup>-century scientists.<sup>327</sup>

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian science was penetrated by new and different political and cultural ideologies, such as Pan-Slavism or nationalism. Scientists became gradually involved in governmental programmes, which aimed to introduce large-scale changes. The scientific bystanders and observers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century became direct participants through their role as state employees. What the state needed was *research* – a background (whether statistical, topographical or even ethnographical) for reforms and restructuring. The history of the IRGS provides an example of how Russians came to replace German scholars. This was not only a change of generations, or a change of scientific paradigms, but more fundamentally – it signalled the shift between two eras and two worlds. This will be discussed in more detail later.

The first scientific ethnographical research was undertaken during the reign of Peter the Great. In 1716 the imperial government contracted Daniel Gottlieb Messerschmidt (1685-1735), a physician from Danzig, so that he might undertake work in the service of the state. Some years later he was asked to lead a research expedition to Siberia, which he did during the period 1720-1727. Among the wide spectrum of investigations, Messerschmidt observed and recorded numerous Siberian ethnic groups, their languages,

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<sup>325</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 1, p. 113.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>327</sup> Since its establishment the IRGS had been very much involved in collecting all possible kinds of material that concerned the Russian Empire. This continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the First World War and beyond. Some saw it as the specificity of Russia's scientific approach: Eduard Vol'ter, ethnographer and linguist, who researched Lithuanian ethnicity in 1888 urged ethnographers to publish in Russian, because Russian ethnography's main goal was collecting and preserving information. “Predvaritel'nyi otchet E. A. Vol'tera o poezdakh ego po Litve i Zhmudi v 1884, 1885, 1886 i 1887 godakh,” *ARGO*, F. 49, op. 1, no. 26, p. 41; also: “Predvaritel'nyi otchet o poezdakh ego po Litve i Zhmudi v 1884, 1885, 1886 i 1887 godakh,” in: *Izvestiia IRGO* (1888), vol. 24, p. 414.



writings and folklore.<sup>328</sup> Prior to this expedition, the Ukrainian nobleman Grigoriï Novitskii (Hryhory Novytsky – ?-1720) published his *Kratkoe opisanie o narode ostyanskom* (1715), notes written during the Christianisation of the Ostiak<sup>329</sup> Siberian tribe, when he was in Siberian exile following banishment for his involvement in the Ukrainian hetman Ivan Mazepa's unsuccessful alliance with Sweden against Russia during the Great Northern War (1700-1721).<sup>330</sup>

In the following decades the scientific expeditions inside the Empire intensified. Although Germans predominated in the scientific fields, more and more educated Russians began to join them. The Germans Johann Gmelin (1709-1755), Gerhardt Müller (1705-1783), Georg Steller (1709-1746), the Dane Vitus Bering (1681-1741) and the Russians Stepan Krasheninnikov (1711-1755), Vasili Zuev (1754-1794) and Ivan Lepekhin (1740-1802) explored Siberia from the Urals to the Kamchatka peninsula. These expeditions were not restricted to a particular scientific discipline. Alongside zoology, botany, geographical surveying and other fields of study in the natural sciences, philological, ethnographical, anthropological, and other types of data were collected, recorded and transported back to the imperial centres.

From the time of Peter I the foremost goal was the geographical demarcation of the state. Parts of Russia were mapped slowly by topographical surveying and the compilation of maps and atlases as well as through the undertaking of scientific expeditions. Cartographic works greatly contributed to the expansion of the Russian worldview. The introverted, local world of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was opened up with the appearance of the first atlases of the Russian Empire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Networks of districts and provinces started to make up the imperial space.<sup>331</sup> Moreover, the Russian language began to change, adopting or inventing new scientific terminology.<sup>332</sup>

Consequently Russia started to perceive itself as a new geo-political entity located between Europe and Asia (in fact, covering both). Its borders were moved further east – to the Ural Mountains, expanding not only European Russia, but also Europe itself. This ideologically constructed division was incorporated into Russian geographical textbooks in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, where a bipartite state was pictured as overlapping two continents.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Dmitrii Anuchin, "O zadachakh Russkoi etnografii." *Etnograficheskoe Obozrenie* (1889) no. 1, p. 2; Pypin, vol. 1, pp. 83-84; vol. 4, pp. 219-220; S. A. Tokarev, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii (dooktiabrskii period)* (Moscow: 1966), pp. 78-79.

<sup>329</sup> *Ostiaki* – the old name for the present-day Finno-Ugric ethnic group *Khanty*.

<sup>330</sup> Tokarev, pp. 76-78.

<sup>331</sup> Postnikov, *Russia in Maps*, pp. 36-81.

<sup>332</sup> Pypin, vol. 1, pp. 94-112; 118-160.

<sup>333</sup> Mark Bassin, "Russia Between Europe and Asia: the Ideological Construction of Geographical Space," *Slavic Review* (Spring 1991) vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 1-17. Russia's discovery of itself mirrored the construction of perception and at the same time mapping of Eastern Europe in the West. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: the Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: 1994).

A major breakthrough occurred later during the reign of Alexander I when a new educational system was introduced, based on the schooling districts administered by universities. This successfully decentralised educational control and consequently increased the size of the Russian intelligentsia. Later, in the 1830s and 1840s, the intelligentsia contributed to the development of Russia's scientific potential. Many of them were alumni of the Orthodox seminaries.<sup>334</sup>

In comparing the systems of education in the reigns of Alexander I and Nicholas I, it may appear at first that in the latter period education experienced a general decline. The system of university education suffered from a lack of teachers, especially when many foreign professors were forced to leave. The "Russification" of imperial universities (it was expected that Russian scientists would fill the vacancies, however there were too few scientists of Russian origin) and attempts to create a "national science" resulted in a decrease in the general scientific level in Russia.<sup>335</sup> Moreover, while Alexander's liberal educational reforms opened up learning possibilities for people from different social estates, Nicholas's restrictions on higher education greatly reduced the access of the lower estates. It was not until the abolishment of serfdom (1861) and later educational reforms (1863) that the situation started to improve.

Nonetheless, Emperor Nicholas I demanded trained specialists to fill administrative places in the imperial administration. The Tsar favoured the natural sciences and applied professions, such as engineering, with which he was familiar. The bureaucracy grew steadily in both size and competence. Officials, scientists and military personnel who graduated during this time were imbued with a peculiar understanding of the *system*, which was mani-

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<sup>334</sup> Marc Raeff, "The Regime of Nicholas I," in: Marc Raeff, *Understanding Imperial Russia: State and Society in the Old Regime* (New York: 1984), pp. 150-153. The introduction of scientific disciplines into the curricula of the theological seminaries began during the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the already-mentioned Mikhail Speranskii, at that time instructor in physics and mathematics at the Neva Seminary, compiled a textbook on physics. Shortly afterwards, with the new educational reforms, theological seminaries were penetrated by scientific courses in medicine, anatomy, pharmaceuticals, physics, and so on. Many Russian spiritual leaders became proficient in various scientific fields, and later, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, they contributed to theoretical and practical research; they became valuable assistants all over the Empire. Alexander Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture: a History to 1860* (London: 1963), pp. 199-200.

<sup>335</sup> The most radical attempts to enforce "Russian science" occurred during Alexander's reign resulting in the so-called "Magnitski-era." Magnitski, who was the curator of Kazan' Educational District censored and dictated what, how, and who was allowed to teach. At this time a mixture of Orthodoxy and Science appeared as the preferable "national" tool against the West. Magnitski and Golitsyn, supported by the Tsar, were the main propagators of this direction. With the death of Alexander and the ascension of Nicholas, this hard-line theological-scientific mysticism was weakened, later to be replaced by Uvarov's formula of "Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality." Dovnar-Zapol'skii, pp. 60-84; Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, pp. 243-244; Flynn, pp. 84-112.

fested in the “conviction that knowledge of actual conditions in the country was essential for effective and progressive government.”<sup>336</sup>

However, Nicholas’ autocratic rule, suppression and control of many spheres of social life meant that the period from the 1830s to the mid 1850s was rather restrictive. The difficult situation for state education, where limitations were introduced for the lower estates, as were censorship and other measures of state control, greatly reduced the scope of mass education. The imperial authorities took special care to destroy the Vil’na Educational District and its centre – Vil’na University (closed in 1832).

Imperial institutions such as the Russian Academy of Sciences, Dorpat University and several others, headed by prominent scientists, continued bearing the torch of Russian science during these hard times of transformation. Many of the leading scholars at this time were Germans, such as: Karl von Baer,<sup>337</sup> Friedrich Struve<sup>338</sup> and Heinrich Lenz.<sup>339</sup>

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century numerous “learned societies” began to appear. As early as 1804 the Education Regulations allowed the imperial universities to sponsor voluntary learned societies. The first to appear were the *Society of Russian History and Antiquities* (1804), the *Society of Comparative Study of the Medical and Physical Sciences* (1805), and the *Society of Naturalists* (1805) all sponsored by Moscow University. Other Russian universities popularised sciences through associations that were set up between professionals and enthusiastic scientific amateurs. Not all of the learned societies met with the same fate: some disappeared, while others grew into highly respected and productive organisations.<sup>340</sup>

In this way these semi-official scientific organisations contributed substantially to the rise of a scientific worldview among educated Russian soci-

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<sup>336</sup> Raeff, “The Regime of Nicholas I,” p. 158; more on this, see: Geller, vol. 2, pp. 236-266.

<sup>337</sup> Karl Ernst von Baer (Karl Maksimovich Ber – 1792–1876) – academician of Baltic German origin, prominent scholar in the fields of embryology, zoology, geography, anthropology, and statistics.

<sup>338</sup> Friedrich Georg Wilhelm Struve (Vasili Iakovlevich Struve – 1793–1864) – a German born astronomer, academician, alumnus of the University of Dorpat, founder and director of Pulkovo Observatory.

<sup>339</sup> Heinrich Friedrich Emil Lenz (Emil’ Khristianovich Lents – 1804–1865) – academician, physicist, mathematician, explorer. His perfect knowledge of Russian often put him in the role of a mediator between Russian and German scientists, most of whom (like Baer) never learned the language. Lenz was described by some of his students as one of the most “profound and learned professors in St. Petersburg” in the 1840s.

<sup>340</sup> Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, pp. 195-196; 349. In the Western provinces several learned societies were established at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The *Vil’na Medical Society*, founded at Vil’na University, united medical doctors, which was one of the most stable layers of the intelligentsia. Even after the closure of the University in 1832 the Society managed to survive until 1940. Other organisations were the *Vil’na Archaeological Commission* and the *Museum of Antiquities*. Both were established in 1855 by Count Eustachy Tyszkiewicz (1814-1873) (Aleksandravičius, Kulakauskas, pp. 247-256; Jolita Mulevičiūtė, “Uždrausti paminklai: Vilniaus Senienų Muziejaus reorganizavimas ir jo padariniai,” *Lietuvos Istorijos Metraštis/The Year-Book of Lithuanian History*. 2003 (Vilnius: 2005), no.2, pp. 45-64). These organisations will be discussed later in this chapter.

ety. They were deeply involved in research throughout the Empire, which, undoubtedly, provided a strong basis for the future reforms, greatly expanding the understanding of *what* and *where* the Russian Empire was, and *who* inhabited its space.

Until the 1840s Russia's ethnography was basically an enterprise undertaken by separate individuals. It had no coherent or systematic research agenda; the collection of ethnic data was distributed among different institutions, such as the Russian Academy of Sciences and various universities.<sup>341</sup> However, the first steps towards a new understanding of ethnographical research had occurred earlier, especially with the rise and diversification of philology.

During the 1820s a new direction in philology and ethnography appeared – Slavic philology. Aleksandr Vostokov<sup>342</sup> published the first work in comparative linguistics of the Slavic languages called “Considerations on the Slavic Language” (*Rassuzhdenie o slavianskom iazyke* (1820)). Interest in the Slavs, their history, culture and language grew rapidly. But it was not until Pavel J. Šafařík published his prominent studies “Slavic Antiquities” (*Slovanské starožitnosti* (1837)) and “Slavic Ethnography” (*Slovanský národopis* (1842)) that Slavophiles and Pan-Slavists realised the full potential of this idea.<sup>343</sup> In the latter work Šafařík presented the first map of the Slavic peoples. The visualisation of this huge territory stretching from the Balkans in the south, to the White Sea in the north, from the lands of the Czechs in the west to the Volga River in the east was painted in one single colour. It indicated not only unity, but also importance and power.<sup>344</sup> Such a vision appealed to the Russian Pan-Slavists, who saw on the map that two thirds of the whole Slavic world belonged to the Russian Empire.<sup>345</sup> During the following decades this map, an academic ethno-linguistic picture, became an important tool in the hands of Russian nationalists.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> Anuchin, p. 6.

<sup>342</sup> Alexander von Ostenek (Aleksandr Khristoforovich Vostokov [son of Baron von Osten-Sacken] - (1781-1864)) – prominent Russian philologist of Baltic German origin.

<sup>343</sup> Louis Levine, “Pan-Slavism and European Politics,” *Political Science Quarterly* (December 1914), vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 664-686; Susanna Rabow-Edling, “The Political Significance of Cultural Nationalism: the Slavophiles and Their Notion of a Russian Enlightenment,” *Nationalities Papers* (June 2004), vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 441-456. Pypin tends to disagree about the influence of the Pan-Slavist movement in Russian society. He notes that around the 1840s educated Russians were not aware of the Slavic world. Only those involved in its research were better acquainted with the space of the Slavic territory. Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 2, p. 3.

<sup>344</sup> On Šafařík's map, see chapter 4.1.

<sup>345</sup> See the full map in: Pavel J. Šafařík, *Slovanský národopis*, (Prague: 1955). Also see Bodianskii's introduction to the Russian translation in Šafařík's *Slavianskoe narodopisanie* (Moscow: 1843), pp. ii-iv.

<sup>346</sup> The importation of the Pan-Slavist ideas into Russia occurred in the 1830s, when several young Russian scientists were sent to explore Slavs outside the Empire. Pan-Slavism was already present in the Central European lands. Soon these Russians adopted this perspective

A major turning point in scientific ethnographic research occurred after the establishment of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society (IRGS) in 1845, which included many prominent and enthusiastic scientists, explorers, and intelligentsia amongst its members. One of the sections of the IRGS was dedicated specifically to ethnography. Ethnographic research started to become a systematic and organised science.

### 3.2. The IRGS – its establishment, structure and function

The understanding of what constituted “Geography” changed with the development of the discipline. Geographic science at first comprised a wide spectrum of different fields, resulting in it being a combination of the natural sciences and humanities. Carl Ritter’s famous study *Die Erdkunde im Verhältnis zur Natur und zur Geschichte des Menschen*, a nineteen-volume masterpiece published during 1822-1859 had a great impact on the evolution of geography. It presented an “organic” understanding of geography in relation to the multiple factors that influence human social formation and habitation in a particular space.<sup>347</sup> The establishment of the Russian Geographic Society (from 1850 – the Imperial Russian Geographic Society) was influenced by the general conception of Geography that dominated at the time.

The members of the IRGS rarely became involved in theoretical discussions about the meaning of geography.<sup>348</sup> From its beginning in 1845 it was

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and brought it back to Russia. This “big-picture” of the Slavic world stimulated progress in Russian ethnography. Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 1, p. 31-32.

<sup>347</sup> Carl Ritter (1779-1859) – one of the most famous 19<sup>th</sup>-century German geographers, founder of the Berlin Geographic Society (1828), professor at the University of Berlin (from 1820). Ritter’s analysis of the interdependency of the geographical space and human habitation was fundamental to modern geography.

Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) and Carl Ritter were the two main German geographers of pre-Darwinian geography. Humboldt was praised for his distancing of geography from theological interpretations, but Ritter represented the opposite side. Although one of his basic arguments rested on the theologically driven presupposition that God created the Earth and that the Earth is the home of Man, his geographic theory included an understanding of the “living” picture of the Earth, i.e. presenting human life in its actual environment. “Man” and “Nature” would then constitute two core elements of Ritter’s theory – the *Zusammenhang*. He also tried to perceive the interplay of culture and nature, history and geography in a given space. Later geographers used Ritter’s conception of *Erdkunde* as an example of the first regional analysis and as marking the beginning of regional studies. Nevertheless, the closeness of his geography to theology contradicted positivist thought, making him somewhat less significant than Humboldt. Some of Ritter’s best-known followers were Arnold Henri Guyot (1807-1884) and Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873). David N. Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Oxford: 1998), pp. 139-142.

<sup>348</sup> The geographer and anthropologist Eduard Petri (1854-1899) was the first to publish a theoretical paper on geographical science in the Society’s periodical *Izvestiia IRGO*. Eduard Petri, “Zadachi nauchnoi geografii,” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1887), vol. 23, pp. 591-616.

designed as a *practical society*, whose priorities were fieldwork, expeditions, archival research and publications – everything that comprised Ritter’s *Erdkunde*. The first years of the Society’s existence were relatively successful due to its stable internal organisation and the appropriate distribution of work between its four scientific departments. The same organisational structure remained until 1930.

The main aim of the founders of the IRGS was to attract and unite people who were interested in research and wanted to understand the Russian Empire.<sup>349</sup> Moreover, the establishment of the Society coincided with the active period of the “generation of the 1840s” – the generation that matured politically during the reign of Nicholas I.<sup>350</sup> The Tsar benefited from these groups of scholars. He slowly began preparations for the abolition of serfdom and this objective required exhaustive knowledge of the social, economic and other conditions of the state. In this way, the IRGS received indirect support from the highest authorities to organise and begin studying the Empire in its multiple aspects, which subsequently brought science and politics even closer together.

The early work of the IRGS was supervised and guided by imperial German scholars, whereas Russian scientists became very active and productive in the 1860s. During the 1840s, however, the old generation of German scientists and explorers gradually began to retire from their posts, allowing the Russians to take over and continue the investigations. Such a course of events also reflected the changes taking place in ideological and cultural trends caused by the rise of the Slavophiles and the propagation of “official nationality.” Despite the political line of Russification, respect for these Germans remained, and shared research continued much to the benefit of the state.<sup>351</sup>

The first plans for the establishment of the Russian Geographic Society appeared in 1844, when Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich (Emperor Nicolas’ second son – 1827-1892) celebrated his seventeenth birthday. One of his tutors was vice-admiral and general-adjutant Friedrich Lütke, a prominent sea-traveller.<sup>352</sup> Together with the statistician and economic geographer

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<sup>349</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. xxi-xxii. Petr P. Semenov Tian’-Shanskii (1827-1914) – geographer, statistician and ethnographer. He was very much influenced by the works of Humboldt and Ritter. Later he translated parts of Ritter’s *Erdkunde* into Russian (the volumes on Asia published in 1850). Ritter introduced the notion of “comparative geography,” which Semenov followed, yet he rejected Ritter’s theological arguments and remained within the positivist framework. I.V. Kozlov, A.V. Kozlova, *Petr Petrovich Semenov Tian’-Shanskii* (Moscow: 1991), pp. 21-37.

<sup>350</sup> Raeff, “The Regime of Nicholas I,” pp. 147-171 *passim*.

<sup>351</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. xxii-xxiii.

<sup>352</sup> Friedrich Benjamin Lütke (Fiodor Petrovich Litke - 1797-1882) – admiral, famous Arctic explorer, circumnavigator, vice-president of IRGS (1845-1850; 1857-1871), 1864-1882 – president of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Konstantin Arsen'ev<sup>353</sup> – another tutor of the imperial children – Lütke proposed the establishment of a society under the patronage of the young Grand Duke.

The main goals of the IRGS were:

***“The collection and propagation, both inside and outside of Russia, of as much complete and credible information about our fatherland:***

1. From a **geographic** perspective, understanding everything that is related through the description of a place (*mestnost'*), the physical characteristics of a country, its natural features and so on.
2. From a **statistical** perspective, undertaking not only the collection of lifeless numbers, of not just quantitative statistics, but also descriptive or qualitative, that is, all measurable elements of common life.<sup>354</sup>
3. From an **ethnographical** perspective. This last point, means knowledge about different ethnicities (*plemia*) that live within the borders of our state, their physical, moral, societal and linguistic aspects, as they are now and also as they were in their previous state; these topics interest society:
  - In relation to the intensity with which the specific features of ethnicities (*narodnosti*) disappear. This brings the danger that important materials and facts, which may still be preserved at present, for the sake of the knowledge of our fatherland's history, within a few decades will be lost irretrievably.
  - Therefore, the significance of the matter is important to historians and anthropologists, as was also widely acknowledged and was the reason for the establishment of special ethnographical societies in Germany, France and England.
  - Finally, Russia provides the richest background for this kind of research and so little has been done so far. Although from the time of Empress Catherine II, knowledge about the state in geographical, physical, statistical and other terms has advanced enormously; yet the explorations of indigenous populations (*tuzemnykh plemen*) conducted by Pallas, Lepekhin and Georgi<sup>355</sup> in contrast did not progress very far. Elaborating this field, the Society will definitely achieve great respect from all lovers of education; equally it could be of benefit to the government, which often needs this kind of ethnographical data. (...)

Therefore, ***propagation in our fatherland, together with obtaining a profound geographic knowledge, a taste for and love of geography, statistics and ethnography*** – that will be the second goal of the Geographic Society.<sup>356</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Konstantin Ivanovich Arsen'ev (1789-1865) – professor of political-economic geography, one of the founders of modern statistics in Russia.

<sup>354</sup> Most of the programme resembled Ritter's ideas, especially in terms of its understanding of geography and statistics.

<sup>355</sup> Peter Simon Pallas (Petr-Simon Pallas – 1741-1811) – German zoologist, botanist, and traveller; Ivan Ivanovich Lepekhin (1740-1802) – Russian traveller and botanist; Johan Gottlieb Georgi (Iogann-Gotlib Georgi – 1729-1802) – German geographer and chemist.

<sup>356</sup> L.S. Berg, *Vsesoiuznoe geograficheskoe obshchestvo za sto let* (Moscow-Leningrad: 1946), pp. 33-34 [emphases in the text].

As can be seen, ethnographic research was considered to be one of the ultimate goals of the work of the IRGS. The high value put on ethnography was a result of the very successful and rich (in the sense of material obtained) expeditions undertaken by Middendorff.<sup>357</sup> It is believed that during a dinner held to honour Middendorff this idea was announced to the public.<sup>358</sup>

The core founders of the IRGS could be divided into four distinctive groups - *sea-explorers* (Krusenstern, Wrangel, Lütke and Riccord),<sup>359</sup> *academicians* (Baer, Struve, Helmersen, and Koeppen),<sup>360</sup> *military officers* of the General Staff (Berg, Vronchenko, Muravev)<sup>361</sup> and *other researchers* (Arsen'ev, Levshin, Chikhachev, Dal', Perovskii, Odoevskii and others).<sup>362</sup> All of them represented the most active spheres in Russian society in the mid-1840s.<sup>363</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> Alexander Theodor von Middendorff (Aleksandr Fiodorovich Midendorf – 1815-1894) – explorer of Baltic German origin, prominent zoologist. In 1843-1845 on behalf of the Russian Academy of Sciences he explored the Taimyr Peninsula, which was considered one of the most successful Russian expeditions carried out in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>358</sup> It is uncertain whose idea it was to establish the IRGS. According to one of the most prominent members of the Society, the vice-president Petr Semenov, the initiative came from admiral Lütke and professor Arsen'ev (Semenov, vol.1, p. 1; also Semenov, “Pamiati ego imperatorskogo vysochestva velikogo kniazia Konstantina Nikolaevicha,” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1892) vol. 28, p. iii; as well as: Ieronim I. Stebnitskii, “Petr Ivanovich Chikhachev,” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1891), vol. 27, part 2, p. 3). A differing version can be found in a collection of articles to celebrate two decades of the existence of the IRGS, where it was claimed that the mastermind behind the foundation was Baer (*Dvatsatiletie Imperatorskago Russkago Geograficheskago Obshchestva, 13 ianvaria 1871 goda* (St. Petersburg: 1872), p. 7).

<sup>359</sup> Adam Johann von Krusenstern (Ivan Fiodorovich Kruzenshtern – 1770-1846) – admiral, commander of the first Russian circumnavigation (1803-1806); Ferdinand von Wrangel (Ferdinand Petrovich Vrangl – 1797-1870) – baron, admiral, Arctic explorer, 1829-1835 – viceroy of Russian North American colonies; Petr Ivanovich Ricord (1776-1855) – sea-explorer, participant in the 1807-1809 circumnavigation.

<sup>360</sup> Karl Ernst von Baer (Karl Maksimovich Ber - 1792-1876) – biologist and a founding father of embryology; Georg von Helmersen (Georgii Petrovich Gel'mersen – 1803-1885) – prominent geologist, engineer; Peter Koeppen (Petr Ivanovich Kepen – 1793-1864) – statistician, geographer, Slavist.

<sup>361</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Berg (Fiodor Fiodorovich Berg – 1793-1874) – general field-marshal, explorer, propagator of sciences among Russia's military (introduced photo-cameras for cartographical work), 1863-1866 Governor of the Kingdom of Poland, participated in the suppressing of the 1863-1864 uprising; Mikhail Pavlovich Vronchenko (1801-1852) – translator, geodesist, cartographer; Mikhail Nikolaevich Muravev (1796-1866) – general, active propagator of Russianness in the Western provinces, 1850-1857 vice-president of the IRGS, 1863-1864 Governor-General of the North Western provinces with extended powers. Due to his fierce measures in suppressing the 1863-1864 uprising he was named “the hangman of Vil'na”).

<sup>362</sup> Aleksei Iraklievich Levshin (1799-1879) – statesman; Platon Aleksandrovich Chikhachev (1812-1892) – explorer and scientist; Vladimir Ivanovich Dal' (1801-1872) – prominent lexicographer, ethnographer, Slavist, linguist and folklorist; Vasilii Alekseevich Perovskii (1794-1857) – general-adjutant, explorer of Lake Aral, mastermind and participant in the annexation of the Khiva Khanate; Vladimir Fiodorovich Odoevskii (1803-1869) – prominent Russian philosopher, writer, music critic, philanthropist and pedagogue.

<sup>363</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 2-3; *Geograficheskoe Obshchestvo za 125 let* (Leningrad: 1970), p. 8. For biographical details, see: Berg, pp. 22-31.



The preliminary structure of the IRGS was established during one of its first sessions. It consisted of several parts: the Council and four scientific sections. During the following years the organisational structure of the IRGS changed slightly, adjusting according to the needs and possibilities of scientific research. The Council, which was responsible for the administrative and financial side of the Society, provided and distributed funding for expeditions and research and took care of the contacts with governmental institutions in search of additional support. The role of the president (who was the Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich), together with that of the vice-president carried considerable weight in dealings with the imperial bureaucracy. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was assigned to supervise the IRGS.

The Council and its main Sections carried out the most important work. The final constellation of sections was: the *Section of Mathematical Geography*, which covered the geodesic and cartographic fields, as well as being concerned with the identification of place coordinates according to astronomic measurements; the *Section of Physical Geography*, which undertook geological, hydrological, climatological, botanical, and zoological research and also dealt with any questions that did not fall into the remit of any other section; the *Statistical Section*, which carried out statistical research; and the *Ethnographic Section*, which explored not only anthropology in its narrow sense, but also the dialects, everyday life, customs and traditions of different ethnic groups, while placing priority on the Russian people. Each section was granted autonomy in its choice of research and the administration of its funds.<sup>364</sup>

As to ethnic research and ethnic demarcation, the main work was carried out in the Ethnographic Section. It collected ethnographical as well as statistical information that was used in the making of subsequent ethnic distinctions. Moreover, for several decades the IRGS had a monopoly in this field, and only in the 1860s, did other organisations start to become involved in ethnographic research. The following section presents the theoretical issues relating to ethnography and the construction of what may be called the “Russian” research perspective, which was closely connected to the political realities of the time. The theoretical shift among the IRGS ethnographers in the late 1840s predetermined the specifics of the ethnic research, which was especially visible when investigations of the non-Russian peoples were carried out. Against this background, the Russian ethnographers and geographers became interested in what were known as the Western provinces – the former lands of the PLC – and from the beginning of the 1860s the IRGS started to plan a large-scale and ambitious ethnographical-statistical expedition to this region.

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<sup>364</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 15-16; Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, p. 351.

### 3.3. The IRGS and ethnographical investigations of the Western provinces (1850s – 1860s)

#### 3.3.1. Change of paradigms in Russian ethnography (1845-1848)

From the mid-1840s, ethnography gradually evolved into a separate scientific discipline with its own methods and theories. Methodological and theoretical systematisation started in the first days of the Ethnographic Section (ES), highlighted by the rapid change in generations, where the aging Germans on one side were contrasted with young Russians on the other.<sup>365</sup>

The academician Baer was the first chairman of the Ethnographical Section. His personal interests related to comparative ethnography and anthropology, in its broadest definition, which meant the investigation of ethnic groups in their material and psychological perspectives. Baer, who could be partially placed within an 18<sup>th</sup>-century French encyclopaedist tradition, was concerned about the disappearing ethnic groups. In a speech delivered to the members of the ES (March 6, 1846), he stated that: “reserves for ethnographic work are decreasing every day because of the spread of education, which erases differences between the ethnic groups (*plemena*). Nationalities (*narody*) disappear and only their names remain. [...] Some ethnicities (*plemena*) are on the brink of extinction, such as, for example, the Livs and Krievings.”<sup>366</sup>

The head of the ES personally formulated and wrote instructions for the first ethnographic expedition, which took place during the summer of 1846. An academician of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, Andreas J. Sjögren (1794-1855), successfully carried out the assignment and members of the ES heard his report in March 1847.<sup>367</sup> This ethnographic expedition to Livonia (or Livland) investigated two almost completely assimilated ethnic groups – the Livs and Krievings. A secondary goal for Baer was to test his

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<sup>365</sup> For a deeper analysis, see: Wladimir Berelowitch, “Aux Origines de L’ethnographie Russe: la Société de Géographie dans les Années 1840-1850,” *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* (avril-septembre 1990), vol. XXXI (2-3), pp. 265-274; Nathaniel Knight, “Science, Empire, and Nationality: Ethnography in the Russian Geographical Society, 1845-1855,” in: Jane Burbank, David L. Ransel (eds.), *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire* (Bloomington: 1998), pp. 108-141.

<sup>366</sup> The 1846 speech, which was originally given in German, is partially reprinted in: Anuchin, “O Zadachakh Russkoi Etnografii,” p. 7. Special attention should be drawn to the usage of the terms *plemia* and *narod*. As historian Darius Staliūnas has pointed out, although *plemia* can be translated as *ethnicity* and *narod* as *nationality*, in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Russian parlance they both could have implied the same notion and be used interchangeably. Darius Staliūnas, “Nationality Statistics and Russian Politics in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Lithuanian Historical Studies* (2003), vol. 8, p. 96.

<sup>367</sup> Saulvedis Cimermanis, “The Livs of Svētiems *Pagasts* in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century,” *Pro Ethnologia 15* (Tartu: 2003), pp. 11-27.

theoretical programme in preparing an ethnographic expedition, which he meticulously elaborated and verified.

The success of the first expedition encouraged Baer to continue investigating small ethnic groups. He asked the IRGS Council to grant more funds for another expedition to research the Finno-Ugric population around St. Petersburg. However, his proposal was rejected because it was argued that the Society did not have sufficient funding at that time.<sup>368</sup>

In 1848, Baer, borrowing the French Egyptologist Jomard's idea, highlighted the importance of establishing a systematic ethnographic museum, which would visualise the everyday life of different ethnic groups. Visualising ethnographic material, according to Baer, would benefit Russian society in ways that no textual description could do.<sup>369</sup> The IRGS subsequently created a museum that existed until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was transferred to the Russian Academy of Sciences.<sup>370</sup> It was founded by the members of the Ethnographical Section in association with the *Moscow Natural Science Lovers Society*, which in 1867 organised a well-received, all-imperial ethnographic exposition. The artefacts from the exhibition became the core of the new museum.<sup>371</sup>

However, Baer's scientific endeavours and strategy for the ES soon collided with the perspectives of young Russian researchers, led by the prominent Slavist, historian, geographer, and writer Nikolai Nadezhdin (1804-1856).

The clash between Baer and Nadezhdin for the post of ES chairman was not dramatic, although, as many contemporaries and historians noted, it represented more than mere competition for the position. Baer had to resign in November 1848, although he continued working in the section. According to the wishes of the majority of IRGS members, the Council appointed a new leader of ethnographic research – Nadezhdin. In the first instance, Nadezhdin's victory meant a change in the scientific direction of the ES.

There was a significant shift in the understanding of the discipline, ethnography, and its relation to the Empire, nationality and religion. Baer had treated all the imperial ethnicities equally. As a naturalist and wide-ranging scientist, his interest concentrated on disappearing or unknown ethnic groups and tribes, a perspective that echoed the Enlightenment ideas at a time when Germans and Russians cooperated for the common good of the state. But by the 1840s the Empire was gradually turning into a *Russian* state.<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 37-38.

<sup>369</sup> 1848 speech partially reprinted in: Anuchin, p. 11.

<sup>370</sup> Berg, p. 148.

<sup>371</sup> Anuchin, p. 19.

<sup>372</sup> Soviet historiography tended not to differentiate between Baer's and Nadezhdin's perspectives. Instead, both were seen as belonging to the liberal-bourgeois trend, while the so-called opposition – the revolutionary-democratic theoretical line – appeared only in the 1850s–1860s. Tokarev, p. 267.

Nadezhdin's theoretical turn strengthened imperial politics through ethnography. The research into and propagation of Russianness became a semi-official prerogative for several decades. His notion of "critical ethnography," or a critical evaluation of material, meant in essence the cleansing of ethnographical data of "alien" influences. Only in this way could a "true" Russian culture be revealed.<sup>373</sup>

Therefore, Nadezhdin can be seen as an advocate of 19<sup>th</sup>-century ideologies: he followed closely Nicholas' I political line of "official nationality."<sup>374</sup> In 1848 Nadezhdin presented his views on the future of Russian ethnography within the ES. The stress was put on the *Russian*. He stated that "what precisely makes Russia, Russia – is the Russian man."<sup>375</sup> Within this perspective, Nadezhdin immediately changed the course of ethnographical research. The new framework was described as involving investigations of "the simple Russian man," covering his everyday life. For this purpose the Section prepared and circulated instructions all over the Empire, which drew attention to objects, habits, language specificities and so on.<sup>376</sup> In this way, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century observation and registration of facts and events instead became research in aid of politics.

The chosen respondents were educated people: priests, provincial intelligentsia and imperial officials. Some of the Orthodox clergy took this task very seriously. One of the most active participants in the research into Russianness was a former Greek-Catholic/Uniate priest, the Archbishop of the Lithuanian Orthodox province Iosif Semashko (1798-1869), who organised in 1848 a committee of local Orthodox (former Uniate) priests in order to establish connections with individuals who could assist in fulfilling this task. The result of Archbishop Iosif's activities was eight published ethnographical articles mostly dealing with life in the Lithuanian eparchy.<sup>377</sup>

These new methods activated not only nationalistic Russian ethnography but also affected historical research. Various cultural artefacts and historical materials became susceptible to ideological (re-)interpretations. General frames of where Russia was and what Russianness should be, gave a free hand to populists and pseudo-scientists. Most importantly politicised ethnography was a very powerful and convenient instrument in the hands of the imperial authorities in propagating an imperial Russian ideology. Eastern Slavs of the Russian Empire (Belarusians and Ukrainians) gradually became incorporated into the concept of the "official" Russians. As will be discussed

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<sup>373</sup> Anuchin, pp. 15-17; Tokarev, p. 271.

<sup>374</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the historian Aleksandr Pypin was rather suspicious about some of Nadezhdin's research trips, especially in 1845-1846, when he travelled as an ethnographer to the Austrian Empire visiting local Orthodox Old Believers. Many facts indicated that he might have been an imperial spy. Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 1, pp. 270-272.

<sup>375</sup> Anuchin, p. 13.

<sup>376</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 1, p. 267; Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 38-39.

<sup>377</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, p. 39.

later, the appropriation of Ukrainians and Belarusians and even non-Slavs, such as Lithuanians, had its basis in the general notion of “critical ethnography.” In general terms, a distorted official history and ethnography started to penetrate the Western provinces together with the discipline of modern ethnography. For this reason, it can be argued that “official ethnography” went hand-in-hand with the promotion of Russianness.<sup>378</sup> The difference between the two was that while the latter clearly represented the position of the authorities, the former was considered to be more “scientific,” hence more “objective.”

Nevertheless, a distinction (no matter how small) between the scientists and the political ideologists remained. The IRGS, as a voluntary organisation, was a shelter for both, as long as they researched the Empire according to scientific methods. It was a neutral arena, where people with different political attitudes could meet and contribute to the increasing body of knowledge about the state. One of the directions into which IRGS research stretched, was the Western provinces. From the late 1850s, statisticians and ethnographers as well as the imperial authorities gradually began to realise what kind of puzzle the western borderlands comprised.

Nadezhdin’s death in 1856 slowed down the ethnographic research on Russianness and the functioning of the Ethnographical Section in general. Izmail Sreznevskii (1812-1880), a famous professor of Slavic philology, took over the leadership of the Section, which he held from 1856 to 1860. It should be noted that the tendency within the IRGS was that the heads of the sections had a direct influence on the general course of scientific research. Indeed, Baer, Nadezhdin and Sreznevskii worked according to their own understanding of what was the most important object of Russian ethnography. As a result of the numerous intersections with other social sciences and humanities disciplines, ethnographic research was susceptible to various interdisciplinary interventions. This meant that Nadezhdin’s research into the “simple Russian man” was transformed into Sreznevskii’s historical-linguistic investigations of the Russian people.<sup>379</sup>

### 3.3.2. Focusing on the Western region

The vice-presidency of F. Lütke from 1857 to 1872, marked for ethnographers, as well as for statisticians the greatest expeditionary period. During this time the Western region was the focus of the IRGS scientists (Figure 9). Before the 1860s, this was commonly considered to be a Polish territory. This perspective came from the Poles themselves, who, since the Third Partition in 1795 had managed to transfer their perception of the Polish (in the

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<sup>378</sup> Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825-1855* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1961).

<sup>379</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 111-112.

sense of the Commonwealth) *geo-body*, to use the historian Winichakul's term, to the Russians.<sup>380</sup>

Prior to this, the Muscovites distinguished a tripartite construction of the GDL, which later became the Western provinces: "Lithuania" in the west (the Lithuanian and western Belarusian lands), "Belarus" in the east and "Cherkasy" (the Ukrainian territories) to the south. From this perspective, proper Russians inhabited only the Grand Duchy of Moscow.<sup>381</sup> After the partitions of the PLC the imperial bureaucratic-administrative perception of the annexed lands reverted to the former geo-political distinctions. Therefore, the four-component structure of the Commonwealth (which consisted of *the Crown* – approximately the ethnic Polish lands, *Lithuania* – roughly the present day Lithuania, *Belarus*, and *Rus'* – the Ukrainian lands) became the semi-official structure of the Western provinces.<sup>382</sup>

The name "Ukraine" in both Polish and Russian tradition meant the land on the border, or border territory, which did not necessarily indicate the lands of the Ukrainian ethnic group. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the imperial perspective fluctuated between the names of "Ukraine" and "Little Russia" (*Malorossiiia*), which also stood for the name of the ethnic group. Before the partitions of the PLC, the River Dnepr formed the border between Russian and Polish-Lithuanian Ukraine. After the annexation of the Commonwealth, the two names remained in use,<sup>383</sup> although the imperial nationalists favoured the title "Little Russia," which represented the historical belonging of the lands to the Russian realm.

The development of the names "Lithuania" and "Belarus" and their connotations evolved from former historical geo-political definitions into later ethnic identifications. The whole concept of historical Lithuania as a "Polish land" began to fade after the first Polish uprising of 1830-1831, when the imperial scholars and politicians noted and distinguished ethnic Lithuanians for the first time. The Belarusians had to wait for the second uprising (1863-1864) and the subsequent policy of de-Polonisation in the Western provinces.<sup>384</sup> Such acts of "distinguishing" can therefore be perceived as an acknowledgment of the active potential of these ethnic groups.

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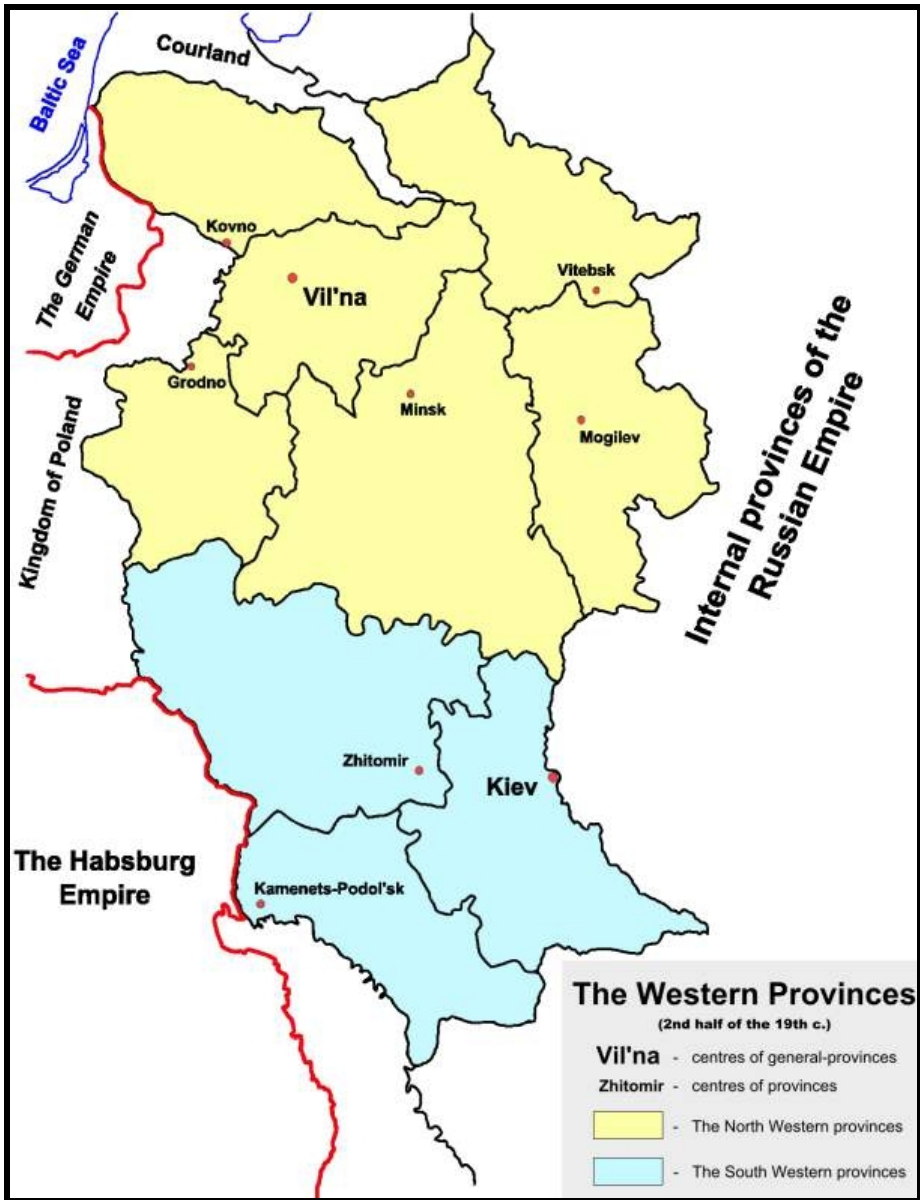
<sup>380</sup> In his book, which analyses the emergence of modern Siam, Winichakul coined the term *geo-body*, which, in his words, "describes the operations of the technology of the territoriality which created nationhood spatially. It emphasises the displacement of spatial knowledge which has in effect produced social institutions and practices that created nationhood." He continues: "the term of geo-body is used to signify [...] not merely space or territory. It is a component of the life of a nation." Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: a History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: 1994), pp. 16-17.

<sup>381</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, pp. 12-13.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16; 30.

<sup>383</sup> A. Tsarinnyi [Andrii Storozhenko], *Ukrainskoe dvizhenie. Kratkii istoricheskii ocherk, preimushchestvenno po lichnym vospominaniiam* (Berlin: 1925), pp. 19-26.

<sup>384</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, p. 3.



**Figure 10.** The Western provinces (second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century)

As discussed earlier, the concept of “Belarus” was usually limited to the Mogilev and Vitebsk provinces, incorporated into the Empire after the First Partition of the Commonwealth (1772). Later, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the spatial notions of “Belarus” and “Lithuania” were used in bureaucratic parlance, with clusters of Western provinces being termed “Lithuanian” (Vil’na, Kovno and Grodno) and “Belarusian” (Vitebsk and Mogilev). After 1831, however, both parts received a new title “West Rus-

sia.” The names, however, survived in scientific works, notably ethnography. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the geographical names had begun to represent ethnic territories. Yet “Belarus” was translated into other languages as “White *Russia*” or “White Ruthenia.”<sup>385</sup>

### 3.3.3. The ethnographical-statistical expedition to the Western provinces (1862-1870s)

Starting in the mid-1850s up until the 1870s, the imperial authorities and various scholars became aware that the South and North Western provinces (a distinction, which appeared in the official parlance only after 1863) and its population and culture was almost *terra incognita*. The IRGS saw a challenge as well as an opportunity to research the Western provinces from an ethnographical and statistical point of view. This concern derived partially from Koeppen’s ethnographical map of European Russia (1851), which did not distinguish the various Slavic ethnicities in this region.<sup>386</sup> Further, the abolition of serfdom in 1861 required more and better information about ethnicities, statistics, economics, culture and other facts, because the reform had a direct impact on the state’s governance.

The initial proposal to organise an ethnographical-statistical expedition came before the ES in 1862. Vladimir P. Bezobrazov (1828-1889) and Nikolai I. Kostomarov (1817-1885) highlighted the importance of researching the ethnic territories of the Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians. After various discussions, the ES decided to organise a special ethnographical-statistical expedition.<sup>387</sup>

Kostomarov sympathised with the Ukrainophiles and they in turn classified him as a mild Russian Ukrainophile.<sup>388</sup> His involvement in the Ukrainian Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood (1847) and his later activities in the South Western section of the Geographical Society in Kiev indicated that the goals of the expedition might have been twofold. The imperial scientists and authorities would benefit from the results, while at the same time the Ukrainian nationalists would also receive indirect official support in the strengthening of their self-consciousness.

Bezobrazov also expected that the research would reveal inter-ethnic *differences*. The IRGS also supported this position, because “this direction [investigation of European Russia], raised by the present situation, requires as

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<sup>385</sup> Nicholas P. Vakar, “The Name ‘White Russia,’” *American Slavic and East European Review* (October 1949), vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 210-211.

<sup>386</sup> On Koeppen’s map see chapter 4.2.

<sup>387</sup> Dimitrii Dovgiallo, “K istorii Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1910), vol. 1, p. 12; *Geograficheskoe Obschestvo za 125 let*, p. 195.

<sup>388</sup> Alexei Miller, *The Ukrainian Question: The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Budapest, New York: 2003), pp. 155-156.



much as possible, a *concentration on ourselves* and will not be futile for science.”<sup>389</sup>

While preparing for the expedition, the IRGS approached the Minister of National Education Aleksandr Golovnin (1821-1886) to mediate between the Society and the authorities in obtaining permission. The Minister subsequently consulted the Emperor asking for his official approval. Alexander II issued a decree (September 6, 1862) assigning 10,000 roubles from Ministry of National Education funds for the proposed research. The decree specified that the scholars were to analyse the inhabitants according to their nationality, confessions, social class and occupations.<sup>390</sup>

The IRGS Council established a special commission for the preparation and coordination of the expedition. The commission gave its opinion on the goals, itinerary, duration, and composition of the expedition. The Ethnography and Statistics sections prepared joint programmes and formulated specific aims for the investigation. The general guidelines for the composition of the programmes were: the research into an ethnic group, its dialects, customs, manners; its size; the demarcation of its ethnographic borders; and the investigation of the group’s economic well-being. Territorially, the expedition covered nine provinces: the *Belarusian* (Vitebsk, Mogilev, Minsk), the *Lithuanian* (Vil’na, Kovno, Grodno), and the *Ukrainian* (Kiev, Volhynia, Podolia). Its duration was to be one year and afterwards it would immediately analyse the results. In addition, great attention was paid to the choice participants in the expedition. They had to be adequately prepared to undertake these tasks. The commission stated that three research leaders would be sufficient. These were: a) an ethnographer-philologist to research ethnic distribution, b) an ethnographer, for the investigation of confessional differences, and c) a statistician, for the evaluation of the statistical-economical aspect of the inhabitants. However, the size of the territory to be covered would have been too large for the three researchers alone; therefore another four specialists were assigned to work in each of the province groups. Their task was to collect all possible statistical data from the local institutions and organisations. The task of the research leaders was to obtain new data, by doing fieldwork through direct interaction with the ethnic groups. The commission noted that the personal experience of the research leaders should be high; they had to be professionals in their own fields, whereas the auxiliary staff – the so-called “specialists” – needed only to have a basic knowledge and understanding of how to collect and process statistical data.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> “Etnograficheskaia i statisticheskaia ekspeditsiia,” *Zapiski IRGO* (1863), vol. 1, p. 39 [emphasis mine – V. P.].

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38; Semenov, vol. 1, p. 375.

<sup>391</sup> “Zhurnal soedenennogo zasedaniia otdelov Statistiki i Etnografii, po snariazheniiu ekspeditsii v Zapadnyi kraj” (January 19, 1867), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1867), vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 91-92.

Finally, a central question was formulated: why were some dominant ethnic groups in the Western provinces less economically advanced than others? It was expected that the answer to this question would provide a deeper insight not only for scientists, but also for the imperial authorities, which would subsequently take steps in resolving this ethnic economic imbalance.<sup>392</sup>

In this way the IRGS expedition became directly involved in analysing the problems of the post-reform period. The Western provinces were not like the Siberian lands. The economic and cultural level here was higher and western influence was greater. The difference from previous attempts was that the ethno-confessional factor now assumed increasing significance in the criteria of spatial differentiation. The IRGS ethnographical-statistical expedition was one of the most graphic examples of a combined scientific and political attempt at appropriation of the non-Russian region. However, it does not mean that politics and science were strongly integrated. In fact, imperial bureaucrats and the local administration often refused to help researchers, which indicated not just ignorance, but also the existing dividing line between the two.

The organising commission succeeded in overcoming the political obstacles. However, it realised that the scale of the tasks would require additional funding. The funds they had barely covered travel expenses. Therefore the organisers decided to appeal to the Minister of National Education asking whether the researchers who were directly involved in the investigation could continue to receive their salaries. The Minister was also asked for additional funds in order to publish the results, and funding was granted.

After deciding on the expedition's structure, the organisers began searching for the participants. The research leaders also formulated the details of their programmes and decided on the division of their work.

The Ethnography Section, headed by Nikolai Kalachev (1819-1885), and the Statistics Section, headed by Evgenii Lamanskii (1825-1902), searched for participants for the expedition. Two IRGS members were recruited for the ethnographic and religious investigation. The ethnographical research was assigned to Alexander Hilferding (1831-1872), while the confessional distribution of the Western provinces was left to Mikhail O. Koialovich (1828-1891). The statistician Arthur von Buschen (1831-1876) agreed to carry out the statistical tasks, which he would perform without using any assistants. This saved some money and the commission decided to employ the historian Petr K. Shchebal'skii (1810-1886), who had proposed a plan for the historical investigation of the Western provinces. The organisers also

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<sup>392</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 376-377.

expected to receive voluntary support from the local members of the IRGS.<sup>393</sup>

Hilferding insisted that the Lithuanians, the Belarusians and the Ukrainians had to be researched in three separate operations. The Lithuanians were expected to present the greatest challenge, because research on this ethnic group was still in its pioneer stage. Therefore, the first task for Hilferding was to familiarise himself with the Lithuanian language. He then had to delimit the Lithuanians' ethnographic borders, especially the eastern one which had been presented differently by every previous investigator. Hilferding envisioned the same plan of research for the Belarusians, although the main task here was the identification of local dialects, their spread and change. The Ukrainians presented the least difficulties, due to an already active local intelligentsia and substantial previous research. Still, in Hilferding's opinion, travelling through Kiev, Volhynia and Podolia provinces would reveal the Ukrainian distinctiveness from the other ethnic groups in the Western region. The specifics of data collection in his plans were very circumstantial: the researcher was to improvise depending on the situation.<sup>394</sup>

Koialovich explained that due to the multi-confessional situation and the short duration of the expedition, he had decided to limit the scope of his research to investigate only the Roman Catholic (*latinskaia*) and Orthodox confessions. Yet, in the more detailed presentation of his plan, he observed that it was also necessary to gather information on the remnants of heathen religions among the Belarusians, Ukrainians and Samogitians (*Zhmud*); to explore local Christian life, especially the function of religious fraternities; and to look into the influence of the respective churches among the Orthodox and Catholic populations. The last question touched on issues such as the relations between the local clergy and the peasantry, the religious education of the common folk, and how neighbours with different confessions were living alongside one another. Koialovich planned to put all his results on a map.<sup>395</sup>

The expedition was about to start when the uprising broke out (1863-1864) and the whole North Western region became a military zone. A Governor-General with extended powers, the former IRGS vice-president (1850-1857) Mikhail N. Muravev, was assigned to administer the North Western provinces and the expedition had to be postponed.

After the uprising, the harsh political situation in the Western provinces resulted in qualitative changes in official attitudes toward the territory and its inhabitants. The Empire began to implement a series of policies, which

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<sup>393</sup> "Etnograficheskaia i statisticheskaia ekspeditsiia," pp. 36-37; Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 378-379.

<sup>394</sup> "Zhurnal soedenennogo zasedaniia" (January 19, 1867), p. 94.

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

aimed at de-Polonising the region.<sup>396</sup> The inhabitants of the lands were repressed and their subjugation was intended to result in conformity. Imperial bureaucrats who did not care much about the details of the region undertook this process of de-nationalisation.

The policy of Russification was, perhaps, the most obvious example of imperial politics in the Western region.<sup>397</sup> It represented the movement of imperial policy into the cultural sphere and everyday life of the people in the borderlands. The prohibition on printing in the Latin script (1865-1904) interrupted the development of Lithuanian writings. The linguist Baudouin de Courtenay (1845-1929) mentions a symptomatic episode, which illustrates well how the politicians abused science. Around 1863 the above mentioned linguist Hilferding proposed a common Cyrillic alphabet for all Slavs. For general interest purposes he wanted several Lithuanian-language texts to be transliterated and published in Cyrillic, so that Russian philologists could familiarise themselves with the language. However, Secretary of State Miliutin transformed Hilferding's philological interest into a political instrument. Eventually the idea was passed to Muravev and he used it for the Russification and cultural integration of the North Western provinces. The ban on publications in the Latin script and the transliteration into Cyrillic lasted for forty years, until 1904, although Lithuanians managed to publish some works in Prussia and the United States and then smuggle them into the country. The prohibition on the Latin script, according to Courtenay, was not intended to punish the Lithuanians for their participation in the uprising. Rather, the intention of the authorities followed the principle *divide et im-*

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<sup>396</sup> For greater insights, see: Theodore R. Weeks, "Defining Us and Them: Poles and Russians in the 'Western Provinces,' 1863-1914," *Slavic Review* (Spring 1994), vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 26-40; Witold Rodkiewicz, *Russian Nationality Policy in the Western Provinces of the Empire (1863-1905)* (Lublin: 1998); Darius Staliūnas, "'The Pole' in the Policy of the Russian Government: Semantics and Praxis in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *Lithuanian Historical Studies* (2000), no. 5, pp. 45-67; Mikhail Dolbilov, "Kul'turnaia idioma vozrozhdeniia Rossii kak faktor imperskoi politiki v Severo-Zapadnom krae v 1863-1865 gg.," *Ab Imperio* (2001), no. 1-2, pp. 227-268; also: "The Stereotype of the Pole in Imperial Policy: the 'Depolonization' of the Northwestern Region in the 1860s," *Russian Studies in History* (Fall 2005), vol. 44, no. 2, pp. 44-88.

<sup>397</sup> The question of Russification remains a broad and complicated subject of discussion. For different perspectives and arguments, see: Darius Staliūnas, "Rusifikacijos samprata XIX a. Lietuvos istorijoje: istoriografija, metodologija, faktografija," *Lietuvos Istorijos Metraštis/The Year-Book of Lithuanian History* (2002), no. 2, pp. 63-72; by the same author: "Termino 'Rusinimas' prasmės istorija (XIX a. 7-tas dešimtmetis)," *Lituanistica* (2006), vol. 67, no. 3, pp. 24-37; Mikhail Dolbilov, "Russification and the Bureaucratic Mind in the Russian Empire's Northwestern Region in the 1860s," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* (Spring 2004), vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 245-271; Andreas Kappeler, "The Ambiguities of Russification," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* (Spring 2004), vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 291-297; Alexei Miller, "Rusifikatsii: klassifitsirovat' i poniat'," *Ab Imperio*, no. 2 (2002) (online); by the same author: "Rusifikatsiia ili rusifikatsii?" in: Aleksei Miller, *Imperii Romanovykh i natsionalizm. Esse po metodologii istoricheskogo issledovaniia* (Moscow: 2006), pp. 54-77.

pera, i.e. it was an attempt to separate the Lithuanians from Polish cultural influence and attach them to the Empire.<sup>398</sup>

The changing policy of the imperial authorities towards the Western provinces shows that their attitude can be described as one of general *confusion*.<sup>399</sup> More substantial discussions about the territories and inhabitants had appeared several years earlier, during the investigations carried out by the officers of the Russian Military Staff, in the late 1850s and early 1860s. These results were published in the series entitled “Materials for the Geography and Statistics of Russia” (*Materialy dlia Geografii i Statistiki Rossii*). Over twenty volumes on the provinces of the Russian Empire appeared during the first half of the 1860s.<sup>400</sup> Moreover, the military published several studies and maps covering religious and ethnic distribution in the North Western provinces.<sup>401</sup> These were a mixture of historical, ethnical, statistical, linguistic, confessional and other data, which showed not only the specificity of the region, but also the difficulties that researchers confronted in encountering such a heterogeneous space and population.

The postponement of the ethnographical-statistical expedition temporarily diverted the ES plans. In 1863, Minister of National Education Golovnin contacted the IRGS vice-president Lütke and asked him to prepare a new ethnographic map of the Slavic ethnicities based on the maps of Šafařík and Koeppen. The map had to depict the borders of the redistributed Slavic population and, since it would cover the whole of Eastern and Central Europe, also include new data obtained from the Russian consuls residing in

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<sup>398</sup> For further details see: William R. Schmalstieg, “Baudouin de Courtenay’s Contribution to Lithuanian Linguistics,” *Lituanus: Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences* (Spring 1995), vol. 41, no. 1 (online). Hilferding’s perspective was strongly influenced by the Slavophile ideology. He was a proponent of de-Polonisation of the region, yet at the same time a proponent of Lithuanian cultural development (actually, conservation), which was more of a political and scientific endeavour. For more, see: Vincas Trumpa, “Hilferdingas ir tolimos paralelės,” in: Vincas Trumpa, *Lietuva XIX-tame amžiuje* (Chicago: 1989), pp. 208-215; Grigorijus Potašenko, “Aleksandras Hilferdingas. Slavofilai. Lietuva,” in: *Lietuvių Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos – LAIS* (Vilnius: 1996), vol. 8, pp. 224-238; Henryk Głębocki, “Aleksandras Hilferdingas ir slavofilų Rusijos imperijos vakarinių pakraščių tautų kultūrinio atgimimo koncepcija,” in: Dariusz Staliūnas (ed.), *Raidžių draudimo metai* (Vilnius: 2004), pp. 45-78.

<sup>399</sup> In 1864, in the *Zapiski IRGO*, somewhat unclear statements appeared concerning the Western borderlands. The IRGS scientists thought that they knew the region based on their general understanding of it, i.e. without any deeper research of the ethnic situation. Yet, arguing with the Polish writers, who presented this region to be within the Polish cultural tradition, the Russian scholars, while disagreeing, admitted that detailed investigation was necessary (“Etnograficheskie izsledovaniia Zapadnago kraia,” *Zapiski IRGO* (1864), book 1, pp. 118-119). In this way, not being able to prove or disapprove the Polish claims, the only way to verify who was right was through the collection of the empirical material and by undertaking an extensive scientific expedition. The results had to prove the “Russianness” of these lands.

<sup>400</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 2, pp. 305-306. The Lithuanian inhabited territories were covered in the following volumes: D. Afanasiev, *Kovenskaia guberniia* (St. Petersburg: 1861); Pavel Bobrovskii, *Grodzenskaia guberniia* (St. Petersburg: 1863), vols. 1-2; A. Kordova, *Vilenskaia guberniia* (St. Petersburg: 1861).

<sup>401</sup> For further discussion on cartography, see chapter 4.3.

the Ottoman Empire. Siberia and the Caucasus were omitted due to a lack of data. The commission also decided that this publication should be designed as an atlas consisting of one general and several small-scale maps depicting particularly interesting ethnic distributions.

Šafařík's and Koeppen's earlier ethnographical maps were far from perfect. The first map was too general and based on unreliable data. It not only depicted an incorrect distribution of the Slavic population, but, as Semenov pointed out, even misled its readers. For instance, Šafařík's map did not present any Polish inhabitants in the Belostok region and separated the Novgorod district inhabitants from the Russians in a separate Slavic tribe (Figure 13). In Koeppen's map, on the other hand, the Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians were not separated (Figure 15).<sup>402</sup>

When the preparations for the new ethnographic map began, the core ethno-linguistic group became the Slavs. The territory to be investigated was: 1) the Slavic lands outside the Russian Empire; 2) the territories of the Russian Empire dominated by the Great Russians (*velikorossy*); and 3) the Western provinces dominated by other Slav ethnicities.

The first task was relatively simple, because most of the data was already available. Additional material was taken from the new research and also obtained from the imperial consuls and embassies. The northern, central and eastern parts of the Empire – the second region – were easily researched because of the predominantly Russian population and the exactness of Koeppen's map (the smaller ethnic groups were ignored). The greatest problems occurred in the North Western and South Western provinces. Further investigations were halted due to the unrest in the region.

There were also problems regarding the reliability of the empirical material. The previous use of parish statistics provided by local priests was considered inadequate. The advance of ethnography and scientific research in general required independent verification of the data provided by the priests. Scholars realised that the objectivity of their informants was often compromised by their biased position regarding the size of their parish, their ideological points of view or through simple ignorance. Thus, for the verification of the ethnic data obtained from local informants, ethnographers started demanding examples of the local language. Linguists could then subsequently determine the relevance of the information. However, the impossibility in obtaining new data for verification due to the unrest in the region halted the project.<sup>403</sup>

In February 1865, two years after the suppression of the Polish uprising, vice-president Lütke and the Section of Ethnography returned to their initial plan for an ethnographical-statistical expedition. They asked the Minister of Internal Affairs Petr A. Valuev (1814-1890) to approve the expedition.

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<sup>402</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, p. 380.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid., pp. 381-382.

However, they received a rejection, being told that the situation in the provinces was not stable enough. In the summer of 1866, the IRGS received a note from the new Governor-General of the North Western provinces Konstantin P. Kaufmann (1818-1882) expressing his wish for the Geographical Society to begin its expedition. This time Valuev did not raise any objections and the ethnographers and statisticians resumed preparations. At the same time the head of the Vil'na Educational District Ivan P. Kornilov<sup>404</sup> began corresponding with the vice-president of the IRGS about the possibility of establishing a North Western Section of the IRGS in Vil'na, which was opened in 1867.<sup>405</sup>

A new organisational committee was convened. It consisted of the heads of the IRGS sections, and also of specialists: geographer and statistician Aleksandr A. Artem'ev (1820-1874), writer Pavel O. Bobrovskii (1832-1905), statistician von Buschen, linguist Hilferding, orientalist Vasilii V. Grigorev (1816-1881), historian Koialovich, writer Aleksei I. Levshin (1799-1879), statistician Semenov, writer Sergei P. Shchepkin (1824-1898), and statistician Iulii E. Ianson (1835-1892). The chairperson was Semenov.<sup>406</sup> The situation, however, had changed radically since 1863. None of the previously appointed members were willing to participate any longer. The ES suggested replacing Hilferding and Koialovich with Dimitri Ilovaiskii (1832-1905) for the research to be conducted on the Belarusians, Russians and Ukrainians, and the Latvian-born folklorist and publicist Krišjānis Barons (1835-1923) to undertake research on the Latvians. Barons declined the offer for personal reasons, while Ilovaiskii accepted the proposal only partially, refusing to be responsible for the ethnographic research of the whole Western region. Finally, the ES chose Sergei Maksimov (1831-1901), an already prominent ethnographer, to investigate the Belarusians. The statisticians replaced von Buschen with Nikolai Dubenski (1822-1892), who at that time was head of the Mogilev Statistical Committee.<sup>407</sup>

The committee found that the original plans needed to be revised. The ethnographic part of the expedition had to be given priority over the statistical, thus setting as the main goal the delimitation of territorial boundaries between the dominant ethnic groups. Further, within these boundaries, members of the expedition had to investigate in general terms the everyday life of the local inhabitants, while the statisticians should concentrate on their economic life.<sup>408</sup>

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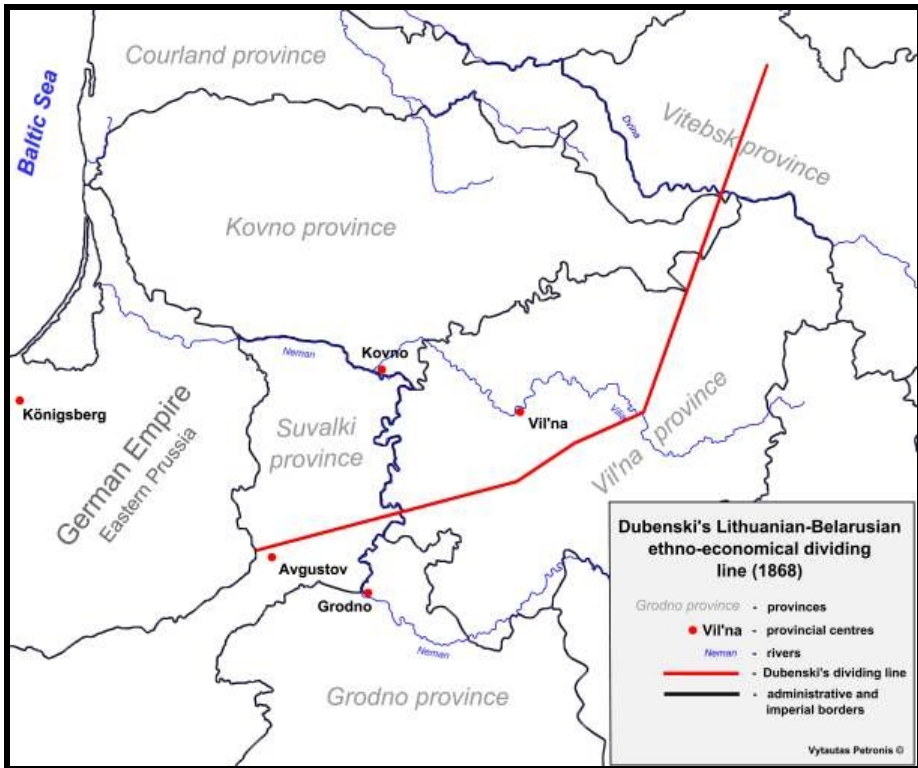
<sup>404</sup> Ivan Petrovich Kornilov (1811-1901) – statesman. Most of his active life he worked in the education system and was head of the Vil'na Educational District (1864-1868), initiator of the opening of the North Western Section of the IRGS in Vil'na, and a proponent of Mikhail N. Muravev's political line.

<sup>405</sup> Dovgiallo, (1910) vol. 1, pp. 12-20.

<sup>406</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 382-383.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 383.

<sup>408</sup> "Zhurnal soedenennogo zasedaniia" (January 19, 1867), p. 95.



**Figure 11.** Dubenski's Lithuanian-Belarusian ethno-economical dividing line (1868). An approximate reconstruction

Dubenski had to undertake the programme of broad statistical research. His tasks were to compile ethno-statistical material for each of the nine provinces, including providing habitat lists, as well as indicating the numbers of each ethnic group. Further, all the data had to be mapped; while in compiling the habitat lists, he had to separate out people's religious and social distribution and then compare this with the ethnic factor. Dubenski promised to collect economic data related to the ethnic groups, focusing on the changes resulting from the recent uprising and the abolition of serfdom. His final task was to collect economic data on the urban population covering both the pre- and post-reform/uprising situation. These latter observations would allow him to speculate on the following questions: had there been any shift in ethno-economic domination, and what influence had recent events had in terms of strengthening the Russian trade element in the Western provinces?<sup>409</sup>

Although the plan was to conduct research throughout the whole of the Western region, the commission decided to postpone investigating the

<sup>409</sup> "Zhurnal soedenennogo zasedaniia" (April 10; May 18, 1867), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1867), vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 127-129; Semenov, vol. 1, p. 384.



Lithuanians and Latvians, because it could not find a competent researcher willing and able to perform the task.<sup>410</sup>

Dubenski decided to reside in Vil'na and coordinated his travels from there. During the summer of 1867 he visited Kovno, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Vil'na, and Grodno provinces and collected statistical data, mostly from official sources. Besides his primary tasks, he also started compiling an economic map of the Western provinces, depicting the density of the population and the quality of this region's soil. This map and its accompanying explanations were presented to the IRGS in 1868.

After a year, Dubenski's investigations shifted even more to the economic study of the Western provinces. From his observations of the economic situation, Dubenski perceived a territorial dividing line between the Lithuanians and the Belarusians – a strip of sandy and infertile land, which stretched from the north-east to south-west, starting above Ludza, extending between Rezhitsa and Sebezh until it reached Druisk on the Dvina River (Vitebsk province), and then extending further between Sventsiany and Vileika, Vil'na and Oshmiany, Troki and Lida (Vil'na province), down to the River Neman, also north from the River Bobr and proceeding to the Prussian border (Figure 11). He speculated that the migration direction of the Lithuanians and the Belarusians went east and west respectively, via the network of rivers: Dvina, Viliia and Neman. On the banks of these rivers the two ethnic groups were mixed. Dubenski encountered villages on the River Viliia, from Dukshty to Vorni, where people could speak both Lithuanian and Belarusian, and where neither ethnic group used the Polish language. From this line eastwards Belarusians inhabited the land completely, almost all of the people were followers of the Orthodox faith, while to the west of this line they were Catholic Lithuanians. Across the Neman River, in Suvalki (at that time still Avgustov) province, the Lithuanians merged with the Poles, and even further south, by the rivers Bug, Bobr, and Narev, in Lomzha and Sedlets provinces, Poles mixed with Belarusians.<sup>411</sup>

After evaluating Dubenski's work the Commission stated that it was unsatisfactory and that he had not accomplished his task. The collected material was partial; it presented only fragmented examples from the life and economy of the local population. The organisers tried to improve the situation by sending Dubenski to the Central Statistical Committee, which kept habitat lists for the Western region. He was asked to confirm their validity in order to obtain at least some relevant material, for use in future explorations

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<sup>410</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 384-385.

<sup>411</sup> Furthermore, Dubenski estimated the number of inhabitants in the Western provinces: in total the area had 12,509,500 inhabitants – 8,150,533 Russians (which meant all the Slavic population except Poles), 1,833,000 Jews, 1,540,000 Lithuanians, Latvians and Samogitians, 748,000 Poles, 129,000 Germans, and 9,000 Tatars and Karaims. Russians comprised 66% of the population, Jews 14.67%, Lithuanians, Latvians and Samogitians 12.33%, Poles 6%, Germans 1.03%, and Lithuanian Tatars with Karaims – 0.07%. Semenov, vol. 1, p. 387.

and studies. Unfortunately, this work stopped due to Dubenski's illness and subsequent death; Bobrovskii later continued this work.<sup>412</sup>

The early attempts by the IRGS to organise a large ethnographical-statistical expedition failed to produce any comprehensive results. Nevertheless, the Society's interest in researching this region grew, thus motivating scholars to continue to improve the organisation of their expeditions. Soon new researchers were sent into the field, where their objective was the investigation of Ukrainians and Lithuanians.

### 3.4. The ethnic fragmentation of the Western provinces

Ethnic research carried out during the 1860s and 1870s in the Western region uncovered several controversial issues. Firstly, the ethnic research compromised the essential Polish argument about the solidity of the Polish historical and cultural region, which then contributed to the ongoing processes of de-Polonisation and Russification of the western borderlands. Secondly, the dominant ethnic groups (the Belarusians, the Lithuanians and the Ukrainians) became the focus of political as well as scientific attention. Moreover, the ethnographers who investigated local cultures provided the impetus for the development of local nationalisms.

Therefore the following analysis of the Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Belarusian ethnographic research has to be seen in the light of a reconstruction of historical geo-political and cultural constellations, thus opening a window for the emergence of new (local or imperial) territorial as well as cultural forms.

The IRGS activities and its regional sections in Vil'na and Kiev played a vital role in this process. The Ukrainian example, which will be discussed first, was a most eloquent precedent showing how imperial scientists became, consciously or unconsciously, the proponents of political ideologies, and how scientific results were susceptible to ideological manipulation. Chronologically the ethnic separation of the Western provinces, then, began with the detachment of the Ukrainians, followed by the Lithuanians and, finally, the Belarusians.

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<sup>412</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 388, 392.

### 3.4.1. The Ukrainians

#### 3.4.1.1. The South Western Section in Kiev (1872-1876)

In 1855 the IRGS Ethnographical Section received an order to explore the life of the people who lived in all the coastal areas. This had been requested by the Naval Ministry, headed by Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich, who was also the president of the IRGS. The background was pragmatic – the modernisation of the Russian fleet required skilled sailors and the inhabitants of the coastal areas were accustomed to the sea. The investigation was planned primarily to collect data by way of ethnographic research. The IRGS dispatched a group of ethnographers and writers, who during the period 1855-1857, gathered various types of data. They published articles mostly in the Naval Ministry's official magazine entitled "The Naval Collection" (*Morskoi Sbornik*).

Some participants in the so-called "Literary expedition," such as the novelists Grigorii P. Danilevskii (1829-1890) and Aleksandr S. Afansiev-Chiuzhbinskii (1817-1875), were assigned to investigate the Ukrainian (Little Russian) territory. They were both descendants of Ukrainians and sympathised with the Ukrainophiles, who actively propagated the Ukrainian identity, also attempting to reinterpret the connection between Russia's northern and southern Slavs. The Ukrainophiles were critical of the process of imperial ethno-political centralisation.<sup>413</sup>

Therefore, Danilevskii and Afanasiev-Chiuzhbinskii were not the first to raise the issue of Ukrainian ethnicity, identity and cultural uniqueness. Research into the Little Russians (or *Malorosy*, as Ukrainians were officially called in the Russian Empire) actually started during the 1830s.<sup>414</sup> The first investigations may be attributed to what Czech historian Hroch calls "phase A" of national awakening.<sup>415</sup> However, the imperial authorities were concerned that ethnic groups should not become nationalistic. The "official" Russian nation was composed of three ethnic groups: the Russians, the Belarusians and the Ukrainians. The suppression of organisations such as the romanticist Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood (1847) and the exile of the most active Ukrainophiles indicated a growing level of opposition to the ethno-political conception of *Russians* and *Russianness*.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Tokarev, pp. 232-233; Catherine B. Clay, "From Savage Ukrainian Steppe to Quiet Russian Field: Ukrainian Ethnographers and Imperial Russia in the Reform Era," in: Bohdan Krawchenko (ed.), *Ukrainian Past, Ukrainian Present* (London: 1993), pp. 18-32.

<sup>414</sup> Orest Pelech, "The State and the Ukrainian Triumvirate in the Russian Empire 1831-1847," in: Bohdan Krawchenko (ed.), *Ukrainian Past, Ukrainian Present* (London: 1993), pp. 1-12; Mikhail Dragomanov, "Uchennaia ekspediciia v Zapadnorusskii Krai," *Vestnik Evropy* (1877), vol. 3, pp. 85-109.

<sup>415</sup> Hroch, pp. 22-30; *passim*.

<sup>416</sup> Marcelli Handelsman, *Ukrainska Polityka Ks. Adama Czartoryskiego przed Wojnq Krymska* (Warsaw: 1937), "Pratsi Ukrain'skogo Naukovogo Institutu," vol. XXXV, pp.14-22.

The “Literary expedition” was a “barometer” that showed the decrease in political pressure in the Russian Empire just after the death of Nicholas I and the slight liberalisation that had taken place in attitudes towards the non-Russian ethnicities. In part, the liberalisation can be explained by the preparations that would lead to the reforms of Alexander II. The government needed more exact information about the imperial inhabitants, such as their numbers and activities. At the same time, instituting the reforms would be impossible without an adequately prepared staff. In this climate of opinion national activists were asked to participate in the research.

However, the 1863-1864 uprising was a watershed in the history of the Western provinces. Official policies differed significantly before and after the uprising. In the North and South Western provinces a campaign of de-Polonisation began, which strove to replace the Polish cultural and political dominance with Russian predominance. Polish dominance had clear historical and political roots, but Russianness was a new and untested model and bore imperial integrative intentions.

After receiving approval to travel, the IRGS renewed its delayed expedition in the Western region. Pavel Chiubinskii<sup>417</sup> was assigned to research the Ukrainians. During three trips between 1869 and 1870 he managed to collect a huge amount of ethnographic, historical, archaeographical and other material, publishing it in seven volumes during the period 1872 to 1879.

The success of Chiubinskii’s expedition and its results gave rise to the hope that the research of the Western provinces might be completed after all. The IRGS organising committee eventually found a researcher for the Lithuanians – the Latvian-born Iulii Kuznetsov-Kalējs, a scholar from St. Petersburg University. The members of the organising committee, Hilferding, Maikov and Semenov formulated identical tasks for both researchers: 1) to determine the ethnic boundaries; 2) to estimate the size of the ethnic groups; 3) to investigate their local way of life and economic situation.<sup>418</sup>

It has to be noted that Kuznetsov’s task was much more difficult than Chiubinskii’s. Whereas the latter travelled among his own ethnic group, full of local patriots who had been studying the Ukrainians for some time, Kuznetsov’s first task was to learn the Lithuanian language and only then could he attempt to perform the assigned tasks. The Lithuanian lands were

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<sup>417</sup> Pavel Platonovich Chiubinskii (1839-1884) – ethnographer. Best known for his participation in expeditions: in research of the bread trade 1867 – a joint expedition organised by the IRGS and the Free Economic Society (*Vol'noe Ekonomicheskoe Obschestvo*), in 1869-1871 – an ethnographic-statistical expedition to the South Western provinces. For the outstanding results of the latter, he was awarded the Uvarov prize, the Constantine golden medal (the highest IRGS award), and also a 2<sup>nd</sup>-class gold medal at the international congress in Paris (1875). For more see: Pypin, *Istoria Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 3, pp. 347-349.

<sup>418</sup> Pavel P. Chiubinskii, *Trudy etnograficheskoi-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii v zapadno-russkii krai* (St. Petersburg, 1872), vol. 1, pp. vii-viii; Semenov, vol. 1, p. 392; “Zasedanie komisii po snariazheniiu etnograficheskoi-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii v Zapadno-Russkii krai” (May 6, 1869), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1869), vol. 5, pp. 241-242.

under the strict surveillance of imperial officials operating against a background of de-Polonisation and Russification. The local Lithuanian intelligentsia was still low in numbers, consisting mostly of Catholic priests. Besides, one side of the de-Polonisation process was the “import” of Russian administrative bureaucrats and teachers, who filled the vacancies left by Poles who had been prohibited from participating in local government and schools. These political colonists were usually not eager to know and understand the specificity of the North Western provinces; their attitudes to the locals were based either on ideological animosity or on simple ignorance.

In 1869, Chiubinskii travelled across the Ukrainian lands carrying with him the IRGS mandate, which guaranteed assistance from the local authorities and the clergy. Moreover, he was not alone in his work, finding support from local enthusiasts. The Governor-General of the South Western provinces, Prince Aleksandr M. Dondukov-Korsakov (1820-1893), and the curator of the Kiev Educational District, Platon A. Antonovich (1812-1883), quietly favoured Ukrainophiles in their endeavours.<sup>419</sup>

Chiubinskii travelled not only across the Kiev, Volhynia and Podolia provinces, but also through the southern parts of Grodno and Minsk, the eastern parts of Lublin and Sedlets provinces and the north-western part of Bessarabia.<sup>420</sup> In his own opinion the task could be completed in two possible ways: 1) by providing subjective impressions while travelling and 2) through the quantitative collection of all possible materials and by processing them later. The results of the second option would reveal a great number of differences between the ethnic groups, therefore Chiubinskii chose this second way.<sup>421</sup>

The positive outcome of the expedition allowed the local IRGS members to ask the Minister of Internal Affairs and the vice-president of the IRGS, for permission to open a local branch of the Geographical Society in Kiev. On April 20, 1872, Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich received a letter from Governor-General Dondukov-Korsakov, in which he offered to open a section of the Geographic Society in Kiev. Chiubinskii, Vladimir B. Antonovich (1834-1908), Mikhail V. Iuzefovich (1802-1889), Vitalii Ia. Shulgin (1822-1878) and others had signed the preparatory documents.<sup>422</sup> Emperor Alexander II approved the establishment of the section in November and the first session took place on February 25, 1873.<sup>423</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Miller, *The Ukrainian Question*, pp. 158-159; Oleksii Miller [Alexei Miller], “Iemskii Ukaz,” *Ukraina Moderna* (Lviv: 2000), years 1999-2000, no. 4-5, pp. 9-11; *Trudy etnograficheskoi-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii*, pp. xvii-xviii.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii.

<sup>422</sup> Miller, *The Ukrainian Question*, p. 158.

<sup>423</sup> “Protokol zasedaniia Iuzhno-Zapadnago Otdela IRGO” (February 13, 1873), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1873), vol. 9, pp. 56-58.

According to the historian Miller, a conflict was embedded in the South Western Section (SWS) from its very beginning, because two opposing groups – the nationalist Ukrainophiles and the moderate loyalists – were competing within the institution. At the imperial level, Ukrainophiles struggled with the policy of the “official nationality,” which did not acknowledge the Ukrainian language (claiming that it was a mere ethnic dialect of Russian) and culture. Some Ukrainophiles spoke of ethnic autonomy and federalism within the Empire, even separatism, and they occasionally inflamed the situation.<sup>424</sup> Naturally, the imperial centre was not pleased.

The SWS nevertheless became a bastion of Ukrainian nationalists. At the beginning they acted cautiously, strategically electing Grigorii P. Galagan (1819-1888) (favoured by the authorities) as its head. Moreover, Dondukov-Korsakov and P. Antonovich protected the SWS Ukrainophiles from external criticism.<sup>425</sup> In his opening speech Chiubinskii also soothed the imperial audience by saying: “the Russian element has revived. All Russian society realised its duty to the cradle of the Russian land.”<sup>426</sup> Chiubinskii also tried to smooth contradictory attitudes towards the nationalist composition of the SWS. Later Petr Semenov (Tian’-Shanskii), remembering this period, remarked that the IRGS in St. Petersburg had reservations from the beginning about opening local branches. The results demonstrated that the most productive and reliable were those local sections that had been established on the peripheries of the Empire, such as the Siberian and the Caucasian. The sections in European Russia soon became inactive as in the case of the North Western Section after 1876. The only broad research that could be undertaken in these sections was ethnography, exploring the adaptation of the local population to its environment. According to Semenov, even this research caused certain inconveniences.<sup>427</sup> Semenov did not elaborate on this; however one of the consequences was probably the nationalist radicalisation of the educated intelligentsia.

Unlike the central imperial authorities, the local administration tended to make compromises with the Ukrainophiles rather than inspire conflicts. This difference in political approach between the local and imperial authorities could have indicated, as some think, the existence of different methods of assimilation. The central authorities tried to tackle Ukrainian nationalism by using a scheme similar to the French model of prohibitions and forced assimilation. But the local administration was prepared to yield temporarily and then slowly integrate Ukrainians into the “official Russian” nation. Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich was well-disposed towards Ukrainians. However, the Minister of Internal Affairs P. Valuev signed the 1863

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<sup>424</sup> Miller, *The Ukrainian Question*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>425</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162.

<sup>426</sup> “Prilozhenie k protokolu zasedaniia Iugo-Zapadnago Otdela IRGO – Rech’ P. P. Chiubinskago” (February 13, 1873), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1873), vol. 9, p. 58.

<sup>427</sup> Semenov, vol. 2, pp. 487-488.

decree restricting the usage of the Ukrainian language in schools and book printing. It was clear that the central authorities were moving towards the “French model” of linguistic assimilation. Still, during the first half of the 1870s, before the restrictions of the Ems decree were imposed, the Russification of the Ukrainians progressed relatively slowly.<sup>428</sup>

The main focus of the SWS was ethnographic research on Ukrainians, Jews and Poles. Members of the SWS approached the topic energetically, stating that: “this investigation has to stand on an objective ground, common to all scientific work. Bias and journalism do not correspond to the goals and purpose of the Section. We should not suppose, should not propose – our goal is to expose. We shall provide material about the events of life, not following any sympathies or antipathies – the same way our respected Society does: with equal love it researches Russians and Belarusians, and Ukrainians, and Jews, and Chukchis, and Tungus [Evenks – V.P.] and so on.”<sup>429</sup>

Objectivity, a scientific and liberal approach were the declared principles. In practice, the primary target group was the Ukrainians. Adopting this focus, the Ukrainophile researchers worked for four years, 1872-1876, helped by local national intelligentsia and under the protection of Dondukov-Korsakov.

The population of the South Western provinces valued the researchers and their activities: people donated artefacts related to the history and culture of these lands. The growing number of donations led to the idea of establishing a museum, dedicated to the culture of the South Western provinces. The SWS also carried out a one-day census of Kiev in 1874.<sup>430</sup>

However, the constantly growing tensions between the Ukrainophiles and the Ukrainian loyalists culminated in 1876, when Emperor Alexander II signed the secret Ems decree, which restricted the usage of the Ukrainian language even further and strengthened the process of Russification. The Emperor ordered the closure of the SWS for an indefinite period and the exile of Chiubinskii and Dragomanov – the most active members of the SWS – to the inner provinces of the Russian Empire.<sup>431</sup>

The Minister of Internal Affairs Timashev, Governor-General Dondukov-Korsakov and the Curator of the Kiev Educational District P. Antonovitch tried to lessen the impact of the decree. It is also likely that the IRGS president Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich took unsuccessful steps to save the SWS.<sup>432</sup>

The restrictions on the Ukrainian language remained in force until the 1905 Revolution. The issue of reopening the SWS emerged briefly in 1899,

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<sup>428</sup> Miller, *The Ukrainian Question*, pp. 15-20; 29

<sup>429</sup> “Prilozhenie k protokolu zasedaniia (...) – Rech’ P. P. Chiubinskago,” pp. 59-60.

<sup>430</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 3, pp. 358-360.

<sup>431</sup> Miller, *The Ukrainian Question*, pp. 179-210. The *Ems Ukaz* text in Russian: *Ibid.*, pp. 270-273.

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196; Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 3, p. 361.

when, during the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of Natural Scientists and Doctors, a group of participants from the South Western provinces addressed the authorities with a petition to reopen the section. Writing to the IRGS, the participants of the congress stressed that the current situation was not conducive to the development of science in the region and that the SWS could have coordinated research and helped with the improvement of the rapidly growing economic potential of the southern provinces. They requested that the SWS should cover the area of three educational districts – Kiev, Kharkov and Odessa. However, no decision was made and the Section remained closed.<sup>433</sup>

The imperial authorities, influenced by Russian nationalistic tendencies, attempted to appropriate the Ukrainian lands, but collided with the Ukrainian national movement. The authorities resorted to prohibitions, exile and forced assimilation – measures more frequently used as part of Russian internal politics. Yet this imperial weapon was double-edged: the weak and unsystematic policy of Russification and the oppression of the Ukrainians resulted in an ever-increasing backlash and growth in Ukrainian identity.<sup>434</sup> Imperial policy helped the Ukrainians to become self-aware, and encouraged them to use science to prove that they were different from the Russians in language, culture and history.

Nevertheless, the geographic perception of the Ukrainian lands was not clearly defined until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even the Ukrainian intelligentsia could not agree where Ukraine was and which provinces and their parts belonged exclusively to the Ukrainians. Later, a specific construction of “Ukraine” evolved that was based on economic research. It approximated the ethno-linguistic territory. Just before the First World War, Ukrainian economists, while talking about the specific entity of Ukraine, referred for the first time to Russian policies in the South Western provinces as oppressive “Russian colonialism.”<sup>435</sup>

The investigation of the Ukrainians proved to be quite a challenge for the Russian scholars. In the beginning the IRGS aimed primarily at scientific research of the lands; however, soon their “innocent” scholarly endeavours turned into political posturing. The imperial authorities as well as the Ukrainian nationalists manipulated the ethnographic results: the striving of the authorities to enforce the idea that Ukrainians were part of the Russian “official” nationality collided with the Ukrainians’ intense cultural homogenisation of their ethnic space. Arguably, the results of this collision brought greater damage to the imperial ideology than they did to Ukrainian nationalism, a fact that was reflected in the restrictive policies of the Ems decree.

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<sup>433</sup> “Prilozhenie V” and “Prilozhenie VI,” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1899), vol. 35, pp. 784-788; Berg, pp. 161-162.

<sup>434</sup> Miller, *The Ukrainian Question*, pp. 247-260.

<sup>435</sup> Stephen Velychenko, “The Issue of the Russian Colonialism in Ukrainian Thought: Dependency, Identity and Development,” *Ab Imperio* (2002), no. 1, pp. 341; 345.



The position of the IRGS in this conflict was rather paradoxical: although the Society was directly responsible for the organisation of the expedition and opening of the South Western Section, Chiubinskii, despite his great input into the radicalisation of the Ukrainians in the SWS, was still considered to have achieved very positive and even exemplary results. The goal of propagating ethnographic (and also ethnic) self-consciousness among the Ukrainians allowed the Society to acquire more scholarly material than before. At the same time this activation of ethnic self-consciousness became one of the foundations of Ukrainian nationalism.

As mentioned above, in parallel with the Ukrainian research the IRGS ethnographers also started investigating the Lithuanian ethnic group. The task was given to Kuznetsov. Prior to his departure to study the Lithuanians, however, the Society managed to open its first local section in the Western region: the North Western Section in Vil'na.

### 3.4.2. The Lithuanians

#### 3.4.2.1. The North Western Section in Vil'na (1867-1876)

Suppressing the uprising of 1863-1864 diminished the "Polish element" to some degree in the northern parts of the Western provinces. The imperial authorities used this situation to introduce a process of political and cultural integration: this involved not only the replacement of the Latin script with the Cyrillic,<sup>436</sup> but also the confiscation of property belonging to the local rebellious nobility, as well as prohibiting Poles from being involved in any kind of land transactions. A programme to strengthen the Orthodox Church began; some Catholic and former Uniate Church buildings were transformed into Orthodox Churches.<sup>437</sup> Russians started arriving in the North Western provinces and filling the vacancies in the local administration, thus replacing Poles. During the process of "restoring" the "Russian roots," Kornilov began a correspondence with the IRGS in 1866 concerning the opening of the Geographical Society's Vil'na branch.

Kornilov, a full member of the IRGS from 1867, was joined by the fifteen other members of the Society, who lived in the North Western provinces. They signed a letter to the Vil'na Governor-General Kaufmann asking for permission "to help the future expedition by establishing a separate North

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<sup>436</sup> The question remains as to whether the replacement of Latin with Cyrillic letters was just a simple act of Russification or whether it also had other specific purposes, such as strengthening Lithuanian identity by distancing it from the Polish cultural influence. For the latter opinion, see: Darius Staliūnas, "Lietuvių tapatumas, kalba ir rašmenys Rusijos tautinėje politikoje (XIX a. 7-asis dešimtmetis)," in: Darius Staliūnas (ed.), *Raidžių draudimo metai* (Vilnius: 2004), pp. 79-109; for the former: Vytautas Merkys, "Lietuvių draudžiamosios spaudos ir tautinės tapatybės sąsajos," *Knygotyra* (2005), no. 44, pp. 1-11.

<sup>437</sup> A. V. Zhirkevich, "Akademik N. M. Chagin (1823-1909)," *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1911), vol. 2, pp. 165-230.

Western section in Vil'na.<sup>438</sup> The establishment of the NWS was both a political and a scientific manoeuvre.

Kaufmann did not see any particular need to establish a section resembling the existing special sections in Siberia and the Caucasus, because the North Western provinces were of no special scientific significance.<sup>439</sup> The Siberian and Caucasian sections established in 1855 were sections on the margins of the Empire. These outposts of Russian exploration were manifestations of imperial colonialism. The Caucasian section was located on the frontier with Armenian, Persian, Turkish and other cultures of the Middle East. Both sections served as colonial outposts. Scientific explorations mingled with high imperial foreign politics. Therefore the appeal was rejected.

Kaufmann and P. Valuev did not see the Northern part of the Western provinces exactly in the same light as Kornilov and Muravev. These provinces were potentially mutinous and dominated by Polish culture, but they did not fall clearly under the title of "frontier," as in the Siberian or Caucasian cases.

On October 9, 1866, Vil'na's General-Governor Kaufmann was replaced by his successor Baranov. The next day Kornilov posted a new appeal using a different formulation of the main arguments. He stressed the policy of de-Polonisation and how the NWS would replace the Archaeological Commission at the Vil'na Museum of Antiquities. Kornilov argued that the Archaeological Commission was a Polish organisation, not controlled by any imperial organisation. In order to secure the policy of "restoring Russianness" that institution had to be closed and replaced by the NWS.<sup>440</sup>

The Archaeological Commission (AC) had been established in 1855 at the Vil'na Museum of Antiquities, supported mainly by its founder Count Eustachy Tyszkiewicz (1814-1873). After the closure of Vil'na University in 1832, the Commission acted as a wide-ranging cultural research centre for the Western provinces. The AC was not specifically involved in ethnographic research.<sup>441</sup> Yet, individual members, such as Adam H. Kirkor (1812-1886) (who also collaborated with the IRGS) wrote ethnographical sketches. Generally the AC propagated a so-called "Polish" perspective, which was not connected directly with Polish nationalism and did not interfere with the Russian political line, but desired rather to keep alive the multi-ethnic culture of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). Polish nationalism was not a major concern for the cosmopolitan members of the AC, most of whom were local aristocrats.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> Dovgiallo, (1910) vol. 1, p. 12.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid., p. 13

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>441</sup> *Zapiski Vilenskoj Arkheologicheskoi Kommissii / Pamiętniki Komisiji Archeologicznej Wileńskiej* (Wilno: 1856); also see: Aleksandravičius, Kulakauskas, pp. 248-256.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid., pp. 250-253.

Pypin called the closure of the Vil'na Museum of Antiquities (VMA) "a strange case" of the imperial policy of Russification. The decision of the authorities to replace the AC with the NWS did not diminish the historical identification of the local nobility with the GDL and Polish culture, but only introduced Russian nationalism as a new factor that clashed severely with local historical-cultural traditions.<sup>443</sup>

The establishment of the Museum of Antiquities occurred at a time when official Russian jargon was still operating with the old geo-political vocabulary, rooted in the structures of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Here *Lithuania* carried a historical connotation, which included both Lithuanian and Belarusian ethnic territories. The founders of the VMA followed the official and legal imperial understanding, which maintained that the Western provinces consisted of *Rus'* (the Ukrainian lands) and *Lithuania*. The ethnographic representation of the Great Russians was absent simply because this ethnic group was insignificant in the region, while Polish culture had strong historical (and for the imperial authorities also undesirable) foundations.<sup>444</sup>

As discussed earlier, the term "Belarusian provinces" initially referred only to the Mogilev and Vitebsk provinces, which at the time of the First Partition did not connote ethnicity. The province of Minsk was ethnically Belarusian but was not considered for a long time to be part of *Belarus* but of *Lithuania*. Yet nationalist perspectives replaced the 18<sup>th</sup>-century geopolitical terminology.<sup>445</sup> After 1863 a new term was popularised among the imperial bureaucracy – the "Lithuanian-Russian country," which indicated an intermediary definition used to describe this region in relation to the policies of the time. According to Kornilov, this "country" was not represented in the exhibits of the VMA. Following the new "politically correct" line, the VMA was reorganised and the NWS took over the Museum and its research. As a result, an old scientific institution was destroyed and replaced according to the principles of the new ideological wave, which was uncomfortable with the idea that a large region of the Empire existed that did not belong to the "official nation." It was not only history that was susceptible to ideological falsification; ethnography too could serve the purposes of the state.

The NWS was able to centralise and coordinate this political line through scientific means within the six North Western provinces – Kovno, Vil'na, Grodno, Minsk, Mogilev and Vitebsk. However, very soon afterwards, in 1868, Kornilov was transferred and the NWS lost its ideological leader and chairperson. After Kornilov's departure the provincial IRGS branch hardly managed to perform its duties. Nonetheless, the NWS was periodically revived by new chairpersons (such as Engel and Nikitin), who managed to

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<sup>443</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, p. 113.

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

<sup>445</sup> Darius Staliūnas, "Granitsy v pogranichie: Belarusy i etnolingvističeskaja politika Rossijskoi imperii na Zapadnykh okrainakh v period Velikikh Reform," *Ab Imperio* (2003), no. 1, (online).

prolong the section's survival until the mid-1870s. At the same time, one of the results of Kornilov's departure was the easing of political pressure on the Section's work.

According to Kornilov's initial programme, membership of the NWS was only open to people of Russian origin.<sup>446</sup> However, the secretary of the IRGS Baron Osten-Saken, a Baltic German, proposed that each branch of the Society should follow the same constitution as that of the IRGS itself, which, in fact, had no ethnic restrictions on membership. Therefore, Osten-Saken advised Kornilov to replace the paragraph prohibiting non-Russians with the formula that membership in the Section was open to anyone who could contribute to the scientific research on the North Western provinces. Furthermore, the secretary of the IRGS pointed out that since admission or rejection of candidates was an internal matter for each section, it would be up to the NWS to choose its members.<sup>447</sup> Kornilov replied that if the phrase limiting membership only to Russians conflicted with the general plans – it would be easy to change it, especially when: “it can be said firmly, that the first selection of members [...] will be completely according to the insights and wishes of the founders.”<sup>448</sup> It is not clear whether by the “founders” Kornilov meant himself. Indeed, during the first period of the NWS only one Lithuanian, Lavrin Ivinskii/Laurynas Ivinskis, was even associated with the NWS, although he did not have full membership.<sup>449</sup>

The NWS in Vil'na investigated the Lithuanian and Belarusian ethnicities. It is difficult to trace any direct communications between the SWS and the NWS. It is certain that they exchanged their publications and that they knew about each other's scientific investigations. The sections were linked through sharing a common interest in the Belarusian ethnic borders.

During the NWS's first period (1867-1876) the main achievements of the section were the creation of a network of meteorological stations in the provinces; conducting a one-day census of Vil'na (1874); holding a meeting of the heads of the Statistical Committees from the nine North Western provinces (January 1874); and the attempts to coordinate the collection of statistical data.<sup>450</sup> Unsuccessful and never fully completed plans, such as the attempts to compose and publish an atlas of the North Western provinces and a

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<sup>446</sup> “First draft of the NWS regulations with later corrections,” ARGO, F.1-1866, op.1, no.15, pp. 5-6.

<sup>447</sup> “Osten-Saken's letter to Kornilov, October 22, 1866,” ARGO, F.1-1866, op.1, no.15, pp. 7-8; Dovgiallo, (1910) vol. 1, p. 15.

<sup>448</sup> “Kornilov's letter to Osten-Saken, October 25, 1866,” ARGO, F.1-1866, op.1, no.15, pp. 9-10; Dovgiallo, (1910) vol. 1, p. 16.

<sup>449</sup> Tamulevičienė, p. 39. Lavrin Ivinskii/Ivinskis (1810-1881) – Lithuanian writer and publicist. His relationship with the NWS was through one of its members, V. Kulin, with whom he corresponded on linguistic, ethnographic and other matters. Danutė Petkevičiūtė, “L. Ivinskis ir Rusijos Geografinė Draugija,” *Mokslas ir Gyvenimas* (1972), no. 10, pp. 34-36; by the same author, *Laurynas Ivinskis* (Vilnius: 1988), pp. 86-89.

<sup>450</sup> K. Bieliukas, “Geografinių draugijų veiklos Lietuvoje apžvalga,” *Geografinis Metraštinis* (1958), vol. 1, pp. 11-14; Iakover, pp. 63-64; Tamulevičienė, pp. 32-43.

project on the historical geography of old Lithuanian and Belarusian topography, proved to be of great value nevertheless in understanding the scholarly intentions of the Section.

Early in 1869 a meeting of the heads of the Statistical Committees of all the North Western provinces took place in Vil'na. The main topic discussed during five sessions was the cartographical representation of the provinces using the latest statistical data. It was agreed that six maps, accompanied by tables of statistics and explanatory texts, would comprise the atlas. The six maps were to represent the North Western region from different perspectives: ethnography, administrative divisions, logistics, religions, economics and education.<sup>451</sup>

Short instructions described what each map was to include. In the case of the ethnographic map, the participants of the meeting decided to map the following ethnic groups: the Russians, the Belarusians, the Ukrainians, the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Samogitians, the Latvians, the Lithuanian Tatars, the Germans and the Jews. Each ethnic group was assigned a cartographical colour. Russians were to be coloured in dark green, while the Ukrainians were in pink and the Belarusians in light-pink. Visually this coloured representation would have created sharp differences between the Slavic members of the tripartite Russian nation. The Latvians were given the colour blue, the Samogitians – green and the Poles – yellow. The basis of this ethnographical map was Rittikh's map, which depicted ethnicities based on confessional criteria (Figure 17).<sup>452</sup>

It is not clear how much was done to fulfil the original plan. The atlas never appeared and even the separate maps were never published. No evidence points to any cooperation occurring between the Statistical Committees on the preparation of the atlas. It is possible that the termination of the project was caused by a lack of central organisation, as the lack of regular meetings made it difficult to communicate and coordinate such work. Nevertheless, the provincial Statistical Committees did collect information in the following years on some ethnic groups (in particular, the Jewish population) as well as on their economic development.

However, the idea of an atlas was not abandoned altogether and was revived during a later NWS meeting (December 15, 1872). The member A. Stolypin proposed that the NWS should help the IRGS prepare an ethnographic map of European Russia. This was to be the future map of A. Rittikh entitled *Ethnographical map of European Russia*, published in 1875 (Figure 22). Stolypin proposed that the work should begin with the easiest part – the collection of place names and surnames of the inhabitants, the comparison of which would provide an insight not only into the existing ethnic boundaries, but also into the historical migration of the various ethnic groups. The par-

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<sup>451</sup> "Statisticheskie karty Zapadno-Russkago kraia," *Izvestiia IRGO* (1869), vol. 5, pp. 80-82.

<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

ticipants at the meeting discussed creating a commission, headed by Stolypin, that would distribute the workload.<sup>453</sup>

During the course of the discussions the ethnographical map was expanded into an eight-map atlas of the North Western provinces. One map was to cover contemporary ethnography, three were to be historical maps (the region before the union with Poland in 1569, the era of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the situation following its annexation to the Russian Empire); one was to be an archaeological map and there were to be three religious maps (a map of early Orthodox times, a map covering the period after the acceptance of the Uniate Church and a map showing the “return” to Orthodoxy). Each map had an accompanying explanatory text, which contained historical, ethnographical and statistical information.

At a special session of the NWS (March 28, 1873), Stolypin, P. Saltykov and Iakov F. Golovatskii<sup>454</sup> presented a general research plan. The Executive Committee of the NWS (April 26) awarded the group annual funding of 100 roubles for hiring scribes and obtaining books and maps. Because of a lack of resources it was decided that the group should concentrate on drawing the ethnographic map, in particular delineating the Lithuanian boundaries and separating them from those of the other ethnic groups. In this way, the ethnographic map came to depict the ethnic distribution not only within the six North Western provinces, but also included parts of the Kingdom of Poland and Eastern Prussia.<sup>455</sup>

In this manner, the main focus of the ethnographic map became the Lithuanians. Due to insufficient ethnographic and cartographic data, the mapping group was to be involved in the compilation of a bibliographical and cartographical index during the initial preparatory stage. For this, relevant material had to be purchased with NWS funds. Moreover, assistance had to be sought from among the local intelligentsia. Finally, it was also planned that the linguistic (i.e. dialect) border between the Lithuanians and Samogitians should be established. At the beginning of November 1873 Potapov, the Governor-General of the North Western provinces, agreed to admit members of the section into the provincial chancelleries and to assist them in collecting ethno-statistical material.<sup>456</sup>

Although the plan concerning the ethnographical map was discussed at almost every meeting, activities progressed slowly. A. Stolypin extracted the

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<sup>453</sup> “Protokol zasedaniia obshchego sobraniia Severo-Zapadnago Otdela IRGO” (December 15, 1872), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1873), vol. 9, pp. 143-145. Other participants were: Ia. Golovatskii, O. Giubbenet, I. Kotovich, P. Saltykov, I. Steblin-Kamenskii, F. Filipov and N. Chotlovokov. There is not much biographical information available on the NWS members; however many of them were VED teachers.

<sup>454</sup> Iakov Fedorovich Golovatskii (1814-1888) – poet, publicist, prominent Galician Ukrainian activist (later a Russophile), rector of L’vov University (1863-1864), between 1867 and 1888 head of the Vil’na Archaeographical Commission.

<sup>455</sup> Dovgiallo, (1911) vol. 2, p. 32; Tamulevičienė, p. 62.

<sup>456</sup> Dovgiallo, (1911) vol. 2, pp. 33-34.

appropriate cartographical material from the Vil'na Public Library; Petr M. Smyslov (1827-1891), the head of the Vil'na Observatory (1858-1877), verified data from the Vil'na province lists of settlements, while count Ozharovskii looked through the publications related to the ethnographical description of the region.<sup>457</sup>

The further progress of the ethnographical map remains unclear. Activity in the section slowly ground to a halt and reports on the progress of the work stopped being issued. During the final years of its first period, the NWS shifted to other, more productive fields of research (meteorology, statistics, the Vil'na census etc.) and the plan to map ethnic groups was pushed into the background. It may have been that the movement away from this plan was partly influenced by the IRGS's work on its second ethnographic map of European Russia, which was published in 1875.<sup>458</sup> On the other hand, the very limited financial resources and lack of personnel forced the NWS to concentrate on its more successful projects, leaving other things to be resumed in the future.

Alongside the ethnographical mapping, another project attempted to describe the region from a historical-geographical point of view. In 1869, Ivan Sprogis<sup>459</sup> devised an interesting plan – to collect and publish an index of place names, which together with the contemporary toponyms would present all the previous name variants of the same location. This scholar had been collecting historical place names in Samogitia for some time, in particular in the Rossieny district. The compilation of the index, using 16<sup>th</sup>-century local court records as the main source material, took him twenty years. Nevertheless, Sprogis realised the value of his study, as it demonstrated not only the multitude of names that appertained to one place in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but also indicated interesting ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural patterns, and gave insights into the former ethnic distribution in the investigated area. Besides, it also presented the Lithuanian forms of the place names, that had changed from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards when many of these titles became Polonised or distorted under the influence of the Polish language. Therefore, this study had significant practical value for many scientific fields. Its exceptional closeness to historical linguistics in relation to the Lithuanian toponyms allowed Sprogis to entitle his book “Dictionary,” which indicated even more the novelty of the work.<sup>460</sup> Yet in the early 1870s this project was still in its initial stages.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> Dovgiallo, (1911) vol. 2, pp. 38-39.

<sup>458</sup> For more on this, see chapter 4.4.

<sup>459</sup> Jānis (Ivan) Sprogis (Ivan Iakovlevich Sprogis – 1883-1916) – Latvian-born ethnographer and archivist.

<sup>460</sup> Ivan Ia. Sprogis, *Geograficheskii slovar' drevnei Zhmoitskoi zemli XVI stoletia* (Vil'na: 1888), pp. iii-xix.

<sup>461</sup> “Protokol zasedaniia obshchego sobraniia Severo-Zapadnago Otdela IRGO” (January 5, 1872), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1872), vol. 8, p. 212; Dovgiallo, (1911) vol. 2, pp. 28-29; Tamulevičienė, pp. 62-63.

The projects on historical geography and the collection of toponyms intersected with the research carried out by Iu. Kuznetsov, a participant in the IRGS ethnographical-statistical expedition to the North Western provinces. Kuznetsov tried to support and continue Sprogis' initiative. In the middle of 1871, during a NWS meeting, Kuznetsov gave a presentation on old Lithuanian archaeology, geography and topography. He emphasised the importance of recording old Lithuanian geographical names in order to be able to identify the borders of historical Lithuania. For this purpose he suggested special research projects for each ethnic group in the region. He also emphasised the benefit of collecting old maps depicting this region, names of places, woods, rivers, ethnic groups, roads and so on.<sup>462</sup>

After the lecture Golovatskii discussed the topic of old toponyms. He elaborated on the names of ancient forests, which had Lithuanian names. Their location inside the ethnic Belarusian territory indicated that the Lithuanians had occupied these areas in some earlier period. Golovatskii was optimistic and supported Kuznetsov's idea, stating that the collection and analysis of such data would provide insights into how ethnic migration had taken place in the region during earlier periods of history.<sup>463</sup>

Meanwhile, Kuznetsov continued his expedition and investigation of Lithuanian historical geography. In a letter to the head of the Ethnographic Section, Maikov, Kuznetsov highlighted Sprogis' works. In his view, they demonstrated and opened new possibilities for researching changes in toponyms over time. Kuznetsov also presented a possible territorial division of ancient Lithuania.<sup>464</sup>

The end of the first period of NWS activity is often considered to be 1876, but some historians have argued for earlier or later dates.<sup>465</sup> Since there was no official closure it is difficult to say with any precision when the section stopped functioning. In the index of institutions and personnel for the Vil'na province (*Pamiatnaia knizhka Vilenskoj gubernii*) the branch of the Geographic Society remained on the register until 1891. At that time three members were listed – Sergievskii, Smyslov and Golovatskii.<sup>466</sup>

There is no evidence that the closure of the SWS in 1876 directly affected or stopped the activities of the NWS. However, the history of both the Northern and the Southern sections intersected in the late 1890s, when there was an unsuccessful attempt to revive the SWS through writing collective petitions. During the period 1899-1902, Vil'na Governor-General Vitalii N.

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<sup>462</sup> "Zhurnal zasedaniia Severo-Zapadnago Otdela IRGO" (August 20, 1871), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1871), vol. 7, pp. 313-317.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 318-320.

<sup>464</sup> [Julian Kuznetsov], "Neskol'ko dannyx o Litovskoi topografii," *Izvestiia IRGO* (1874), vol. 10, pp. 179-180.

<sup>465</sup> Lithuanian historian Mulevičius argues for the closure of the NWS in 1874. Mulevičius, p. 23 (footnote).

<sup>466</sup> Tamulevičienė, p. 42.



Trotskii (1835-1901) together with the Curator of the VED Vasilii A. Popov corresponded with imperial high officials and the IRGS in an attempt to restore the NWS.<sup>467</sup> The Vil'na section was finally re-opened in 1910.

### 3.4.2.2. Kuznetsov's ethnographical-statistical expedition (1869-1872)

The attempt of the NWS to map the ethnographic distribution of the region overlapped with the already mentioned IRGS expedition conducted by Iu. Kuznetsov.<sup>468</sup> The main objects of his research were the Lithuanians, the delimitation of their ethnical territory, and the description of their everyday life, folklore, economy etc. His plan was to complete and present a "concrete ethnographical map of the Lithuanians" with explanations, but without a historical description.<sup>469</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Chiubinskii's and Kuznetsov's initial programmes were identical. Chiubinskii compiled a linguistic map of Ukrainian dialects (published in the 7<sup>th</sup> volume of his *Trudy ekspeditsii*). Kuznetsov also decided to turn his final results into an ethnographic map. However, his hand-drawn map disappeared from the archives of the Russian Geographic Society around the year 1950.<sup>470</sup> The surviving material, such as the notes on the progress of the composition of the map, gives some basic insight into how the task was carried out.

Kuznetsov was neither a professional ethnographer, nor a cartographer. He studied jurisprudence at St. Petersburg University, working later as a civil judge (the so-called *mirskii posrednik*) in the Lithuanian lands. As Semenov has noted, one of the main reasons for choosing Kuznetsov was his Latvian descent, which facilitated his fast learning of the Lithuanian language.<sup>471</sup>

Before his first journey in 1869, the ethnographer spent some time preparing a plan of the approximate research territory. He analysed lists of settlements for the North Western provinces kept by the Central Statistical Com-

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<sup>467</sup> "Correspondence between the Governor-General V. Trotskii and the VED curator V. Popov with the imperial authorities and the vice-president of the IRGS Semenov," ARGO, F.1-1866, op. 1, pp. 153-165; "Letter from the NWS to the Minister of Education," in: VUBRS, F. 34-GD 691, no. 11.778; "Prilozhenie V" and "Prilozhenie VI," *Izvestiia IRGO* (1899), vol. 35, pp. 784-788; Tamulevičienė, pp. 42-43.

<sup>468</sup> Iulii Petrovich Kuznetsov-Kalējs (1843-1905) – Latvian-born ethnographer and linguist. Born in Aluksne *uezd*, he studied law at St. Petersburg University. Later he worked as a judge (*mirskii sud'ia*) in Vilkovishki (Suvalki province), as a civil judge (*mirskii posrednik*) in Kretingen (Kovno province) and Valk (Livonia province). As a member of the Latvian National Movement he belonged to its political left wing. After a conflict with Riga's governor over defending peasants' rights, he was transferred to Turkestan as a customs inspector where he died.

<sup>469</sup> "Izvlachenie iz pis'ma chlena ekspeditsii v Severo-Zapadnyi Krai Yu. N. Kuznetsova" (April 28, 1872), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1872), vol. 8, pp. 166-169.

<sup>470</sup> Information from: Vacys Milius, *Mokslo draugijos ir lietuvių etnografija (XIXa. antroji pusė – XXa. pirmoji pusė)* (Vilnius: 1993), p. 15.

<sup>471</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, p. 390.

mittee (*Tsentralnyi Statisticheskii Komitet*), trying to determine which areas belonged to the Lithuanians and to the Latvians, and which territories were inhabited by other ethnic groups. Once he had completed this task, at the end of August, Kuznetsov departed for the North Western provinces.<sup>472</sup>

An important task for him was to learn the languages and familiarise himself with the people and country. He spent several months learning Lithuanian, which must have been the Samogitian dialect, since he spent most of his time in Telshi district. He became acquainted with Ivinskii/Ivinskis, a writer and publisher of Lithuanian calendars (one of the most popular publications among the Lithuanian peasantry at that time), who was later to become a temporary member of the NWS. Ivinskii/Ivinskis accompanied Kuznetsov during his first months in the Lithuanian lands. From his travel accounts it can be seen that he was becoming quite confused about the general situation of the population and local politics. He complained that local attitudes towards his scientific research were unhelpful. The local people were either uncooperative or ignorant. On top of this, the Russian officials whom he interviewed were not interested in trying to learn about the country; they did not bother to learn the local language in order to communicate with country people. The result of such ignorance was that Lithuanians considered every official as an untrustworthy stranger. Kuznetsov tried different approaches to break down the barriers between himself and the peasantry; however he could not easily persuade the peasants to be more communicative, because the local police were strictly monitoring the region and prohibited any large gatherings fearing that they might lead to political agitation.<sup>473</sup>

Kuznetsov planned to map the Lithuanian linguistic boundaries. He intended to depict not only the territory of the language according to the density of the population, but he also wanted to introduce another dimension – mapping the second language of the population, presenting it in different shadings.<sup>474</sup> However, while analysing the official statistical data, Kuznetsov encountered a lack of clarity regarding the historical parts of the Western provinces and the new ethno-linguistic identification of the region. The latter issue was even more complicated because of the multilingual situation: in different data sets, different languages were designated as the first language, which made the ethno-statistical data unreliable. Furthermore, the historical geo-political term “Lithuania” was still in use, while it was also often employed as an ethnic identification. In these cases, instead of Belarusians, for example, there were plenty of the so-called “Lithuanians,” regardless of the fact that they spoke Belarusian.<sup>475</sup>

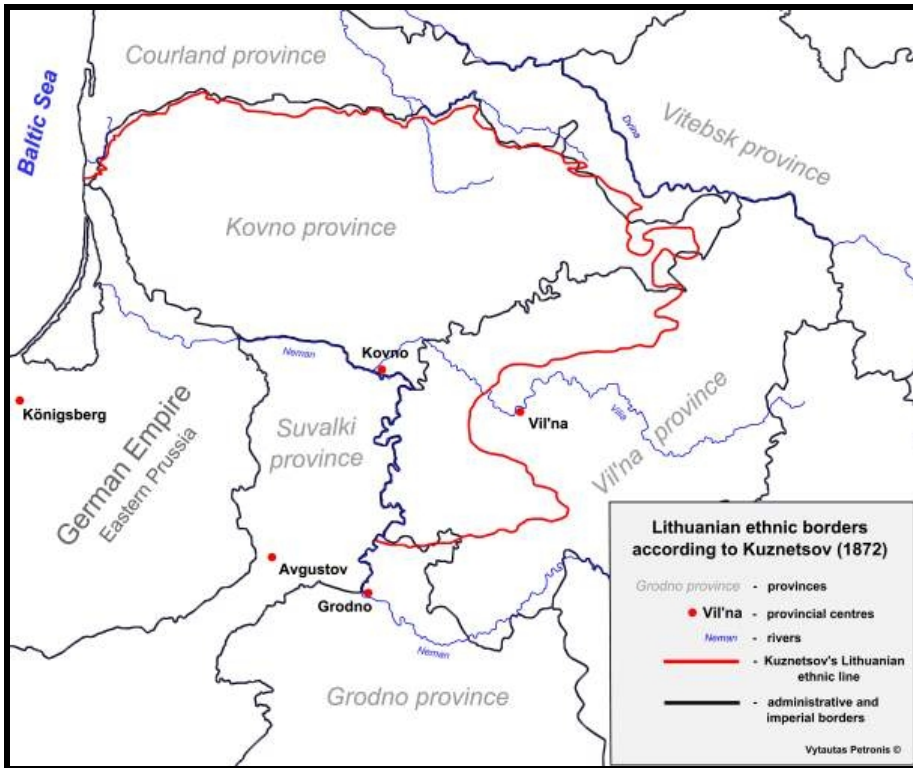
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<sup>472</sup> “Otchet o poezdke k litovtsam i latysham – 1869,” *ARGO*, F. 11, op. 1, no. 1, p. 1.

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>474</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2; “Iz vlechenie iz pis'ma chlena ekspeditsii v Severo-Zapadnyi Krai,” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1872), vol. 8, p. 169.

<sup>475</sup> “Obiasnitel'naia zapiska k karte plemennogo sostava vsekh litovskikh mestnostei, s uchetom opoliachivaniia, obruseniia, obnemchivaniia i t.d.,” *ARGO*, F. 11, op. 1, no. 20, p. 1.



**Figure 12.** The Lithuanian ethno-linguistic border according to Kuznetsov (1872). An approximate reconstruction

Using official sources (for example, regarding the number of Russian colonists and the number of Lithuanians in East Prussia), and following his own calculations, Kuznetsov estimated that around 1870 there were 1,241,000 Lithuanians in the Russian Empire and 150,000 in East Prussia (140,000 Protestants and 10,000 Roman Catholics). In total, the Lithuanians comprised approximately 1,400,000 people in both empires. This statistical data was put onto the map.

As regards the linguistic border, in his view, this was where the Lithuanian language tended to become the second language or disappear entirely. However, the inner parts of the region, such as the Telshi district, remained solely Lithuanian. Kuznetsov claimed that this tendency could be explained by the higher levels of literacy among the local peasantry, and also stressed the important role of Catholic priests of Lithuanian descent.<sup>476</sup>

Kuznetsov's plan before the expedition was to establish the demarcation of the contemporary ethnic boundaries and also to discuss their role in dividing the Lithuanians from their neighbours. He planned to obtain an overview of the historical shifts that had taken place in the linguistic borders by tracing

<sup>476</sup> "Obiasnitel'naia zapiska k karte plemennogo sostava," pp. 2-3.

their changes through the use of toponyms. Furthermore, he planned to perform an interesting form of mental mapping, which was to be made manifest through a reconstruction of the Lithuanians' self-perception of their living space, as well as the perception of the Lithuanians by their close neighbours – the Belarusians and the Latvians. Old toponyms were to be used as the basis for this research, where, for example, Belarusians would be asked to explain local place names, which were clearly of Baltic origin. Other investigations involved the extraction of the physical and cultural specificities of this ethnic group (using recruitment data from the Russian army, such as the most common illnesses among the Lithuanians found during medical examinations); understanding their everyday culture as well as analysing the Lithuanian understanding of juridical terms. Moreover, he intended to examine the creativity that could be found in folklore and poetry, as well as cultural uniqueness and borrowings; and, finally, to take a retrospective look at the Lithuanian character in contrast to other ethnic groups.<sup>477</sup>

The cartographic work was organised separately (Figure 12).<sup>478</sup> The initial plan included ascertaining the distribution of the Lithuanian language by concentrating on Vil'na province's Lithuanian villages and their boundaries. Kuznetsov also wanted to identify the zones where the languages were mixed and where the local population was bilingual. Special symbols on a map indicated places with non-Lithuanian ethnic groups (symbols showing  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total inhabitants in a given place). Kuznetsov magnified the scale of his map so as to mark the individual farms, indicating their ethnic belonging as well as identifying the nationality of the part-time workers. In his plan, a note can also be found concerning the necessity of mapping the Belarusian settlements, where, despite the fact that they spoke Belarusian at the time of the expedition, the older generation could still remember the Lithuanian language.

Ethnic mapping involved many fields of socio-economic life. Kuznetsov was interested, for example, in which ethnicity leased or rented farms and what second languages Lithuanians and Belarusians knew. He noted that the ethnic composition of cities and towns often did not correspond with the ethnic distribution of the rural areas. Kuznetsov may have chosen to highlight this particular aspect of his research because he was familiar with the complicated ethno-geographic constellation not only of the North Western region, but also of that of his homeland – the Baltic provinces.

The Russian population also had to be taken into consideration, which at that time consisted of both new colonists and long-established villages of Old-Believers. His reconstruction ventured into the fields of historical geography and mental history, as the identification of old Russian settlements and

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<sup>477</sup> "Plan sochineniia," ARGÓ, F. 11, op. 1, no. 21, p. 1.

<sup>478</sup> "Kratkoe ukazanie o sobiranií svedenií dlia etnograficheskoi karty Litvy," ARGÓ, F. 11, op. 1, no. 27.

their disappearance depended on interviews and the use of oral history as well as on the use of toponymics.<sup>479</sup> Therefore, as can be seen, Kuznetsov's initial intentions were very wide-ranging, and it would have been a huge task even for a group of people.

While in the field, Kuznetsov tried to mediate between the local Lithuanian intelligentsia and the authorities in the North Western provinces, as well as with the IRGS. His expedition and its goals were known among the Lithuanians, some of whom (including Ivinskii/Ivinskis, Bishop Anton Baranovskii/ Antanas Baranauskas (1835-1902) and others) assisted Kuznetsov in his collection of material, as he tried to learn the language and grasp the Lithuanian mentality.<sup>480</sup> It is probable that he gradually managed to establish contacts with the local Lithuanian intelligentsia. During his trips he wrote to the IRGS, highlighting the destructiveness of the policy of Russification for the local ethnic cultures, but also stressing the incompetence and ignorance of the people responsible for implementing the policy, which was resulting in cultural stagnation. Kuznetsov wrote several notes to the IRGS about the futility of the prohibition on printing in the Latin alphabet, which had resulted in the restriction of the Lithuanian language.<sup>481</sup>

In the explanatory text, which accompanied the ethnographic map, Kuznetsov addressed the problem of the perception of "Lithuania." In his opinion, this geographic name had several connotations: 1) historical-political – in the understanding of local people across the North Western provinces it was associated with the GDL (in Grodno, Minsk and Volhynia provinces people called themselves and their neighbours "Lithuanians", and called the land "Lithuania"); 2) ethnographical – used most often by German scholars to indicate the area of the Lithuanian ethnicity, and 3) "Lithuania" (*Litva*) in a narrow sense, which was common among the Russians to indicate the territory of the Lithuanian dialect, in order to separate it from the territory of the Samogitian (*Zhmud*) dialect.<sup>482</sup>

The geographical term "Lithuania" had even more connotations, depending on who was using it. The Poles made a distinction, dividing the GDL into "Litwa" and "Rus." In general terms, Kuznetsov identified the major

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<sup>479</sup> "Kratkoe ukazanie o sobiranii svedenii," p. 2.

<sup>480</sup> A. Baranovskii/Baranauskas' letter to Kuznetsov concerning the details of the Lithuanian language, ARGO, F. 11, op. 3, no. 1.

<sup>481</sup> "Zapiska d. chl. Russk. geogr. obshchestva Iu. P. Kuznetsova o vrednykh posledstviiaikh zapreshcheniia litovtsam pol'zovat' sia latinskoiu azbukoiu," ARGO, F. 11, op. 1, no. 24. The note was read during the ES meeting held on November 27, 1887. Its main opponent was M. Koialovich, who defended imperial policy in the North Western provinces; however, according to the meeting's protocol heated discussions revealed that most of the audience, including the leaders of the IRGS and its sections, supported Kuznetsov's point of view. They concluded that the authorities had to allow Lithuanians to choose which script they wanted to use – one or the other, or both (*Izvestiia IRGO* (1887), vol. 23, pp. 770-773).

<sup>482</sup> "Litovskii narod, ego rasselenie i chislenost'," ARGO, F. 11, op. 1, no. 18, p. 1.

sources of the ethnic- and historic-geographic confusion and ethno-political misunderstandings.

From the 1840s Russian nationalism, politics and culture began to suppress the national consciousness of smaller ethnicities through restrictions and prohibitions. The official geo-political vocabulary remained in a somewhat pre-modern, pre-nationalist stage of development. Even the strict and systemic administrative-territorial revisions carried out in the reign of Nicholas I did not immediately change the geographical imagination of the imperial constitutive parts of the Western region. The names of the provinces were adjusted to the uniform imperial standard. The former provinces of Lithuanian Vil'na and Lithuanian Grodno were cut off from their historical ties with "Lithuania" through the GDL. The use of historical geo-political and administrative titles alongside new – ethnic – territorial descriptions created misunderstandings and provoked debate.<sup>483</sup> This confusion could be seen for a long time even within the national movements: the Lithuanian nationalists had difficulties in articulating the differing notions between "historical" and "ethnic" conceptions of Lithuania even before the First World War.

The politics of the "official nationality" and Russification also resulted in peculiar ethno-political and geographical innovations. The difficulties that the authorities had with Belarusians were partially solved by calling them the "Lithuanian-Russian ethnicity" (*litovsko-ruskaia narodnost'*), a term that amalgamated historical, ethnic and confessional concepts with the official ideology. Kuznetsov argued against such political interference, and the confusion between confessional and ethnic elements. It greatly complicated not only general ethnographic research on the North Western provinces, but it also forced him to revise the official ethnic statistics. Kuznetsov made a circuit of the Lithuanian (language) territory, collecting information from about 7,000 settlements. Comparing his own cartographic work with other works published in Western Europe he described his method and results as "concrete-graphic" (*konkretno-graficheskii*), i.e. his detailed cartographical reconstruction depicted even the individual farms, manors and other small points that helped identify the ethno-linguistic line.<sup>484</sup>

Kuznetsov mapped not only the distribution of the Lithuanian language, he also marked Polish language enclaves (*akality*) as well as "official Russian settlements" consisting of Russian colonists imported after the 1863 uprising. Information on the Russians and the Jewish population was ob-

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<sup>483</sup> See, for example, the discussion between Erckert and Bobrovskii chapter 4.3.

<sup>484</sup> "Litovskii narod, ego rasselenie i chislenost'," p. 2.

tained from official sources.<sup>485</sup> The collection of statistical material on the Jewish population was an ongoing research process in the NWS.<sup>486</sup>

The process of data collection depended on contacts with useful local officials, who were expected to know the ethnic composition of their districts. Kuznetsov visited some villages and communicated with the locals, but because the isolated villages of Lithuanian language speakers were very scattered and the roads were poor, these trips were rare.<sup>487</sup>

He intended to finish his research in 1873; however, because of the great amount of data and the slow speed of analysis, he postponed the final presentation until 1876, and even by that date no report had been sent to the IRGS. This led the organising committee to conclude that the researcher had not completed his task. At the end of the 1870s we find Kuznetsov investigating the economic situation and trade in the North Western provinces. No significant results were ever presented to the Geographic Society.<sup>488</sup>

### 3.4.2.3. Vol'ter's expeditions to the Lithuanian lands

The IRGS was forced to acknowledge its failure in obtaining sufficient ethnographical and statistical information on the North Western provinces. As a result of this, in the early 1880s the IRGS contacted a new researcher, the German-born Eduard Vol'ter (Wolter/Volteris – 1856-1941).<sup>489</sup>

Vol'ter was a linguist specialising in the Slavic languages, which at that time was deemed to include the Baltic languages. He attended the lectures of the most prominent scholars of the Baltic languages, such as August Leskien (1840-1916) and Aleksandr O. Potebnia (1835-1891), and he later worked with Aleksei A. Shakhmatov (1864-1920). Vol'ter's interests also included archaeology, ethnography and other aspects of ethnic and cultural research. During the period 1882-1887 he travelled across the North Western provinces, investigating Latvians in Vitebsk province and Lithuanians in Eastern Prussia.<sup>490</sup>

Vol'ter's expeditions differed qualitatively from Kuznetsov's travels. First of all, Vol'ter concentrated on folklore and language. He did not de-

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<sup>485</sup> “Dokladnaia zapiska v Russkoe Geograficheskoe Obshchestvo ob etnograficheskostatisticheskoi ekspeditsii, snariazhennoi v Zapadnuiu guberniiu – 1870,” ARGO, F. 11, op. 1, no. 2.

<sup>486</sup> “Protokol zasedaniia 5-go ianvaria 1872 g. obshchego sobraniia Severo-Zapadnogo otdela IRGO” (January 5, 1872), ARGO, F.1-1866, op. 1, pp. 118-119.

<sup>487</sup> “Litovskii narod, ego rasselenie i chislenost’,” p. 5.

<sup>488</sup> Semenov, vol. 2, pp. 870-871.

<sup>489</sup> Vol'ter was called when his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated in 1926 – *gente Germanus, natione Lettonus*. Tumas Vaižgantas, “Eduardas Volteris,” in: *Vaižganto Raštai*, vol. 14 (Kauņas: 1929), p. 24.

<sup>490</sup> “Predvaritel’nyi otchet E. A. Vol'tera o poezdakh ego po Litve i Zhmudi v 1884, 1885, 1886, i 1887 godakh,” ARGO, F. 49, op.1, no. 26; the text was published as: “Predvaritel’nyi otchet o poezdakh po Litve i Zhmudi v 1884, 1885, 1886 i 1887 godakh,” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1888), vol. 24, pp. 403-414; “O rezul’tatakh etnograficheskoi poezdki k Prusskim Litovtsam (letom 1883 goda),” *Izvestiia IRGO* (1885), vol. 21, pp. 97-112; Semenov, vol. 2, p. 871.

marcate any ethnic borders; the object of his research was exclusively the Lithuanian ethnicity, its dialects, traditions, mythology, toponymics and so on.<sup>491</sup> Thanks to the help of his Lithuanian, Belarusian and Russian assistants the expedition was completed.<sup>492</sup> Vol'ter's research methods were later compared with Chiubinskii's tactics in employing Ukrainian locals.<sup>493</sup>

Vol'ter collected material with the help of the local municipalities and teachers employed by the Educational District. Imperial control and the policy of Russification, as well as the support and propagation of the Orthodox Church in a Catholic country helped foster negative attitudes towards researchers with imperial mandates. As a consequence of this, Catholic priests officially refused to help Vol'ter in any way, including even those who had earlier assisted Kuznetsov. They claimed that this was partly due to certain controversial anti-Lithuanian articles, which had made the Lithuanian intelligentsia suspicious of his intentions. Nevertheless, some Catholic clergy did supply information about the Lithuanians, their culture and everyday life.<sup>494</sup>

Vol'ter also used local official channels. The peasantry was informed beforehand that the ethnographer would visit their district. They were asked to prepare a meeting, find the best storytellers, singers and other suitable people. Meetings would take place in the municipal centres, even in the presence of gendarmes. Vol'ter, like Kuznetsov, stressed the importance of speaking to Lithuanians in Lithuanian, which encouraged their trust: a high imperial official sent from St. Petersburg was addressing them in their own language, thus raising their self-esteem.<sup>495</sup>

Interest in Latvians and Lithuanians within the ES of the IRGS grew so much that in 1893 a Lithuanian-Latvian Commission (LLC) was established.<sup>496</sup> Chaired by the head of the Section of Ethnography, V. Lamanskii, the commission met once a month. Its main task was to prepare special ethnographic questions concerning the research on Latvians and Lithuanians, as well as compile programmes for ethnographical expeditions, and also republish important articles related to Latvians and Lithuanians.<sup>497</sup>

In the summer of 1893, St. Petersburg University was preparing to send two philologists, Georgii G. Ginken (1869-1918) and Aleksandr L. Pogodin

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<sup>491</sup> "Predvaritel'nyi otchet E. A. Vol'tera," pp. 1-42; Eduard Vol'ter, "Obzor trudov po litovskoi etnografii (1879-1890)," *Zhivaia Starina* (1890), issue 2, part 3, pp. 177-183; "O litovskoi mifologii," *ARGO*, F. 54, op. 1, no. 9, pp. 1-6.

<sup>492</sup> A partial list of the people involved in Vol'ter's expeditions can be found in Semenov, vol. 3, p. 1263 (footnote); Vaižgantas, pp. 21-43, *passim*.

<sup>493</sup> In the Lithuanian press, published outside the Russian Empire because of the prohibition on printing in the Latin script, some correspondents urged Lithuanians to submit ethnographical data to the IRGS. A memo was provided indicating what topics people should pay attention to, and which parts of their life were most significant. Miglovara [Juozapas Miliauskas-Miglovara], "Cėsoriszka rusiszka geografiszka draugystė," *Auszra* (1885), no. 9, pp. 276-280.

<sup>494</sup> "Predvaritel'nyi otchet E. A. Vol'tera," p. 6; Vaižgantas, p. 35.

<sup>495</sup> "Predvaritel'nyi otchet E. A. Vol'tera," p. 17; Semenov, vol. 3, pp. 1263-1264.

<sup>496</sup> It has to be noted that no other ethnical group had a special commission within the IRGS.

<sup>497</sup> Semenov, vol. 3, p. 1270.



(1872-1947) to explore the North Western provinces. Knowing this, Vol'ter proposed that members of the LLC – Vol'ter, the ethnographer Henri Visendorf (Wissendorff/Visendorfs – 1861-1916) and the Lithuanian-born forester Pavel Matulionis/Povilas Matulionis (1860-1932),<sup>498</sup> who were specifically interested in the Lithuanians, should formulate a programme for the summer expedition together with Ginken and Pogodin. Under the leadership of Lamanski the section head and the ES secretary Fedor M. Istomin (1856-?), the group formulated a schedule of work for ethnographic research in Lithuania and Samogitia.

Vol'ter suggested several research directions for the Lithuanian-Latvian Commission's consideration. These were the re-issuing of the dialectological programme for Lithuanian and Samogitian studies, together with the republication of other important articles dealing with mythology and Lithuanian family life; the collection of toponyms, especially the recording of the names of Lithuanian locations (*urochishche*); the analysis of ethnographical material on Lithuania, which had been submitted to the Society during previous decades; the possible compilation of a map, which would show ancient Lithuanian dykes (*daika*); popular Lithuanian folk songs and refrains, relying on the printed material, and manuscripts kept in the archive of the IRGS; and the collection of various drawings of Lithuanian and Samogitian architecture, and supplying these sketches with names and descriptions of their separate parts thus indicating their national character.<sup>499</sup>

The first session of the LLC was held in 1893, chaired by V. Lamanski and with the participation of Vol'ter, Visendorf, Matulionis, Ginken, Pogodin, and Istomin. It was decided to devise separate programmes for individual ethnographical research questions, which were sent to local assistants and corresponding members. The questionnaires were printed in Russian with a translation into Lithuanian.<sup>500</sup>

While studying the Lithuanian language in 1893, Pogodin had visited Telshi *uezd* (in Kovno province). He stayed there for two weeks and during that time explored its vicinities. During this trip he investigated four hitherto, unknown Lithuanian dialects. From Telshi Pogodin continued to Raseiniai, where he stayed at the manor of IRGS corresponding member, the Lithuanian poet Mechislov Dovoina-Silvestrovich/Mečislovas Davainas-Silvestravičius (1849-1919). In this region, in Pogodin's opinion, the Samogitian and the Lithuanian dialects were merging. For two weeks he tried to translate one of the most important Lithuanian ethnographical books of the time "The description of wedding customs of Lithuanians from Veliuona district" (*Opisanie svadebnykh obriadov Velionskikh litovtsev*), written by the priest Anton Jushkevich/ Antanas Juška (1819-1880). In 1893

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<sup>498</sup> More on Matulionis, see chapter 5.3.2.1.

<sup>499</sup> Semenov, vol. 3, pp. 1268-1269.

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1269.

Pogodin published a selection of Dovoina-Silvestrovich's collection of Samogitian songs, and the following year an article on Lithuanian wedding traditions.<sup>501</sup>

On his return Pogodin presented an account to the LLC. He gave a presentation on the history of Lithuanian songs, claiming that from the dialectological material it was possible to distinguish four regions of Samogitia, one of which comprised Courland and represented the separate dialect of the Couronian tribe.<sup>502</sup>

In October 1893, Ginken presented his results from Volkovysk (Grodno province) and Vladislavsk (Suvalki province). There he had collected about 300 tales and riddles, made some notes on pagan Lithuanian gods, observed dialects, clothing, and Lithuanian physical anthropological types. These investigations were published in the journal of the ES *Zhivaia Starina* in 1894.<sup>503</sup>

At the December 1893 meeting, Vol'ter presented a paper entitled "On the meaning of the Lithuanian language for Russian archaeology and palaeontology" (*O znachenii litovskogo iazyka dlia russkoi arkheologii i palentologii*). After introducing the latest research on the Lithuanian lands, he noted that research on old Lithuanian topography could be a means not only of resolving ongoing quarrels about the area once settled by the Lithuanians, but also of affirming the archaic origin of present-day Lithuanians, which was dependant on specific ancient geological conditions.<sup>504</sup> It seems that Vol'ter did not deal with the question of ethnic boundaries; however, he cooperated with Sprogis and others in the field of Lithuanian onomatology – the science of names and their classification.

In 1888 Vol'ter and Matulionis prepared a statistical table-questionnaire, *Polnyi spisok obitaemym mestam v Vilenskoii gubernii*. The goal was to investigate Lithuanian and Belarusian place names, their location in relation to natural phenomena, numbers of inhabitants, their ethnic belonging, the language that was used at home, literacy and which other languages were known.<sup>505</sup> This work was partly influenced by the investigations carried out

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<sup>501</sup> Aleksandr L. Pogodin, "Otchet o poezdke v Kovenskuii gub. letom 1893 goda," *Zhivaia Starina* (1894), vol. 4, pp. 114-119; "Prilozhenie k otchetu A. L. Pogodina o poezdke v Kovenskuii gub. letom 1893 goda," *Zhivaia Starina* (1894), vol. 4, pp. 233-258.

<sup>502</sup> Aleksandr L. Pogodin, "Neskol'ko slov o Kuronakh," *Zhivaia Starina* (1893), vol. 3, pp. 571-572.

<sup>503</sup> Georgii G. Ginken, "Otchet o poezdke v Suvalskuii guberniiu," *Zhivaia Starina* (1894), vol. 4, pp. 133-142; "Materialy po litovskoi etnografii," *Zhivaia Starina* (1894), vol. 4, pp. 487-498.

<sup>504</sup> Semenov, vol. 3, p. 1270.

<sup>505</sup> "Polnyi spisok obitaemym mestam v Vilenskoii gubernii," ARGO, F.1-1882, op.1, n.13, pp. 60-63; 65; Eduard Vol'ter, *Spiski naselemykh mest Suvalskoii gubernii kak mater'ial dlia istroiko-etnograficheskoi geografii kraia*, (St. Petersburg: 1901), p. 1; Vaižgantas, "Eduardas Volteris", pp. 31-32. Earlier Vol'ter addressed the IRGS asking for support in researching ethnical statistics in Vitebsk province (*Izvestiia IRGO* (1888), vol. 24, p. 566).

by Koeppen. On the basis of his questionnaire Vol'ter composed statistical-ethnographical-geographical tables.

In 1895 and 1896 Vol'ter travelled to Suvalki province, inspecting some places to determine their ethnic composition and checking the official statistics. What interested him most, however, was old toponymics that could indicate the location of the extinct Iatvingian Baltic tribe, which, in his opinion, once lived within the province. In this way, the linguist became involved in the collection of place names indicating ethnic composition. The outcome was the publication of *Spiski naseleennykh mest Suvalkskoi gubernii* – the result of employing a multi-purpose questionnaire. This work can be seen as a continuation of Sprogis' alphabetical collection of old place names in Rossieny *uezd*. It is possible that the same kind of material was collected for Vil'na and Kovno provinces. Data on these provinces later ended up in the archives of the Kovno Province Statistical Committee but disappeared. The Vil'na' province data, according to some sources, was collected by Count Adam Alfred Broel-Plater (1836-1908) and sent to Krakow. There the material was incorporated into the publication of the *Obszar języka litewskiego w Gubernii Wilenskiej* by an anonymous author.<sup>506</sup> This map depicted a low percentage of Lithuanians and the domination of Belarusians and Poles.

Vol'ter's work for the IRGS produced a large amount of information on Lithuanians, thus closing this IRGS case. At the same time Vol'ter also opened doors for the Lithuanian intelligentsia to participate in imperial research. Their interest in their own Lithuanian culture found a positive response and received support from the imperial centre. Dovoina-Silvestrovich, F. Zykus, G. Petkevich/Petkevičaitė-Bitė (1861-1943), Juozas Brazaitis (1850-1926), Pr. Kushlis/Kušlys, Rokas Shliupas/Šliūpas (1865-1959) and others, began to submit their articles to the ethnographic journal *Zhivaia Starina*. Some of them became corresponding members (Dovoina-Silvestrovich, Petkevich – 1886, Silvestras Baltramaitis (1841-1918), Matulionis – 1891), and some full members (Ivan Iablonskii/Jablonskis (1860-1930) in 1896, Petkevich/Petkevičaitė-Bitė in 1905) of the IRGS. Finally, it should be noted that the Lithuanian intelligentsia began to participate in the activities of the St. Petersburg Geographical Society, because the NWS in Vil'na by that time was already inactive. Paradoxically, at a time when the local IRGS section refused to accept local non-Russians, the central institution was more open and liberal towards anyone who wanted to investigate Russia.

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<sup>506</sup> Vaižgantas, p. 32. Historians argue that this material was collected by elders (*starosty*) from the Vil'na province districts who were initially commissioned by Broel-Plater in 1890 (Efim Karskii, *Etnograficheskaia karta Belarusskogo plemeni* (Petrograd: 1917), pp. 7-8; Vytautas Merkys, *Tautiniai santykiai Vilniaus vyskupijoje 1798-1918 m.* (Vilnius: 2006), pp. 78-83). The Lithuanian historian Merkys also tends to think that the anonymous author was in fact Kazimierz Modernia (1843-1910), an amateur historian and secretary of the Vil'na deputation of nobility. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

The positive outcome of Vol'ter's expedition partly resembled that of Chiubinskii's investigation. At the beginning of the 1870s Kuznetsov failed to accomplish his task, primarily because of the lack of support from the still small circle of nationally conscious local Lithuanian intelligentsia. However, ten years later Vol'ter encountered much greater numbers of educated Lithuanians who willingly participated in this scholarly endeavour. Similar to the Ukrainian case, the Lithuanians received an impetus from the IRGS expedition and began their own collection of ethnographical material and publication of articles, thus becoming members of the Society. Once again the IRGS activities played a double role: by showing interest in Lithuanian culture, they distanced the Lithuanians further from the Poles; at the same time the investigation of local culture benefited nationalists by highlighting the difference of these lands and the people inhabiting them from their surrounding neighbours as well as the Russians.

### 3.4.3. The Belarusians

The Belarusians were the last dominant ethnic group in the Western provinces to begin a national movement. Until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were few people active within the Belarusian intelligentsia who were in a position to formulate nationalistic programmes.<sup>507</sup> However, for a long time the authorities regarded Belarusians as a part of the political Russian nation and therefore did not see any benefit in researching them.

#### 3.4.3.1. Maksimov's research on the Belarusians (1867-1868)

One element of the IRGS ethnographical-statistical expedition was to investigate the Belarusian lands, their ethnography, dialects and area. In 1867 the organising committee chose Sergei Maksimov (1831-1901) – a prominent Russian ethnographer – to carry out the assignment.

V. Lamanski, head of the ES, offered Maksimov this opportunity while also asking the historian Ilovaiski to support Maksimov's endeavours and act as a second researcher. An agreement was reached and Maksimov had to prepare a research plan, which was presented and discussed during a joint meeting of the Statistical and Ethnographical sections on May 18, 1867. Maksimov's main tasks were: 1) to investigate and determine the features which would indicate the borders between the Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Polish and Latvian ethnic groups, 2) to investigate the distinctive features of the Belarusians, who lived alongside Ukrainians on the right bank of the River Dnepr, 3) to determine the dialects of Belarusian and

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<sup>507</sup> For a brief comparative analysis between the Belarusian and Ukrainian formation of nations, see: Pavel Tereshkovich, "Ukraintsy i belorusy: sravnitel'nyi analiz formirovaniia natsii na fone istorii Tsentral'no-Vostochnoi Evropy XIX – nachala XX v.," *Perekrestki* (Minsk: 2004), no. 1-2, (online).

Ukrainian, and 4) to research Belarusian everyday life from the confessional, economic and other points of view both separately and in relation to the Poles, Lithuanians, Jews and other ethnicities. Maksimov was instructed to complete his travels by the end of 1868 while providing information about his progress in the meantime.<sup>508</sup> However the only report on the progress of the investigation was presented on March 22, 1868, where Maksimov described his methods and the difficulties he had encountered.<sup>509</sup>

Maksimov used two research methods – personal observations and interviews (*rasprosy*). From his perspective, personal observations provided material about the external aspects of life in the North Western provinces, while interviewing the local population revealed the specifics of their inner life. Maksimov started travelling in Mogilev province, which according to him was entirely Belarusian. He investigated the local dialects and concluded that they differed from Russian and Ukrainian, making them unique. Moreover, external observations led him to conclude that an important factor in identifying Belarusians was their specific agrarian way of life. However, when Maksimov attempted to obtain details about the inner structure of Belarusian life – he encountered strong distrust and uncooperativeness, which he assigned to the introverted nature of the people.

In order to fill the gaps in information about everyday life, he interviewed people from other related social groups who had constant contact with the Belarusian peasantry, i.e. the local clergy and the authorities. Yet, he was not satisfied with their answers either. According to him, the clergy was greatly influenced by the dominant Polish culture and ideology and thus was isolated from the peasantry. Officials from the local administration comprised two groups: those who did not understand the subtlety of Russification and prohibited anything that in their view was not “Russian” (which also included the distinct Belarusian culture) and those – mostly school teachers – who actually helped the ethnographer to understand the local ways of life.

Maksimov also encountered other peculiarities, such as the role of Jews, who for the researcher were not only the object of observations but also acted as mediators between himself and local officials. In an account to the IRGS, the ethnographer stated that he managed to observe only the external life of the Jewish population, because they were reluctant to talk about their private life. Maksimov also remarked that Belarusians and Jews coexisted with no great conflicts. Finally, as the major achievement of the expedition,

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<sup>508</sup> “Zhurnaly zasedanii komissii soedenennykh otdelenii Statistiki i Etnografii, dlia ustroistva statisticheskoi i etnograficheskoi ekspeditsii v Zapadno-Russkii krai” (May 18, 1867), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1867), vol. 3, pp. 128-129; Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 383-384.

<sup>509</sup> “Zhurnal zasedaniia Otdeleniia Etnografii IRGO” (March 22, 1868), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1868), vol. 4, pp. 134-138.

Maksimov pointed to the collection of material which allowed the demarcation the Belarusian western border.<sup>510</sup>

These results were achieved because of the extensive travels he undertook during 1867. Maksimov's route extended across the Grodno and Vil'na provinces, where he demarcated the Belarusian-Masovian and Belarusian-Lithuanian ethnographic borders. Travelling through Slonim and Novogrudok Maksimov reached Nesvizh, and then later visited Borisov, Cherven/Igumen, Mozyr, Pinsk and Kobryn. After completing this circle, Maksimov returned to Grodno province in order to research the Polish influence on Belarusians. Later, he relocated to the northern parts of the Belarusian lands – northern Vil'na and Minsk provinces as well as to the eastern parts of Vitebsk province.

In 1868 he made a trip along the Belarusian-Russian ethnographic border from Pskov via Opochka, Novorzhev and Usvyaty, from whence he turned north-west from Porech'e/Demidov to Smolensk, Vitebsk, finishing at Polotsk and Drissa. Later he travelled back to Grodno province, this time to its southern parts, where he established the Belarusian-Ukrainian border.<sup>511</sup>

After returning to St. Petersburg in the autumn of the same year, Maksimov declared to the IRGS that the Belarusian research had been completed, but he declined to do any subsequent research on the Ukrainians. The IRGS Council decided to release him from any further research, telling Maksimov that they eagerly awaited the results. The following year, the Ukrainian research was entrusted to Chiubinskii.<sup>512</sup>

Years passed however, without any scientific results being presented. Maksimov informed the organising committee (which at that time was already preoccupied with the ongoing research on Ukrainians and Lithuanians) several times that his work was progressing slowly. At the beginning of 1871, he presented an outline of the Belarusian ethnographical descriptions and maps, which he was preparing. He claimed that in the autumn of 1871 he would be ready with the description, map and reports.<sup>513</sup> However no results were presented. In 1872 Maksimov declared that the final description of the Belarusian ethnic group, based on his expedition, would be ready during the winter of 1872/73. Before submitting the final protocols, he promised to deliver several lectures based on his work, which, he estimated would

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<sup>510</sup> "Zhurnal zasedaniia Otdeleniia Etnografii IRGO" (March 22, 1868), pp. 135-137. During the following discussion the historian Koiyalovich explained that ethnographical research in the North Western provinces was still a dangerous occupation because martial law had not been lifted after the uprising. Moreover, Russification served as a pretext for some local authorities to prohibit everything they did not understand, thus making any ethnographic research difficult. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>511</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, pp. 385-386.

<sup>512</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 387-388; also, see Chapter 3.4.1.

<sup>513</sup> "Zhurnal komissii po snariazheniiu etnograficheskoi statisticheskoi ekspeditsii v Zapadno-Russkii kraii" (March 8, 1871), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1871), vol. 7, part. 1, p. 149.

consist of twelve printing sheets.<sup>514</sup> The IRGS, however, again received nothing. Fifteen years later, in 1892, the publicist and historian Pypin was still wondering about Maksimov's results on Belarusian ethnography.<sup>515</sup> It was known that part of the collected data had been incorporated in general articles and essays and also in the chapter on Belarusians in Semenov's "Zhi-vopisnaia Rossiia."<sup>516</sup>

Until Efim Karskii's successful trip to map the Belarusian ethnographic border almost thirty years later, there is no evidence of any other serious attempts being made to investigate and delimit this ethno-linguistic territory.

### 3.4.3.2. The first Belarusian ethnic map by Karskii (1903)

Karskii<sup>517</sup> was the first to compile a Belarusian ethnographic map. In 1899-1900 he participated in a scientific trip to explore Belarusian dialects in Grodno, Vil'na and Minsk provinces.<sup>518</sup>

This major expedition, which resulted in a three-volume study titled "The Belarusians" and the first Belarusian ethnographic map, began early in 1903. In January, Karskii received an invitation from the IRGS to take part in an ethnographic expedition to the Belarusian lands, which was funded by a 500 roubles donation from the Governor-General of the North Western provinces, Sviatopolk-Mirskii.

The main research goals were: 1) the identification of the Belarusian ethnographic borders with the Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Lithuanians and Latvians, 2) to become familiar with the Belarusian dialects and their dispersal, 3) the observation of local everyday life, 4) to validate old and collect new folklore. These goals, in Karskii's opinion, would have been difficult to achieve without the materials that had already been published and his own research, which had begun in 1886.<sup>519</sup> Karskii simplified the ethnic distinction of Belarusians and Lithuanians by ascribing the boundaries to the language used, i.e. if former Lithuanians spoke Belarusian he marked them as Belarusians and vice versa.<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> "Zhurnal komissii po snariazheniiu etnograficheskoi-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii v Zapadno-Russkii krai" (October 25, 1872), *Izvestiia IRGO* (1872), vol. 8, part. 1, p. 365.

<sup>515</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, p. 147.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170; Tokarev, pp. 303; 315.

<sup>517</sup> Efim (Jauchim or Jaukim) Fiodaravich Karskii (1861-1931) – prominent Belarusian linguist and ethnographer.

<sup>518</sup> Vitaut Tumash, "Jaukim Karskii: zhytsio, navukovaya spadchyna, pohlady (1861-1931)," in: Vitaut Tumash, *Vybranyia pratsy* (Minsk: 2002), pp. 145-146; 159-160.

<sup>519</sup> Efim Karskii, "Otchet o poezdke v Belarussiiu v techenie letnikh mesiatsev 1903 goda," *Izvestiia IRGO* (1905), vol. 41, pp. 705-706.

<sup>520</sup> Efim Karskii, *Belorussyy* (Warsaw: 1903), vol. 1, p. 4.



**Figure 13.** Karskii's ethno-linguistic border between the Lithuanians, Latvians and Belarusians in Vil'na province and around Vil'na city. Fragment from: Efim Karskii, *Belorussia* (Warsaw: 1903), vol.1

He began his trip in Vil'na, with the expectation of investigating the ethnical situation in the Novoaleksandrovsk district. However, Karskii's student, a teacher at Kovno boys' gymnasium, V. Kaminski, offered to help. Kaminski made a circuit around the district according to Karskii's plan and collected information. According to this research the main locations functioning as ethnic border markers were Sudzy, which had no Belarusians; Pliussy and Slabada in Krasnogorskaia *volost'* where Belarusian Catholics dominated; and Vidzy, where Belarusians constituted only a small part of the population as was also the case in Tverech'. There was a low percentage of Belarusians in the town of Rimshany; however they dominated in Smolvly. Later Karskii continued his travels, investigating the ethnic situation and presenting examples of the local dialects and folklore.



Karskii's first demarcation of the Belarusian ethnic boundaries in 1903 was conceptualised in his explanatory notes, which were published at the end of the First World War in several editions and entitled *Etnograficheskaia karta Belarusskogo plemeni*. Karskii entered into a polemic with the Lithuanian and Polish ethnographers, statisticians and cartographers, presenting the Belarusian side, which had already become part of an ongoing nationalist debate.

He stressed the ambiguity of the statistical material and the multiple identities of the disputed mixed territories. A lack of both ethnic and confessional stability made a more precise demarcation impossible; therefore Karskii primarily used a linguistic criterion, stating that the actual spoken language was the identification of ethnic belonging.<sup>521</sup>

Based on this principle, the detailed border between the Lithuanians and Belarusians drawn by Karskii began west of Lake Drisviaty, and included part of Novoaleksandrovsk *uezd*, which, according to Karskii and other researchers, was a transitional area between the two ethnicities. However, attempting to draw the ethnographical line in areas where Belarusians and Lithuanians lived together and spoke both languages proved to be very difficult (Figure 13).<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Efim Karskii, *Etnograficheskaia karta Belarusskogo plemeni* (Petrograd: 1917), pp. 1-2.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6. In detail, the Lithuanian-Belarusian ethno-linguistic line went from Lake Drisviaty from where the borderline stretched south into Vil'na province, extending to the Disna River, then curving through the Svetsiansy district and following a south-western direction reaching Lithuanian – Tverechi, Godutsishki, Svetsiansy – *volosti*, in the south leaving the Belarusian *volosti* of Komai, Lyntupy, and Kemelishki. Further south there were completely Belarusian settlements: Starche, Svir, Shemetov, Nestanishki, Iasev, Zanarochi, Voistom, Duboty, Kabylniki and Vishneva.

Karskii's projected ethnic border then crossed the River Zhemaitianka and curved across Vil'na province. North of the line were the Lithuanian districts of Ianishki, Gedroitsy, Shirvinty, Musniki, while to the south there were the Belarusian *volosti* of Nemenchin', Podberez'e, Moishagoly, Solechniki, Vorniany, Reshy, Mitskuny, Kerdziaitsy, Shumsk, Bystritsa, Rukoime and Rudomino.

At the town of Kernova, the border crossed over to the left bank of the River Viliia and the line continued further south, encountering Belarusian areas at Ev'e and Troki, from the western side at the village of Mustyniany, including Dovgerdzishki, Bogdanantsy (in Shumelishki *volost*) and Tal'kovo village (Ganushishki *volost*), then to Mezhirech'e leaving Rudzishki railway station in the south, continuing east and south-east into the Lida *uezd* at the place named Podbor'ia; further it continued into Oshmiany district. The Lithuanian ethnicity dominated in Dzevenishki *volost* and in part of Sedlisk *volost*, namely the villages of Germanishki and Pashale. On the eastern side, Grauzhishki, Ol'shany and Traby *uezd*, and in the south Sobotniki, Geranony, Siedlisk and Politnitsa were Belarussian. The remaining *volost* of the Oshmiany *uezd* was ascribed to the Belarusians. Lithuanians in small numbers were found in several villages of the Bakshty *volost*, for instance in Liugomovichi, Iuratsishki and Soly.

Further, the ethno-linguistic border stretched over the northern part of Lida *uezd*: from Geranony in a south-western direction almost to the Bastuny railway station and up to Zabolot'ia. Then the border turned north, leaving the village of Pelesy in the east and the Lithuanian *volost* of Rodun'; the Belarusian part here included the mixed areas of Eishishki and Nacha (Koniavy *volost* was Lithuanian). From Eishishki the border turned south-west splitting Dubichi *volost*, by the Dub Lake, in the east. In Lida *uezd*, the *volosti* south of the line were exclusively Belarusian while only Aleksandrov *volost* belonged to the Lithuanians

In sum, Karskii's Lithuanian-Belarusian border constituted a Belarusian perspective on the ethnic situation in Vil'na province at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The problem of Vil'na province will be discussed in the final chapter of this study, when looking at the Lithuanians and their projections of national Lithuanian territory. Suffice to say here, that the highly complicated multilingual and religious distribution in this particular province allowed the Belarusians (at that time mostly represented by the imperial scientists), the Lithuanians and the Poles to all deduce that their particular ethnicity dominated in the territory. Therefore, Karskii's map depicted neither a true, nor a false ethnic distribution, because a section of the population around the delimited border could comprehend and speak all three – Belarusian, Lithuanian and Polish – languages. Hence the identification of ethnic belonging greatly depended on the language in which the question was posed by a researcher.

#### **3.4.3.3. The North Western Section and the research of the Belarusians (1910-1914)**

For a long time the authorities treated the Belarusian lands and Belarusians as an underdeveloped branch of Russian ethnicity. The wide-spread Polish culture and language among local elites had diverted the focus of the authorities and scholars away from this ethnic group. Yet it was a specificity of the North Western lands that the higher social groups were culturally Polish, although they themselves could have been of Belarusian descent.<sup>523</sup> Therefore, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Belarus and Belarusians were presented in an unflattering way: “the climate is shifting, humid and unhealthy. The nature is monotonous, melancholic and poor. Everywhere there are endless gloomy woods, impassable dams and swamps. The people are rude, uneducated and poor, feeble and physically weak. The language is incorrect [i.e., compared to standard Russian – V.P.] and ugly. The character of the folk is unstable. Radical rudeness alternates with obedient subservience. Laziness, carelessness, sluggishness, an inclination to alcoholism, petty thefts, short-sightedness, a disposition and habit in everyday life that follows the advice and suggestions of Jewish innkeepers (*korchmarei*), advice and suggestions that were not unselfish – these are the distinctive features of the Belarusian

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in the northern part. From the Dub Lake, the projected Belarusian-Lithuanian ethnic border stretched until the Grodno province from the headwaters of the Rotnichanki River to the Neman River by Druskeniki.

From this place Karskii began analysing the Belarusian-Polish border. Lithuanian numbers here were small, according to the statistics that had been collected, while Polish inhabitants (or, rather, people who identified themselves as Poles) made up either the first or second dominant group in the *uezdy* of Grodno province. Karskii separated the Poles from the Belarusians, i.e. Polish Belarusians from Poles. Karskii, *Belorussiy*, vol. 1, pp. 7-9; *Et-nograficheskaya karta Belarusskogo plemeni*, pp. 5-8.

<sup>523</sup> V. Stukalich', “N. Y. Nikiforovskii: 1845-1910 gody,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1910), vol. 1, pp. 132-133.

masses.”<sup>524</sup> This was the attitude (perhaps somewhat exaggerated) of local officials towards the Belarusians.

During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through ethnographical, geographical and other kinds of research, and also the growth of the economy within the North Western provinces, this negative Belarusian stereotype slowly started to disappear. Instead, Belarusians began to be portrayed as interesting and important. No wonder that the reopened NWS (in 1910) planned to study the Belarusian lands almost exclusively. The priorities of the ethnographic research of the NWS were the publication of Belarusian folklore, the compilation of a Belarusian Gypsy dictionary, and the study of the district (*volost'*) courts from the perspective of customary law.<sup>525</sup>

The four volumes of the NWS journal *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* were almost entirely dedicated to the Belarusian lands. From its beginning until the First World War, the NWS was moving towards identifying the multi-ethnic coexistence of a number of groups in the North Western provinces and towards a perception that this region was unique and important, and also that it was possible to have a multi-ethnic Empire. Just before the outbreak of the war, at a meeting of the NWS (May 30, 1914), F. Kudrinskii presented a paper entitled “The ethnographical character of a Belarusian,” in which he described the typical set of behavioural attributes that were commonly associated with this ethnic group. After the presentation Dimitrii Dovgiallo/Dauhialla (1868-1942), an administrator of the NWS, initiated a discussion on how the historical past had affected the formation of the character of the ethnic groups within the region.<sup>526</sup>

Although the initial programme was only partially completed during the period prior to the outbreak of the war, these tendencies were quite apparent. The NWS was dedicated to the research on the eastern parts of the North Western provinces. One of the reasons for such a choice could have been the already active Lithuanian intelligentsia, which began publishing Lithuanian folklore and other information in the periodical publications of the IRGS from the mid 1880s, and especially its establishment of the *Lithuanian Scientific Society (Lietuvių Mokslo Draugija – 1907, forthwith - LSS)* as an organisation for Lithuanians and other scholars who were interested in this ethnic group.<sup>527</sup> The first Lithuanian national scientific society was structured according to the principles of the IRGS. The NWS and the LSS were both

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<sup>524</sup> Stukalich', pp. 133-134.

<sup>525</sup> “Zhurnal Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO” (January 29, 1910), *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1910), vol. 1, p. 276.

<sup>526</sup> “Protocols of the NWS meetings for the year 1914,” VUBRS, F. 34-GD715, p. 12.

<sup>527</sup> At the same time local Poles also established their own scientific organization, the Fellowship of Science Lovers of Vil'na (*Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Wilnie – 1907*). Their research interests concentrated on the space within the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Despite the political animosity between the Lithuanians, Poles and Russians, the scientific organisations found grounds for cooperation.

stationed in Vil'na but directed their scientific gaze in opposite directions – the first to the east, and the second to the west.

It is hard to say whether there was any ethnic animosity between these two groups of scholars. There was a dialogue between the official section of the IRGS and the Lithuanian organisation: several articles were translated and reprinted in the NWS journal from *Lietuvių Tauta*, the LSS publication. News about the proceedings of the LSS appeared from time to time in the *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO*. Members of the IRGS section made an official visit to the LSS museum and wrote positive reviews about the work of the Lithuanians and their supporters.<sup>528</sup> However, with the outbreak of the First World War the functioning of the NWS ceased.

### *Concluding remarks*

In conclusion, it can be said that during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the perception and geographical representation of “Lithuania” shifted. Instead of a single, historical geo-political term, new ethno-geographical and ethno-political terms for Belarus and Lithuania evolved. The IRGS expeditions had a direct influence in breaking down the former construction and introducing the new national perspectives. “Lithuania” shrunk from being a broad historical into a narrow ethnic concept, while the previously marginal “Belarus” expanded greatly occupying more than merely the initial two provinces with which it was associated in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The administrative-territorial structure that was the Western region became heavily fragmented and subsequently divided into ethnographic regions of Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians. Despite the fact that the imperial authorities were striving to integrate and unify the whole territory of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Russian scholars, especially ethnographers, (un-)consciously contributed to the imperial ethnic regionalisation and to the rise of national self-consciousness among the local population, while at the same time providing background material for future national separatism. Arguably, this paradox in the scientific investigations contradicted imperial policy and was one of the factors, which not only highlighted the multi-ethnic and multicultural structure of the Russian Empire, but most of all “transported” national ideas into different parts of the state.

The same can be said of the members of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, who through their participation became involved in the imperial ethnographical, statistical and geographical research. The initial scientific pro-

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<sup>528</sup> “Litovskoe Uchenoe Obshchestvo,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1911), vol. 2, pp. 354-360; I. Bassanovich [J. Basanavičius], “Pechiati korolia Mindovga i vel. Kniazia Keistuta,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1912), vol. 3, pp. 257-264; “Kak litovtsy v drevnoste perepravlialis’ po vode,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1914), vol. 4, pp. 23-36; I. G., “Litovskoe Nauchnoe Obshchestvo,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1914), vol. 4, pp. 227-228; on visiting the museum of the LSS: “Doklady v ocherednykh sobraniakh,” *Zapiski Severo-Zapadnogo Otdela IRGO* (1914), vol. 4, p. 265.

gramme gradually evolved into a national political conflict over territories and population between the local ethnic groups, mainly between the Belarusians, the Lithuanians and the Poles. Political arguments sought legitimacy through scientific results, which, as was shown, were unable to fully support the interpretation of any of the opposing sides. What they did show was the complicated ethnic situation in the western borderlands of the Empire.

Nevertheless, the Russian imperial administrative-territorial grid succeeded in preventing greater political conflicts. The perception of the Empire as a multi-ethnic but unified state to some extent restricted national movements from manoeuvring freely and drawing up solid ethno-*political* borders. Once again imperial scientists turned out to be useful to the nationalists, because the former were permitted to draw ethnographical maps – the dividing lines between the peoples.

## 4. Presentations of the Lithuanians on the Ethnographical Maps of the Russian Empire (1840s – 1880s)

The historiography of ethnic cartography remains until the present day an underdeveloped field of research. Scholars have only briefly touched upon the development of ethnic maps and their role in particular societies.<sup>529</sup> As discussed in the introductory chapter, the techniques and methods for analysing maps are not yet firmly established. Here, I will try to examine the ethnographic maps using mainly a method of source criticism and at the same time placing this material in the historical context of the time. Other methodological options, which were discussed in the introduction, will be used when necessary. Nevertheless, the following text should be perceived rather in a constructivist light, where each map is regarded as a “snapshot” in time, which was made by a particular cartographer, in a particular political, social, economic, scientific, etc. milieu. In this context, it would be more appropriate to talk about individual *presentations* of ethnic territories and borders on maps, rather than regarding them as *representations*, i.e. “objective” visualisations of the “real” ethnic borders.

In this and the following chapter, two distinct but interconnected constructions of ethnic cartography will be analysed. First, this chapter will investigate the official mapping of the Lithuanian lands. The following chapter will discuss further the Lithuanian national appropriation of imperial cartographic materials and the subsequent production of its own visual presentation of Lithuania. In order to establish a certain consistency of analysis, I will follow Herb’s suggestion that in order “to understand the role of maps in a construction of national territorial identity, maps have to be deconstructed and analysed in their ‘leaps of textuality’: the *cartographic image* itself, the *material it accompanies*, and the *larger social context*. National identity is an artificial construct, which is conceptualised and disseminated through social discourse. Maps have to be viewed as part of this discourse, as simply another text.”<sup>530</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> Ethnic maps are usually discussed within the general framework of thematic maps (see for example works by: Barbara B. Petchenik, Arthur H. Robinson, Gilles Palsky, Ingrid Kretschmer, Eduard Imhof, Guntram Henrik Herb, Francine Hirsch.

<sup>530</sup> Guntram Henrik Herb, *Under the Map of Germany: Nationalism and Propaganda 1918-1945* (London and New York: 1997), pp. 7-8 [emphasis added].

Therefore, my further investigation will concentrate on the production of maps and their historical context while at the same time attempting to discover the *messages* that each map conveyed. Obviously, a retrospective view from a different epoch distorts and conceals particular meanings that were visible to readers in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Russia.<sup>531</sup>

As discussed earlier, the major breakthrough in Russian cartography occurred during the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the compilation of the first all-imperial land surveys and the establishment of cartographic institutions, as well as the general policies of modernisation of the Russian state. The initial attempts at ethnic demarcation also began in the same period, when the Russian geodesists were asked to collect, record and sometimes map additional information (social, cultural, historical, archaeological etc.) about the lands they surveyed.<sup>532</sup> Many ethnographic maps produced during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were primarily based on historical data, old chronicles and archives. It was only with the growth of statistics that scholars could begin to research the contemporary situation of the state.

In the following I will present the major ethno-cartographic works devoted to the Lithuanians that were made by imperial cartographers and scholars during the period from the 1840s onwards. The last map discussed here is dated 1875. After this there was a hiatus and discussions on compiling a new all-imperial ethnographic map only began again in the period prior to the First World War, with no significant results being achieved.<sup>533</sup> Moreover, the focus of this chapter will be on official and unofficial cartographic studies. Thus, explanation of the historical context and the circumstances surrounding the production of the maps, as well as the discussion of the visual representation of ethnic territories, not only reveals a growing body of knowledge about the Russian state, but also highlights the ever increasing politicisation of science, and of ethnography in particular.

It is commonly considered that the first Russian ethno-cartographic work was Koeppen's ethnographical map of European Russia, published in St.

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<sup>531</sup> As Casti indicates, "the message conveyed by a map is a self-defined message which assumes an independent status in the process of communication. Ultimately, it is this *self-referentiality* that determines the map's effectiveness: its ability to act as a substitute for direct experience of the physical reality portrayed means it can fulfil a specific role in orchestrating the various components – or individual acts – that play a part in the process of territorialisation." (Emanuela Casti, *Reality as Representation: the Semiotics of Cartography and the Generation of Meaning* (Bergamo: 2000), p. 9)). Therefore, the message of a map eludes the original intention of the cartographer. The contextualisation of a map as well as the analysis of its production then becomes crucial in discovering the self-referentiality of the map as well as projecting its possible reception in a given historical and societal milieu.

<sup>532</sup> See Chapter 2.2. Valerie Kivelson demonstrates that the demarcation of different ethnic territories occurred sporadically even in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, during the political centralisation of Muscovy, in combination with the gradual increase in the scientific exploration of the state. Valerie Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom: the Land and its Meanings in Seventeenth-Century Russia* (Ithaca and London: 2006).

<sup>533</sup> Hirsch, pp. 35-51.

Petersburg in 1851. However, looking specifically at the Lithuanian case, the beginning of ethnic demarcation can be traced to the works of the prominent Slovak ethnographer, linguist and publicist Pavel Josef Šafařík. Arguably, it is on his ethno-linguistic map of the Slavs that the Lithuanian ethnic territory was visualised for the first time.

#### 4.1. The Lithuanians on the first ethno-linguistic map of the Slavs (1842)

During the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century various learned societies began to appear all over Europe. They were interested in philology, geography, ethnology, archaeology and other aspects of human activity. These scientific endeavours complemented the appearance of political nationalisms, which exploded in 1848 during the “Spring of Nations,” when there was a significant qualitative change in European society.<sup>534</sup>

Russian society was also affected by these European trends. The beginnings of Russian ethnic cartography can be related to the works of various European scholars, but principally to the famous linguist and Slavist, Pavel Josef Šafařík (1795-1861). Despite the fact that he was not a citizen or subject of the Russian Empire, his extensive research on the Slavs nevertheless provided a significant foundation for Russian scholars, which underpinned the intensification of their ethnic investigations.

Šafařík was born into the family of a Slovak pastor and studied at Jena University (1815-1817). After leaving university he became interested in the Slavic peoples, and gradually started to explore them by investigating their history, culture, literature and especially their languages.<sup>535</sup> Šafařík’s pioneering works influenced the evolution of Slavic nationalism in the Austrian and Russian empires and in the German lands, and played a significant role in the development of the Pan-Slavist movement. Among his many writings, one particular study, entitled “Slavic Ethnography” (*Slovanský národopis* – 1842), became highly important in the construction of the first image of the ethnic territory of the European Slavs.

This book described the distribution of Slavic and non-Slavic languages and dialects from the Balkans to northern Russia and the Ural Mountains. He compared the languages, tracing their changes and thus contributing to the field of comparative linguistics, which was still in its infancy. Yet the great-

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<sup>534</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848* (New York, Toronto: 1962).

<sup>535</sup> Aleksandr S. Mylnikov, *Pavel Šafařík vydaiushchiisa uchenyi-slavist* (Moscow, Leningrad: 1963); P. J. Šafařík (1795-1861), *zbornik chlanaka povodom 100-godishnitse smrti* (Novi Sad: 1963); Bronius Genzelis, “P. J. Šafaříkas ir Lietuva,” in: Bronius Genzelis, *Kultūru sąveika* (Vilnius: 1989), pp. 149-155; I. Sedlák (ed.), *Pavol Jozef Šafařík a slovenské národné obrozenie, zborník z vedeckej konferencie* (Martin: 1989); *Pavol Jozef Šafařík a slavistika* (Martin: 1996).



est value of this study lay in the appended map entitled “The map of the Slavs” (*Slovanský Zemlěvid*), which was warmly received.<sup>536</sup> In the introduction to the first Russian edition of *Slovanský národopis*, the translator and prominent Russian Slavist Osip M. Bodianskii (1808-1877) wrote: “here for the first time the Slavs appear as one visible family, the children of one mother.”<sup>537</sup>

Beside the scientific and cultural significance of the publication, the appearance of *Slovanský národopis* had an important political function. At that time the Austrian Empire was gradually beginning to introduce a policy of Germanisation of the non-German ethnic groups and Šafařík’s study interfered with this state policy to some extent by focusing attention on the Slavs rather than on the Germans. In this way the book acted as a stimulus to the activation of Slavic national consciousness in Austria and in the neighbouring German lands, as well as helping to strengthen the growth of Slavocentric identification in Russia. The depiction of the Slavic lands, which on the map appeared to be much more extensive than the Austrian Empire, presumably helped the non-Germans to resist the official political line.

Moreover, the study (and even more so the map) revealed Russia’s unique position as the only independent Slavic state. This supported Russia’s later attempts to establish itself in the role of champion of the Pan-Slavist movement. This particular interest became one of the major factors that helped raise the importance of ethnographic boundaries (especially in the Balkans), and which also resulted in the subsequent politicisation of ethnography.<sup>538</sup>

The material presented in *Slovanský národopis* can therefore be regarded to some extent as pre-nationalist or “raw,” i.e. susceptible to exploitation by different ideologies. For the early European Pan-Slavists it supplied material that allowed the identification of the Slavic ethnicities while also providing a depiction of the territories inhabited by the Slavic world. For the Russian Pan-Slavists the map revealed their ultimate goal – the unification of the Slavs under a Russian protectorate. Yet at the same time the other – non-Slavic – ethnic groups such as the Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians or Magyars could also benefit from the map, because it also visualised their ethnic borders.

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<sup>536</sup> Hans Kohn, “Romanticism and Realism among Czechs and Slovaks,” *The Review of Politics* (January 1952), vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 34-35.

<sup>537</sup> I. (Osip M.) Bodianskii, “Predislovie perevodchika,” in: P. I. Šafařík, *Slavianskoe narodopisanie* (Moscow: 1843), p. v. Šafařík’s map was not the first to depict the Slavic world. In 1825 Ján Kollár (1793-1852) published the “Map of the Slavs”. However, it did not become as popular as the *Slovanský Zemlěvid* (Josef Hürský, “Vznik a poslání Šafaříkova Slovanškého Zemlěvidu,” in: Pavel J. Šafařík, *Slovanský národopis* (Praha: 1955), p. 223).

<sup>538</sup> Wilkinson, pp. 27-32. Russia began the push for the establishment of political boundaries based on ethnic territories. The first attempts were made during the Conference in Constantinople in 1876, when Russia argued for ethno-political boundaries in the Bulgarian lands (Ibid., pp. 62-65).

As mentioned above, the boundaries of the Slavic world were delineated according to linguistic affinity, for which data was derived from different statistical sources. Šafařík acknowledged the difficulties that this task of investigating the multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic territories entailed. Therefore, he focused on the methodological preparation and logical delimitation of his research: “while estimating areas of language and dialects in the linguistically fragmented territories, I have paid the greatest amount of attention to the language of the common people, or the local – village – inhabitants, as natives and a stable element, rather than to the language of city-dwellers, who were most often the newcomers, vagabonds, or renegades.”<sup>539</sup> This positioning did not allow him to undertake, however, detailed analysis of smaller ethnic areas, which meant that he only covered territories with dominant ethnic groups.

Although this methodological assumption allowed him to proceed to some extent with the research, its implementation remained somewhat complicated. The major conundrum lay in the credibility or otherwise of the (official and unofficial) statistical data, which at the beginning of the 1840s was far from accurate. Šafařík tried to compensate for its poor quality by undertaking an extensive correspondence with other Slavists and scholars and asking for new data. In this way information on the Russian Empire was obtained through his cooperation with Koeppen, Mikhail P. Pogodin (1800-1875), Bodianskii, Izmail I. Sreznevskii (1812-1880) and others.<sup>540</sup>

In his introduction, Šafařík explained that he had tried to move beyond the abstractness and incorrectness of his sources, while at the same time he asked his readers not to judge the study solely from a scientific point of view. Šafařík considered that his work was incomplete and that it would be continued in the future and further improved.<sup>541</sup> Later, however, certain Russian Pan-Slavists considered his critical evaluation of the statistical data to be too cautious and therefore that it somewhat distorted the “real” picture of the Slavic world,<sup>542</sup> although when we consider the methodological preparation and organisation of this study, the approach he used was pioneering and in accord with the scientific culture of the time. Therefore, the *Zemlěvid* may be considered to be the first modern ethno-linguistic map, which depicted

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<sup>539</sup> Šafařík [Šafařík], p. ii.

<sup>540</sup> Ibid., p. i; Mylnikov, pp. 41-42; 79-99; Luboš Řeháček, “Slovanský Národopis s Helediska Filologického,” in: Pavel J. Šafařík, *Slovanský národopis* (Praha: 1955), pp. 200-205; Ludmila Lapteva, “Znachenie tvorcestva P. I. Šafarika dlia razvitiia slavianovedeniia v Rossii,” in: *Pavol Jozef Šafařík a Slavistika* (Martin: 1996), pp. 217-222.

<sup>541</sup> Šafařík [Šafařík], pp. iii-iv.

<sup>542</sup> Another ethnic cartographer Rittikh described it as unstated, full of allusions and presuppositions. Aleksandr F. Rittikh, *Slavianskii mir* (Warsaw: 1885), p. ii.

above all, the ethnic borders of the Baltic peoples – the Lithuanians, the Latvians and the Estonians (Figure 14).<sup>543</sup>



**Figure 14.** The Latvian and Lithuanian ethno-linguistic territories. Fragment from Šafařík's map in *Slovanský národopis* (1842)

The cartographic basis of the *Zemlěvid* was the map of Europe drawn by the German cartographer Reymann.<sup>544</sup> As to the Russian Empire, not many de-

<sup>543</sup> In 1839, Šafařík made his first attempt to produce a map of the Slavs – *Ethnografická Mappa ke Slowanským Starožitnostem*, according to the material presented in the *Slovanské starožitnosti* (1837). Hůrský, p. 224-228.

tailed maps were available to European scholars, especially as the Russian topographers were still carrying out their surveying and topographic mapping of the state.<sup>545</sup>

The technical side in producing the *Zemlěvid* was fairly straightforward. The composition of the map was undertaken through the collection of ethno-linguistic statistics and names of habitations. Later the collected data was marked on Reymann's atlas, coloured in and then transferred onto the large-scale map.<sup>546</sup>

The Balts, like several other non-Slavic ethnic groups, appeared on the *Zemlěvid* because they neighboured the Slavs. The Lithuanians together with the Latvians were presented as being the closest ethnic groups to the Slavs in terms of their origin, language, and character. This closeness was also indicated by the use of a different shade of the colour green (the Estonians, for example, were coloured in a contrasting orange colour, while the German colour was yellow), although their territory was distinctively separated by a solid line. The precision of the Lithuanian and Latvian ethnic boundaries was the result of the information provided by Koeppen, who since the late 1820s had been personally collecting data on these two ethnicities,<sup>547</sup> and by the Polish historian Waclaw A. Maciejowski (1793-1883).<sup>548</sup> As can clearly

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<sup>544</sup> Pavel J. Šafařík *Slovanský národopis* (Praha: 1955), pp. 9-10. The so-called "Reymann map" (*Topographische Spezialkarte von Mitteleuropa*), was a series of topographical maps started by the German engineer and cartographer Daniel Gottlob Reymann (1759-1837) in 1806. Updated versions of this topographical atlas continued to be published until 1908. Walter Satzinger, "Grand Atlas d'Allemagne edited by Johann Wilhelm Jaeger, Frankfurt am Main, 1789" *Imago Mundi* (1976), vol. 28, pp. 94; Hürský, p. 228.

<sup>545</sup> For a more detailed presentation, see chapter 2.5.

<sup>546</sup> One of the significant features of Šafařík's map was its precision. The text, which complemented the map, indicated the particular places that were marked in detail. Another significant point was the high cartographical quality of the publication. The distribution of colours, the inscription of the place-names in their original languages, the use of the newest statistical and demographical data, its clearness, suggestiveness, etc. all indicated the author's high scientific ability. Hürský, pp. 220-223.

<sup>547</sup> On Koeppen, see chapter 4.2.

<sup>548</sup> Maciejowski provided Šafařík with information on the Lithuanians, their language and place names. Pogodin and Sjögren also contributed information on the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians. Šafařík also established contact with some of the local Lithuanian-born writers, such as Dionizy Paszkiewicz/Poška (1757-1830) – a poet, ethnographer and collector of antiquities, who also submitted material regarding the Lithuanian ethnic group. Moreover, Šafařík collected books in Lithuanian and about Lithuanians (Hürský, pp. 255-260; Genzelis, pp. 152-153).

In the 1850s, Šafařík was introduced to several Russian linguists (namely, A. Hilferding and S. Mikutski) – the "specialists on the Lithuanians." However, these scholars were advocates of the official Russian ideology. Mikutski argued that the Lithuanian language was in fact Slavic, which differed from Russian only externally. At first Šafařík valued Mikutski's input, but after discovering the political context behind his linguistic arguments, he ended the correspondence (Genzelis, pp. 151-152). The Slovak scholar participated in different scientific organisations that investigated ethnicities. Among his many memberships, he took part in the activities of the "Archaeographical Commission" in Vil'na (established 1857), being especially interested in the field of archaeology. Michal Slivka, "Pavol Jozef Šafařík a jeho

be seen on the map (Figure 14), the small villages and manor houses, which served as identification points, especially on the Latvian-Estonian ethnic border, revealed the author's detailed knowledge of the area.

Furthermore, Šafařík decided to transcribe the names of local cities and towns in the forms that were used by the dominant ethnic groups.<sup>549</sup> This decision resulted in a rather peculiar outcome: in the case of Lithuanians, despite the fact that the nomenclature he used mostly derived from Russian or Polish, the transcription in the Czech alphabet brought them closer to normative Lithuanian, which was introduced only at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and which was also based on the Czech alphabet. Some of the place names on the map, for example, in Eastern Prussia, were recorded in Lithuanian rather than German forms.

The linguistic border of the Balts with the Finno-Ugric Estonians and the Slavs started at Lake Pechiora and continued until the town of Zaškovichi<sup>550</sup> on the Viliia River; and then continued on to the south and southwest – from Zaškovichi to Horodno,<sup>551</sup> i.e. to the lower reaches of the River Ganchia, where it ended at the Neman River. These borders divided the Latvians from the Russians and Belarusians. Further, the ethno-linguistic dividing line separating the Lithuanians and the Poles, ran from the Ganchia River to Lake Nordenburg (in Prussia).<sup>552</sup> The line separating the Lithuanians and the Germans ran from Lake Nordenburg to the Curonian Lagoon at Labiava.<sup>553</sup> The western border continued via the coastline of the Baltic Sea. It stretched as far as the settlements of Pissen<sup>554</sup> and Irben<sup>555</sup> in Courland province. In the north, the Latvian ethnic territories ran alongside the coast of Riga's Lagoon, except for the small intrusion of the Livs (in Šafařík's text – Estonian Chuds) – a Finno-Ugric ethnic group.<sup>556</sup> This group inhabited the coastal

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vzt'ach k archeológii," in: I. Sedlák (ed.), *Pavol Jozef Šafařík a slovenské národné obrodenie, zborník z vedeckej konferencie* (Martin: 1989), p. 256.

<sup>549</sup> Sreznevskii, reviewing Šafařík's *Slovanský národopis*, indicated that this work presented Slavic (!) habitation names spelled in local dialects. The review was published in 1843, in the "Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniia" (part 38, pp. 1-30). Reference from: Lapteva, p. 219 (footnotes 9, 10).

<sup>550</sup> Zaškovichi – Zaskavičy, Maładečna district, Minsk region, Belarus. While attempting to write the habitation names in the local languages, Šafařík altered their spelling or used the names that were sent by his correspondents. The editors of the 1955 reprint of *Slovanský národopis* attempted to identify the place-names, although they were unable to avoid making mistakes. I have undertaken their additional verification, supplying old and new forms of the habitation names, as well as names that are or were known among other ethnic groups in the region. The names in the main text are used in accordance with the original spelling found on Šafařík's map and in his text.

<sup>551</sup> Horodno – (lt. Gardinas; pl. Grodno; rus. Grodno) – Hrodna, Belarus.

<sup>552</sup> Nordenburg (lt. Ašvėnai) – Krylovo, Kaliningrad Oblast, Russian Federation.

<sup>553</sup> Labiava (ger. Labiau; lt. Labguva; pl. Labiawa) – Polessk, the Kaliningrad Oblast, Russian Federation.

<sup>554</sup> Pissen – at present Pissen farm on the coast of the Baltic Sea, Ventspils district, Latvia.

<sup>555</sup> Irben – Irbe, Latvia.

<sup>556</sup> It was to the lands of this ethnic group that the IRGS organised its first ethnographical expedition in 1846. See chapter 3.3.1.

area between the town of Irben and Lake Angern.<sup>557</sup> Further, the Latvian territory adjoined the Estonian lands, along the line that ran from Aderkas-Muiza,<sup>558</sup> through Valtenberga-Muiza,<sup>559</sup> Rujen,<sup>560</sup> Valka,<sup>561</sup> Senna-Muiza,<sup>562</sup> Hani-Muiza,<sup>563</sup> Krusta-Pils<sup>564</sup> ending at Lake Pechiora.<sup>565</sup>

On the Russian imperial administrative map, the Lithuanian and Latvian territories occupied almost all of Courland, the western part of Vitebsk (the Dinaburg,<sup>566</sup> Ljucyn,<sup>567</sup> Režica<sup>568</sup> districts, and parts of Druja<sup>569</sup> *uezd*), the southern half of Livonia, almost all of Vil'na (only in the eastern and the south eastern part – in the Braslav,<sup>570</sup> Svėncjany,<sup>571</sup> and Ošmjany<sup>572</sup> *uezdy* – did the Belarusians constitute a majority), and the northern part of Grodno (Lida<sup>573</sup> and Grodno *uezdy* along the line from Zhirmuny<sup>574</sup> to Gozhy<sup>575</sup>), the northern part of Avgustov province (known as Zapushchianskaia – from the Neman River until the towns of Sejny<sup>576</sup> and Suvalki,<sup>577</sup> in particular, the three districts: Sejny, Kalvaryja,<sup>578</sup> and Maryampol<sup>579</sup>). In Prussia the Baltic ethno-linguistic line continued from the north eastern corner of the Prussian state border, via the towns of Sarkau<sup>580</sup> (on the Curonian Lagoon bay), Labiava,<sup>581</sup> Darkiany<sup>582</sup> and Oleško.<sup>583</sup> The last Lithuanian village, accord-

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<sup>557</sup> Lake Engure, Latvia.

<sup>558</sup> Aderkas-Muiza – Aderkas manor should be identified as present-day Svėtciema (Sveiciema) muiža/manor in Limbažu district, Latvia, which in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was also known as Dorff Swatzhem or Neu-Salis.

<sup>559</sup> Valtenberga-Muiza (lv. Valtenberģu Muīža) – located close to the town of Mazsalaca (est. Vāike-Salatsi; ger. Salisburg), Valmiera district, Latvia.

<sup>560</sup> Rujen (ger. Rujen) – Rūjiena, Valmiera district, Latvia.

<sup>561</sup> Valka (est. Valga; ger. Walk; lv. Valka) – Valka/Valga is a border-town divided between Latvia and Estonia.

<sup>562</sup> Senna-Muiza (ger. Sennen) – a manor house, which was located in a place called Senna, on the road from Harjel (Hargla, Vōrumaa county, Estonia) to Werro (est. Vōru, Vōru county, Estonia), close to the town of Rauge (Rōuge, Vōrumaa county, Estonia).

<sup>563</sup> Hani-Muiza – perhaps Haanja mõis/manor, Vōrumaa county, Estonia.

<sup>564</sup> Krusta-Pils (ger. Schloss Neuhausen, lv. Krustapils or Vastselīna, est. Vastseliina, rus. Novy Gorodok/Novgorodok) – Vastseliina castle, Vōrumaa county, Estonia.

<sup>565</sup> Šafařik, pp. 113-114

<sup>566</sup> Dinaburg (ger. Dünaburg) – Daugavpils, Latvia.

<sup>567</sup> Ljucyn (ger. Ludsen) – Ludza, Latvia.

<sup>568</sup> Režica (ger. Rositten) – Rēzekne, Latvia.

<sup>569</sup> Druja – Druja, Braslau district, Belarus.

<sup>570</sup> Braslav (ger. Breslau; lt. Breslauja; pl. Brasław; rus. Braslav) – Braslaŭ, Belarus.

<sup>571</sup> Svėncjany (rus. Svėntsiāny, former Zavilejsk) – Švenčioniai, Lithuania.

<sup>572</sup> Ošmjany (lt. Ašmena; pl. Oszmiana; rus. Oshmiany) – Ašmiany, Hrodna region, Belarus.

<sup>573</sup> Lida (lt. Lyda; pl. Lida) – Lida, Hrodna region, Belarus.

<sup>574</sup> Zhirmuny - Žyrmuny, Lida district, Hrodna region, Belarus.

<sup>575</sup> Gozha - Hozha, Hrodna district, Belarus.

<sup>576</sup> Seiny (lt. Seiniai) - Podlasie Voivodeship, Poland

<sup>577</sup> Suwałki (lt. Suvalkai; ger. Suwalken) - Suwałki Voivodeship, Poland.

<sup>578</sup> Kalvaryja (ger. Kalvarien; pl. Kalwaria) – Kalvarija, Lithuania.

<sup>579</sup> Maryampol (pl. Mariampol) - Marijampolė, Lithuania.

<sup>580</sup> Sarkau – Lesnoi, Kaliningrad district, Russia.

<sup>581</sup> Labiau (lt. Labguva; pl. Labiawa) – Polesk, Kaliningrad district, Russia.

ing to Šafařík's description was Norkiten<sup>584</sup> (close to Tapalcken<sup>585</sup>), seven miles north of Königsberg<sup>586</sup> on the road to Instenburg.<sup>587,588</sup>

As can be seen from the map, Šafařík also distinguished the linguistic border between the Lithuanians and Latvians. He followed the historical-administrative boundary, which had previously separated the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from its vassal state – the Principality of Courland. Because this particular border was relatively stable for a long time, it had created rather distinct ethno-political and confessional dependencies on both sides.

Although the whole of Vil'na, and parts of Grodno and Avgustov provinces and the northern part of Prussia were, according to the author, entirely Lithuanian,<sup>589</sup> other ethnic groups also inhabited these lands thus constituting their ethnic minorities. Šafařík mentioned four parishes of Latvians in Upite<sup>590</sup> and also in Vilkomir<sup>591</sup> *uezdy*, namely around the small towns Okniste<sup>592</sup> and Južinty.<sup>593</sup> Beside the Latvians, other ethnicities such as the Estonians, Germans, Jews, Belarusians, Poles, Lithuanian Tatars and others, lived together with the Lithuanians.

Moreover, some Lithuanian villages remained outside the delimited ethno-linguistic territory. These ethnic exclaves were found in Vileika<sup>594</sup> *uezd* (Minsk province), some were located in Novohrodek<sup>595</sup> (Vil'na *uezd*), while there were several villages in Slonim province, for example, Zhybur-tovshchina, Nortsevichi, amongst others. Finally, several Lithuanian-speaking villages were marked in the Polish Sokolka<sup>596</sup> *uezd* (in Belostok district).<sup>597</sup>

The statistical information collected allowed Šafařík to argue that in 1842 the Lithuanians and Latvians comprised a population of 2,380,000 individu-

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<sup>582</sup> Darkiany (ger. Darkehmen also Angerapp (1938-1945); lt. Darkiemis; pl. Darkiejmy) – Ozersk, Kaliningrad district, Russia.

<sup>583</sup> Oleško (ger. Oletzko also known as Marggrabowa and Treuburg) – Olecko, Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship, Poland.

<sup>584</sup> Norkiten (ger.) – Mezhdureche, Kaliningrad district, Russia.

<sup>585</sup> Tapalcken (ger.) – Talpaki, Kaliningrad district, Russia.

<sup>586</sup> Kralovec (ger. Königsberg; lt. Karaliaučius; pl. Królewiec) – Kaliningrad, Russia.

<sup>587</sup> Instenburg (on the map marked as Instruc) – Cherniakhovsk, Kaliningrad district, Russia.

<sup>588</sup> Šafařík, p. 115.

<sup>589</sup> In comparison, the Latvian lands had multiple German ethnic islands, predominantly around the urban areas and the Finno-Ugric territory in the northern part of Courland province.

<sup>590</sup> Upite (pl. Upita) – Upytė, Panevėžys district, Lithuania.

<sup>591</sup> Vilkomir (pl. Wiłkomierz; ger. Wilkomir) – Ukmergė (old version Vilkmėrgė), Vilnius district, Lithuania.

<sup>592</sup> Okniste – Aknīste, Jēkabpils district, Latvia.

<sup>593</sup> Južinty (in the text Uzhvinty) – Južintai, Rokiškis district, Lithuania.

<sup>594</sup> Vileika – Vialejka, Vialejka district, Belarus.

<sup>595</sup> Novohrodek (lt. Naugardukas; pl. Nowogródek; rus. Novogrudok) – Navahrudak, Hrodna district, Belarus.

<sup>596</sup> Sokolka – Sokółka, Podlasie Voivodeship, Poland.

<sup>597</sup> Šafařík [Šafařík], *Slavianskoe Narodopisanie*, p. 106; Šafařík *Slovanský národopis*, pp. 115-116.

als. Separately, there were 1,438,000 Lithuanians (1,282,000 in the Russian Empire, mostly belonging to the Roman Catholic confession, and 156,000 in Prussia, almost entirely Lutheran), while the Latvians, who lived exclusively in the territory of the Russian Empire constituted a population of 942,000 individuals (822,000 Roman Catholics and 120,000 Protestants). Later Koeppen criticised Šafařík's ethno-confessional data, claiming that around 1850 the Latvian distribution according to religion was: Protestant – 680,000, Catholic – 145,000 and Orthodox – 45,000.<sup>598</sup> Although the statistical data was constantly updated, these numbers still remained inaccurate and problematic to use.

Šafařík concluded his presentation of the Balts on a rather optimistic note by stating that both ethnicities (not taking into account their low level of literacy) already contained the rudiments of a potentially growing national consciousness. He based this conclusion on several Latvian and Lithuanian dictionaries that had been published during the 18<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>599</sup>

Wilkinson points out that Šafařík's ethno-linguistic map contained many defects, chiefly the imprecision of the ethnic borders, which somewhat decreased the cartographic value of the work.<sup>600</sup> Without doubt, it was far from being a complete work in terms of depicting the ethnic distribution in Central and Eastern Europe. However, it could be argued that the *Zemlěvid* was a multifunctional study. Its value rested on the pioneering scientific approach it employed, while it also played a significant role in the spread of ethnic cartography contrary to (or in the case of the Russian Pan-Slavists in support of) the political argumentation of the period.

## 4.2. The first ethnographical map of European Russia (1851)

From the 1840s onwards ethnography, ethnic statistics and related fields were rapidly gaining popularity in the Russian Empire. As discussed earlier, the founding of organisations, such as the IRGS in Russia and similar institutions around the world, was an indication of the ever-growing interest in local and foreign ethnic groups, their cultural and historical traditions. In Russia, the first person to combine the results of ethnography, statistics and linguistics on a map was the prominent academician and statistician Peter Koeppen (1793-1864).

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<sup>598</sup> Koeppen [Petr Keppen], "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh litovskago plemeni," *Zhurnal Ministerstva Vnutrennikh Del* (1851), vol. XXXIV, issue 4, p. 16.

<sup>598</sup> Wilkinson, p. 35.

<sup>599</sup> Šafařík, *Slovanský národopis*, pp. 115-116.

<sup>600</sup> Wilkinson, p. 35.



Koepfen's approach to the field of ethno-statistics and ethnic cartography driven by rather pragmatic goals. In his opinion, the first and foremost concern of the statistician was to determine the *space* of a country and the *numbers* of its inhabitants. Therefore, "to show the division of the inhabitants according to their ethnicities has to be the occupation of Ethnography; based on this research, and from the data presented by Geography, the Statistician has to derive his conclusions."<sup>601</sup> The problem with such a view was that around the 1840s Russian ethnography was still in its formative stage and the scholars who provided information about ethnic distributions in Russia came mainly from other scientific fields. Consequently, in Koepfen's view, their reports lacked methodological correctness and precision. Therefore, around 1840, he decided to begin his own ethno-statistical investigation, at the same time realising that his endeavours might fail precisely because of the insufficient ethnic data.<sup>602</sup>

Being a prolific statistician Koepfen was meticulous in acquiring vast amounts of information. His primary work included the collection and indexing of habitation lists (towns, villages, farms etc.) from all over European Russia, while at the same time determining the ethnic composition of their inhabitants. He constantly requested that local authorities, the Russian Academy of Sciences and other competent bodies should provide statistical data on each province or *uezd*. The preparations for the first issue of the *Ethnographical Atlas* (1848) took him more than ten years, despite the fact that in the initial stages of this work he decided to limit his scope of investigation by excluding the Caucasian and Siberian regions.<sup>603</sup> By the end of these preparations he had created a huge card-file catalogue, which contained statistical, ethnographical and geographical information on the whole of European Russia.

Based on this material, Koepfen published two cartographic studies – the *Ethnographical Atlas of European Russia* (1848),<sup>604</sup> and the *Ethnographical Map of European Russia* (1851).<sup>605</sup> The latter became a very popular publication finding a readership among a wide circle of people. The atlas was a detailed, huge and expensive publication, printed in only three copies.<sup>606</sup> For

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<sup>601</sup> Koepfen, Peter [Piotr Keppen], *Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii, Petra Keppenna, izdannoi Imperatorskim Russkim Geograficheskim Obshchestvom* (St. Petersburg: 1852), p. 3.

<sup>602</sup> Koepfen, *Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>603</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>604</sup> Peter Koepfen [Petr Keppen], *Etnograficheskii Atlas Evropeiskoi Rossii, sostavitel' Piotr Keppen, chlen Russkago Geograficheskago Obshchestva* (St. Petersburg: 1848).

<sup>605</sup> Peter Koepfen [Petr Keppen], *Etnograficheskaiia Karta Evropeiskoi Rossii* (St. Petersburg: 1851).

<sup>606</sup> Peter Koepfen, "Der Litauische Volksstamm: Ausbereitung und Stärke desselben in der Mitte des XIX. Jahrhunderts," *Bulletin de la classe des Sciences Historiques, Philologiques et Politiques de L'Academie Imperiale des Sciences de Saint-Petersbourg* (1851), vol. VIII, no. 18-19, p. 275 (footnote no. 7); Karskii, *Belorussy*, vol. 1, p. 235.

this reason its existence and scientific value remained and still remains rather unnoticed.<sup>607</sup>

It should be noted that neither the 1848 atlas, nor the 1851 map distinguished the distribution of the Russians (i.e. the “official” Russian nationality, which comprised the Belarusians, the Russians and the Ukrainians). Koeppen dealt exclusively with the non-Russian ethnic minorities (excluding the Caucasus and Siberia). The Russian territory remained uncoloured and ethnically undivided (Figures 15 and 16). Although at the beginning of his investigations he decided not to map the Slavs, some Slavic ethnicities, for example, the Bulgarians, the Poles and the Serbs, subsequently appeared on the map, mainly because Koeppen was able to acquire information about the places of their habitation.<sup>608</sup> In some cases, particular Slavic ethnic groups, such as, for example, the Poles in the Western provinces were depicted as having their territorial exclaves among the non-Russians. Therefore, these compact ethnic islands were also marked.

The distribution of the non-Russian ethno-linguistic groups was presented in accordance with the system of ethnic classification introduced by the linguist, ethnographer and academician Andreas J. Sjögren (1794-1855). During the time when the maps were being made, Sjögren’s system was still not fully established. However, despite the limited information on some smaller ethnic groups (such as the Finno-Ugric groups around St. Petersburg), Koeppen still attempted to incorporate them into the system and subsequently put them on the map.<sup>609</sup>

The system of ethnic classification played another important technical function. Each group was assigned a specific colour on the map. In the preparatory stages, Koeppen obtained several collections of detailed maps of European Russia. At the same time he decided not to follow any predefined systems of coloration that had been developed among contemporary thematic cartographers. Instead, a tri-colour system became the foundation for his maps where each tint represented a specific ethnic group: yellow for the Finns, blue for the Tatars, while red identified the Germans. In this way he established a pattern, which was later expanded through the use of additional shades thus creating a palette of contrasts (38 colours in total). In addition, each ethnic group received a numeric identification based on its alphabetic order (Figure 16). In the end, the map broke down the territories of the non-Russian ethnic groups by colour and by number. These technical issues were

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<sup>607</sup> One copy of the atlas is kept in the archives of the Russian Geographic Society.

<sup>608</sup> Koeppen, “Der Litauische Volksstamm,” pp. 25-26.

<sup>609</sup> Although the method of ethno-linguistic classification was borrowed from Sjögren, in several cases Koeppen still attempted to verify its correctness by asking local authorities and intelligentsia to provide additional examples of particular languages and dialects. However, the vastness of the European part of the Empire and the huge amounts of information required did not allow him to verify all accounts. Koeppen hoped that in future the IRGS would update and improve his map (Koeppen [Keppen], “Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii,” pp. 19-23).

solved with the help of the surveyor and Military Governor of the Irkutsk province, Karl K. Ventsel.<sup>610</sup>

Good technical preparation, however, did not eliminate all the practical obstacles involved in the work. Not all of the data could be mapped adequately. The density of the population in some regions along with its multi-ethnic composition required a simplification of the demarcation and the omission of certain details. For example, in the places where the Jews or the Germans were living in compact settlements among other ethnic groups, they were marked according to the predefined colours. However, in the places where they lived in a scattered formation, Koeppen decided not to mark them at all. Some nomadic ethnic groups, such as the Gypsies, were even more difficult to demarcate, yet some of the territories in which they lived appeared on the map.<sup>611</sup>

The cartographic basis was taken from the *Special Map of Western Russia* (which comprised 59 full sheets and 3 in folio format), additionally complemented with maps from the *Detailed Map of Russia* (39 sheets). Koeppen highlighted the names of the places using colours assigned to a specific dominant ethnic group. Then he joined the dots and coloured the spaces. After completing the drawings on the large-scale maps, the information was transferred to a large-scale cartographic format, which had been specifically developed by the IRGS. It had been created on the basis of the *Postal Map of the Russian Empire* by adding the absent parts that were uncharted on the original map, and also by updating it according to the latest surveying results.<sup>612</sup> Such was the technical side of the making and publication of the four-sheet *Ethnographical Map* (1851). The *Atlas* was printed without the reductions and depicted all the details that Koeppen had marked during the initial stage of mapping.

As can be seen, the IRGS played an active role in the creation of these ethnographic maps. This was due to the fact that in 1845, after the establishment of the Society, Koeppen became the head of its Statistical Section. This position allowed him to dedicate more time and effort to this ethno-cartographic project, widen his correspondence with local officials and IRGS members in the provinces, as well as acquire additional funds and technical assistance.

Koeppen was uncertain about the validity of his data. To verify its correctness he supplied the local authorities and individual correspondents with the information he had on their regions, expecting them to check and correct the ethno-statistical information. At the same time he was urging them to provide additional data. Moreover, Koeppen closely followed the official provincial newsletters (*Gubernskie vedomosti*), taking cuttings of articles

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<sup>610</sup> Koeppen [Keppen], "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," pp. 24-25.

<sup>611</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>612</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-10.

about different ethnic groups, and in this way constantly updated his “database.” He also used the travel notes of other researchers and personally explored the vicinities around St. Petersburg investigating the Finno-Ugric population. In 1849 relying on the help of the IRGS Council, Koeppen attempted to acquire permission from the Minister of Finance, Vronchenko, to modify the Ministry’s statistical questionnaires. He asked him to include additional questions on the ethnic belonging of the respondents. Vronchenko, however, rejected Koeppen’s proposal.<sup>613</sup>

Nonetheless, the publication of Russia’s first ethnographic map became one of the top priorities for the newly established IRGS. This task was taken very seriously, especially as most of the work had already been done. In April 1846, the IRGS Council decided that this publication had to fit onto a four-sheet map. In October, Koeppen was asked to find several competent topographers who could begin transferring data from the large-scale maps onto the IRGS base map. Later the Council assigned additional funds for employing another assistant, who helped Koeppen in preparing the explanatory note. In February 1847, the topographers Sukharin and Orlov completed their work.<sup>614</sup>

Koeppen, on the other hand, was still trying to obtain additional information on several ethnic groups. In relation to this he turned to the Minister of Internal Affairs (as indicated earlier, the IRGS was subordinated to the Ministry and the Minister acted as the mediator between the IRGS and other imperial authorities) and asked for his assistance in obtaining the missing data concerning the habitation names in the North Western provinces.<sup>615</sup> These last-minute requests concerned the Latvians and the Lithuanians.

As already mentioned, the most important source in creating ethnic (and generally any thematic) maps was statistics. Koeppen began to collect ethno-statistical material on Lithuanians and Latvians in the early 1820s.<sup>616</sup> He also admitted that the most difficult task was obtaining information that was at least approximate on the Baltic peoples. In 1827 he published an article in Russian, German and Polish on the origins, languages and literature of these ethnicities. The main purpose of this text was to start a polemic with the local intelligentsia in order to elicit more material on the Balts.<sup>617</sup> However, these articles provoked no response and so this endeavour was unsuccessful.

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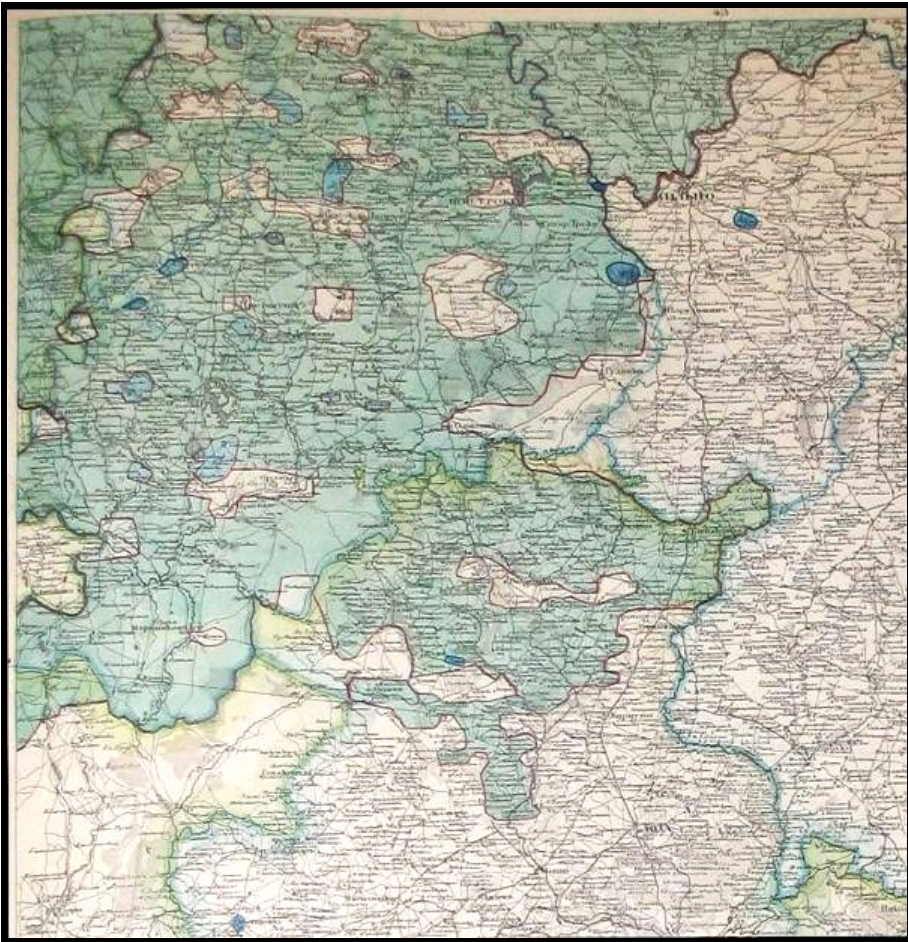
<sup>613</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, p. 42.

<sup>614</sup> Ibid., pp. 42-43.

<sup>615</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>616</sup> The first material was acquired in 1821 (Köppen [Koeppen], *Der Litauische Volksstamm*, p. 284; “Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii,” p. 14-15).

<sup>617</sup> “O proiskhozhdenii, iazyke i literature Litovskikh narodov, so vklucheniem kratkago obozreniia Litovskoi istorii do XVI veka,” *Materialy dlia istorii prosveshcheniia v Rossii* ((St. Petersburg: 1827), vol. 3, pp. 151-253). Later it was translated into German (*Ueber den Ursprung, die Sprache und Literatur der Litauischen (oder Lettischen) Völkerschaften* (Mitau: 1829)) and Polish (*O początkach, języku i literaturze narodów Litewskich, przez Piotra Kępena* (Wilno: 1829)).



**Figure 15.** The Lithuanian ethno-linguistic territory around the city of Vil'na. Fragments from Koeppen's *Etnograficheskii atlas Evropeiskoi Rossii* (1848). The Lithuanian area is coloured green, while the not coloured territory was predominantly Belarusian. The Polish territory was coloured in light blue and the Lithuanian Tatar territories were indicated with the use of dark blue

He continued looking for statistical data on these ethnic groups. In autumn 1847, Koeppen circulated letters addressed to Vil'na's Military-Governor, the Governor-General of Grodno and to the governors of Minsk and Kovno provinces. His main question concerned the distribution and separation of the Lithuanian and Samogitian villages. To make their task easier, Koeppen even supplied the names of the villages and settlements, which he thought were inhabited by these ethno-linguistic groups and even organised the habitation names in alphabetical order. However, the results proved to be very uneven.<sup>618</sup> It was only in early 1850 that Koeppen started receiving more

<sup>618</sup> The results concerning Shavli *uezd* (Kovno province) were especially controversial. Koeppen compared the data obtained with the results that were kept in the Russian Academy of

credible data from the local authorities in Grodno, Kovno and Vil'na provinces. Finally, thanks to the assistance of the Russian Academy of Sciences, he acquired ethno-statistical data on the Lithuanians in the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>619</sup>

Koeppen continued to update his archive with the most recent statistical information. In an article in 1851, he explained and corrected mistakes and deficiencies that were present in his earlier material. Striving for higher statistical precision and at the same time proceeding with his work, Koeppen urged his colleagues to use all available data to continue the improvement of this work.<sup>620</sup>

As for the Lithuanian speakers, it was already known that they lived in the territories of two neighbouring states: the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia. Based on the spoken dialect, in Russia they were divided into two groups – the Lithuanians and the Samogitians. One of Koeppen's respondents, a statistician in the Vil'na Governor-General's office, P. Kukul'nik, claimed that Samogitia was the "true heart" of the Lithuanian lands.<sup>621</sup>

As indicated earlier, the separation of the Samogitians and their lands from the Lithuanians derived from a long historical tradition. During the time of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania the Samogitians had an individual administrative unit – the Samogitian Palatinate. It was only after the Third Partition in 1795 and abolition of the old administrative system that the Samogitian lands were conjoined with the territories of the Lithuanian speakers especially, after 1843 when a common Kovno province was established.

Moreover, the Samogitian nobility was much less Polishised in comparison to their Lithuanian counterparts. This allowed their own cultural awak-

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Sciences. The comparison revealed that this particular *uezd* (in the Academy's dataset) contained 82,828 Lithuanians and Samogitians, while Koeppen's respondents indicated only 9,293 (Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," pp. 279-281).

<sup>619</sup> Koeppen [Keppen], "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," pp. 14-15.

<sup>620</sup> "Because of the current situation of the science [the ethnic statistics], we should and must use these approximate results, without any fear that they are digressing from the essence of the matter anymore than all other results; at the same time, we cannot but be happy when we see that one or another corner of the ethnographical map attains its numeric particularity, due to the systematic counting of the inhabitants, which in any case, is more reliable than the [earlier] results based on deduction and guesses, regardless of how grounded or wise they were." Koeppen [Petr Keppen], "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti," pp. 1-2.

<sup>621</sup> Initially Koeppen enquired which villages in Grodno, Vil'na and Minsk provinces were inhabited by Lithuanians and Samogitians. Kukul'nik indicated that the Samogitians did not inhabit these provinces at all, living only in three Kovno province *uezdy* and also on the western side of Ponevezh *uezd*. He also pointed out that the main differences separating the Lithuanians from the Samogitians were their dialects, way of life, customs and traditions, comparing them to the differences between the Ukrainians and the Russians. To underpin his observations, Kukul'nik provided Koeppen with examples of the spoken language from different *uezdy*, as well as with the Lithuanian-born Bishop M. Volonchevski/Valančius' (1801-1875) book "The Samogitian bishopric" (*Žemajtiu Wiskupiste* (1848)), which was written in the Samogitian dialect. Koeppen [Keppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," p. 276; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti," pp. 3-4.

ening to start and develop as early as in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This movement was later called the Samogitian Literary Movement, which resembled other romantic literary societies of the time. A small group of people composed historical, literary and religious texts in both the Samogitian and Lithuanian languages. The endeavours of this voluntary literary movement faded during the 1860s due to its small number of activists, and also because of the restrictive measures introduced by the Russian authorities on cultural activities, together with the policy of Russification that was implemented after the 1863-1864 uprising. Although the Samogitian Literary Movement was not engaged in political activities and concentrated mostly on the spiritual and culture spheres, it nevertheless greatly influenced the development of the Lithuanian National Movement in the 1870s.<sup>622</sup>

Returning to the question of ethnographic mapping, Koeppen determined that the Samogitians mainly inhabited Telshi, Shavli, and Kovno *uezdy* (in Kovno province), while Novoaleksandrovsk<sup>623</sup> and Vilkomir *uezdy* belonged exclusively to the Lithuanians. In Ponevezh and Kovno *uezdy* there was a mix of these two ethnic groups. Using official data (based on the 1834 revision) he calculated that around 1850 in Kovno province there were 308,683 Samogitians and 260,111 Lithuanians.<sup>624</sup>

In Vil'na province, the Lithuanians were found in Lida, Sventsiany, Troki and Vil'na *uezdy*. Koeppen also received information that there were Lithuanian speakers in Oshmiany *uezd*, however, this data was uncertain and he decided not to include it on the map (an identical situation occurred with several Latvian villages in Vilkomir *uezd*). In total, Vil'na province had 138,320 statistically identified Lithuanians.<sup>625</sup> The northern part of Grodno province had several Lithuanian villages, namely in Grodno and Slonim *uezdy*. Their population was low – 2,338 inhabitants.<sup>626</sup>

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<sup>622</sup> On the Samogitian movement see, for example: Vincas Maciūnas, *Lituanistinis sąjūdis XIX amžiaus pradžioje: susidomėjimas lietuvių kalba, istorija, tautotyra* (Kaunas: 1939); Jerzy Ochmański, *Litewski ruch narodowo – kulturalny w XIX wieku (do 1890)* (Białystok: 1965); Juliusz Bardach, *O dawnej i niedawnej Litwie* (Poznań: 1988), pp. 191-259; Egidijus Aleksandravičius, *Kultūrinis sąjūdis Lietuvoje 1831-1863 metais. Organizaciniai kultūros ugdymo aspektai* (Vilnius: 1989); also: *Lietuvių atgimimo kultūra. XIX amžiaus vidurys* (Vilnius: 1994). The Lithuanian historian Staliūnas recently argued that considering its potential, Samogitian (not Lithuanian) nationalism had almost no chance in advancing to the modern, i.e. political, stage. For more details, see: Darius Staliūnas, "Kas būtų jeigu...? Kelios XIX a. Lietuvos istorijos alternatyvos," *Kultūros Barai* (2006), no. 5, pp. 71-77.

<sup>623</sup> Former Braslav uезд. Present day Zarasai, Lithuania.

<sup>624</sup> For statistics on the Samogitians in Kovno province see: Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," pp. 277-278; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 4-5; "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," pp. 31, 37.

<sup>625</sup> In Vil'na district 14 parishes were identified as being inhabited by Lithuanians. Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," pp. 282, 290; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 5-6; "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," pp. 31, 35.

<sup>626</sup> Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," p. 283; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," p. 6; "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," pp. 31, 36.



**Figure 16.** The Lithuanian and Latvian ethnic territory. Fragment from Koeppen’s *Etnograficheskaia Karta Evropeiskoi Rossii* (1851). On this map the Lithuanians were indicated by the use of the colour dark green and the number 19, the Poles received a light blue colouring and the no. 26, while the Lithuanian Tatars – were marked with a light blue colour and the no. 29 (Courtesy of Helsinki University Library)

Koeppen was rather sceptical of the validity of the official ethno-statistical data for Courland province. To correct it, he turned to his local correspondents and sent them already prepared statistical tables. The results from Courland revealed that small groups of Lithuanian speakers were found in the Doblen, Friedrichstadt, Goldingen, Grobin, Hasepoth, Illuxt, Talsen, Tuckum and Windau districts.<sup>627</sup>

<sup>627</sup> The present-day Latvian names are: Doblen (Dobele), Friedrichstadt (Jaunjelgava), Goldingen (Kuldīga), Grobin (Grobiņa), Hasepoth (Aizpute), Illuxt (Ilūkste), Talsen (Talsi),



Further, Koeppen explored the ethnic statistics of the territories that belonged to the Kingdom of Poland (from the left bank of the River Neman up to the imperial border with Prussia). He indicated that three *uezdy* (Mariampol', Kalvaria, Seiny) in the northern part of Avgustov province, had 183,916 Samogitian speakers.<sup>628</sup> In Eastern Prussia the Lithuanian speakers inhabited the northern parts of the Königsberg region: in Memel district – 34,000 mostly living in villages; Labiau district (the ethnic border was drawn along the River Deime/Dejma) had 26,800 Lithuanian speakers, two-thirds of whom lived in the countryside.<sup>629</sup> Furthermore, Gumbinnen, Darkehmen and Goldap<sup>630</sup> districts also had a Lithuanian speaking population. In total, Koeppen calculated that there were 252,700 Lithuanian speakers. He primarily acquired this information from the statistical material collected by the Prussian statistician Friedrich W. Schubert.<sup>631</sup>

According to Koeppen's figures in all of the above-mentioned regions there lived approximately 1,154,000 Lithuanians and Samogitians. The number was lower than the figure presented in Šafařík's study (1,438,000). There was also a decrease in the case of the Latvians, as there were 942,000 Latvians in Šafařík's study compared with 872,000 in Koeppen's. The total number of Balts fell from 2,380,000 in 1842, to 2,026,000 according to his 1848 calculations.<sup>632</sup> One of the reasons for the difference might have been that Koeppen did not estimate numbers using religion as the criterion for ethnic identification, which had been partially used by Šafařík. This being said, in one of Koeppen's articles certain confessional estimations were pre-

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Tuckum (Tukums) and Windau (Ventspils). Here Koeppen identified and calculated 6,562 Lithuanians in rural areas, and 872 in towns making 7,434 in total (Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," p. 282; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh litovskogo plemeni," pp. 6-7; "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," pp. 31, 37.

<sup>628</sup> Koeppen [Keppen], "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 7-8. In October 1849, he received 82 pages of habitation names from the local authorities of these *uezdy*. He was informed that the people living there spoke only Samogitian (Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," p. 283). Later, ethnographers and linguists determined that the northern Suvalki region had its own specific dialect, hence naming its inhabitants – Suvalkiečiai. It is interesting to note, that this dialect became the basis of the present-day normative Lithuanian language.

<sup>629</sup> The most southern Lithuanian settlement in Prussia (also highlighted by Šafařík) was the village of Norkiten. In Norkiten church, according to Koeppen, the local priest was performing ceremonies in Lithuanian. Köppen [Koeppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," pp. 284-285.

<sup>630</sup> For the present-day place names see the footnotes to the previous chapter.

<sup>631</sup> On his way from Königsberg to Russia in around 1824, Koeppen took the opportunity to investigate the Prussian and Russian Lithuanian ethnographic border. This inspection gave him an insight into how to distinguish these two related parts of the same linguistic group. Later, in 1850, Schubert informed Koeppen about a collection of Prussian Lithuanian songs recorded by the ethnographer L. Rhesa/Réza's and about A. E. Preuss's notes on Lithuanians in his study on Prussians. These linguistic and ethnographic collections helped Koeppen to verify and modify his ethnic map: Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," pp. 284-285; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 8-10; "Ob etnograficheskoi karte Evropeiskoi Rossii," p. 14 (footnote).

<sup>632</sup> Koeppen [Keppen], "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 10-15.

sented. Arguing that Šafařík had presented incorrect confessional numbers, Koeppen indicated that Roman Catholics comprised a population of approximately 900,000 people, while Protestants numbered about 250,000, and Orthodox – 4,000.<sup>633</sup>

The difference between Šafařík's and Koeppen's statistical figures can be explained in several ways. The latter used more accurate and updated statistics, which subsequently highlighted the level of approximation that had been used in the earlier ethnic estimations. Yet, perhaps, the most significant source of statistical imprecision was the ambivalence of local ethnic (self-) identification, which, as discussed earlier, was still causing confusion among ethnographers and statisticians at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, in the North Western provinces, ethnic numbers continued to fluctuate between the Belarusian, Lithuanian and Polish ethnic groups, which was also visible in terms of the decreasing Lithuanian territory on Koeppen's map.

Geographically the Lithuanians occupied 1,100 square miles: in the Russian Empire – 800, in the Kingdom of Poland – less than 120, and in Eastern Prussia – around 200. The Latvian space was larger – 1,200 square miles, all of which was in the Russian Empire (Courland province – 496, Livland – less than 400, Vitebsk – 300 square miles).<sup>634</sup>

Finally, perhaps one of the major disagreements between Šafařík and Koeppen as regards ethnicity and consequent ethnic mapping, was the issue of the small territory which lies in present-day north western Latvia and which Šafařík referred to as the Finno-Ugric Chud (also known as the Livs) territory, on the coastal strip between the town of Irben and Lake Angern/Angeren. Koeppen completely disagreed with his colleague, arguing that the Chuds were already assimilated and that only Latvians now inhabited this small coastal strip.<sup>635</sup>

Koeppen's ethnographical map (1851) became a popular work and was republished several times during the 1850s. Moreover, it won the highest IRGS awards – the golden Constantine medal and Zhukov's prize (endowed by the tobacco magnate Zhukov to the IRGS statisticians) for the most outstanding work in the field of Russian statistics.<sup>636</sup>

### 4.3. Ethnic maps in the political arguments of the 1860s

At the beginning of the 1860s Russia witnessed significant changes as a result of the reforms introduced by Emperor Alexander II (1855-1881). In 1861 he signed a decree abolishing serfdom, while later (1864) the *zemstva* –

<sup>633</sup> Koeppen [Keppen], "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," p. 16.

<sup>634</sup> Koeppen [Köppen], "Der Litauische Volksstamm," pp. 291-292; "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 15-16.

<sup>635</sup> Koeppen [Keppen], "Novye svedeniia o chislenosti i obitateliakh," pp. 17-18.

<sup>636</sup> Semenov, vol. 1, p. 142.

local self-government institutions – were introduced, mostly in the Russian provinces. The North Western provinces and the Kingdom of Poland were not subjected to the *zemstva* structure, although the abolition of serfdom affected the organisation of local administration to some extent.

This wave of the so-called Great Reforms, especially after the emancipation of a large number of serfs, aroused great interest among scholars as regards the changing social structure of the state. Wide ranging investigations began on the socio-economic and ethnic character of the “new” imperial population. Both the central and local authorities examined the progress of societal change, and expeditions were organised (especially to the Western region) to investigate a broad spectrum of questions.<sup>637</sup>

Investigations into the ethnic question in the Western provinces had been increasing since the end of the 1850s, especially culminating in 1863. Several maps and atlases as well as numerous articles and books were published that dealt exclusively with the Western and North Western regions; many of these publications were the works of members of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society.<sup>638</sup>

At the same time the change in policy in the Western region after the 1863-1864 uprising was reflected in (and partially formed by) the scientific interpretations, especially those concerning ethnic questions. Because of this, almost all scientific works became susceptible to the political currents of the time, and colluded in the drawing of “politically correct” conclusions.<sup>639</sup> In this context, in around the year 1863, during the uprising, two major cartographic works were published – an ethnographic atlas of the North Western provinces and an ethno-confessional atlas of the Western provinces. At the beginning of 1863 Aleksandr F. Rittikh (1831- to no earlier than 1911) prepared an atlas, which presented the confessional distribution of the Western provinces.<sup>640</sup>

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<sup>637</sup> The IRGS and the Free Economic Society were the leaders in some of these explorations, organizing several expeditions that researched the trade in bread and the ethnographical-statistical changes in these lands.

<sup>638</sup> “Etnograficheskie issledovaniia,” *Zapiski IRGO* (1864), vol. 1, pp. 118-125. By reviewing the ethnographic works that were published in Russia in 1863, it can be seen that the Western and North Western regions were the centre of attention.

<sup>639</sup> Pypin explains the concern of the imperial authorities stating that “it was necessary finally to establish the real historical and ethnographical connection of the [Western] land; at the same time the [imperial] government wanted to provide answers to the questions and concerns of European diplomats and the press [about the ethnic situation in the Western region] [...]” Two atlases (Erckert’s and Rittikh’s) and the proceedings of the Vil’na Archaeographical Commission became the form of this official answer (Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, pp. 101).

<sup>640</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh; Pompei N. Batiushkov, *Atlas Narodonaseleniia Zapadno-Russkago Kraia po Veroispovedaniiam* (St. Petersburg: (1862) 1864). The atlas was compiled in two languages – Russian and French. It should be noted that initially this atlas was not available to a broader audience and was mainly used by the Russian military and bureaucracy. However, when a permission for the publication was granted, the atlas was printed in 1864, with the second (statistically updated) edition following in 1865. Pypin, vol. 4, pp. 103-104.

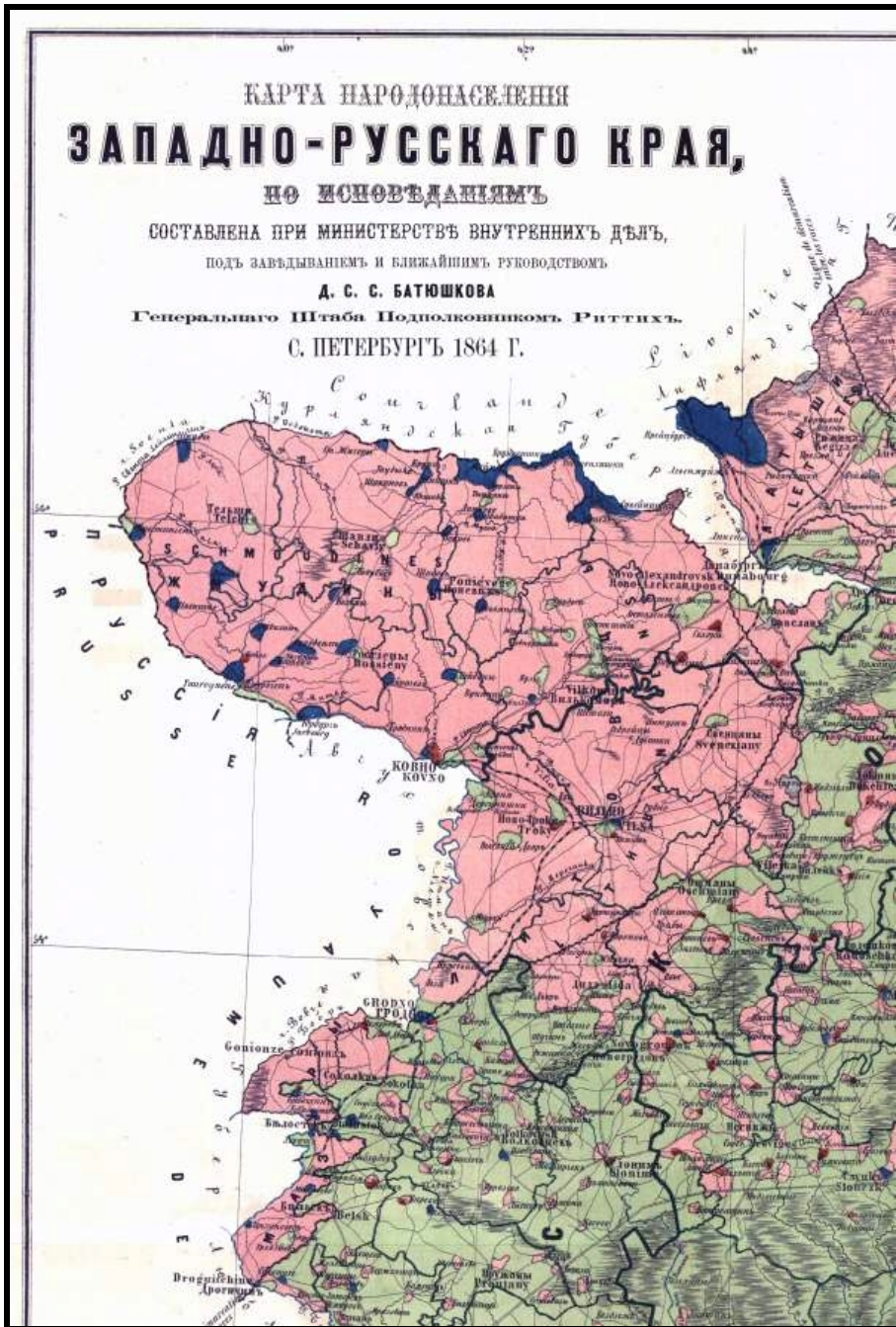
Born in 1831 into the Livonian nobility, Rittikh was educated at the Nikolaevskaia Engineer Academy, later continuing his studies at the Military Academy of the General Staff. There he familiarised himself with cartography and statistics. Rittikh's scientific aspirations brought him into contact with numerous learned societies. During his lifetime he was a member of such organisations as the IRGS, the *Imperial Free Economic Society*, the *Imperial Moscow Society of Lovers of the Natural Sciences, Anthropology and Ethnography* and many others. At the same time, his military training, along with the Pan-Slavist and pro-Russian ideologies of the 1850s and 1860s, had a great impact on the formation of his worldview. Rittikh later participated in the Russo-Turkish war, and in 1894 he resigned from the military in order to dedicate his time to scholarly research.

The composition of the atlas began in 1859. Pompei N. Batiushkov,<sup>641</sup> who at that time was supervising the construction of new Orthodox churches in the Belarusian part of the North Western provinces, began collecting ethno-confessional statistics on each of the Western provinces. This information was obtained from the local authorities and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The latter received updated statistics from its numerous inspectors in the field who were involved in the process of strengthening Orthodoxy among the Belarusian population. In this way, during 1860-1861, Batiushkov prepared the first maps for the eastern *gubernii* of the region – Vitebsk, Mogilev and Minsk provinces. Later, this wave of renovation and the construction of the Orthodox churches moved into other provinces, which subsequently allowed Batiushkov to collect similar statistics on the other Western provinces. In 1863 Rittikh obtained and was able to update Batiushkov's datasets with additional information drawn mostly from Koeppen's ethnographical map, from the investigation of Protestant confessions undertaken by Bush, from the latest statistical information acquired by military statisticians, as well as from Lebedkin's article on the ethnic and confessional distribution of the Western provinces. This new information allowed him to complete the preparation of the atlas. One of the IRGS members, an expert on the Western provinces, the historian Koialovich, argued that because of these additions, Rittikh had become the main author of the atlas.<sup>642</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> Pompei Nikolaevich Batiushkov (1810-1892) – general, publicist. He was a younger brother of the Russian poet Konstantin Batiushkov. From 1850 he served for some time as Vice-Governor of Kovno province and later headed the Vil'na Educational District.

<sup>642</sup> Rittikh, Batiushkov, [Introductory note to the Atlas and explanations on the Vil'na province plate], in: *Atlas narodonaseleniia*; Mikhail O. Koialovich, "Mnenie deistv. chl. M. O. Koialovicha o trudakh Rittikha," *Zapiski IRGO* (1864), no. 1, appendix 3, p. 93; Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4. p. 104.



**Figure 17.** The Lithuanian inhabited territory in Rittikh's *Atlas narodonaseleniia Zapadno-Russkago kraia po veroispovedaniiam* (1864). The Roman Catholic population is indicated in red, Protestants in blue, the Orthodox population in green and Muslims in brown (courtesy of the Austrian National Library)

The atlas consisted of ten maps: nine plates which depicted the religious situation in each of the Western provinces and a general map of the region (Figure 17). Each confession was marked in a specific colour: the Roman Catholics – red, the Orthodox – green, various Protestant confessions – blue, while Muslims were coloured in brown. The Orthodox Old-Believers were considered to be “Russians” and their presence was indicated only in the appended statistical tables placed around the maps.

Another deviation from the general pattern of mapping occurred with the marking of the Jewish population, which was indicated by different underlinings under the names of the towns and cities inhabited by them. Vitebsk, Minsk and Mogilev provinces had additional symbols, representing newly built and state-funded Orthodox churches. Finally, each individual *guberniia* map was made on a 1:630,000 scale (except for Minsk province – which used 1:840,000), and the general map which depicted the Western provinces on a scale of 1:1,680,000. The base for the atlas came from the topographical maps of the provinces prepared by the General Staff, according to the topographical land surveys undertaken during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>643</sup>

Rittikh’s atlas was perceived in part as an ethnic depiction of the Western region.<sup>644</sup> Although the palette of colours used indicated the distribution of different confessions, the general map also had captions that delimited the areas of major ethnicities in the region. For example, the position of the inscribed name of the “Lithuanians” (*Lithuaniens*) in Vil’na *guberniia* showed the city of Vil’na belonging to this ethnic group (Figure 17). Moreover, looking at the map, the whole red-coloured territory could have been perceived as being Lithuanian land. Analogous markings were absent in the detailed map of Vil’na province.

Furthermore, a curved line indicated the approximate Lithuanian-Belarusian (or Russian) ethnic boundary. For the Lithuanians the line started at Dinaburg going south west to Novoaleksandrovsk, then south east to the towns of Vidzy and Kosiany on the Disna River, then south west again to Oshmiany and Rodun’<sup>645</sup> down to the village of Dubichi,<sup>646</sup> then Grodno and it ended at the Russo-Prussian border. The line also indicated that the inhabitants in the east were Catholic Belarusians (the remaining red territory), while on the opposite side, according to the map, was the Lithuanian living space.

Therefore, the Lithuanian (including the Samogitian) ethno-confessional and to some extent, ethnic mainland, consisted of the Roman Catholic areas in Kovno, the western side of Vil’na and the northern side of the neighbouring Grodno provinces. Rittikh’s ethnic border showed that more than half of

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<sup>643</sup> Rittikh, Batiushkov, [Introductory note to the Atlas].

<sup>644</sup> [R.], “Atlas narodonaseleniia zapadno-russkago kraia po veroispovedaniiam,” *Zapiski IRGO* (1864), no. 1, appendix “Bibliografiia i kritika,” pp. 1-26.

<sup>645</sup> Rodun’ (lt. Rodūnia; pl. Raduń) – Raduń, Voranava district, Hrodna region, Belarus.

<sup>646</sup> Dubichi (pl. Dubicze) – Dubičy, Vaŭkavysk district, Hrodna region, Belarus.

Vil'na province belonged to the Lithuanians, although it is not quite clear whether they were Lithuanian-speakers. Moreover, considering the fact that he used Koeppen's map as one of his ethno-cartographic sources, it can be seen that Rittikh did not follow Koeppen's ethnic distinction to the letter. It is hard to grasp why he chose to increase the Lithuanian territory – the texts of the atlas do not explain his reasons. However, a possible explanation might be found with one of the sources he may have used – Koreva's study of Vil'na province – a study by military statisticians.<sup>647</sup> The book contained a small ethnographic map of the province, which generally resembled Rittikh's proposed ethnic division of Belarusians and Lithuanians.

The ambivalent usage of religious and linguistic statistics in identifying ethnicities allowed another military cartographer, Roderich von Erckert, to partially convert the confessional data into ethnic data, thus allowing him to make an ethnographic map of the North Western provinces.

Erckert<sup>648</sup> was born in Prussia in 1821; as a military cartographer he received an education in geodesy and engineering. Until about 1850 Erckert served in the Prussian army, later continuing his military career in Russia where he was transferred with a personal recommendation from the Prussian King, Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1795-1861). The reasons behind this transfer are not known. However, they may have been related to Erckert's competence as a skilled officer and cartographer.

In Russia his service started in the Moscow regiment, however later, in the early 1860s, Erckert was deployed in the North Western provinces, where he commanded the 5<sup>th</sup> Rifle Brigade. Later, in around 1880, he was stationed in the Caucasus, by which time he held the rank of Lieutenant General. After retiring from his military career, Erckert left Russia for Berlin where he died in 1900.<sup>649</sup>

Military service did not hinder Erckert's scientific endeavours. His fields of interest were ethnic studies, linguistics, statistics and cartography. In April 1860 he became a member of the IRGS, although he did not participate actively in the IRGS projects.<sup>650</sup> Presumably, his membership was of a more individual and pragmatic character, because as a member he could obtain access to IRGS material, as well as receive benefits in terms of such things as travel grants and postal services. After moving to Berlin, Erckert was associated with the Berlin Geographical Society. There he published his most famous studies on the Caucasus.<sup>651</sup> As a military cartographer Erckert

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<sup>647</sup> A. Koreva, *Vilenskaia guberniia. Materialy dlia geografii i statistiki Rossii sobrannye ofitserami general'nago shtaba* (St. Petersburg: 1861).

<sup>648</sup> Roderich (Georg Ferdinand Robert) von Erckert (Rodrig Fiodorovich Erkert – (1821-1900)) also credited himself as Oerkert, or d'Erckert.

<sup>649</sup> Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, p. 102 (footnote); *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie* (München: 2006), second edition, vol. 3, p. 284.

<sup>650</sup> *Sostav Imperatorskogo Russkago Geograficheskago Obshchestva* (St. Petersburg: 1872).

<sup>651</sup> Roderich von Erckert, *Der Kaukasus und seine Völker* (Leipzig: 1887); and *Die Sprachen des Kaukasischen Stammes* (Wien: 1895).

had access to and was a member of, the Military Topographic Depot – one of the leading 19<sup>th</sup>-century cartographic institutions in imperial Russia. All these memberships helped him to combine his career opportunities with his personal scientific interests. In this sense, Erckert was in a much better position than Koeppen, who had to go through different imperial bureaucratic institutions in order to obtain permission for the publication of his maps.

In the spring of 1863, Erckert published an ethnographical atlas in French of the so-called Polish provinces,<sup>652</sup> re-issuing it later in the same year in a Russian version.<sup>653</sup> The French edition was intended for European readers. It presented the “Russian perspective” on the ethnic situation in the North Western provinces as opposed to the interpretations that were being propagated by the Polish émigrés. The Russian language atlas had exactly the same goal, only its audience was Russian.<sup>654</sup>

However, comparing the two it is noticeable that the latter version was not identical to the earlier one. Depending on the particular audience, the atlases had different depictions of the Polish and Belarusian areas in Grodno and Vil’na provinces (Figure 18). In the explanatory note to the Russian edition, Erckert failed to mention these alterations, and he also failed to mention the change in the name of the atlas. The key word “Polish” in the French title was omitted in the Russian version, and the second edition was entitled in accordance with the official line – “The Ethnographical Atlas of the West-Russian Provinces and Neighbouring Districts.”

Each atlas consisted of six plates depicting the general ethnic distribution, as well as individual plates showing territories inhabited by the Polish, “Russian” (i.e. the Belarusian), German, Lithuanian together with the Latvian, and Jewish populations.

Erckert’s explanatory text to the Russian edition of the atlas sheds some light on the process of mapping as well as its placing in the context of the ongoing ideological struggle between Polishness and the policy of Russification. It appears that the cartographer’s interest in this region came from his earlier observations and investigations of ethnic relations between the Poles and the Germans in Eastern Prussia, and between the Poles, the Russians and other nationalities in the North Western provinces. As a member of the IRGS he had access to two collections of habitation lists, one compiled by Koeppen and the other by the Russian Academy of Sciences. However, he also greatly relied upon his own empirical observations made during the time he was stationed in these provinces. Therefore, part of Erckert’s perspective was formed from material such as stories and reports from his fellow officers

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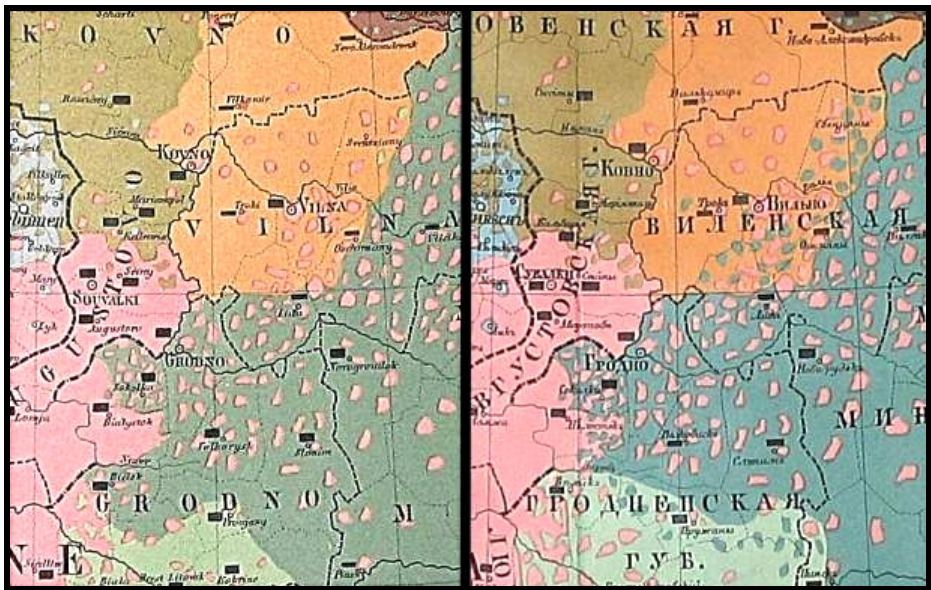
<sup>652</sup> Roderich von Erckert [R. d’Erkert], *Atlas Ethnographique des Provinces Habitées en Totalité ou en Partie par des Polonais* (St. Petersburg: 1863).

<sup>653</sup> Roderich von Erckert [R. F. Erkert], *Etograficheskii atlas Zapadno-Russkikh gubernii i soседnikh oblastei* (St. Petersburg: 1863).

<sup>654</sup> Roderich von Erckert [Rodrig F. Erkert], *Vzgliad na istoriiu i etnografiu zapadnykh gubernii Rossii* (St. Petersburg: 1864), p. 1.



and soldiers (descendants from these lands), as well as from his personal correspondence and conversations with the local nobility, clergy and peasantry, and also from other sources.<sup>655</sup>



**Figure 18.** Differences in the ethnic composition in the North Western provinces found in the French (on the left) and Russian (on the right) versions of Erckert's ethnographic atlases (1863)

Although Erckert indicated his primary sources, the scientific basis of the work still remained rather obscure. In his use of other authors' materials he did not specify their names or works, which made his argumentation rather weak. This meant that when reviewing the book, Pavel Bobrovskii (another military officer, publicist and member of the IRGS, who investigated and wrote on the Belarusians in Grodno province<sup>656</sup>) indicated that this atlas, despite its pioneering nature, had only a temporary value and that future researchers would have to correct the misinterpretations and mistakes.<sup>657</sup>

Despite the incomplete and somewhat lacking data, Erckert indicated that his major goal was to depict the *ethnic majority* in the North Western region. At this point the author of the atlas disclosed his intention to follow the official political ideology of de-Polonisation. The illustration of the gradual

<sup>655</sup> Erckert [Erkert], p. 6.

<sup>656</sup> Pavel Bobrovskii, *Zakony dvizheniia narodoseleniia Grodnenskoii gubernii v 15 letnii period: razhdaemost', braki, smernost'* (Vil'na: 1860); *Grodnenskaia guberniia. Materialy dlia geografii i statistiki Rossii sobrannye ofitserami general'nago shtaba* (St. Petersburg: 1863), vols. 1-2.

<sup>657</sup> Pavel Bobrovskii, "Mozhno-li odno veroispovedanie priiat' v osnovanie plemennogo razgranicheniia slavian zapadnoi Rossii," *Russkii Invalid* (1864), no. 75, 80 (offprint), pp. 50-51.

Polonisation of these provinces during the past several centuries served as the historical excuse. Combined with contemporary ethno-statistical material, the purpose of the atlas gradually shifted from the claimed scientific into the political and ideological sphere. It is hardly surprising that Erckert openly proposed methods for the “correction” and improvement of the unfavourable ethnic situation to the Russian authorities, i.e. how better to undertake the policy of de-Polonisation and Russification.

The rationale behind these aims was Erckert’s conviction that his arguments and their illustration in the Russian version of the atlas would help the imperial authorities to realise the “threats” arising from Polish culture and those who identified with the Poles. Once the authorities perceived this danger, they were to undertake immediate action in securing the “ethnic future” of the North Western provinces:

(...) Now, when the influence of Polishness is weakened, the most important work rests in establishing moral authority, the moral conquest. Neither ethnic or religious hatred, nor social animosity or preconceived opinions about social, or economic well being [of the Western region] or even institutions, and least of all, democratic-liberal fanaticism with its often closely related despotism will solve this case [of securing the ethnic future], but moreover it should not have any kind of influence over this great and important task [in restoring] social and national relations in our Western provinces. The issue at stake here is returning several million alienated brethren back into the Russian family, who were placed in these miserable conditions, i.e. it is about restoration through tender, friendly participation and [their] education, as well as the restoration of their earlier equality to these family members; it is only in this way and through time that all of them will form one big nation in one great fatherland.<sup>658</sup>

Although Erckert’s atlas reflected the position of the imperial authorities, his personal perspective in the explanatory note still remained rather ambiguous.<sup>659</sup> His manifested ideological predisposition towards the state and its policies contrasted with his claim to have achieved some kind of scientific “objectivity.” In his opinion, such objectivity was possible because of his disassociation from either side. This “objective view,” in Erckert’s opinion, resided in his personal background, i.e. his having neither Russian, nor Polish ethnicity, and adhering neither to the Roman Catholic, nor to the Orthodox confession. Moreover, his having no capital or lands, and no social ambitions in these provinces also contributed to the “objectiveness” of his perspective.<sup>660</sup> He did not consider it a possibility that his military service in

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<sup>658</sup> Erckert [Erkert], pp. 3-4.

<sup>659</sup> Later, in the 1890s, the Russian historian Pypin noted, that although Erckert’s maps propagated the official political line, it was doubtful that the imperial authorities were responsible in ordering their compilation. Pypin based his doubts on particular over-interpretations found in Erckert’s atlases. Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, p. 102.

<sup>660</sup> Erckert [Erkert], p. 5.

Russia might have played any significant role in his judgement. However, it was precisely this factor, which dictated Erckert's perspective and his siding with the Russian authorities and even more so – the Russian state. In this sense, no ethnic or religious belonging was important, because securing the integrity of the state was his primary objective.

As mentioned earlier, both of Erckert's atlases and the subsequent explanatory text appeared during the time of the uprising. Even before the uprising the problem of the Poles and Polish culture was one of the most important political issues in Russia.<sup>661</sup> Therefore, the atlases had at least two differing goals for readers in the West and East respectively. The French edition depicted larger Belarusian and Ukrainian territories, in this way reducing the size of the Polish territories (arguing that these areas were non-Polish). The Russian version highlighted an opposite tendency – the Polish ethnic territories (coloured in red) were indicated as penetrating the Belarusian (dark green colour), the Lithuanian (orange colour) and Ukrainian (light green colour) territories (Figure 18). Therefore, while the earlier map presented clear-cut boundaries between the Polish and other ethnic groups (not taking into account the Polonised exclaves), the latter depicted an ethnic distribution that was in favour of the Poles, or at the very least unclear. The Belarusian ethnic group also appeared in numerous ethnic islands all around Vil'na province. Erckert must have realised that presenting the North Western provinces as being dominated by "official" Russians would have weakened the intensity of the official anti-Polish propaganda; therefore for the sake of "political correctness," the Poles became the problematic ethnic *majority*. The French language atlas had to rebuff the Polish arguments by showing that the Poles did not dominate the North Western provinces at all.

Having in mind the Belarusian-Polish borderlands, Bobrovskii criticised Erckert's refusal to present the actual (i.e. more scientifically rather than ideologically based) ethnic situation. By overemphasising the Polish element, Erckert played down the size of the significant number of Belarusians and Ukrainians who, in Bobrovskii's view, constituted the majority in Grodno province. At the same time the number of Poles, who made up 1/9 of the total population in the Western provinces, did not surpass the other numerous local ethnic groups, such as the Latvians, the Samogitians and the Lithuanians.<sup>662</sup>

Bobrovskii and Erckert did not separate ethnic Poles from the Polonised Belarusian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian nobility. As Bobrovskii indicated, the Poles had higher social positions in the Western provinces. They achieved this through cultural and socio-political superiority thus establishing control over the local peasantry. Therefore, the presentation of such a biased ethno-

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<sup>661</sup> Witold Rodkiewicz, *Russian Nationality Policy in the Western Provinces of the Russian Empire* (Lublin: 1998).

<sup>662</sup> Bobrovskii, "Mozhno-li odno veroisповедanie," pp. 3-4.

social distribution created the impression that these lands were totally Polish. The *szlachta* was an unofficially recognised ethno-social group; it existed in the perception of the imperial authorities as a local elite. Moreover, the Jews were usually perceived as assisting in the *szlachta*'s domination because of their inclination for business and living predominantly in towns and cities – they were inadvertently believed to be helping to conserve this old social status quo.<sup>663</sup>

After discussing this constellation, Bobrovskii took issue with Erckert's refusal to analyse more deeply the complexity of the ethno-social situation in the North Western provinces. But it is no wonder that Erckert's ethnic atlases depicted only the basic ethnic (i.e. the Polish-Russian ideological) conflict, because deeper analysis would have obscured his main political message.

The religious criterion was another factor that was closely related to the examination of ethnicity. At the beginning of the 1860s the religious situation in the North Western provinces was as ambiguous as the ethnic. Two major confessions – the Roman Catholic and Orthodox faiths – competed for the souls of the inhabitants. The Roman Catholic Church still retained its former position as a result of its traditional, historical and cultural association with the dominant Polish culture and Polish speaking elite. The Orthodox Church was supported, controlled and promoted by the Russian state. The Orthodox situation improved after the abolition of the Uniate (Greco-Catholic) Church in 1839, when large numbers of Belarusians and Ukrainians were forced to become Orthodox, hence increasing the total numbers of this confession. The Uniate Church only continued to exist among the Ukrainians in Austrian Galicia, as it remained prohibited in the Russian Empire (it is worth noting that a small number of the Belarusian Uniates lived in the Kingdom of Poland<sup>664</sup>) until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Thus, twenty years after the abolition of the Uniate Church, Erckert's determination and mapping of the ethnicities in the North Western provinces was based on a fairly simple binary separation. He assumed that each Roman Catholic of Slavic descent (the Belarusian or the Ukrainian speakers) was a

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<sup>663</sup> Bobrovskii, "Mozhno-li odno veroispovedanie," pp. 4-6. This was an oversimplified interpretation of relations between the Jews and *szlachta*. The historian Medišauskienė highlights that the relationship was in fact much more complex and predominantly based on Christian/Jewish and agrarian/capitalist animosity. The Lithuanian gentry, despite profiting from the taverns they rented to Jewish innkeepers, were nonetheless quite ill-disposed to the economic, cultural or religious activities of this particular ethnic group. Zita Medishauskene [Medišauskienė] "'Ottalkivaiushchii, no bez nego ne oboitis': evrei kak alter ego litovskogo dvorianina serediny XIX v.," *Ab Imperio* (2003), no. 4, (online).

<sup>664</sup> The Sapotskin district (present-day Hrodna region, Belarus), which for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was in the Kingdom of Poland, was the only place in the Russian Empire where the Uniate Church (Belarusian) survived. Andrei Vashkevich, "Greka-katalitskae nasel'nitsva Augustoushchyny v kantsy XVIII – pachatku XX stst. (kanfesiinye zmeny i farmiravanie etnichnav sviadomasti)," *Belaruski Gistarychny Zbornik/Białoruskie Zeszyty Historyczne* (Białystok: 2005), no. 24, (online).

“Pole” (the Lithuanians constituted a different case, since they did not fall within the “official” Russian nationality, yet their closeness to the Polish cultural tradition and Catholicism, no doubt, made them somewhat “Polish” too).<sup>665</sup>

As suggested earlier, the religious and ethnic confusion among the peasantry of the Western region resulted from their self-identification with what was “Polish.” Having no conscious perception of their ethnic identity, the Catholic peasants avoided being labelled as “Russians,” which would have denoted their association with the Orthodox Church. Erckert, however, extended this imbroglio by stating that the term “Catholic Belarus” did not exist and that it was only an academic invention. Therefore, there was no separate Belarusian territory and no Belarusian language.<sup>666</sup> This claim was strengthened by the fact that the Orthodox and Catholic Belarusian peasantry described their language as “simple” (*prostoi*), and called themselves “Russians” or alternatively – “Lithuanians” (the latter identity came from their former political belonging to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania), or just “peasants,” which indicated a social separation from their landlords. Moreover, Erckert noted that most of the Polish speaking nobility and Catholic clergy also often referred to Slavic Catholics as “Lithuanians.”<sup>667</sup>

A better explanation of this can be found in Bobrovskii’s review. He stated that Erckert was correct in claiming that neither the Polish gentry, nor the clergy would have called the Catholic Belarusians “Belarusian” or “Russian,” but rather “Lithuanian.” The reason for this was, as Bobrovskii put it, that it was obvious that this so-called “Lithuanian” was not a “Pole.” A simple linguistic test would have clarified this statement: if someone spoke to this “Lithuanian,” he or she would have received an answer in the Belarusian language, i.e. a language that was basically understandable to the Russian speaker, while proper Lithuanian was completely different from any Slavic dialect. Bobrovskii concluded, that the Polish elites used the name “Lithuanian” correctly from the historical-political perspective (i.e. referring to inhabitants of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania), but from the ethnolinguistic point of view it was a mistake.<sup>668</sup>

These and other complex factors combined with his attempt to provide support for the policy of de-Polonisation, defined the scope and objectives of Erckert’s atlases. His task became “to show briefly, *who* were the inhabitants of the Western provinces earlier on, *what* they have become over several

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<sup>665</sup> Erckert [Erkert], p. 8.

<sup>666</sup> Here Erckert ignored the fact that “Belarus,” or the “Belarusian provinces” had existed for some time in the administrative divisions of the Russian Empire during the reign of Catherine II, Paul and Alexander I. Furthermore, the Belarusian Educational District (1832-1850) also existed and covered parts of the Belarusian ethnic lands.

<sup>667</sup> Erckert [Erkert], p. 8.

<sup>668</sup> Bobrovskii, “Mozhno-li odno veroispovedanie,” pp. 24-26.

centuries, *why* they have become such and such, and *whom* we consider them to be at present.”<sup>669</sup>



**Figure 19.** The Latvian and Lithuanian inhabited territories. Fragment from Erckert’s *Atlas Ethnographique des provinces habitées en totalité ou en partie par des Polonais* (1863)

When writing about the number of Polish inhabitants, Erckert admitted that he artificially increased their numbers. The reason behind this decision resulted from the underlying intention of the work, as well as from the author’s own point of view: “he, who no matter what, starts searching for the Russian element among the inhabitants of the Western provinces – will find too many Russians; and he, who looks for the Polish ethnicity – will find too

<sup>669</sup> Erckert [Erkert], pp. 6-7 (italics in the text).

many Poles.”<sup>670</sup> Thus, depending on the perspective adopted, and its political or practical reasoning, the interpretation of the ethnic data and its presentation was simply a matter of which strategy was chosen. Erckert did not hide his practical intention. Moreover, he presented this ethnic Russian-Polish conflict as a fight for survival, because, in his view, only the nationality that controlled this region was meant to survive.<sup>671</sup> Small ethnic groups, such as the Lithuanians, were caught in the middle. Their future was unclear, although partial or full assimilation (either Polonisation or Russification) was, according to Erckert, the most probable outcome of this struggle.

The primary criterion of ethnic identification, in Erckert’s view, depended on religion rather than language. He refuted the linguistic approach for pragmatic reasons, claiming that the linguistic map would have improperly highlighted the superiority of the Russian element, which would have also distorted the real ethnic situation.<sup>672</sup> Continuing to balance between the Polish and the Russian elements, he continued to demonstrate his “disassociation” from either of these elements. Yet the official campaign of de-Polonisation required that more Poles be found than “official” Russians, which would help propel the imperial authorities to combat this perceived antagonistic ethno-social element.

Therefore, Erckert presented four possible points of view concerning the ethnic mapping of the North Western provinces: first, using *language* (Russian or Polish) as the sole criterion of ethnic distinction (and attaching it to the social distribution) – in his opinion, the results would have presented a lower number of Poles; second, the *contemporary religious* criterion would have indicated 6,454,000 Russians and 1,257,000 Poles (counting Russian Catholics in southern Belarus as “Russians” and a completely Polonised Orthodox population as “Polish”); third, by considering *the earlier religious situation before the abolition of the Uniate Church* (1839) and presuming that the Uniates were closer to the Catholics – in this case the number of “Poles” in the Western provinces would have increased several times in comparison with the previous method; and, fourth, taking into account neither religion, nor language, and deriving the distinction solely from the criterion of *political-social influence* in this region. This last perspective would have rendered all of the Western provinces “Polish.” Erckert described the first perspective as the “ultra-Russian,” the second as the “common-Russian” (which he thought was the most adequate), the third as the “common-Polish”

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<sup>670</sup> Erckert [Erkert], p. 9.

<sup>671</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>672</sup> Ibid., p. 6. However, Erckert did not follow this strategy. Ethnic groups such as the Lithuanians or Latvians were separated from the Poles based on their linguistic difference. A separate map depicted their territory (Figure 19). Bobrovskii argued that the same rule could have been applied to the Belarusians and Ukrainians as well. Bobrovskii, “Mozhno-li odno veroispovedanie,” pp. 14-15.

(the perspective that was used by Polish scholars), and the fourth as the “ultra-Polish.”<sup>673</sup>

Supporting the unacceptability of the two “Polish” points of view, Bobrovskii personally favoured a distinction based on linguistic separation. Defending language as the only ultimate criterion, he highlighted the notions of ethnic “civilisation” and “development” – as the factors that indicated ethnic individuality. “The language is like a family’s coat-of-arms, given to a man as a legacy by his ancestors, an ethnicity [is given] by its primordial tribe [*korennyim plemenem*]; it is a mirror, which reflects moral character and even the history of a nation; *the language lives with the nation, together they evolve and die.*” Therefore, each ethnographer’s task was to research the language and record its dialects, because this was the most reliable and the most correct way to undertake ethnographical mapping.<sup>674</sup>

As can be seen, the main discussion inspired by Erckert’s atlases revolved around the Polish and the Belarusian ethnic groups. The Lithuanian (which was precisely the language that Erckert used in distinguishing Lithuanians from other ethnicities) ethno-linguistic territory was much larger than in Koeppen’s or even Šafařik’s maps (Figure 19). It is obvious that Erckert did not determine the statistics for the particular ethnic distribution in each *uezd*, basically marking the Lithuanians straight onto the administrative map of the North Western provinces (lighter shades indicated a lower percentage of Lithuanian-speakers).

The individual Lithuanian cartographical plate in Erckert’s atlas was, perhaps, the first map that showed the territory of this ethnic group without any other ethnicities, with the exception of the Latvians. Still, as discussed earlier, the Lithuanian-Latvian ethno-linguistic border allowed an uncomplicated separation of these two ethnicities. Therefore, looking at the map it can be seen that the Lithuanians lived in all of Grodno, Lida, Oshmiany and Slo-nim *uezdy* – the areas that were only partially marked on Šafařik’s and Koeppen’s maps. Perhaps the depiction of these territories served Erckert’s intention of strengthening his anti-Polish argument; however, it was precisely this map and what it depicted that inspired the Lithuanian national intelligentsia more than fifty years later to use it as an instrument in their arguments about the “Lithuanianness” of Vil’na and its districts.<sup>675</sup>

Erckert strongly advocated the idea that for most of the Slavic population of the Russian Empire the confessional territory almost always represented its ethnic territory.<sup>676</sup> His explanatory note was the best presentation of the complexity of the ethnic distribution in the North Western provinces. At the same time, it revealed the scale of the official policy of de-Polonisation and

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<sup>673</sup> Erckert [Erkert], pp. 57-58.

<sup>674</sup> Bobrovskii, “Mozhno-li odno veroispovedanie,” p. 14 [emphasis in the text].

<sup>675</sup> See chapter 5.3.1.

<sup>676</sup> Erckert [Erkert], p. 2.



the subsequent intentions of Russification in this region. Discussion of the problems of ethnic cartography conveyed the extremity of the cultural and political collision between the Polish and the Russian worlds. Although Erckert positioned himself outside this conflict, he nevertheless consciously served the policies of the state. For this reason Erckert's atlases can be called *pseudo-scientific* and, following Ager's description, intentional and *propagandistic*.<sup>677</sup> Another specificity of his atlases was their functional character and ideological argumentation, which, as the author intended, should lead to practical ends in securing the "ethnic future" of the region. Erckert metaphorically described the situation in the North Western provinces as a "bleeding wound" and his atlases as a finger pointing at it. He expected that those who had the power of "healing" would take all necessary measures to heal that wound.<sup>678</sup>

Neither Rittikh's, nor Erckert's atlases can be classified as completely ideological works, however Erckert presented and discussed different methodical and practical nuances concerning the separation of ethnic territories, analysed statistical data, and used lists of habitations and confessional distributions. Rittikh's atlas was considered to be a highly valuable source, compiled from a significant amount of statistical information. What caused the overlap between science and ideology was, perhaps, not so much the actual material from which these atlases were produced, but rather the general political context of the time, which, no doubt, was one of the main factors that influenced the interpretations that were made.<sup>679</sup>

The main purpose of each of these atlases was hidden in their visual messages. Just as Bodianskii expressed his fascination with the visual power of Šafařík's map, so Erckert aimed to obtain the same effect by intentionally polemicising with the Russian authorities and at the same time presenting a solution to the ethnic "problem" of the North Western provinces.

The impact of Erckert's ethnographical atlases was greater than Bobrovskii had predicted. The Lithuanian National Movement chose Erckert's depictions of their ethnic territory as one of the most "real" presentations. Frontiers found in the *Atlas ethnographique* (especially the eastern border with the Belarusians) were reproduced in pre-WWI Lithuanian national maps. This will be discussed later.

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<sup>677</sup> See discussion on propaganda cartography in chapter 1.3.2.3.

<sup>678</sup> Erckert [Erkert], pp. 9-11; 72.

<sup>679</sup> See Pypin's remark on the situation during the first half of the 1860s: "the efforts of the [Russian] government were directed at that time to eliminating this Polish element, be it direct or implicit; this was also promoted by the [Russian] patriotic press. The word "Russification" (*obrusenie*) was on everyone's lips, Poland had to be reborn (or eliminated?) – it is no exaggeration to say, that [the promotion of] "Russification" in the western *Russian* (*zapadno russkago*) region went beyond the wildest imagination." Pypin, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, vol. 4, p. 110.

#### 4.4. Serving science and ideology – Rittikh’s “Ethnographical map of European Russia” (1875)

During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Rittikh established himself as one of Russia’s leading cartographers and an ethnic specialist. While doing this he revealed himself as a harsh Russo-centric Pan-Slavist, who strongly identified with the state’s official ideology. In a book entitled *The Slavic World*, he followed Šafařík’s and Hilferding’s earlier ideas and promoted the notion of the unification of the Slavs under the aegis of the Russian Empire.<sup>680</sup> From his perspective all Slavs needed to become the subjects of a strong Slavic state, while other ethnicities, such as, for example, the Finno-Ugric peoples (including the Estonians and Magyars) or the Balts, were obstacles which prevented this ethnic and territorial consolidation from happening. Hence they had to be assimilated.<sup>681</sup>

Rittikh’s methodological approach to ethnography and ethnic research was more sophisticated than Erckert’s. At the same time, Rittikh expressed his views with a much more intensive ideological underpinning. The most clear-cut example of this came with his *Four Lectures on Russian Ethnography*.<sup>682</sup> The so-called lectures actually never took place and the author did not explain the reasons why. Nevertheless, these texts were published as a book and presented Rittikh’s understanding of the evolution of Russian ethnography and demography and the theoretical standpoints that he developed during his most active years 1862-1881.<sup>683</sup>

Ethnography, in Rittikh’s opinion, was exclusively political but at the same time an applied scientific discipline. One of its major goals was to undertake research on different imperial ethnicities, and then to assist afterwards in the teaching of imperial bureaucrats, helping to familiarise them with the multi-ethnic space of the Russian state. This ethnographic knowledge facilitated the transfer of imperial officials from one side of the state to the other; it also helped to reduce their time of adaptation to a new and different ethnic environment. This meant that any cultural investigations became politicised and pragmatic practices, closely related to the administration of the state.

Further, these officials were either people of Russian descent (including also the assimilated non-Russians) or belonged to the military, whose location of service was constantly changing. Seen from this perspective, ethnography was more important than other socio-political sciences such as history, geography, archaeology, statistics, etc., which became mere addenda to this new political-bureaucratic ethnography.<sup>684</sup>

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<sup>680</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh, *Slavianskii mir istoriko-geograficheskoe i etnograficheskoe issledovanie* (Warsaw: 1885).

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>682</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh, *Chetyre lektzii po Russkoi etnografii* (St. Petersburg: 1895).

<sup>683</sup> Rittikh, *Chetyre lektzii*, “Introduction.”

<sup>684</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-11; *passim*.

Rittikh considered that Slavic studies would also have to become a part of this political ethnography. Although Slavic studies were still not recognised at this time as an individual discipline, their closeness to the politicised and Russo-centric ethnography nevertheless provided Slavists with an exceptional status in Rittikh's scientific hierarchy.<sup>685</sup> Therefore, "ethnography is and was the property of those educated people, *who have power*. This dependency, its advantage, will always be related to the knowledge of this [Russian] nation and army, which we are fortunate to belong to."<sup>686</sup>

In his later works Rittikh toned down his harsh politicisation of ethnography. For example, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Rittikh had claimed that the Lithuanians had to be "brought closer to the Slavs" (with the help of the imperial schooling system); later, however, his strong advocacy of the assimilation of non-Russians somewhat decreased, although he remained fiercely anti-Polish and an anti-Jewish Pan-Slavist. In one of his last books, Rittikh even supported the Lithuanian nationalists, mainly over their fight to have Lithuanian and not Polish language services held in the Catholic Church. He wrote: "This favourable transition [of introducing the Lithuanian language] will only happen then, if the Russian government and authorities firmly side with the Lithuanians: for the separation of Lithuania from the Poles."<sup>687</sup>

His political convictions contrasted sharply with his scientific work, which was greatly appreciated by the Russian and European scientific community.<sup>688</sup> The ethno-confessional atlas of the Western region became an inspiration as well as an example for other Russian scholars. For example, N. Galkin, author of the *Ethnographical Map of the Kingdom of Poland* (1869), noted that despite the fact that both Erckert's and Rittikh's data were his main sources, he personally preferred continuing Rittikh's line of work as regards the analysis of the confessional distribution, rather than Erckert's presentation of the general patterns of ethnic composition. Galkin also remarked that because of Rittikh's strict statistical approach, his work remained within the field of science and did not slip into politics.<sup>689</sup>

After the publication of the confessional atlas Rittikh continued collecting and analysing ethno-confessional statistics. In 1864 he published statistical material on Lublin and Avgustov provinces (the latter was renamed Suvalki

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<sup>685</sup> Rittikh, *Chetyre leksii*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>686</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21 [emphasis mine].

<sup>687</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh, *Obizhennyi kraj (s kartoi Zapadno-Russkago kraia)* (St. Petersburg: 1911), p. 40; also: "Zapadno-Russkaia granitsa i Russkaia narodnost' (s planom)," *Russkaia Starina* (St. Petersburg: 1907 (May)), vol. CXXX.

<sup>688</sup> In an address to the British Royal Geographical Society, its president H. C. Rawlinson referred to Rittikh's ethnographical map of European Russia (1875) "as the most important and the best executed work." H. C. Rawlinson, "Address to the Royal Geographical Society. Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1875," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London* (1874-1875), vol. 19, no. 6, p. 424.

<sup>689</sup> Nikolai N. Galkin, "Obiasnitel'naia zapiska k etnograficheskoj karte Tsarstva Pol'skogo," *Zapiski IRGO po otdeleniiu Etnografii* (St. Petersburg: 1871), vol. 4, p. 157.

province in 1866).<sup>690</sup> The Lithuanian speaking population inhabited the northern part of Avgustov province. Here Rittikh managed to collect ethno-confessional statistics relating to the lowest administrative units. He also claimed that part of his information came from an unpublished statistical study conducted by Nemira, where the data had been collected in 1852. Nemira's manuscript was kept in the archives of the General Staff and allegedly belonged to one of the military statisticians. The statistical descriptions of Lublin and Avgustov provinces were also updated with the use of Koeppen's habitation lists and other material.

Therefore the ethno-confessional line presented in Rittikh's study was drawn across three northern *uezds* of Avgustov province. It indicated that the Lithuanian speakers inhabited Mariampol', Kalvariia and partly, Suvalki *uezdy*. In 1852, according to Nemira's estimations, there were 222,673 Lithuanians living in Avgustov province, while Rittikh, after determining that the annual growth was 1.5%, estimated that by 1864 there were 261,541 Lithuanians,<sup>691</sup> when a year earlier in one of the statistical tables in his atlas he had presented a different number – 256,708. In his opinion the difference was because of the mixed population and the difficulty involved in identifying actual ethnic belonging.<sup>692</sup> Based on Rittikh's information Galkin established the Lithuanian ethnic border, which started on the left bank of the Neman River and finished on the Russian-Prussian border (Figure 20).

Almost a decade later Rittikh prepared another cartographic work - the *Ethnographical map of European Russia* (Figure 22),<sup>693</sup> while also issuing the *Ethnographic map of Slavic Ethnicities* (see Figure 21) during the same year, which was an updated version of Mirkovich's<sup>694</sup> map, published in 1867.<sup>695</sup>

The creation of a new ethnographical map of European Russia was initiated by the IRGS. Initial thoughts about revising Koeppen's ethnographical map of 1851 were aired as early as 1863, however the actual discussions and preparations began only in 1871. During the two decades since Koeppen's map was first published a significant amount of new ethnographical and

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<sup>690</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh *Prilozhenie k materialam dlia etnografii Tsarstva Pol'skogo. Gubernii: Liublinskaia i Avgustovskaia* (St. Petersburg: 1864). Later he published a collection of ethno-statistical material on the Baltic provinces: *Materialy dlia etnografii Rossii. Pribaltiiskii kraï* (St. Petersburg: 1873).

<sup>691</sup> Rittikh made a mistake in his calculations; the actual number of Lithuanians would have been 262,754.

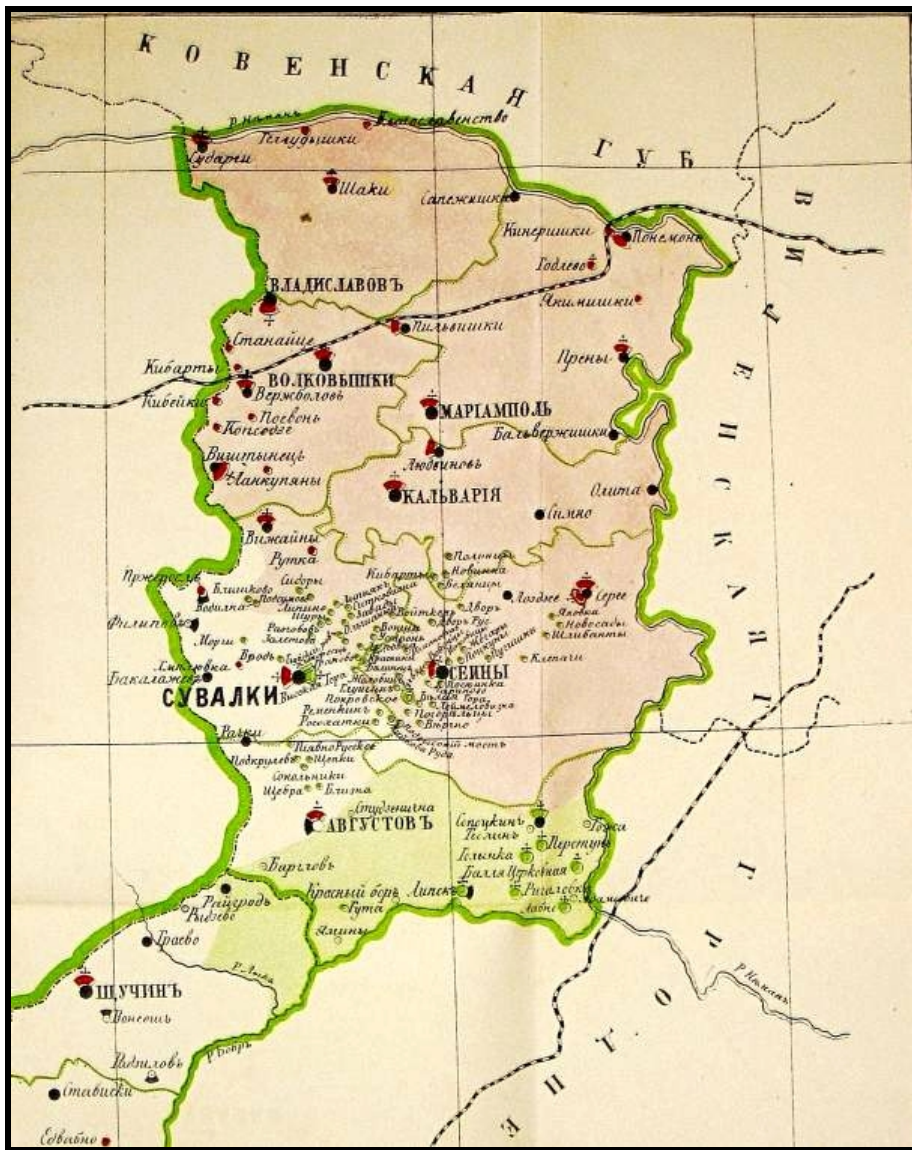
<sup>692</sup> Rittikh, *Prilozhenie k materialam*, p. 15.

<sup>693</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh, *Etnograficheskaia Karta Evropeiskoi Rossii* (St. Petersburg: 1875).

<sup>694</sup> Mikhail Fedorovich Mirkovich (1836-1891) – of Serbian descent, Lieutenant-General in the Russian army, son of Fedor Iakovlevich Mirkovich (1786-1866), who was vice-chair of the Walachia and Moldavia divan's (1828-1834), and Vil'na Governor-General (1840-1850).

<sup>695</sup> Aleksandr F. Rittikh, *Etnograficheskaia karta slavianskikh narodnosti M. F. Mirkovicha, dopolnena A. F. Rittikhom* (St. Petersburg: 1875). Mirkovich's map was among the chief exhibits at a Pan-Slav conference, which took place in Moscow in 1867. The map was part of a political propaganda effort to emphasise the (large) size and political significance of the Slavic territories. Wilkinson, p. 53-55.

statistical material had been collected, which meant that the preparation of a new and updated ethnographical map was one of the IRGS's priorities.



**Figure 20.** The Lithuanian territory (red colour) in the Kingdom of Poland, around the towns of Mariampol', Seiny, Kalvariia and Volkovyshki. Fragment from Galkin's *Etнографическаиа карта королевства Пол'sкаго* (1869)

The main data sources for the new mapping project included the updated lists of habitations collected and published by the Central Statistical Committee, along with the lists of parishes kept in the Russian Academy of Sciences. The composition of a new map also had another practical aspect. The

IRGS expected that its involvement in this endeavour would hasten the statistical updates on the Russian and non-Russian populations. At the same time the making of the map would further develop the investigations into the coexistence and integration of the non-Russians and help in gaining a better understanding of their attitudes to the dominant Russian nationality.<sup>696</sup>

For the better coordination of this task a Supervising Commission was formed, which prepared general guidelines for the work. Russia's new ethnographical map was also to include the Kingdom of Poland (the so-called *Privil'sianskii Krai*), the Caucasus and the Grand Duchy of Finland. The map depicted the contemporary ethnical distribution, using language as the main criterion of distinction, while in special cases resorting to other criteria, such as history, religion etc. The religious distinction was used especially in those places where the local population was already Russified, although it continued to maintain its distinctively old traditions. Furthermore, the guidelines indicated that the main sources were to be the published "Lists of habitations of the Russian Empire" (*Spiski naseleennykh mest Rossiiskoi Imperii*). For the individual provinces, which were not included in these lists, the researchers used unpublished manuscripts for the period from 1857-1860, stored in the archives of the Central Statistical Committee and in the library of the Russian Academy of Sciences. For the Caucasus the researchers used the cameral indexes prepared by the local authorities of the viceroyalty, and for the Kingdom of Poland they used Galkin's ethnographical map. Other sources included Rittikh's works on the Baltic and Kazan' provinces, the data collected from the IRGS ethnographical-statistical expedition to the Western provinces, as well as other materials.<sup>697</sup> The editorial work was delegated to Rittikh, who agreed to carry out the task. In this way, Rittikh's ethnographical map was the joint endeavour of many ethnographers, geographers and linguists, mostly members of the IRGS.

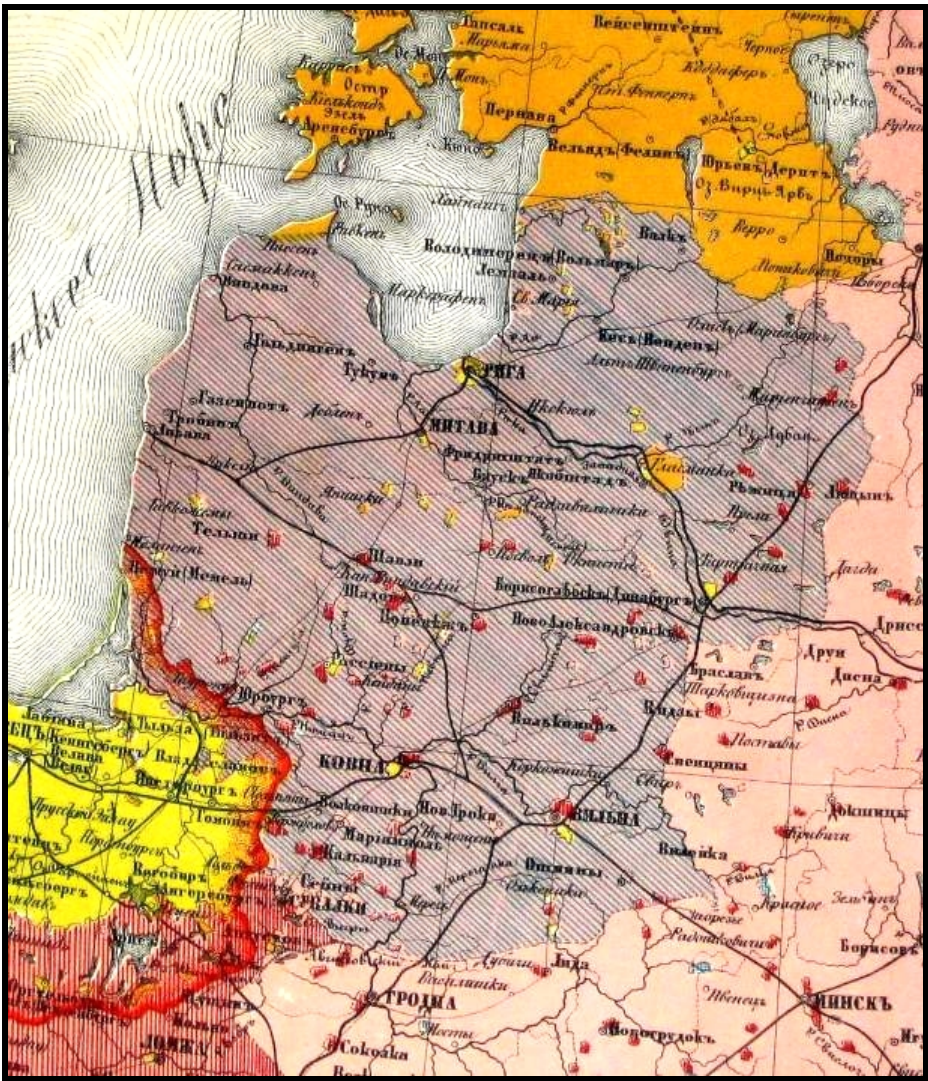
One of the greatest obstacles during the preparation of the map was funding. The Commission promptly requested that the IRGS Council include additional expenses in the Society's budget (for the year 1873) for the completion of the new ethnographical map. However, the IRGS was involved at the same time in several rather large expeditions which also required extensive funds. A partial solution came thanks to the initiative of one of the IRGS members, A. Bashmakov, who decided to donate 2,000 roubles to this cartographical project.<sup>698</sup>

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<sup>696</sup> Semenov, vol. 2, pp. 953-954.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid., pp. 954-955.

<sup>698</sup> Ibid., p. 955.



**Figure 21.** The ethnic territory of the Balts. Fragment from Mirkovich/Rittikh *Et-nograficheskaja karta Slavianskikh Narodnostei* (1875)

The base of the new ethnographic map was prepared by the Military Topographical Department on a scale of 1:420,000 (10 versts/inch) and the final version of the map was published on a scale of 1:2,520,000 (60-verst/inch). The practical side of the mapping resembled the earlier procedures used by Koeppen. It included, first, building a card-file system on the habitation lists for each province and all its settlements, which meant identifying the individual ethnic minorities in a particular location (the settlements that belonged to the dominant ethnic group were not marked, rather the whole territory of the province was coloured according to a predetermined tint). The information on each settlement was written on a card. Later, these cards

were used in the mapping process, i.e. underlining each settlement according to the colour of the dominant ethnic group. Finally, these coloured points were joined and, in this way, ethnic areas were formed. This particular part of the mapping was carried out on a 10-*verst* map, and the information was then transferred to the larger scale map. Rittikh also compiled an explanatory note that accompanied the map.<sup>699</sup>

Before the end of 1873 Rittikh finished and submitted the sheets of the small-scale map for the Supervising Commission's evaluation. The Commission considered that the initial stage of mapping was complete, although the map still remained without colours. Simultaneously, the proof-reading of this first version was given to members of the IRGS who were not directly involved in the work, while the Caucasian sheets were sent to the IRGS Caucasian Section in Tiflis for checking. The deadline was set for the end of January 1874. Therefore, this uninterrupted work allowed the Supervising Commission to inform the IRGS Council that the final large-scale version of the new ethnographical map would be ready before the spring of 1874.<sup>700</sup>

Once assured of the progress of the work, the IRGS Council began searching for a publisher. While considering several publishing houses (Il'in's, Breze's, Devrien's and Glybov's) and discussing the layout of the map, the Council came up with additional suggestions and comments. The Supervising Commission was asked to reassess some Caucasian ethnic groups (such as the Laks, Tabasarans,<sup>701</sup> and others) by investigating whether they belonged to the same linguistic group. The reason was to decrease the number of tints, which was already too large. At the same time the IRGS planned to publish a detailed map of the Caucasian ethnic groups, and this allowed for some small inconsistencies in Rittikh's map. Furthermore, some of the comments concerned the coloration of neighbouring ethnic groups, and centred around a request for the contrast to be increased. In addition, irrespective of coloration, a numerical system had to accompany the palette (46 ethnic groups were marked on the map). Finally, the printing rights were given to Il'in an IRGS member who owned a publishing house. Another publisher, Devrien, received exclusive rights to distribute the ethnographical map outside the Russian Empire, with the right to add a short explanatory text in French. Just after the printing of the map it was sent to the International Geographical Congress in Paris, where it won a first-class medal.<sup>702</sup>

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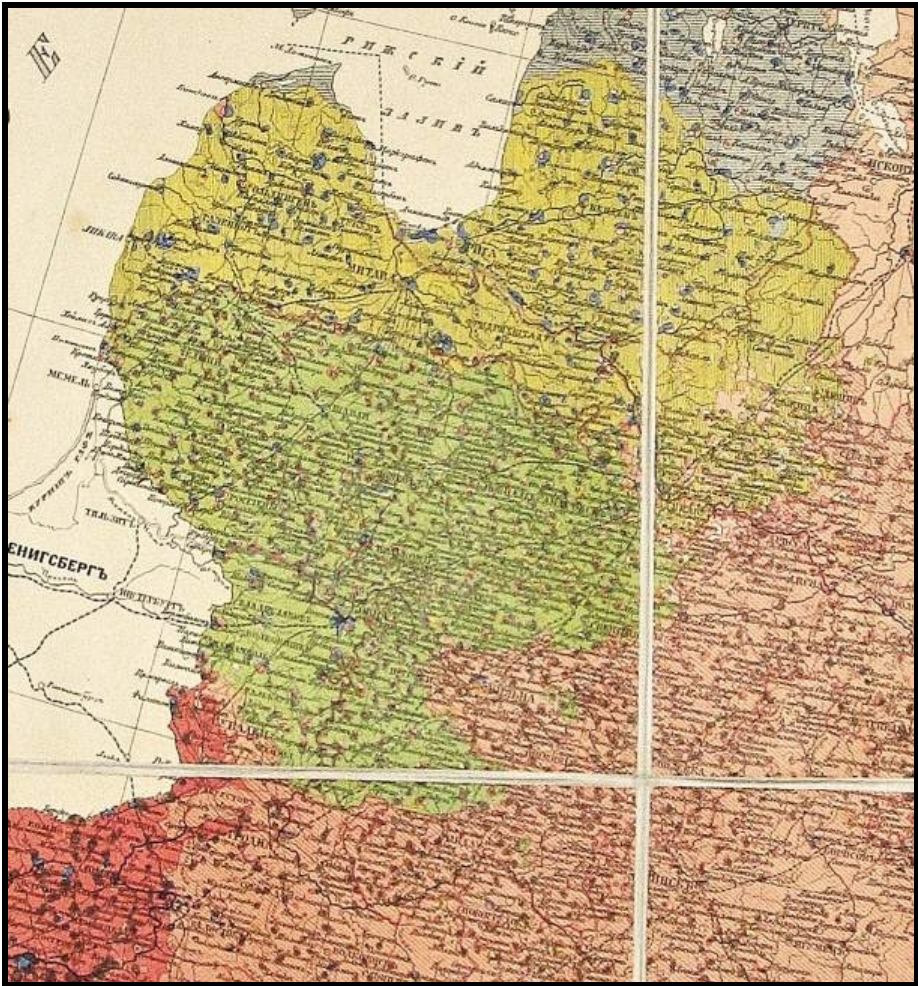
<sup>699</sup> Semenov, vol. 2, p. 956.

<sup>700</sup> Ibid., pp. 956-957.

<sup>701</sup> Both ethnic groups live in the present-day Republic of Dagestan, Russia.

<sup>702</sup> Semenov, vol. 2, pp. 957-959.





**Figure 22.** The Lithuanian ethnic territory on Rittikh's *Etnograficheskaia karta Evropeiskoi Rossii* (1875 - fragment)

In the reviews of the Geographical Congress, European scholars were excited about Russia's performance, and praised Rittikh's map. However, some of the reviewers noticed that the map revealed rapid assimilatory tendencies: "It [Rittikh's map] exhibited in a most striking manner the gradual absorption of the minor nationalities by the great Russian race; and showed clearly that the time is not far distant when the whole of that vast empire will be inhabited by *one* people speaking the same language."<sup>703</sup> Such an impression was, perhaps, an exaggeration. Still, even if the harsh Russian ethnic policies are left to one side and the map is analysed in purely visual terms, it is noticeable that the intense red colour of the vast Slavic territories pre-

<sup>703</sup> Ernest George Ravenstein, "Statistics at the Paris Geographical Congress," *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* (December, 1875), vol. 38, no. 4, p. 428.

dominated. This meant that the other less intensive colours representing other ethnic areas were somewhat concealed. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the map (it is not clear about the cartographer) was making its point.

When comparing Rittikh's work with the first ethnographical map of European Russia the most obvious change was that the new map had become a mosaic of colours, which this time also depicted the expansion of the Slavic ethnic groups (Figures 16 and 22). In Koeppen's map the reader had to concentrate on the numeric distinction between Belarusians, Russians, Ukrainians or other Slavs in order to understand which of the ethnicities neighboured the non-Russians.

Another distinctive pattern found in the official ethnographical maps was that the imperial borders restricted the depiction of the ethnic territories outside the Empire. This meant that Rittikh's ethnographic map did not depict Lithuanian territories in Prussia, whereas on the 1851 map these territories were indicated numerically. Hence, ethnic groups were "locked" inside the state's political boundaries, although scholars were well aware of their existence outside those boundaries.

Comparing the Lithuanian territory on Koeppen's and Rittikh's maps (Figures 15, 16 and 22), it can be seen that this ethno-linguistic area had shrunk, especially around the city of Vil'na, where the Belarusian ethnic territory penetrated almost halfway between the cities of Kovno and Vil'na. This can be partly explained by the effectiveness of the official propaganda, where the contestable Lithuanian-Belarusian-Polish territories were interpreted or being more "Belarusian" than "Lithuanian" (and naturally, not Polish). However, as the results of Kuznetsov's ethnographic expedition (1869-1872) demonstrated, the Lithuanian ethno-linguistic border was indeed narrowing. The inhabitants around Vil'na tended to respond mostly in Russian, Belarusian or Polish rather than in Lithuanian. Therefore, Kuznetsov drew the approximate Lithuanian linguistic line west of Vil'na (Figure 12).<sup>704</sup> As an alternative, these areas could have been considered "ethnically neutral" territories, since their inhabitants were ambiguous about their language and ethnic identity. However, it was impossible for such a category to exist at that time, especially when the political interpretations of ethnographic data were in the hands of, to use Rittikh's words, "those with power."

Furthermore, the rather large Polish ethnic islands in the southern part of the Lithuanian lands, which can be seen on Koeppen's map (indicated by no. 26, Figure 16), disappeared on Rittikh's map, merging instead with the Lithuanian territories, although the overall number of small Polish settlements dramatically increased. Another area, which indicated significant eth-

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<sup>704</sup> It is hard to verify the credibility of Kuznetsov's accounts, however having good relations with the local Lithuanian intelligentsia, Kuznetsov, perhaps, was not so ill-disposed towards this ethnic group and based his interpretations on his observations and the information he collected (see chapter 3.4.2.2).

nic dynamics, was the south western part, on the left side of the River Neman. Rittikh's map showed an expansion of the Lithuanian territory compared to that depicted on the 1851 map, moving it closer to the town of Suvalki. The same can be said of the south eastern side of this area, i.e. on the right bank of the Neman River. Here the Polish and Belarusian ethnic islands, which had been marked by Koeppen, now disappeared leaving the area inhabited by the Lithuanians.

Rittikh also helped in updating Mirkovich's map of the Slavs (Figure 21). This unofficial cartographical work was basically similar to Šafařík's map, indicating almost identical Lithuanian ethnic borders. However, in Mirkovich/Rittikh's map the Lithuanians lost a significant amount of territory in Prussia. In addition, a number of Polish ethno-linguistic islands were depicted all around the Lithuanian lands. The fact that Rittikh participated in reprinting Mirkovich's map while at the same time preparing the ethnographic map of European Russia, allows further speculation on the author's individual perspective and his balancing of scientific/political ethics (the size of the Lithuanian territory was very different on these maps). On the one hand, Rittikh was praised for his mastery of scientific methods, especially in collecting and processing statistical data, as well as for his cartographic skills. Yet in his writings, where he expressed his thoughts about the past, present and future of the Russian Empire and the Western region, Rittikh revealed his strong political inclination in favour of the "official nationality" of the state.

#### *Concluding remarks*

This chapter has discussed the imperial mapping of the Lithuanian ethnic territory from the perspective of the general development of ethnographic cartography in the Russian Empire. Although Šafařík's map of the Slavs was not created in Russia it nevertheless had a huge impact on the evolution of certain scientific disciplines, such as ethnography and linguistics, and at the same time contributed to the activation of ethno-political movements. Hence, Šafařík's work had a dual result: first, it depicted the ethnic territories (including the Lithuanian) by indicating their contemporary boundaries, which were mapped in accordance with the most recent research methods and using the latest statistical data; second, the map revealed ethnic cartography's susceptibility to political argumentation.

Erckert's work is the best illustration of politicised ethnic cartography. By making two different (French and Russian) versions of the same ethnographic atlas, the author attempted to achieve two political goals: first, refuting the Polish arguments that the North Western provinces were culturally Polish (the French version of the atlas), and, second, helping the Russian authorities to decide what course of action to take with regard to the Poles in the North Western provinces (the Russian version). Erckert's argumentation was constructed according to an ideological interpretation and through the manipulation of ambiguous ethnic statistics. In order to demonstrate the exis-

tence of a Polish *majority* in these provinces, he conveniently used a method of ethnic distinction based on ethno-confessional data (at the same time knowing full well that the use of other methods would have given him different results). This allowed Erckert to claim that every Roman Catholic was Polish and every Orthodox Christian was Russian.

The Lithuanian ethnic territory in Erckert's atlases was depicted as being much greater than the contemporary ethno-statistical data showed it to be. In fact this spatial exaggeration served both his goals: a large Lithuanian territory undermined the Polish argument, by indicating that the Lithuanians (as well as Belarusians and Ukrainians) dominated this region; while in the "Polish-as-majority" argument, the Lithuanian map acted for the Russian authorities at a sub-level by turning the Lithuanians into one of the minorities oppressed by the Poles. Moreover, this Lithuanian and Latvian ethnic map was one of the first maps that singled out the territory of the Balts.

Such an extreme oversimplification provoked much critical reaction from other Russian scholars, who had struggled for a long time to collect, organise and process scattered ethnographic material. Koeppen's example showed that an individual compiling an ethnographical map of European Russia had to devote a huge amount of effort and time. It was only with the help of such organisations as the IRGS that he could complete and publish his work. The same can be said of Rittikh's confessional atlas and the second ethnographical map of European Russia – the new version of Koeppen's work.

This chapter has also revealed that science and politics (or ideology) were to a greater or lesser degree in a constant interplay. Many things depended on the cartographer and his scientific ethics in relation to political attitudes. Rittikh represented one of the most striking examples of a prolific scientist but also a harsh ideologist. Although skilled in cartography and statistics, he nevertheless published writings that advocated the development of a political, bureaucratic and state-controlled ethnography.

The position of the imperial ethnic cartographers reflected the attempts by the authorities to create a homogeneous territory through the "horizontal" or "national" integration of the state's space. The Russification of the North Western region was openly promoted in Erckert's works. Basically, he argued that the state has to be constituted from a single political nation. Therefore, the Polish elites were seen as a threat to the process of societal and cultural unification of the Empire. In this way, the manipulation of the Lithuanian and Belarusian ethnic territories played a significant role in refuting the claims of the Poles concerning their dominance in the region.

Arguably, the usefulness of the Belarusians and Lithuanians for the imperial authorities resulted from their mere existence and cultural difference from the local elites. Before the 1860s the Western region was sometimes unofficially called the "Polish provinces." However, imperial ethnic cartography presented a new option: it dissected the old Polish-Lithuanian *geo-body*, to use Winichakul's term, and then started to construct the Russian *geo-body* (by "Russian" I refer here to the state, not the nation). In this way

these ethnic maps can be perceived as the initial “stiches” in the Russian imperial *geo-body*.

In relation to this, it may be noted that whereas the administrative maps depicted the “vertical integration” of the state’s space, Russian ethnographical maps showed the first stage in the imperial “national integration,” i.e. first, by making Russia’s western borderlands multi-ethnic (i.e. non-Polish) and then, as the reviewers of Rittikh’s map remarked, by moving to the second stage – the making of one nation, which, as indicated above, gradually progressed in the form of Russification and Orthodoxisation.

Looking specifically at the change in the Lithuanian ethnic territory from its first depiction on Šafařík’s map to the way it was presented on Rittikh’s ethnographical map, it is obvious that the borders of this ethnic group were shrinking. The depiction of this tendency began on Koeppen’s maps and with his extensive collection of ethno-statistical information. The same can be said about Rittikh’s preparation of the second ethnographical map of European Russia. In the light of this, a general conclusion can be drawn: the more imperial ethnographers and statisticians investigated the Lithuanians, collected and interpreted information on this ethnic group – the smaller their territory appeared on the map. It was a consequence of two processes: a (self-) assimilatory process among the Lithuanian speakers and the “politically correct” interpretation of ethno-statistics by imperial scholars.

After the publication of Rittikh’s map in 1875, no other large ethno-cartographical works were published on European Russia or the North Western provinces. In part, this was due to the fact that no new statistical information was available after the last census in 1856. A new all-imperial census was not carried out until 1897, which subsequently became the best source for attempts to produce a new ethnographical map of the whole of the Russian Empire. The discussions about the creation of such a map only began just before the outbreak of the First World War.

As a consequence of the political reforms of the 1860s, the ethno-social structure of the North Western provinces was gradually changing. This was also stimulated by the imperial ethnic explorations in this region. From the 1870s onwards the Lithuanian national intelligentsia began its activities, first by studying and collecting works about Lithuanians, and then later by starting to construct a new – Lithuano-centric – worldview. One of the central aspects of this national revival, which was important in the formation of a Lithuanian national identity, was locating the national territory. In this way, the works of the imperial cartographers were to become a significant resource for the Lithuanian nationalists. In the end, it was the Lithuanian intelligentsia who would decide what and where the Lithuanian national territory was.

## 5. Constructing the Lithuanian National Territory (from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1914)

The works of Russian imperial cartographers showed that the Lithuanian ethnic boundaries had crystallised around 1870. As indicated earlier, the imperial cartographers presented the official Russian perspective, which combined scholarly investigations with imperial politics. The outcome of this was an interpretation of the multilingual and multi-ethnic Belarusian-Lithuanian-Polish Vil'na region as "Russian." The Polish intelligentsia argued that these lands belonged to their cultural and national borderlands (*kresy*), while the still small Belarusian national intelligentsia slowly began to question the meaning of "Russian" and conceptualise the Belarusianness of Vil'na province. At the same time the rapidly growing Lithuanian intelligentsia organised itself and launched what became known as the Lithuanian National Movement (LNM). From their perspective Vil'na and most of its province was Lithuanian; however the matter still required proof. Hence the construction of the Lithuanian ethnic territory signalled the beginning of Lithuanian national geography and cartography.

The appearance of Lithuanian national cartography and geography was therefore closely connected not only with the growth of the LNM, but also with the subsequent development of Lithuanian national education. Undoubtedly, it was a very important instrument for raising the literacy of the Lithuanian-speaking masses as well as for the procreation of nationalist ideology, which also included geography lessons on the Lithuanian national space. In addition, these interrelated processes (leaving aside the Polish and Belarusian perspectives) also owed much to the imperial policies of the time.

The formation of a modern Lithuanian, nationally conscious intelligentsia occurred around 1870. During the decades that followed it grew in size and gradually split into a variety of different political streams.<sup>705</sup> Most national-

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<sup>705</sup> A form of ethnic consciousness appeared in the 1820s and 1830s, through the Samogitian Literary Movement. Although propagating mostly cultural and less political goals, mainly using the Samogitian dialect as their literary language, the Samogitian petty nobility constituted *Phase A* in Miroslav Hroch's system of national awakening. This movement had several key figures, including the historian S. Dovkont/Daukantas (1793-1864) and the Roman Catholic bishop M. Volonchevski/Valančius (1801-1875). Historians tend to agree that there was a continuity between the Samogitian Literary Movement and the later Lithuanian National Movement. However the 1863-1864 uprising and the subsequent enforcement of de-

ists originated from the same Lithuanian social class – the peasantry. This was important as it played a significant role in helping nationalists to establish and maintain contact with the Lithuanian-speaking masses, which allowed them to prevail in the presence of the harsh policy of indoctrination being implemented by the Russian authorities. Therefore, the formation of a Lithuanian nationalist ideology depended not only on anti-Russian, but also on anti-Polish feelings, although it would be difficult to estimate which were more predominant.

Raising new “Lithuanian” (self-)consciousness among the Lithuanian peasantry became the ultimate goal of the nationalists. Attempts to achieve this were made in many ways, especially through the use of the press, religious and educational institutions and so on. In this way, as a response to Russification, the Lithuanian intelligentsia began its own campaign of nationalistic indoctrination of the Lithuanian speakers. This cultural and later ideological counteraction was not only based on the creation of the “imagined community” as such; at the same time one of its major goals was to establish the geographically defined Lithuanian space – bordering and mapping the imagined national Lithuanian space.

The following will serve as a concluding chapter that conjoins the previous parts, which discussed the administrative integration of the territory of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the appearance of geopolitical and ethnic regions in Russia, and the role of imperial science and scientists in ethnographic research and the subsequent cartographic separation of a Lithuanian ethno-linguistic and ethnographic space. This part will therefore adopt a different point of view, as it will deal with the Lithuanian perspective, i.e. the emergence of a national Lithuanian territorial ideal as presented in political discussions, geographical textbooks and maps.

In order to do this I have demarcated three periods that highlight different aspects of change in the formation of the Lithuanian national geographical space. The first period which runs up to 1904, features a form of national geographical education, which evolved during the time of press prohibition in the North Western provinces. The second period covers two very active years (1904-1906), starting with the abolition of the press prohibition (1904) and covering the revolutionary years of 1905-1906. During this period the question of national territory became highly prioritised and politicised. The final part covers the years leading up to the First World War, when Lithuanian nationalists came very close to formulating an answer to the questions concerning what constituted Lithuania and where the national Lithuanian territory actually lay.

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Polonisation, Russification, the prohibition on printing in the Latin alphabet and other attempts at forced integration of the Lithuanian-speaking population into the imperial realm, distinguished *Phase A* from *Phase B* (see: Hroch, pp. 22-30; on the Lithuanians: pp. 86-97). The historiography of the Lithuanian national movement is vast. See, for example, the works by Egidijus Aleksandravičius, Antanas Kulakauskas, Vytautas Merkys, Darius Staliūnas and Rimantas Vėbra.

## 5.1. The beginning of a Lithuanian national geography (before 1905)

The system of mass education in the North Western provinces in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be roughly divided into three qualitatively different parts: a) the Russian imperial system of education, b) education given by the Roman Catholic Church (which will not be discussed here, because it was less concerned with secular subjects) and c) education that was promoted by the national movements – the Lithuanian, the Polish and the Belarussian (the Jewish system of education was organised and existed on a rather different level and it is not related to the topic that is analysed here).

Obviously, both of these – the imperial and Lithuanian national – parts were different. Indeed, at first glance it would appear that this is not really a comparison of like with like, and that the development of national education was not directly involved in creating Lithuania's future boundaries. However, it could be argued that as pedagogic *systems* and “pedagogic authorities,” to use Bourdieu's term, both the imperial and the nationalist “pedagogical actions” could be compared.<sup>706</sup> The main reason for giving a detailed presentation of the system of education is its capacity to reproduce the nationalist worldview and its conception of boundaries.

It is clear that “pedagogic authorities” greatly depended on available material and financial resources. While imperial education took place within a fully established institutional structure (universities, gymnasiums, different types of secondary and primary schools), the national schools for a long time were able to provide only a very limited level of primary education, which consisted of thinly spread illegal home schooling.<sup>707</sup> The main focus here will

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<sup>706</sup> In Bourdieu's system of cultural reproduction in society, the so-called “Pedagogic Authority” represents the power that controls the process of teaching and (re-) introduction of particular ideologies. “Pedagogic action”, in Bourdieu's description, constitutes “symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power,” and it “seeks to reproduce the cultural arbitrary of the dominant or of the dominated classes.” Therefore, “pedagogic action necessarily implies, as a social condition of its exercise, **pedagogic authority** and the **relative autonomy** of the agency commissioned to exercise it [Bourdieu's emphases].” Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: 1992; 1<sup>st</sup> French edition 1970), pp. 5; 11-12.

<sup>707</sup> “Home schooling” was organised simply by finding any literate person who could teach children the basics of reading and writing. These teachers usually did not have any pedagogical proficiency; they were paid only small fees for their work. The peasants on their side provided a place for the school, which, due to the persecutory policies of the imperial authorities, was constantly changing its location.

Home schooling created a paradoxical situation. In the case of the Lithuanians, around 1870, high percentages of literate people lived in Kovno (53,5 %), Vil'na (32,3 %) and Suvalki (43,6 %) provinces. It was inversely proportional to the number of pupils in the state schools as compared to the whole population in this region (in 1897 the total number of schoolchildren that attended state schools constituted only 0,96% in Kovno, 1,90% in Vil'no and 1,52% in Suvalki provinces). Vytautas Merkys, “Lietuvių draudžiamosios spaudos ir tautinės tapatybės sąsajos,” *Knygotyra* (2005), no. 44, p. 4.



be on the Lithuanian national education and the picture of Lithuania that was propagated in its geographical textbooks.

Repressive methods used by the imperial authorities in the Belarusian, Lithuanian and Polish lands prevented the development of national education during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was only in the period after 1905, when more liberal policies were introduced, that private organisations were permitted to open schools. In this way, private Lithuanian organisations such as “Rytas,” “Saulė” or “Žiburyš” were able to start their networks of primary schools and even open gymnasiums. Naturally, these legal schools were closely supervised by the imperial authorities and had to follow the syllabus of the imperial education. In relation to this, perhaps the greatest achievement at that time was gaining permission to teach in the Lithuanian language.<sup>708</sup>

Primary schooling was the most important level of education and a collision point between the imperial and national ideologies. However, primary education was not obligatory until the end of the Russian Empire (except in the Baltic provinces). The first attempt to introduce a system of compulsory education occurred in 1906.<sup>709</sup> In the North Western region the already mentioned Vil’na Educational District (VED) administered all official education. After the uprising of 1831, Tsar Nicholas I had ordered that the VED and Vil’na University were to be closed, and that the District’s territory should be adjoined to the recently established Belarusian Educational District (formed in 1828, except for Polotsk and Mogilev provinces, which were attached to the St. Petersburg Educational District). Soon afterwards however, the VED was reopened and continued to exist until the First World

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<sup>708</sup> The study schedules of the private Lithuanian schools reveal that the workload of their pupils was much greater compared to those children in similar imperial schools. Lessons on the Lithuanian language, culture, history etc. constituted additional courses to those found within the all-imperial programmes. *Plan podgotovitel’nykh kursov dlia vzroslykh, razreshennykh k otkrytiiu v gor. Kovne obshchestvu “Saulė”/Planas prirengiamųjų paaugusiems kursų, leistų “Saulės” draugijai atidengti Kaune* (Kovna: 1913); Čepėnas, vol. 1, pp. 175-178; J. Laužikas, V. Merkys (eds.), *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties raidos bruožai (ligi Didžiosios Spalio socialistinės revoliucijos)* (Vilnius: 1983), p. 256; “Pavyzdinis lietuvių kalbos mokymo programos žemesnėms ir vidutinėms mokslo įstaigoms Vilniaus, Kauno, Gardino ir Suvalkų gubernijose,” in: Magdalena Karčiauskienė (ed.), *Lietuvos mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis XIX a. antroji pusė – XX a. pradžia. Antologija* (Vilnius: 2002), pp. 131-139.

<sup>709</sup> A more definite project of compulsory education was developed in the period just before the First World War. Financial calculations were estimated for Kovno province in 1913, which indicated how much it would cost to introduce a system of compulsory education. The plan revealed that minimal reorganisation of the already existing schools with the same annual budget would have taken 10 years (from 1914 until 1924), whereas building a sufficient number of schools for all the children in the province would have meant that the scheme would not have been finished until 1943. Jonas Matusas, *Lietuvių rusinimas per pradžios mokyklas* (Kaunas: 1937), pp. 37-38.

War. From 1850 onwards Kovno, Vil'na, Grodno and Minsk provinces were brought under the control of the same educational curator.<sup>710</sup>

A new institution, the Primary School Directorate opened in 1863 in Kovno province. Its establishment was linked to the imperial educational reforms (1863) and the introduction of a new type of school: the primary school. Before 1863 parish schools were the main institutions for primary education. Administered by the Catholic clergy, they taught the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as the Polish and Russian languages. In some schools additional lessons were given in the basics of Latin, calligraphy and geography.<sup>711</sup>

The establishment of new primary schools was a response to Governor-General Muravev's prohibition (1864) of all private schools in the region. In response to this, one of the most prominent leaders of the Lithuanian Catholic clergy, bishop M. Volonchevski/Valančius, urged priests to hire home teachers and continue teaching. It was not long, however, before the authorities began persecuting even this form of education.<sup>712</sup>

For a long time the imperial authorities pursued a policy of indoctrination as regards the official language and ideology in the Western provinces of the Empire. However, the Russian language and Orthodox religion were confronted by the traditional way of life of the Roman Catholic Lithuanian speakers. After the suppression of the 1863-1864 rebellion the Empire attempted to force uniformity on its space and peoples, through policies such as de-Polonisation and the prohibition of printing in the Latin alphabet. Thus, even though the period 1865-1904 is generally described in Lithuanian historiography as being mainly a "period of press prohibition," as Kulakauskas has rightly remarked, the prohibition of printing was only one of many repressive imperial policies introduced in the North Western provinces.<sup>713</sup>

Resistance to official policy became one of the preconditions for the appearance of the Lithuanian National Movement. Moreover, the ban on printing in the Latin script and the attempt to replace it with the Cyrillic alphabet resulted in the formation of a book-smuggler movement. Lithuanian lan-

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<sup>710</sup> The role of the curator at this time was much less important than it had been at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the reopening of the VED the curator became accountable not only to the Ministry of Education, but also to the Governor-General of Vil'na. Antanas Kulakauskas, *Kova už valstiečių sielas. Caro valdžia, Lietuvos visuomenė ir pradinis švietimas XIX a. viduryje* (Kaunas: 2000), p. 30.

<sup>711</sup> Matusas, pp. 19; 15-17; Merkys, "Lietuvių draudžiamosios spaudos," p. 4. In 1856 in Vil'na province there were 36 (three at Roman Catholic churches) primary schools with approximately 800 pupils. Kovno province had 58 primary schools (including 16 parish schools, administered by different confessions) with approximately 1,900 pupils (these numbers do not include the Jewish schools). *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties*, p. 124; Lukšienė, *Lietuvos švietimo istorijos bruožai*, pp. 230-231; Kulakauskas, p. 31.

<sup>712</sup> Jonas Matusas, p. 19; Magdalena Karčiauskienė, "Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties raidos bruožai: 1863-1918," in: Magdalena Karčiauskienė (ed.), *Lietuvos mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis XIX a. antroji pusė – XX a. pradžia. Antologija* (Vilnius: 2002), p. 12.

<sup>713</sup> Kulakauskas, pp. 5-6.

guage books in the Latin alphabet were printed mostly in East Prussia and subsequently smuggled and distributed among the Lithuanian population. In time, these book-smugglers organised and established distribution networks.<sup>714</sup>

Furthermore, most of the Lithuanian peasantry refused to allow their children to attend the imperial primary and secondary schools, since the main language of teaching there was Russian, and they also had compulsory lessons in the Orthodox faith. For these reasons the education of Lithuanian children was undertaken at home and revolved around the teaching of the basics of reading and writing. These activities did not go unnoticed by the authorities. The book-smugglers and distributors were severely punished through imprisonment or deportation to Siberia. Nonetheless, these books continued to flow into the Empire and the authorities' plan to force the Lithuanians to read in Cyrillic failed.<sup>715</sup>

It was against the backdrop of this harsh political and cultural situation at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that the first Lithuanian geographical textbooks appeared.

From the beginning of the period of national awakening the members of the LNM began to prepare the basics of a Lithuanian geographical education for the Lithuanian-speaking masses. As discussed above, precise knowledge concerning the Lithuanian ethnic boundaries remained a puzzle even to the imperial scientists, who were specifically investigating this question. Therefore, the LNM speculated on what constituted Lithuanian territory by relying mostly on Russian, Polish, German and other statistical, ethnographical and cartographical studies.<sup>716</sup> Thus, the nationalists' information came from the sources of their ideological opponents and their task became one of reinterpreting it according to a Lithuanian nationalist doctrine, presenting the material in newspapers, journals and school textbooks – the main links between the Lithuanian nationalists and the peasantry.

For a long time issues concerning national geography and cartography were not highly prioritised within the LNM, although they formed the background to their articles, brochures, books and private discussions. Obviously, the question of national space was crucial, since it is not only culture and language that constitute the prerequisites of a nation – a land or national

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<sup>714</sup> Petras Ruseckas (ed.), *Knygnešys, 1864-1904* (Vilnius: 1992 – 1<sup>st</sup> issue 1926, 1928), vols. 1-2; Antanas Tyla, *Garšvių knygnešių draugija* (Vilnius: 1991); Vytautas Merkys, *Knygnešių laikai, 1864-1904* (Vilnius: 1994), pp. 197-217; 235-292; 330-357; Rimantas Vėbra, *Lietuviškos spaudos draudimas 1864-1904 metais: istorijos bruožai* (Vilnius: 1996);

<sup>715</sup> Pranas Čepėnas, *Naujųjų laikų Lietuvos istorija*, (Vilnius: 1992 1<sup>st</sup> edition Chicago: 1977), vol. 1, pp. 166-172; *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties*, 181-204; Karčiauskienė, pp. 76-116.

<sup>716</sup> Čepėnas, vol. 2, pp. 251-286.

territory signifies the very existence of an ethnic group. It therefore had to be discovered and established, and ultimately delimited and nationalised.<sup>717</sup>

The biggest problem for members of the Lithuanian national intelligentsia was that they could not agree on their own “mental map” of the ethnic Lithuanian territory.<sup>718</sup> Following an already established formula used by Russian scholars, they identified ethnic Lithuania as referring generally to Kovno, Vil’na, and the northern parts of Grodno and Suvalki provinces. This basic understanding was dominant until the First World War. The territorial identification was primarily based on the Russian imperial administrative map. Therefore, *gubernii* and *uezdy* borders were used as formative units in identifying ethnic territories. Moreover, ethnic statistics, collected during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were also used to describe the ethnic distribution of the *gubernii*, *uezdy* or lower administrative-territorial units. There is no doubt that this schema of imperial administrative-territorial divisions complicated the precision of national territorial identification for several reasons. Firstly, despite much reshaping, the administrative structure that was introduced during the 1840s did not (or only partially) take into account the ethnic criterion. Secondly, these borders represented the authorities’ attempt to exert control over the state’s space. Taxation, military recruitment, various policies and many other factors of governance were dependent on this grid. In this way, the administrative borders were “solid” and immobile. The changing of these borders was the prerogative of the highest authorities and the Tsar.<sup>719</sup>

Naturally, the Lithuanian nationalists were not interested in reshaping the inner administrative borders. Their interest lay in the demarcation of the Lithuanian ethnic territory. Hence, from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards they made sporadic attempts to present their ideas concerning the ethnic distribution of the population as well as to draw maps of what they judged to be Lithuania proper.<sup>720</sup>

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<sup>717</sup> Research on the nationalistic (as well as cartographic) appropriation of territories has already received significant attention. Different aspects have been covered in the works of Benedict Anderson, Raymond B. Craib, Karen Culcasi, Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, Robert Shannan Peckham, Thongchai Winichakul and Larry Wolff. Perhaps, one of the most interesting examples of such a historical-ethnic construction of a territory occurred after the Second World War with the establishment of Israel. It took over 50 years of planned ideological Zionist propagation and concentration of human and material resources to acquire the land and nationalise it, although, this appropriation of the territory created a long-lasting disturbance and conflict between the Jews and Arabs. Maoz Azaryahu, Arnon Golan, “(Re) naming the landscape: the formation of the Hebrew map of Israel 1949-1960,” *Journal of Historical Geography* (2001), vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 178-195.

<sup>718</sup> Mykolas Biržiška remarked that the life of an ordinary Lithuanian for a very long period did not extend beyond the borders of a parish (Mykolas Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias į naują gyvenimą* (Los Angeles: 1952), vol. 1, p. 184).

<sup>719</sup> For more details, see chapter 2.

<sup>720</sup> Similar processes of geographic and cartographic growth occurred among other ethnic groups in the Russian Empire. The Finns, for example, who enjoyed their autonomous territory, started modernising their geographical lessons and textbooks during the 1880s. Hannele Rikkinen, “Developments in the status and content of geography teaching in the secondary

It has to be noted that there were no professional geographers or cartographers among the Lithuanian map-makers. Many of these cartographers were trained engineers. Moreover, the Lithuanian cartographers used the material that was accessible to them for their maps. No ethnographical or statistical investigations were undertaken and the making of maps was based on reinterpretation of the official data and on individual knowledge.

The first Lithuanian-made maps appeared as supplementary pedagogical material and as illustrations in geography textbooks. Before the repeal of the prohibition on printing in the Latin script (1904) these maps formed a portion of those illegal Lithuanian publications discussed above, and were thus mostly printed outside the Russian Empire.

### 5.1.1. The first Lithuanian geography textbooks

Geographical information about the Lithuanian lands in the Lithuanian language started to appear in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is probable that the first geography textbook was published in 1896, in Tilsit (Tilžė), Prussia. Its author was the Franciscan priest Juozas Žebrius.<sup>721</sup> Written in the form of a set of questions and answers, the small textbook was reminiscent of the structure of the Catholic catechism. Apparently, *The Short Description of the Earth*<sup>722</sup> was written in the early 1880s during the author's studies at a Catholic seminary. Žebrius admitted that despite being the first author of a geography textbook in Lithuanian he was not satisfied with it, probably realising that his study did not correspond to the standards of geographical pedagogy.

In this sense he was correct, because this seemingly simple text presented the world in a rather ambivalent way.<sup>723</sup> It contained mostly questions on world geography and only a few were specifically related to the Lithuanian lands. As the author admitted, his main goal was to accustom Lithuanian speakers to Lithuanised place names, rather than attempt to create a compre-

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schools of Finland in 1770-1888," *Fennia* (1982), vol. 160, no. 1, pp. 43-93; by the same author: "Developments in the status and content of geography teaching in the secondary schools of Finland in 1888-1977," *Fennia* (1982), vol. 160, no. 2, pp. 313-383.

<sup>721</sup> Juozas Žebrius (1860-1915) – Roman Catholic priest, publicist. Soon after becoming a priest (1893), Žebrius emigrated to the USA, where he became actively involved in national and religious work among the Lithuanian émigrés. He was an editor of several local Lithuanian newspapers and published popular books.

<sup>722</sup> Juozas Žebrius, *Trumpas aprašymas apie žemę arba žemrašys* (Tilžė: 1896).

<sup>723</sup> The book was harshly criticized by Vincas Kudirka (1858-1899), editor of the Lithuanian periodical "Varpas." He completely rejected the idea that the work had any value, and instead argued that it would cause more harm than good. Giving examples of questions and answers, Kudirka showed how Žebrius presented faulty and misleading information, useless details (for example, how many Roman Catholic churches there were in a particular province), and that the text had no structure – which led him to conclude that the author had a very poor knowledge of geography. The reviewer stated that regardless of the fact that Lithuanians at this time were only just starting to produce their first books in Lithuanian, such a "monstrous" publication could only hinder Lithuanian education. V. K. [Vincas Kudirka], "Peržvalga raštu," *Varpas* (1896), no. 12, pp. 182-184.

hensive and complete textbook.<sup>724</sup> Hence, readers could start to familiarise themselves with the pronunciation of the names of various foreign countries, rivers, mountains, etc. in their own language.<sup>725</sup> It is doubtful however, that this small brochure had any great impact on Lithuanian geographical education, yet it nevertheless served its purpose by acting as a “catechism” of Lithuanian geography.

In 1898, Petras Vileišis<sup>726</sup> published a proper geography textbook entitled *A Short Geography or Description of the Earth*.<sup>727</sup> Soon afterwards, in 1899, another Lithuanian publicist, Juozas Adomaitis-Šernas,<sup>728</sup> printed a book with a similar title *A Geography or Description of the Earth*.<sup>729</sup> Both books signalled the beginning of Lithuanian national geographical education.

These works were published in the Lithuanian émigré communities in the United States. In order to reach their target audience, they had to be shipped to Prussia and then smuggled into the Russian Empire, thus becoming educational material for the teachers.<sup>730</sup> It is difficult to estimate how many copies of these early textbooks found their way to the home-schools, or to what extent they were actually used as educational material.<sup>731</sup> Naturally, the pedagogic level in these home-schools was very low and everything depended on the qualifications and eagerness of the hired teacher, the so-called *daraktorius*. Still, the fact that there was a growing interest in the propagation of geographical knowledge signified that the Lithuanian intelligentsia considered it to be an important aspect of national education as well as national unification.

Vileišis and Adomaitis-Šernas presented the world in a very generalised way. These works were basically translations or compendiums based on other textbooks – Adomaitis-Šernas even named some of the authors he had used in his title. Regardless of the fact that most of these books were transla-

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<sup>724</sup> Žebrius, “Prakalba.”

<sup>725</sup> Some Lithuanian researchers tend to think that the earliest Lithuanian national cartography (1900-1920) was preoccupied with the Lithuanisation of the topographical nomenclature (Jonas Deksnys, “Lietuviški žemėlapiai per pirmą dvidešimtmetį (1900-1920),” *Geodezijos darbai* (1994), vol. 20, pp. 71-78). This is only partially correct, because the purpose of creating national maps was not only related to map making *per se*, but was also connected to the issue of the visualisation of the political arguments of the Lithuanian national intelligentsia.

<sup>726</sup> Petras Vileišis (1851-1926) – prominent Lithuanian publicist, engineer. Vileišis graduated from St. Petersburg University, receiving degrees in mathematics and engineering. He became known for designing and building railways and bridges all over the Empire. He also wrote various texts in Lithuanian.

<sup>727</sup> Petras Vileišis [Neris], *Trumpa geografija arba žemės aprašymas* (Chicago: 1898).

<sup>728</sup> Juozas Adomaitis-Šernas (1859-1922) – publicist. Adomaitis-Šernas was an amateur scholar who popularised scientific knowledge for his Lithuanian audience. During his lifetime he published about 20 books.

<sup>729</sup> Juozas Adomaitis-Šernas, *Geografija arba žemės aprašymas, pagal Geikie, Narkowski ir kitus* (Chicago: 1899).

<sup>730</sup> Čepėnas, vol. 1, p. 230.

<sup>731</sup> According to some calculations most of Vileišis textbooks (he wrote textbooks on various subjects) had print-runs of between 1,000 and 6,000 copies. Jonas A. Martišius, “Petro Vileišio vadovėliai,” *Mokslas ir Gyvenimas* (2000), no. 12 (516), (online).

tions, their originality rested in the chapters describing Lithuania and its territory. These texts were written by the translators themselves and thus expressed their perception of how Lithuania might have been described at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, each book was illustrated with a map of Lithuania. Finally, the publication of the books outside Russia meant that these texts did not undergo the scrutiny of the imperial censors.

The structure of Vileišis' Lithuanian chapter was quite schematic. He began by describing the borders, their length and indicated the border towns. Later the neighbouring ethnic groups, including the Swedes on the other side of the Baltic Sea, were named. Further on, he briefly presented the ethnic minorities in the Lithuanian lands (the Jews, the Poles, the Russians, the Lithuanian Tatars, the Karaim and the Roma), afterwards depicting the physical geography of this territory.<sup>732</sup>

Next Vileišis described the Lithuanians. He began by indicating that the Lithuanians were traditionally an agrarian people. However, he urged them to start competing in other spheres, such as industry and commerce. These economic branches were dominated by the Jewish ethnic group. Vileišis proposed a peaceful and gradual takeover, i.e. through the replacement of Jewish with Lithuanian-dominated trade in these lands.<sup>733</sup>

This moderate nationalist ideology was reflected in other chapters, which discussed the problems involved in overcoming Lithuanian illiteracy and presented the urban geography and demography of the country. The latter is of particular interest, since here the description of local cities and towns was organised in a very specific way. First, Vileišis indicated that the urbanscape was almost completely non-Lithuanian. This deviation was highlighted by making a comparison with other countries (France, Germany and the Polish lands), where towns were populated with people that spoke the same language as the dominant ethnic group. The Lithuanian urbanscape was multinational and predominantly Jewish.

To make the urbanscape more "Lithuanian," the author used a specific method of describing towns and cities. The lesson was constructed by using national (i.e. historical and religious) "Lithuanian" objects, such as, for example, the St. Stanislas (Šv. Stanislovo) Cathedral in Vil'na, where the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas (Witold) was allegedly buried, or the chapel named the "Gates of the Dawn" (Aušros Vartai) – a must-know place for a devout Catholic. At the same time, some of the towns described were significant in their relation to the national movement, such as the town of Tilsit in Prussia – which was the most important centre in Lithuanian language publishing. However, this Lithuanisation of the urbanscape and the attempt to present Lithuania as an individual and distinct country had its limits. The author did not disassociate the Lithuanian lands from the Russian imperial space – the Empire was present in the net of highways and

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<sup>732</sup> Vileišis, pp. 46-47.

<sup>733</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

waterways as well as in the towns and cities that were of imperial importance.<sup>734</sup>

A rather similar territorial distinction appeared in Adomaitis-Šernas' book, although he expanded his presentation by adopting a historical-geographical point of view and by joining the Lithuanian and Latvian lands, subsequently calling his chapter "The Lands of the Lithuanian Family" (*Krasztai Lietuviškos giminės*).

While considering various developments that had occurred in the past and present, Adomaitis-Šernas concentrated on the Balts' loss of their ethno-linguistic territory, which included the Latvians, the Lithuanians and the already extinct Prussian ethnic group. His main message was that these areas had been lost because in the past there had been a lack of unity between the three. Yet the situation at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century seemed exactly the same to him: the Lithuanians in the Russian Empire did not want to cooperate with the Prussian Lithuanian-speakers because of their religious differences (the former being Roman Catholics, and the latter Lutherans). Similarly, there was not much cooperation between Lithuanians and Latvians.<sup>735</sup>

Describing the geography of the Lithuanian lands, Adomaitis-Šernas mixed history, ethnography, linguistics and geography, thus making his a somewhat confusing text. The presentation was organised according to three major ethno-historical-geographical regions: the Prussian (the so-called "Prussian Lithuania"), the Latvian and the Lithuanian (the latter being referred to as "Russian or "Muscovite (*Maskolizka*)) Lithuania."<sup>736</sup>

Although it was not clearly distinguished, the text indicated the difference between "historical" and "ethnic" Lithuania. The latter was of greater concern, while the "historical" Lithuanian territory stood as an example of previous grandeur.<sup>737</sup> Moreover, a hierarchical distinction of certain historical objects, which were considered to be of great national importance, was made by juxtaposing them with imperial ones thus undermining the idea of Russian dominance. For example, the ruins of the castle tower in Vil'na stood on a hill, while the residence of the Governor-General was located below. This comparison between hierarchies of power was an obvious manifestation of Lithuanian spatial nationalism.<sup>738</sup>

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<sup>734</sup> Vileišis, pp. 50-51.

<sup>735</sup> Adomaitis-Šernas, pp. 422-424.

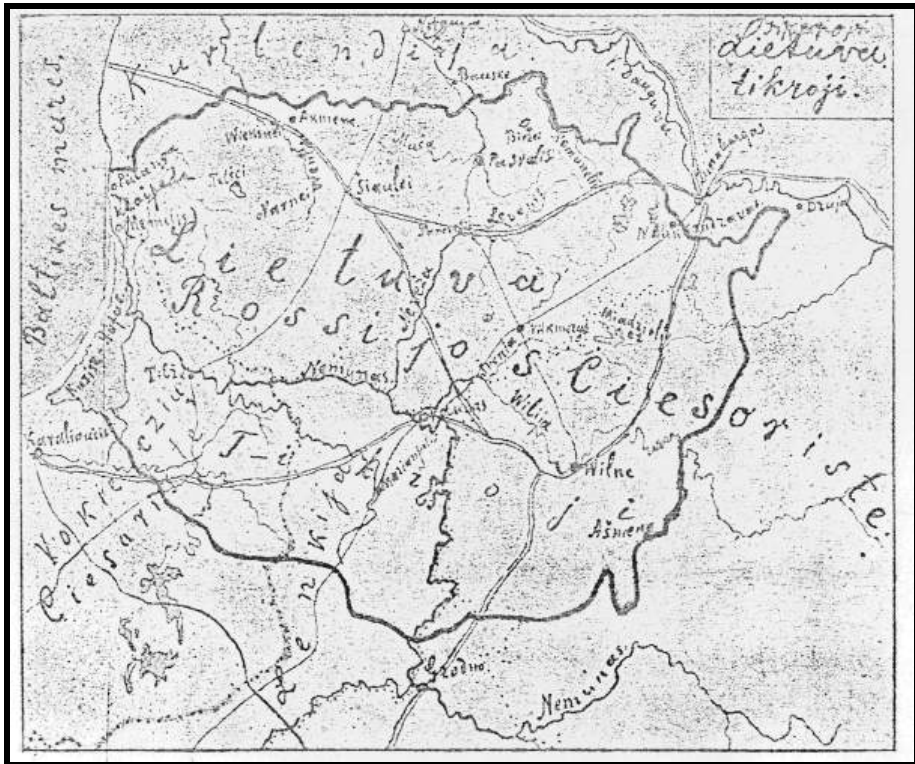
<sup>736</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 428.

<sup>737</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 428-429. When presenting the network of towns and cities in the Lithuanian lands, Adomaitis-Šernas described Minsk as the second largest Lithuanian city (further indicating that Grodno and Vitebsk belonged to the Lithuanian area as well) (*Ibid.*, p. 437-439). This nationalisation of the non-Lithuanian urbanscape can be seen as a result of the still undetermined historical and ethno-linguistic criteria for territorial identification. The author's urge to rely on the historical past (and the lands of the Balts) did not exactly correspond with the contemporary ethnic situation. Therefore, he confined himself to merely naming the Lithuanian border cities but did not analyse their ethnic status, because the historical argument justified their appropriation.

<sup>738</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 437.



Adomaitis-Šernas' geographical description of the Lithuanian lands was densely packed with scientific information. The main purpose of this book (as of his other textbooks) was the popularisation of scientific knowledge. But it must have been difficult material for pupils as well as their teachers to comprehend, since it required that the reader possess at least a basic previous knowledge of history, ethnography, linguistics, geology etc. Hence, viewing it from a pedagogical perspective the value of the book seems rather doubtful.



**Figure 23.** Vileišis' "Lithuania proper" (*Lietuva tikroji*) (1898). The dark line indicates the Lithuanian ethnic settlement, the dotted line the Russo-German border

Nevertheless, the first Lithuanian geographical books contained some unique visual material – most notably, a map of Lithuania. It first appeared in Vileišis' work and was most probably created by the author himself. The same map was subsequently reprinted in Adomaitis-Šernas' book. This hand-made map, entitled "Lithuania proper" (*Lietuva tikroji*), visualised the Lithuanian national perception of its ethnic territory for the first time (Figure 23).

This map is interesting in many ways. As demonstrated earlier, most of the non-official ethnic maps were not bound by the political boundaries of the state. In this respect Vileišis' map was no exception. It depicted the

Lithuanian ethnic territory as being divided between the Russian and German empires, thus focusing the perspective on the whole Lithuanian country. It greatly distorted the cartographic geo-political structure of the region, because it seemed to show that part of Prussia belonged to the Russian Empire. The sharpness of the Lithuanian ethnic boundaries drew attention away from the barely visible Russo-Prussian border. In comparison, the imperial cartographers were extremely conscious of their depiction of political borders. It was difficult for Koeppen's or Rittikh's maps to violate the Prussian border (although in the 1851 map Koeppen indicated the Lithuanian territories in Prussia by using numbers).<sup>739</sup>

Other details, which attracted immediate attention, were the captions and sizes of the letters inscribed on the map, which showed the hierarchical importance of particular nomenclature. The lettering "Lithuania proper" (*Lietuva tikroji*) was of the same size as the words "Russian Tsardom" (*Rossijos Ciesoriste*) thus indicating the equal weight given to these categories, in contrast to the use of smaller letters to indicate the territory of the German Empire (*Vokiecziu ciesariste*), Poland (*Lenkija*) and Courland (*Kurlendija*). Furthermore, the caption "Lithuania proper" created another peculiar visual power play. The word "Lithuania" was placed above the caption indicating "Russian Tsardom" while the second word "proper" even encircled it. In this way, a rather strange, but at the same time eloquent phrase "Lithuania – Russian Tsardom – proper" covered the central part of the map. This central caption(s) created the impression that although Lithuania was distinct from the other neighbouring countries, it was nevertheless an equal (?), significant and constitutive part of the Romanov realm.

As mentioned earlier, the Lithuanisation of geographical names played a significant role in establishing a common terminology or nomenclature. The map depicted the names of the states, provinces, towns and rivers in Lithuanian, although it was not yet a normative language. Some locations outside the ethnic territory, such as "Druja," "Mintauja" etc., were important and well known to Lithuanian speakers, therefore Vileišis' map began a gradual expansion of the Lithuanised space by including them, a tendency that was to become one of the most significant aspects of early Lithuanian national cartography.

A close examination of the borderlines on the map reveals that to some extent they followed the boundary lines of the state's administrative-territorial units. The Lithuanian ethnic border began on the coast of the Baltic Sea, included the Polangen district (in Courland province) and continued along the Kovno-Courland provincial border. Further, it went south, cutting across Svetsiany and Oshmiany *uezdy* and then stretching due west into Prussia. The administrative borders were also disregarded in the south, where the line divided Lida *uezd* (Vil'na province) in two parts, leaving its northern side in Lithuania proper. Vileišis' depiction of Lithuania's borders

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<sup>739</sup> See chapters 4.2 and 4.4.

showed that a large part of Vil'na district was included in the national territory (largely following Koreva's ethnic distinction<sup>740</sup>) while the southern/south-western ethno-linguistic border (north of Grodno) resembled the line found in Rittikh's *Ethnographical Map of European Russia* (1875) (Figure 22). This highlights the significant impact that imperial cartography had on the first visualisation of Lithuanian national territory. Thus, the Russian administrative and ethnographic maps constituted one of the main sources of reference for Lithuanian national cartography.

### 5.1.2. Maciejauskas' map of the Lithuanian and Latvian country (1900)

While the ban on publishing in Latin script was still in place, the Lithuanian intelligentsia succeeded in publishing a map in Russia of Lithuania in Lithuanian. In 1900 the engineer Antanas Maciejauskas<sup>741</sup> prepared and printed (in 2,000 copies) the *Map of the Lithuanian-Latvian Country* in St. Petersburg (Figure 24).<sup>742</sup> It is considered to be the first original large format Lithuanian map.

The publication of the map was a huge event. It was very well received among the Lithuanian intelligentsia.<sup>743</sup> Firstly, it was a proper Lithuanian cartographical work. Maciejauskas' map was on a scale of 1:840,000, consisting mainly of habitation names written in Lithuanian, Latvian, and partly in German. Furthermore, the map depicted the idea of a common Latvian and Lithuanian ethno-territorial unity, which existed as one of the geopolitical territorial alternatives at the time.<sup>744</sup>

The Lithuanian-Latvian country depicted was not uniform. Even the density of the marked Lithuanian settlements was not the same in different regions. The region of greatest density was located on the south western part (Suvalki province) of the map. A second distinctive region corresponded to Kovno province. Vil'na and Grodno provinces together with the Lithuanian settlements in Prussia formed a third region. Finally, the Latvian territories were depicted as having a very scanty network of settlements.

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<sup>740</sup> Koreva, see the appended map; Vytautas Merkys, *Tautiniai santykiai Vilniaus vyskupijoje 1798-1918 m.* (Vilnius: 2006), p. 103.

<sup>741</sup> Antanas Maciejauskas (Macijauskas – 1874-1950) – engineer, publicist and cartographer. In 1898 Maciejauskas graduated from the St. Petersburg Technological Institute and became an engineer. He worked in the imperial railway system and at the same time wrote articles and textbooks in Lithuanian. He also established the first Lithuanian bookshops in Riga and Kovno.

<sup>742</sup> Antanas Maciejauskas, *Žemėlapis Lietuviškai-Latviško krašto* (St. Petersburg: 1900).

<sup>743</sup> Vytautas Pocius, *Antanas Macijauskas* (Vilnius: 2004), pp. 62-67.

<sup>744</sup> The topic of the cultural and territorial unity of these neighbouring and linguistically related ethnic groups episodically reappeared in the declarations of Lithuanian politicians. Although the attempt to create some kind of Lithuanian-Latvian country was unsuccessful during the "Great Assembly of Vilnius" in 1905, this idea continued to receive attention both before and during the First World War (Lopata, pp. 33-34; Motieka, p. 154)

Another specific feature of Maciejauskas' map was its marking of highways and railways. This feature was especially enhanced in his subsequent cartographical work, which appeared in a geography textbook entitled *The Basics of Geography (Pradinė geografija – 1905)*, which will be discussed later (Figure 25).



**Figure 24.** Maciejauskas' "A Map of the Lithuanian-Latvian Country" (St. Petersburg: 1900) (Courtesy of the National Museum of Lithuania)

The second impact of the publication of this map – was political. Preparations for publishing the work took some time. The practical and legal aspects of such work had to be carefully thought through. Therefore Maciejauskas decided to print the map in St. Petersburg, because the situation in the capital was relatively more liberal than anywhere else in Russia and the capital also had very good cartographical print shops. It was possible to print the map legally as long as it was not distributed in the North Western provinces (i.e. among the Lithuanians), and thus did not violate the press ban. Moreover, Maciejauskas relied on the fact that during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

different scientific publications were published legally in the Latin alphabet inside the Russian Empire.<sup>745</sup> He was proved to be right when permission was received from the imperial censors. Thus, the map of the Lithuanian and Latvian country was printed in early 1900.

However, eight months later, on November 17, 1900, Vil'na's Governor-General V. Trotskii asked the higher authorities to confiscate the map. One of the reasons given was that the map had been advertised in the illegal Lithuanian press. Its popularity was increasing, the Lithuanians were eagerly buying it and this violated the prohibition on printing in the Latin alphabet. The case was referred to the head of the Supreme Publication Committee Prince N. V. Shakhovskoi, who confiscated the remaining 1,186 maps. 814 copies had already been distributed.<sup>746</sup>

Unexpectedly, Maciejuskas decided to take the case to court. He consulted the lawyers Maksim Ganfman<sup>747</sup> and Avgust I. Kaminka,<sup>748</sup> who helped him to build a case; Kaminka agreed to represent the cartographer. They analysed the juridical side of the confiscation and came to a much wider conclusion: that the whole prohibition of the Latin alphabet had never been legally formalised, hence it was against imperial law. Despite the fact that Maciejuskas' case was formally against Shakhovskoi, even the Russian authorities perceived it to be a more fundamental issue. Without going too deeply into this matter, it is sufficient to note that the cartographer won the case in 1903. This victory contributed to some extent to the abolition of the press prohibition, which was officially declared on April 24, 1904.<sup>749</sup>

The time before the 1905 Revolution was the period when the Lithuanian National Movement became organised, as well as politicised. The Lithuanian intelligentsia grew increasingly preoccupied with the propagation of the idea of national unity and identity among the masses. In this respect national geography became an increasingly important topic, although restrictive imperial policies prevented a wider elaboration and discussion of the subject.

The first school textbooks on Lithuanian geography marked the beginning of large-scale spatial revisionism and the emergence of a national geographical identity. Arguably, the first maps showed "Lithuania proper" as being

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<sup>745</sup> Pocius, pp. 60-61.

<sup>746</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>747</sup> Maksim Ganfman (1873-1934) – Jewish-born lawyer. Ganfman was born in Taurogen (present-day Tauragė, Lithuania), studied law at St. Petersburg University; soon however he was expelled for participation in the anti-tsarist movement. Later he completed his studies at Kazan University. After the First World War he lived and worked in Riga.

<sup>748</sup> Avgust I. Kaminka (1865-1940) – lawyer, publicist, politician. Kaminka was a docent of St. Petersburg University, one of the founders and co-editors of the journal *Pravo*, and also one of the founders of the *Cadet* political party. After the First World War Kaminka emigrated to Finland (1918) and later lived and worked in Berlin.

<sup>749</sup> Rimantas Vėbra, "A. Macijausko byla dėl Lietuvos žemėlapių ir M. Miežinio žodynas (papildomi faktai)," in: Rimantas Vėbra, *Lietuviškos spaudos draudimas 1864-1904 metais: istorijos bruožai* (Vilnius: 1996), pp. 199-200; Pocius, pp. 67-80.

hierarchically equal to (or even slightly higher than) Russia, which gave a boost to the national geo-political understanding: “Lithuania” *in/and* “the Russian Empire,” rather than “Lithuania” *under* “the Russian Empire.” The outcome of the Maciejauskas case proved that his perspective was more than simply a matter of visual rhetoric.

## 5.2. Political Interpretations of Lithuanian ethnic boundaries (1905-1906)

The most significant concretisation of territorial perceptions occurred during the revolutionary years 1905-1906. The political impact of the Lithuanian National Movement, which began during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the first political party was established in 1896 – the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party), was reflected in the subsequent development of plans for future territorial construction. These plans were revealed before and during the Great Assembly of Vilnius (*Didysis Vilniaus Seimas*), which took place in November 1905.

Representatives from all over the Lithuanian lands, various political parties and social classes attended the Assembly. The delegates agreed on a general manifesto, which stated that the LNM would strive for an autonomous Lithuanian territory within its ethnographic boundaries, as an interim phase on the road to complete independence. However, there were certain disagreements concerning the specific territory that would comprise an autonomous Lithuania.

Before 1905 the Lithuanian Democratic Party (LDP, established 1902) maintained a balance between the two major distinctions in understanding Lithuanian territory – the *historical* and the *ethnographical*. It was realised that although the first option involved more territory from the point of view of political demands, the second option presented the more realistic possibility when negotiating with the imperial authorities. These thoughts evolved during discussions between the LDP and the so-called *krajowcy* movement, which consisted of democratically-minded local Polish nobility who had formed an “autonomist” circle (1904-1905) to discuss the possibility of establishing a common autonomous territory in Lithuania and Belarus. However, the Lithuanian politicians gave priority instead to *ethnographic* Lithuania, including some areas in Vil’na and Grodno provinces which contained Belarusian and Polish speakers and as a result these discussions ceased.<sup>750</sup>

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<sup>750</sup> Mykolas Römeris [Michal Römer], *Letuva. Studija apie lietuvių tautos atgimimą* (Vilnius: 2005 – 1<sup>st</sup> Polish edition 1908), p. 203; Raimundas Lopata, *Lietuvos valstybingumo raida 1914-1918 metais* (Vilnius: 1996), pp. 44-45; Jan Sawicki, *Mykolas Römeris ir buvusios Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės žemių tautinės problemos* (Vilnius: 1999), “Lietuvių Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos - LAIS,” vol. 15, pp. 98-101; Egidijus Motieka, *Didysis Vilniaus Seimas* (Vilnius: 2005), pp. 51-53.

The *krajowcy* movement argued for the restoration of *historical* Lithuania; its main ideologist was Michał Römer/Römeris.<sup>751</sup> The movement was founded in 1905 by liberal and democratically-minded nobility from the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL), who sought ways to cooperate with the Belarusian and Lithuanian national movements. The name *krajowcy* can be translated as “the people of the ‘country’ (*kraj*),” which indicated that they envisioned a common fatherland for all the major ethnic groups in the GDL lands (i.e. Belarusians, Lithuanians, Jews and Poles). In terms of the *krajowcy*’s conception, this country constituted an integral territorial and economic unit, with its distinctive historical traditions, culture and specific ethno-social structure.<sup>752</sup>

In this way, the local Polonised nobility (*gente Lituanus/Ruthenus, natione Polonus*) tried to act as a connecting link between the growing national separatist movements. In his early writings (before 1914) Römer discussed one of the possible territorial structures of this multi-ethnic autonomous country. Later however, he decided to support the Lithuanians, while at the same time stressing his dual – Lithuanian-Polish – ethno-political identity. His proposed country consisted of two large parts – Belarus and Lithuania. The identification of the Lithuanian ethno-linguistic territory presented no great difficulties, since Lithuanians were distinctive in their language and culture. The Belarusian case, however, was more complicated. In Römer’s view, the Belarusian lands could have been divided into three parts – the eastern part, which was under Russian influence (Mogilev, part of Vitebsk and the south eastern part of Minsk *gubernii*); “Belarus proper” (Minsk province and Vileika and Disna districts); and the so-called “Lithuanian Rus” (parts of Vil’na and Grodno provinces, including the city of Vil’na and Novogrudok *uezd*), the inhabitants of which, as Römer described them, represented a “Polish-Belarusian-Lithuanian” amalgam and lived in the so-called *kresy*, or the border-territories.<sup>753</sup>

This proposed alternative, however, collided with the nationalist understanding of individual and bordered ethnic space. The Lithuanian nationalists strove for a narrower definition of Lithuania, although their own conceptions of national territory were not solid either.

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<sup>751</sup> Michał Pius Römer/Römeris (1880-1945) – prominent lawyer, publicist and politician. He was the founder of the *krajowcy* movement. After 1920 he lived in Kaunas, where he was a member of the Lithuanian Supreme Court (1921-1928) and also professor and rector of Kaunas University (from 1930 – Vytautas Magnus University).

<sup>752</sup> Sawicki, p. 98.

<sup>753</sup> Römeris, pp. 5-6 (also footnote 1); 203-204; 230-231; Sawicki, p. 96. Later, in 1913, Römer described the inhabitants of this ethnically undefined part as *tutejszość* – or the “locals,” since ethnically they could not be ascribed either to the Lithuanians, Belarusians or Poles. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109. On the complexity of the ethno-linguistic situation and problems of national self-identification in Vil’na region see: Halina Turska [Galina Turska], *O powstaniu polskich obszarów językowych na Wileńszczyźnie / O proiskhozhdenii pol’skoiazychnykh arealov v Vil’niusskom krae* (Vilnius: 1995 – reprint from 1939 Polish edition), pp. 13-44; 106-166; *passim*.

The proceedings of the Great Assembly of Vilnius revealed that there was a fundamental problem with the terminology being used for ethno-geographical identification. Two words, which were constantly being used by national politicians, were “ethnic” and “ethnographic.” Despite their similarity, they nevertheless connoted rather different territorial conceptions. The “ethnic” criterion referred to space where the Lithuanian *language* was still spoken, but the “ethnographic” criterion designated a much greater territory, where only a part of the population spoke Lithuanian, i.e. it was based primarily on the *historical* and *material* (i.e. ethnographical) culture and much less on the language. The “Memorandum” (issued November 2, 1905), which was prepared by the Assembly and presented to the central imperial authorities, revealed that the autonomous Lithuania being proposed consisted of Kovno, Vil’na and Grodno provinces, as well as parts of Courland and Suvalki provinces. When analysing the text of the Memorandum, the Lithuanian historian Motieka highlighted this peculiar duality between the “ethnic” and “ethnographic” concepts: “The authors of the Memorandum clearly perceived the conceptions of ‘ethnographic’ and ‘ethnic’ Lithuania. ‘Ethnic Lithuania’ – is the territory inhabited by the Lithuanian ethno-linguistic community. Together with the Lithuanian, Polish and Belarusian ethnic borderlands (consisting of the ‘non-Lithuanian’ part of Vil’na province and all of Grodno province) this ‘ethnic Lithuania’ constitutes the ‘ethnographic Lithuania.’”<sup>754</sup>

Furthermore, in the joint resolution issued after the Assembly a new ethno-geographical definition of Lithuania appeared. The second paragraph stated that: “autonomous Lithuania has to be constituted from present-day ethnographical Lithuania as a nucleus and its peripheries, which due to economic, cultural, national or other reasons are attracted to this nucleus and [whose] inhabitants wish to be part of it.”<sup>755</sup> This meant that both the “ethnographical” and “ethnic” concepts were joined in one definition. The post-Assembly conception of Lithuania therefore consisted of Lithuanian Kovno, Vil’na and parts of Grodno, Suvalki and Courland provinces (the coastal district of Polangen and some territories in the Illukst district). However, even with this definition, Lithuania did not gain a definite shape. The abstractness of the “peripheral” territories complicated the presentation of this projected autonomous unit on the map (Figure 28). Different political wings of the LNM could not agree on territorial questions, such as whether or not to include the whole or just the Lithuanian-speaking parts of Suvalki and Grodno provinces, and what the status of the Lithuanians in Prussia should be. Since the Assembly planned to achieve an autonomous Lithuania within the boundaries of the Russian state, Prussian Lithuania remained outside the remit of any political arguments.<sup>756</sup>

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<sup>754</sup> Motieka, p. 84. For the text of the “Memorandum” in Russian and Lithuanian, see: *Ibid.*, pp. 272-279.

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 294.

<sup>756</sup> Motieka, pp. 183-185.



When discussing the work of the Assembly, Römer provided some interesting insights into the Lithuanian attempts to delimit their ethnic territory. He agreed that a simple delimitation of the ethno-linguistic territory would have been “artificial and imprecise”. The clearest borders were with Prussia and Latvia (Courland) while a somewhat less clear (although definable) border separated Lithuanians and Poles in Suvalki province, whereas the Lithuanian-Belarusian ethnic border was in a state of constant flux. Here the drawing of the eastern and south eastern borders had to rest on one of two perspectives: either the ethno-linguistic or ethno-political. Ruling out the ethno-linguistic definition, he proposed that autonomous Lithuania should include “Lithuanian Rus” (i.e. Vil’na province without Vileika and Disna *uezdy*) and the northern part of Grodno province, possibly including Novogrudok *uezd*. Thus, the definition of the autonomous Lithuanian territory proposed by the Assembly was quite similar to the *krajowcy* understanding of this region: “it [the Assembly’s definition] does not talk directly about the territory outside the [Lithuanian] ethnographic borders, although it formulates the criteria according to which there is a possibility for the political inclusion of certain non-ethnographical [i.e. non-Lithuanian] regions with Lithuania.”<sup>757</sup>

Despite these different projects, the LNM did not manage to achieve any territorial autonomy for the Lithuanian lands. From 1906 political discussions were relocated to the imperial Duma, where Lithuanian delegates from Vil’na, Kovno and Suvalki provinces held seats. Meanwhile, during 1905-1906, the Lithuanian intelligentsia concentrated on cultural activities, dedicating much attention to the new legalisation of education in the Lithuanian language. In relation to this, perhaps one of the best examples of the Assembly’s discussion on territory was manifested in new Lithuanian geographic textbooks.

### 5.2.1. Lithuanian geographical education (1905-1906)

Before 1904 the tsarist official press complained that children in the illegal Lithuanian schools were being taught not just reading, writing and arithmetic, but that teachers were also providing their pupils with a certain degree of geographical and historical knowledge.<sup>758</sup> Judging by the first Lithuanian textbooks on geography, such complaints by the imperial authorities about the quality of geography lessons were an exaggeration. It was unlikely, however, that national textbooks could compete with the material used in the

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<sup>757</sup> Römer, pp. 230-231; Sawicki, p. 105.

<sup>758</sup> Magdalena Karčiauskienė, “Mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis kapitalizmo kilimo laikotarpiu (1861 – XIX a. pab.)” in: J. Laužikas, V. Merkys (eds.), *Lietuvos mokyklos ir pedagoginės minties raidos bruožai (ligi Didžiosios Spalio socialistinės revoliucijos)* (Vilnius: 1983), p. 198.

official state schools.<sup>759</sup> Small Lithuanian texts did not and could not present a complete picture of Lithuania.

The same could be said about the home-school teachers and their level of competence. Moreover, it was soon realised that peasant children could not easily grasp the teaching on territory. The home schools were organised mainly during the wintertime when children did not have to work in the fields. Besides, in the eyes of the peasants, children did not need such knowledge if they were to continue working the land, and only wealthier families could afford a higher level of education, although as a rule they normally wanted their sons to enter the priesthood.<sup>760</sup>

A wider, more conceptualised and articulated wave of national geographical education came after the revoking of the press prohibition and especially during and after the 1905 Revolution. The imperial authorities were forced to make compromises and introduce more freedom in the sphere of cultural activities, which also affected the system of education. After 1905 some private organisations and individuals were permitted to establish their own schools.<sup>761</sup>

One of the most substantial victories for the national movement in the field of education came with the official introduction of teaching in the Lithuanian language. The tsarist authorities approved those Lithuanian national textbooks, which appeared after 1904 because they did not deviate from the official system of education and its curriculum.<sup>762</sup> Although geography (as well as history) was generally considered to be a political subject that encompassed the state's ideological perspective, the Russian authorities nevertheless allowed this material to be translated into non-Russian languages. The imperial censors had the final word allowing or rejecting any

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<sup>759</sup> During the years 1876-1917, 173 different textbooks on general and Russian geography were published (Nikolai N. Baranskii, *Istoricheskii obzor uchebnikov geografii (1876-1934)* (Moscow: 1954), pp. 45-354). Teachers from the state schools were allowed to choose any officially approved textbook. However, some of them preferred popular but older textbooks, which had been published as early as in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*S'ezd prepodavatelei matematiki, fiziki, estestvovedeniia i geografii srednikh uchebnykh zavedenii Vilenskago uchebnago okruga, proiskhodivshii v Vil'ne s 25 fevralia po 2-e marta 1908 g. Sektsiia geografii* (Vil'na: 1908), pp. 68-72). An additional 108 textbooks, published between 1850 and 1876, could be added (L. Vesin, *Istoricheskii obzor uchebnikov obshchei i Russkoi geografii izdamykh so vremen Petra Velikago po 1876 god (1710-1876)* (St. Petersburg: 1876), pp. 311-663).

<sup>760</sup> Römeris, p. 135; Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė, "Karo metų dienoraštis," in: Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė, *Raštai* (Vilnius: 1966), vol.2, p. 740.

<sup>761</sup> In 1910 there were around 70 private schools with approximately 5,000 pupils. By 1914 the number of schools had increased to 900 (most of which were primary). Around 20% of all school-age children attended schools (Karčiauskienė, "Mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis kapitalizmo kilimo laikotarpiu," p. 258). The Lithuanian historian Čepėnas noted, that before the First World War there were 1,557 official and private schools in Vil'na and Kovno provinces (Čepėnas, vol.1, p. 161).

<sup>762</sup> For example, Mečius' *Trumpas žemės aprašymas* was approved in 1908. *Mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis*, p. 261.

publication in Russia.<sup>763</sup> Books published before 1904 were not legalised because they had not been scrutinized by censors before their publication. However, this cannot be considered as a major loss, since the quality of these early books was much lower compared to the textbooks that were published in 1905.

When the syllabuses of the Lithuanian private and imperial schools are compared it is noticeable that geographical education in the state schools had relatively few weekly hours allocated to it. Children started to learn the subject only in the second year of secondary school and had two lessons per week.<sup>764</sup> In comparison, pupils who studied in the Lithuanian “Saulė” gymnasium, in Kovno, had two geography lessons a week starting from their first year. In general, the programmes in the private schools were more intensive than those in the official schools. This incongruity arose partly because the private schools taught not only the compulsory official programme of secondary education, but also provided additional courses in Lithuanian.<sup>765</sup>

The home-schools survived after the liberalisation of imperial education. Their number grew even larger after the abolition of the prohibition on the press.<sup>766</sup> They functioned in parallel to the official and private institutions. One of the reasons for this was that the home-schools retained their main function – the basic education of the Lithuanian peasantry. The basic skills of reading and writing were thus considered to be sufficient for peasants who would continue to work in agriculture. Moreover, they came to be regarded as a kind of “national tradition” and a symbol of resistance to Russification.

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<sup>763</sup> On the organisation of imperial censorship in the North Western provinces, see: Zita Medišauskienė, *Rusijos cenzūra Lietuvoje XIX a. viduryje* (Kaunas: 1998); Nijolė Lietuvninkaitė, “Kauno periodinės spaudos cenzūra 1900-1914 metais,” *Knygotyra* (2001), no. 37, (online); Natalia Grinchenko; Vladen S. Izmozik; Natalia G. Petrusheva; Dimitrii A. Eliashevich; David I. Raskin, “Istorija tsenzurnykh ucherizhdenii v Vilenskoï gubernii v XIX – nachale XX veka,” *Knygotyra* (2004), no. 43, (online).

<sup>764</sup> See table 18 in *Mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis*, p. 259. The intensity and quality of geographical education was of great concern to the teachers in the official schools. For example, the meeting of the geography teachers of the VED in 1908 discussed different possibilities of improving geographical education. The participants at the meeting argued about their understanding of, and methods used in geographical education, especially debating the issue of reducing the information given during these lessons in secondary schools, excursions, textbooks etc. These and other topics revealed that the geography lessons held in official schools suffered from the same difficulties as those held in private schools. Talking about the textbooks, teachers complained that none of the books presented the local, i.e. North Western or the VED territory (*S'ezd prepodavatelei matematiki, fiziki, estestvovedeniia i geografii*, passim). Lithuanian national textbooks filled this gap by adding chapters on Lithuania. This meant that in the imperial schools the main spatial denominator was the fragmented space of the huge Russian Empire, while the Lithuanian nationalists concentrated more on local, even regional spatial consciousness, i.e. Lithuanian perspectives, relegating Russia to a secondary position. Still, it is hard to determine the exact effect that this incongruity between Russian and Lithuanian geographical education had in terms of the growth of Lithuanian spatial perception.

<sup>765</sup> See table 19. *Mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis*, p. 260.

<sup>766</sup> Pranas Čepėnas, vol. 1, p. 170.

The organisation of lessons on Lithuanian history and geography was complicated. Lithuanian educators undertook the preparation of materials for these subjects and discussed methodologies for teaching them. As regards geography, the general principle for teaching these lessons was conceived in accordance with the system of “local studies” (*kraštotyra*). During the initial lessons pupils were introduced to their immediate and familiar surroundings and were gradually presented with the outer world later on. The same was done with cartography – pupils began by learning how to draw a plan, and only then did the teacher explain the function of a map. Moreover, it was thought necessary that geographical knowledge should be acquired before historical, i.e. pupils had to learn orientation in space before becoming acquainted with the concept of (historical) time. As Karčiauskienė’s research indicates, at that time the Lithuanian pedagogues propagated the popular theory of “cultural evolutionism.”<sup>767</sup>

Lithuanian geography textbooks were based on these methodological assumptions. While prioritising general readings in the Lithuanian language, these books also included basic information on geography and history as well as fictional texts. Specialised textbooks were also needed for the higher grades in the Lithuanian gymnasiums. Therefore, in 1906, the newly established “Lithuanian Teachers Society” (1905-1907) announced a competition to write original textbooks for the teaching of the Lithuanian language, arithmetic, geography and history.<sup>768</sup> After the society’s dissolution, this competition continued under the auspices of the “Lithuanian Scientific Society.”<sup>769</sup> The first legal Lithuanian geography textbooks in Russia appeared during 1905.

### 5.2.1. Maciejauskas’ “Basic Geography” (1905)

The engineer and cartographer Antanas Maciejauskas (pen name Adata) wrote and published a book in Riga entitled *Basic Geography: A Short Overview of the Globe and Lithuania*.<sup>770</sup>

The special feature of the book was its attention to contemporary statistics and political geography. The last chapter was dedicated to Lithuania. The text was a rather condensed collection of different facts, starting with a brief historical presentation of Lithuania and continuing with a description of cities and towns. The latter (together with a map) revealed that Maciejauskas’ Lithuanian urban landscape included Vil’na (Vilnius), Kovno (Kaunas), Mītava (Mintauja; Jelgava) and Riga. Moreover, at the level of the *gubernii* division, the author of the book expanded his identification of “Lithuania” to include

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<sup>767</sup> Karčiauskienė, *Pradinio švietimo raida Lietuvoje*, pp. 153-154.

<sup>768</sup> On the “Lithuanian Teachers Society,” see; *Mokykla ir gyvenimas 1905-1925: Lietuvos mokytojų prof. s-gos 20 metų sukurtuvėms paminėti jubilėjinis numeris* (Kaunas: 1925).

<sup>769</sup> Karčiauskienė, *Pradinio švietimo raida Lietuvoje*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>770</sup> Antanas Maciejauskas-Adata, *Pradinė geografija. Trumpa paržvalga žemės rutulio ir Lietuvos* (Riga: 1905).

Kovno, Vil'na, Courland, Livonia, Suvalki, Grodno, Vitebsk and even Lomzha provinces as well as part of Prussia, indicating only that the Lithuanians occupied relatively small territories in the later three provinces.<sup>771</sup> He emphasised the historical identification of the Lithuanian and Latvian lands.

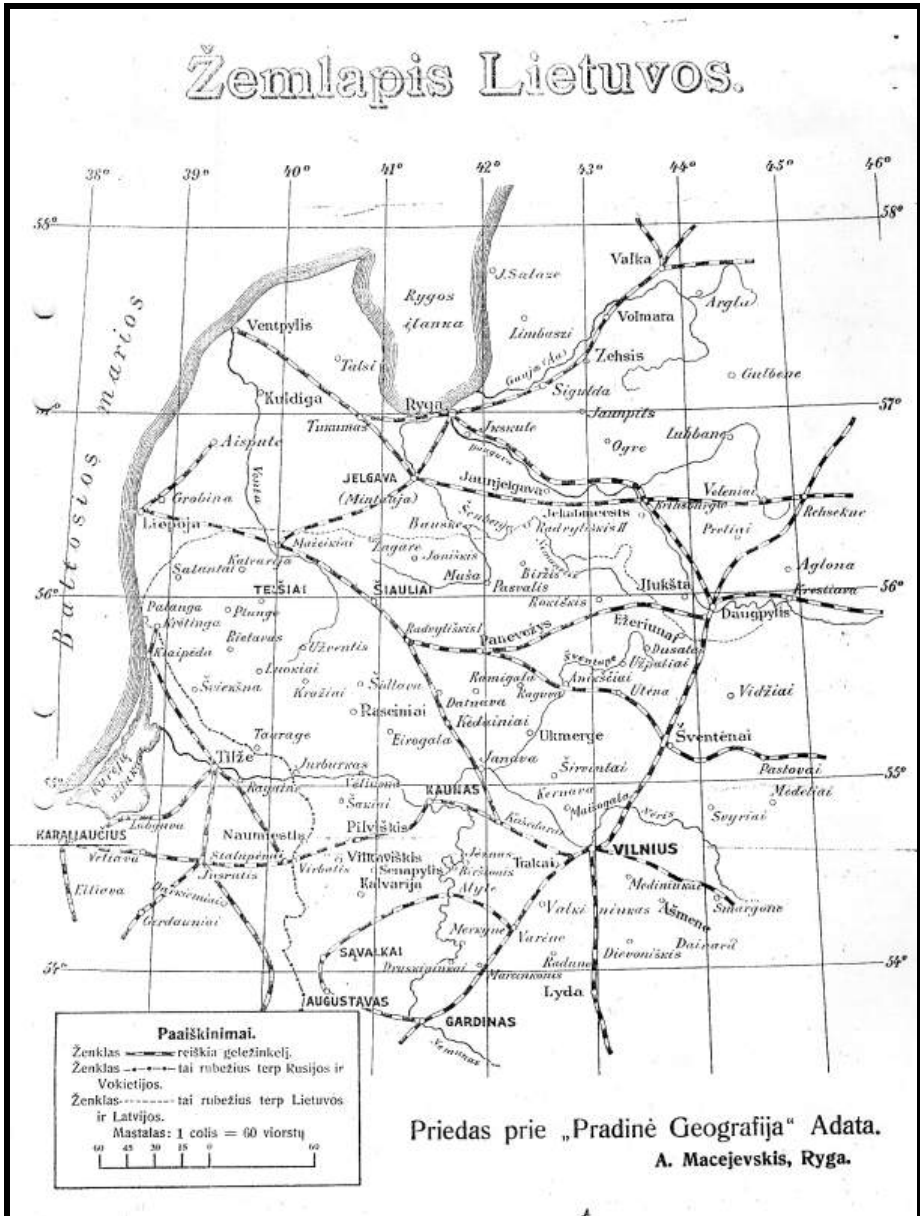


Figure 25. Maciejuskas' "A Map of Lithuania," from: *Pradinė geografija. Trumpa paržvalga žemės rutulio ir Lietuvos* (Riga: 1905)

<sup>771</sup> Maciejuskas-Adata, pp. 60-63.

This conception of Lithuanian-Latvian territorial unity was reflected in the appended map (Figure 25). Here the depiction of “Lithuania” was more abstract than in his map of 1900. The new map pictured only two administrative borders – the provincial border between Kovno and Courland provinces and the imperial border with Prussia.

However, other markings indicated territories that belonged to the Russian state. The names of settlements, as well as the use of different typefaces and sizes of lettering, presented a hierarchical structure of administrative-territorial divisions. For example, the *gubernii* centres (Riga, Vil’na (*Vilnius*), Avgustov (*Augustavas*), etc.) were marked in bold letters, while the *uezdy* centres (such as Rossieny (Raseiniai), Sventsiany (*Šventėnai*; Švenčioniai) or Vilkomir (*Ukmergė*)) were highlighted with the use of larger fonts. Nonetheless, the presentation of this system of the urban political-administrative hierarchy was not solid. One of its inconsistencies lay in its attempt at Lithuanisation. For example, some of the Latvian/German place names in Courland were written in their Lithuanian forms.

Furthermore, Maciejauskas under-represented the density of Latvian and Prussian settlements as he had done previously on his earlier map of 1900. Thus, the border that separated Kovno and Courland provinces (the Lithuanians and Latvians), as well as the Russo-Prussian border (which divided the Lithuanians in Russia from their Prussian counterparts) also depicted a somewhat uneven spread of settlements. One of the conclusions which might have been drawn from this picture, was that “Lithuania proper” (the Lithuanian territory in the Russian Empire) was perceived as the true Lithuanian land.

Another distinctive detail was the emphasis placed on the network of railways. Railways as such were the symbols of progress and modernisation, a form of transportation, which increased communication inside and outside of the region. At the same time, the railways were built and controlled by the imperial authorities who also regulated the practical side of travelling (ticket prices, different carriage classes etc.). Indeed, a distinctive feature of the Russian railways, which separated Russia from the rest of Europe and which, in fact, was directly related to this part of the Empire, namely to the Russo-Prussian border, was that the width of the European railway gauge was narrower than that found within Russia. Therefore, passengers who travelled in and out of the Russian state had to change trains at the border. Moreover, these broken lines on the map created a particular effect – the railway lines represented another kind of border.

This strong emphasis on the railways had another, deeper association. According to the Lithuanian historian Vėbra’s calculations, out of the 1,339 members of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, 476 worked directly in or did work

related to this particular form of transportation.<sup>772</sup> Even Maciejauskas worked in Riga's railway office as an engineer during 1902-1905.<sup>773</sup>

Finally, Maciejauskas' Lithuanian territory, to use Motieka's distinction, was ethnographical. It incorporated an ethno-linguistic nucleus and loosely attached peripheries. However, the most distinctive feature of this cartographical picture was the absence of borders. The author did not portray the administrative divisions; rather the railways interconnected these peripheries with the Lithuanian nucleus. One of the side effects of such a general picture was the schematisation of the map, which aggravated debates about exactly where and what Lithuania was.

### 5.2.2. Juškytė's "Short Readings for Children" (1905)

In 1905 another geographical representation of the Lithuanian lands was published. The author was Jadvyga Juškytė.<sup>774</sup> As a proficient teacher she contributed to Lithuanian pedagogy by writing a book titled *Short Readings for Children, With a Little Map of Lithuania*.<sup>775</sup>

Strictly speaking, Juškytė's book was not a geography textbook. It belonged to that group of books, which were intended to provide an introduction to reading, with their major goal being to accustom pupils to reading in Lithuanian. However, the texts and lessons were constructed in accordance with the principle of "local presentation" (*kraštotyra*). Therefore a great deal of attention was paid to basic knowledge about the immediate surroundings, nature, and the ethno-political structure of the Lithuanian lands, etc., i.e. to building a spatial perception.

Simple, illustrative and playful texts started with lessons entitled "Parents," "Family" and "Relatives," i.e. the most familiar environment. Further on, it expanded the space, describing a house, its parts, different objects inside the house etc. Later the description took the reader outside the house, indicating the functions of farm-buildings, presenting the most common

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<sup>772</sup> Rimantas Vėbra, *Lietuvių visuomenė XIX a. antroje pusėje. Socialinės struktūros aspektai* (Vilnius: 1990), pp. 173-174. In addition to this, the significant role of the railways as a tool of territorial integration and subjugation was especially evident in the case of the construction of the Trans-Siberian line, which connected the European and Asiatic parts of the Russian realm (Steven G. Marks, *Road to Power: the Trans-Siberian Railroad and the Colonization of Asian Russia* (London: 1991)). Furthermore, as discussions in the Third State Duma revealed (1908), the fear of the imperial authorities that Finland was on the road to separation from the Empire had to be solved by a more thorough integration of it into the imperial railway system.

Moreover, as the Lithuanian representative P. Keinys (who also worked on the railways) explained, for a non-Russian Roman Catholic it was much easier to get a position in the imperial railway system than in any other state institution, because if a prospective employee stated that he was Orthodox they would not check it (Gaigalaitė, pp. 124-126; 130).

<sup>773</sup> "Knygotyros' enciklopedinio žodyno papildymai: biogramos," *Knygotyra* (2000), no. 36, p. 329.

<sup>774</sup> Jadvyga Juškytė (1869-1948) – pedagogue, publicist and folklorist.

<sup>775</sup> Jadvyga Juškytė, *Vaikų skaitymėliai su Lietuvos žemėlapiu* (Vilnius: 1905).

domestic animals, fields, garden, etc. – everything that constituted the space of a farm.<sup>776</sup>

Once the reader left the farm, he or she entered the village space filled with different buildings (a church, shop, forge etc.), which was followed by a presentation of the wild nature space. The latter consisted of dangerous/friendly objects and animals. Other chapters introduced the basics of human anatomy and described the structure of society. Juškytė also presented specific temporal and spatial constructions in chapters entitled “A Plan and a Map,” “Our Fatherland,” “Our Hills and Rivers” and “Our Cities.”<sup>777</sup>

Hence, these chapters taught children how to distinguish a plan from a map, as well as how to make a plan of a room, a house or a village. Notions such as cartographic scale or a map’s legend were introduced in simple words. Further, the “Readings” presented the meaning of “Our Fatherland.” Juškytė indicated that Lithuania consisted of two regions: Samogitia and Aukštaitija (for a long time this eastern part was also referred to as “Lithuania”), and that Lithuanians lived in two empires, which subsequently formed Prussian and Russian Lithuania. The text continued by describing only the Russian part, briefly mentioning the administrative division and the location of the central imperial institutions.<sup>778</sup> In this way, “Our Fatherland” was situated in the Russian Empire and despite the fact that Lithuanian speakers also lived in Prussia and constituted their own “Lithuania”, it is difficult to determine from Juškytė’s text whether they were part of the “Fatherland.”

This inconsistency between the Prussian and the Russian parts also continued to some extent in the description of the topography. The names of hills, lakes, rivers and cities emphasised those around Kovno, Vil’na and other neighbouring provinces inhabited by Lithuanian speakers. Only two important cities were mentioned from the Prussian side – Memel (*Klaipėda*) and Tilsit (*Tilžė*).<sup>779</sup> Thus, it can be argued that the confused and confusing presentation of the different parts of Lithuania continued in this textbook as well. By “Lithuania,” it would appear that the author meant only the Lithuanian lands inside the Russian Empire. Naturally, a pupil’s knowledge of the organisation of the Russian state was much more important than their understanding of the functions of the Prussian state. Nevertheless, the separation of Prussian and Russian Lithuania was obvious.

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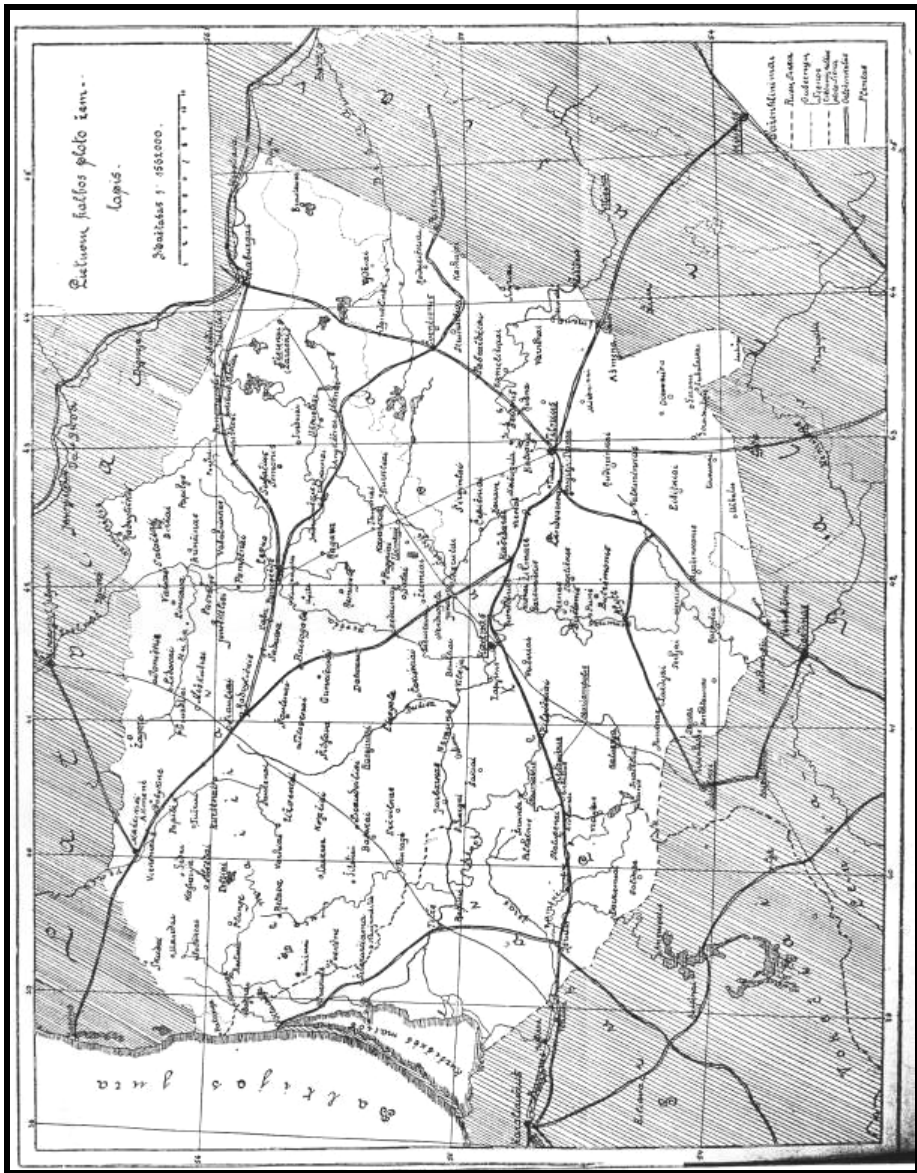
<sup>776</sup> Juškytė, pp. 1-94.

<sup>777</sup> Ibid., pp. 94-169; 192-225.

<sup>778</sup> Ibid., pp. 225-235.

<sup>779</sup> Ibid., pp. 236-243.





**Figure 26.** Juškytė’s “A Map of the Lithuanian Language Territory,” from: *Vaių skaitymėliai su Lietuvos žemėlapiu* (Vilnius: 1905)

Another inconsistency occurred between the textual and visual descriptions presented. Juškytė’s map clearly indicated the Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian territories (Figure 26).<sup>780</sup> However, in the text she distinguished

<sup>780</sup> The map originally appeared in the periodical publication *Vilniaus Žinios* ((06 19 1905), no. 149, p. 3). Therefore, the map in Juškytė’s book was a reprint. The Lithuanian historian Merkys argues that this map was an improved version of Vileišis’ cartographical work. Merkys, *Tautiniai santykiai*, p. 103.

the two constitutive parts of Lithuania (Samogitia and Aukštaitija), but her map gave a rather different division: the western part was described as the linguistic territory of the Samogitians (on the map – *Žemaičiai*), while the rest of the area (including Prussian Lithuania) was termed “Lithuania” (*Lietuva*).

The borders of the Lithuanian territory on Juškytė’s map only partially resembled those found on Vileišis’ map. The northern border traditionally followed the administrative line dividing Kovno and Courland provinces. The same was true of the Lithuanian linguistic border in Prussia. However, the sharp straight lines of the eastern and the southern borders were clearly artificial and indicated the uncertainty of the map-maker. When compared to earlier cartographical works, this map presented a much greater Lithuanian territory, which expanded into the areas around Dinaburg, and then continued up the river Dvina as far as the town of Druia before going down to Lake Svir, further through the towns of Zhadeiki, Oshmiany, Subotniki, Porech’e, Seiny and then continuing into Prussia. In this way Vil’na was secured and, presumably, those who would use the book and study the map would have no doubt about the Lithuanianness of the city.

Finally, while the map depicted the ethno-linguistic territory of Lithuanians and the space without colouring constituted “Lithuania,” the text in the book and the particular captions on the map sub-divided the whole ethnic space into several parts. Moreover, the notion of “our fatherland,” which in one of the chapters was practically equated with “Lithuania,” was later revealed to be a term that was applicable only to those inhabitants who lived in the Aukštaitija region, i.e. to those people who inhabited the eastern side of Kovno province. To some extent the “fatherland” also included Samogitians, although on the map Samogitia was separated from Lithuania.

The Samogitian language territory could have been perceived as one of Lithuania’s peripheries, although it is not clear whether Juškytė considered this distinction. Nevertheless, this textbook and the map were very precise on where the Lithuanian national territory was. The clear-cut boundaries separated Lithuanians from other ethno-linguistic groups. The caption indicated that the map presented the Lithuanian language area, which had to be “ethnic” (or ethno-linguistic) Lithuania, although it was known that Vil’na *guberniia* was inhabited, to use Römer’s description, by a “Belarusian-Lithuanian-Polish” population. This meant that once again Juškytė’s map pictured Lithuania’s national territory according to an *ethnographic* criterion, with the title of the map therefore contradicting the picture on the map. This peculiarity highlighted how Lithuanian national territory remained undefined and still disputed.

### 5.2.3. Mečius’ “A Short Description of the Earth” (1906)

One of the most popular and widely used textbooks at that time was Mečius’ *A Short Description of the Earth: The First Tasks in Geography with Short*

*Stories and Other Readings*, first published in 1906 and subsequently reprinted several times (1914, 1918 and 1919).<sup>781</sup>

This textbook was originally written by the prominent Russian educator and traveller Sergei P. Mech. Mech's books became very popular during the late imperial period (some of his textbooks had over 30 reprints), which allowed researchers to even classify them as a specific group within the geographical-pedagogical literature.<sup>782</sup> The characteristic feature of these textbooks was that they were written in the form of travelogues. Geographical space was presented by using three methodological notions: the integrity of all parts of the depicted world; the interplay between historicism and geography (i.e. every geographer had to know the past in order to understand the present); and the role of the natural environment in the formation of human character (i.e. an approach emanating from a geographical determinist perspective).<sup>783</sup>

The Lithuanian version was based on one of Mech's textbooks; however, the original Russian version did not have a chapter on Lithuania. Two Lithuanian translators – I. Tumas/Tumas-Vaižgantas and I. Jablonskii/Jablonskis<sup>784</sup> – wrote and added the Lithuanian part of the textbook.

When comparing the different editions of the book, it is noticeable that the chapter on Lithuania was significantly revised. In particular, the text and the structure of its presentation differed markedly between the first and the second editions, i.e. 1906 and 1914, while the texts in the 1918 and 1919 editions were similar to the 1914 edition and almost identical to each other.

The text was divided into lessons and tasks, which were primarily devoted to the analysis of the map. Just before the chapter on Lithuania, it was suggested that during the lesson the class should use a map of Lithuania and its neighbours as a form of supplementary material.<sup>785</sup> Although the book referred to a map, no cartographic image was appended; therefore, the choice

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<sup>781</sup> S. Mečius, *Trumpas žemės aprašymas. Pirmieji geografijos uždaviniai su apsakymėliais ir kitais pasiskaitymais* (Vilnius: 1906, 1914; Voronezh: 1918; Vilnius: 1919 [wrongly indicated as the third edition]). The imperial censors approved this book in 1908 (*Mokykla ir pedagoginė mintis*, p. 261).

<sup>782</sup> I. N. Kornev; S. N. Pozdniak, "Ob obrazovatel'nykh tseliakh shkol'noi geografii i pedagogicheskoi tsennosti starnovedeniia," *Geografiia* (2002), no. 2 (online).

<sup>783</sup> E. L. Faibusovich and T. I. Gerasimenko, "Starye spornye mysli," *Geografiia* (2004), no. 5 (online).

<sup>784</sup> Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas (1869-1933) – priest, writer, politician, lecturer. Before 1914 he was editor of several major Lithuanian periodical publications. Later, after the First World War, he continued working as an editor and publicist while teaching the history of Lithuanian literature at Kaunas University. Jonas Jablonskis (1860-1930) – linguist, founder of the Lithuanian normative language. He studied classical languages at the University of Moscow. Before the First World War he worked for some time as a lecturer in the Ponevezh (Panevėžys) teachers' seminary. After the War, Jablonskis became professor of Lithuanian language studies at Kaunas University.

<sup>785</sup> From here on I will use the Lithuanianised version of the author's name – Mečius, to indicate the difference between the original and the translation.

of map was left to the teacher.<sup>786</sup> By the appearance of the second edition (1914) several maps in Lithuanian had appeared (for example, V. Verbickis' *Map of Lithuania with Ethnographic Borders* (Figure 29)), which could therefore have been used as a teaching tool.

As indicated above, the presentation of the Lithuanian lands required pupils to interact directly with a map. Thus, their first task was to find the major Lithuanian rivers, hence introducing themselves to the hydrographic network, which served as a basis for the further construction of spatial perception.<sup>787</sup>

After discovering the physical landscape, schoolchildren were then expected to pick out the major towns and cities, most of which were situated on rivers. In this way an orientation in cartographical space was formed. The lines indicating the rivers constituted the "spine" of the Lithuanian map as well as the foundation of the lesson. According to the text, Vil'na, Kovno, Grodno and other cities in Russian Lithuania together with Memel (Klaipėda) and Tilsit in Prussia constituted "our land." The second edition expanded the number of towns, by mentioning smaller but significant ones, such as the spa resort in Druskeniki (Grodno province), which was well known in the Russian Empire. However, in contrast to previous editions, the territory of the imaginary Lithuania was separated from the Latvians and Prussia – the cities of Königsberg, Riga and Libau were no longer situated in Lithuania.<sup>788</sup>

In the first edition of Mečius' book, the translators appended a condensed but enlarged (compared to Mech's original) chapter entitled "The Inhabitants of Lithuania." In effect, this was a presentation of the LNM position at that time. Starting with the description of an abstract ethnic space, the text presented the major ethnic groups which inhabited these lands.<sup>789</sup> The typical description of Lithuanians and their problems (a low level of literacy, high emigration, a lack of education, passivity in commerce etc.) was made through a comparison with other ethnic groups – such as the Belarusians,

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<sup>786</sup> Mečius, (1906), p. 31; (1914), p. 48; (1918), p. 34; (1919), p. 48. The missing map was immediately noticed by reviewers of the book, who also complained about inconsistent geographical presentation. For example, pupils were asked to show cities, seas, oceans etc. on the map, before it was explained to them what was meant by these terms. One of the few positive things said about Mečius' book was that it contained easy and interesting geographical readings. Therefore it was suggested that the book should have been used as additional material during the lessons on geography in the higher grades, rather than as an introductory textbook. [A. Jakučionis], "Kokie mums dabar labiausia reikalingi vadovėliai," *Mokykla* (1911), no. 2, p. 19.

<sup>787</sup> Mečius, (1906), pp. 31-32; (1914), pp. 48-49. The text in both books was similar.

<sup>788</sup> Mečius, (1914), p. 50. The analysis here is based solely on the texts found in the chapters on Lithuania. Obviously, neither of these cities were truly Lithuanian, although Riga and Libau were known to have large numbers of migrants. The Lithuanian intelligentsia knew that. However, the main concern here is to analyse the image of "Lithuania," which was formed through these texts.

<sup>789</sup> As the authors admitted, ethnic boundaries could not be indicated, because "we ourselves do not know the [ethno-] linguistic borders, neither do we have a good linguistic map." Mečius, (1906), p. 34.

Poles, Jews, Russians, Germans and others. The non-Lithuanian ethnic groups were generally presented through the use of stereotypes; however, in some cases there were attempts to reduce or correct the picture of the “others.” For example, the text suggested that the Lithuanian perception of the Jews was generally negative, because of the latter’s extensive involvement in local commerce, as a result of which they were often labelled as thieves or swindlers. It was remarked that the attribution of the faults of some individuals to the whole Jewish population was wrong. When presenting the Poles, a distinction was made between the Polonised local inhabitants and genuine migrants from the ethnically Polish lands. The former were criticised and depicted in a negative way, while the latter were considered to be a part of the Polish nation and were therefore regarded neutrally.<sup>790</sup>

In the later edition this chapter was split into several lessons. The size and the structure of the chapter became more balanced in comparison to the rest of the text. The presentation of Lithuania expanded with new information being added about the achievements of the LNM, successful Lithuanian entrepreneurs, peasant communities that had started buying land, descriptions of the achievements of the temperance society, etc. This information was undoubtedly intended to demonstrate the vigour of the Lithuanians as well as to confirm once again that this (although undefined) region was dominated by, and belonged to, the Lithuanian nation.

### 5.3. Constructing the Lithuanian version of Lithuania (1907-1914)

#### 5.3.1. Lithuanian claims for autonomy

After the 1905 Revolution attempts to introduce change in the Russian state by armed force was replaced by parliamentary struggle. Tsar Nicholas II permitted representatives from all the imperial provinces to gather and discuss the laws and organisation of the state, thus taking a first step towards the democratisation of Russia. In May 1906 delegates assembled in St. Petersburg to attend the First Russian State Duma.

The Lithuanians managed to secure several places among the representatives from the North Western provinces. Among the delegates to the First Duma (May-July 1906) there were seven Lithuanians and one Jewish representative. The same number of representatives was also elected to the Second Duma (February-June 1907). However, in the Third State Duma (November 1907 – June 1912) the number of Lithuanian representatives decreased to five (four Lithuanians and one Jew) and, finally, in the Fourth

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<sup>790</sup> Mečius, pp. 34-39.

Duma (November 1912 – October 1917) only four Lithuanians (three from Kovno and one from Suvalki provinces) were elected.<sup>791</sup> The fall in the number of representatives reflected the change of perspective of the imperial authorities towards the Duma and specifically, towards the non-Russian ethnic groups, who tended to raise disturbing complaints about oppression, Russification and Orthodoxisation, while at the same time arguing for a change in the geo-political structure of the Empire into a federalist state.

The Lithuanian delegates discussed and promoted autonomy for their own country and at the same time supported other non-Russian ethnic groups. Each time they left for the Duma, the delegates were instructed to raise questions about the status of the Lithuanian language, schools, land reforms, etc.<sup>792</sup> Therefore, it became common practice that while discussing the state budget, economic issues, education and other things, the Lithuanian delegates would take the opportunity to raise the issue of autonomy.

Although each group of representatives had its own specific objectives, they managed to find enough common ground to form factions and make a stand against imperial policies. During the First Duma, for example, the Lithuanians formed blocs with the Jewish and Russian representatives. In the Second Duma, the political affiliation of the delegates became more pronounced. A. Bulat/Bulota (1872-1941), the representative from Suvalki province, became one of the most active figures and then chair of the *trudoviki* faction.<sup>793</sup>

The idea of a federal Russia appeared during the First Duma, when sixty-three Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Ukrainian and other delegates formed the so-called autonomist group.<sup>794</sup> The Duma lasted seventy-two days and its achievements were rather insignificant. Nevertheless, some specific issues were raised which the Lithuanian National Movement needed to resolve. In particular, the Lithuanian intelligentsia needed to concretise its understanding of “autonomy,” as the definition adopted at the Great Assembly of Vilnius was imprecise and vague. For this reason, the Lithuanian

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<sup>791</sup> A. S. Stražas, “From Auszra to the Great War: the Emergence of the Lithuanian Nation,” *Lituanus* (1996), vol. 42, no. 4 (online); Gaigalaitė, pp. 27; 60-65; 108-113; 233-238; *passim*. The number of “Lithuanians” here stands for those delegates who belonged to the Lithuanian National Movement and who supported the manifesto issued after the Great Vil’na Assembly. The Lithuanian representatives came from Kovno and Suvalki provinces, while the representatives from Vil’na province belonged to Polish, Russian, or Belarusian political groups. It is rather difficult to place the Jewish representatives, who sometimes sided with the Lithuanians and on other occasions with the Poles, but were basically representing the Jewish ethnicity.

<sup>792</sup> Gaigalaitė, pp. 25-26; 68-70;

<sup>793</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33; 62; *passim*. The *trudoviki* was a small and moderate Labour party.

<sup>794</sup> The proceedings of the First Duma disclosed many complicated factors that were in play when discussing autonomies. It was not only the Lithuanian representatives who highlighted the need for autonomy; the representatives from the Belarusian provinces argued for their territorial individualism and pointed to the uniqueness of their culture and national character. Jan Zaprudnik, “The struggle for the Byelorussia’s autonomy in the First State Duma (27 April/10 May – 7/20 June 1906),” *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies* (1969) vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 289-307.

deputies who were elected to the Second Duma investigated and discussed the national perspective as well as defining major political standpoints.<sup>795</sup>

The issues of autonomy and the federal structure of the Russian state became key themes during the Third Duma. From 1907 there was a significant rise in Russian nationalism, which had the support of high state officials, including the Prime Minister Petr Stolypin (1862-1911). This resulted in the Duma being subject to many restrictions and much interference by the authorities, such as the rather successful attempt to have more Russian deputies returned from the non-Russian provinces by changing the electoral procedures.<sup>796</sup>

During the Third Duma, the Lithuanian parliamentarians continued to promote the idea of Lithuanian autonomy. However, the Russian authorities demonstrated an opposite tendency – the greater unification and integration of the non-Russian borderlands. One example was the violation of the Finnish constitution, which had been granted in 1906. The Russian authorities interrupted the work of the Finnish parliament, thus creating discontent among liberal minded and democratic Russian society, while also inviting criticism from foreign countries. Moreover, in the 1908 debates on the imperial budget it was suggested that a new railway network should be built which would integrate Finland and Russia economically, thus making the possible separation of the region more difficult.<sup>797</sup>

Another case presented itself in 1912. Two Polish *gubernii* – Lublin and Sedlets – were detached from the Kingdom of Poland to become part of the South Western provinces, administered by the Kiev Governor-General. From these territories the new province of Khelm was formed. This disruption of Polish ethno-territorial integrity had a great impact in terms of unifying the Polish parliamentarians and helped them gain support from other non-Russian deputies. The Lithuanians used the tension in the Duma to express their position on the Polish question and once again raise demands for autonomy, especially as regards the Lithuanian part of Suvalki province. At the same time, the attempt to introduce local self-government (*zemstva*) in the Western provinces failed, resulting in a significant political crisis that greatly discredited Stolypin and his cabinet.<sup>798</sup>

The Fourth Duma was little different from the previous ones. The Lithuanians managed to obtain only four seats, which prevented them from forming any significant alliances. The deputies were limited to only expressing their (and consequently the LNM's) views. One of the final instances of Lithuanian activity in the Russian State Duma before the First World War came with the so-called "Amber Declaration" of M. Ichas/Yčas (1885-1941) (a member of the Cadet party), which was made at the end of July 1914,

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<sup>795</sup> Gaigalaitė, 70-75; Stražas, "From Auszra to the Great War."

<sup>796</sup> Gaigalaitė, pp. 127-128;

<sup>797</sup> Geoffrey A. Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment: Government and Duma, 1907-1914* (Cambridge: 1973), pp. 106-116; Gaigalaitė, pp. 125; 127-131.

<sup>798</sup> Hosking, pp. 116-149; Čepėnas, pp. 419-422; Gaigalaitė, pp. 131-136.

after the outbreak of the First World War, in response to the Tsar's manifesto establishing an autonomous Poland. This declaration of Lithuanian loyalty to Russia at the outbreak of the war was merely a political tactic in the hope that the same autonomy would be granted to Lithuania.<sup>799</sup>

In the end, the attempts of the Lithuanian parliamentarians to achieve autonomy failed. The Duma speeches they gave, as well as the problems they raised did little more than popularise the Lithuanian case, making it known to a wider circle of the Russian intelligentsia. However, they were not alone in raising these specific questions and concerns. At the same time, it was difficult to argue for territorial autonomy, when its definition was based on the abstract description declared after the Great Assembly of Vilnius. Naming the Lithuanian-inhabited provinces and *uezdy*, and claiming that this territory constituted ethnographic Lithuania by itself was never going to be sufficient, especially when each map produced after 1906 had different (or no) boundaries.

The Lithuanian National Movement continued to develop its conception of the Lithuanian *geo-body*, while arguing about the correctness of the ethnographic space. Among numerous opinions expressed on the topic, with different ideas emerging from the left- and right-wing political parties, the position expressed by Antanas Smetona<sup>800</sup> demonstrated the ideological side to forming a Lithuanian space, as well as its attachment and dependency on imperial ethnic mapping and the state's administrative boundaries.

In an article titled *Lithuanian Ethnographical Borders*, Smetona attempted to balance ethno-linguistic and ethnographical arguments, stating that Lithuania stretched as far as one could hear the Lithuanian language, where peasants still had a "Lithuanian soul" and where the moral and material intertwined. However, this ethno-linguistic/ethnographic distinction was based on earlier ethnographic statistics and cartography. The main problem for Smetona was that the available ethnic representation on maps and in statistical tables was faulty and based on miscalculation of the number of Lithuanians. The results of the 1897 census were also doubtful, according to him, since after that time many Lithuanians had become nationally conscious, thus increasing their general number and hence the Lithuanian ethnic space.<sup>801</sup>

The question Smetona raised was how to discover this "pure" Lithuanian territory. Interestingly enough, he found the answer in the ethnographic maps and ethnic statistics of the 1850s and beginning of the 1860s, when the "information that was collected about Lithuanian ethnography, was more real, more objective, because [in collecting the data] there were no obstacles such as we have today; there were neither Belarusian, nor Lithuanian questions, and the struggle for Lithuania was occurring between the Russian au-

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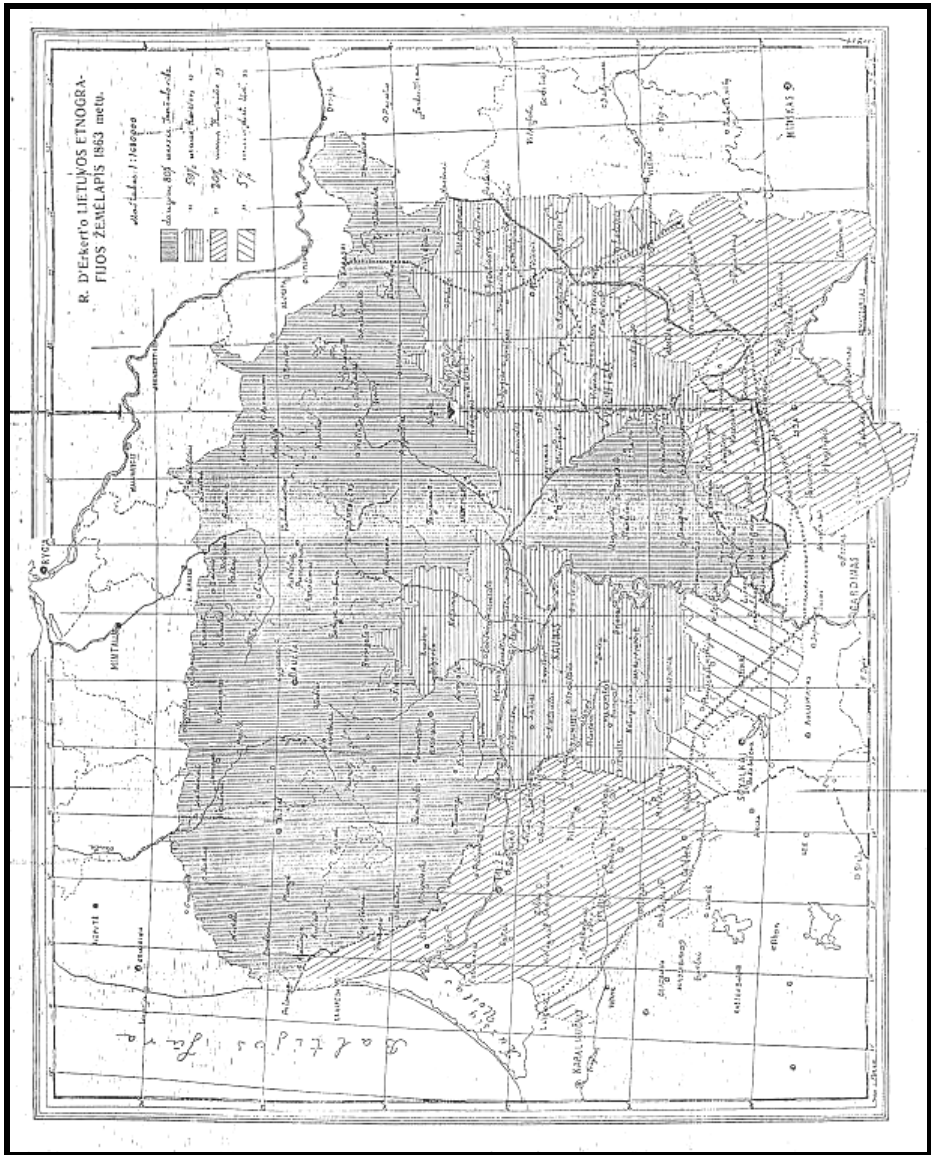
<sup>799</sup> Lopata, pp. 34;

<sup>800</sup> Antanas Smetona (1874-1944) – a member of the conservative Lithuanian National Progress Party, journalist and future Lithuanian president (1926-1940).

<sup>801</sup> Antanas Smetona [A. Sm.], "Lietuvos etnografijos ribos," *Vairas* (1914), no. 16, p. 2.



thorities and our Polonised nobility and clergy.”<sup>802</sup> In other words, at that time the Lithuanian ethnic group was not the main object of this conflict, hence the “objectivity” of the data.



**Figure 27.** Smetona’s “R. D’Erkert’s Map of the Lithuanian Ethnography from the Year 1863” (1914)

Having adopted this point of view, Smetona then began to analyse the ethnographic studies that had been produced at that time. He presented results

<sup>802</sup> Smetona, “Lietuvos etnografijos ribos,” pp. 2-5.

from several studies, the most significant of which was Erckert's atlas (the French version). Smetona argued that the material from this particular period showed the "exact" extent of Lithuanian speakers while also depicting their territory.<sup>803</sup> As discussed earlier, Erckert's atlas was anything but scientific and the author did not conceal his intention to politicise the ethnographical map of European Russia. It appears that fifty years later Lithuanian nationalists did not have a problem with Erckert's intention to promote Russification in the North Western provinces. On the contrary, Smetona pictured the situation as though the Lithuanians at that point in time were somehow outside the Russian-Polish conflict.

As in many articles and speeches of the time, he also highlighted the forty years of press prohibition, Russification, Polonisation, and the absence of Lithuanian schools etc. The Lithuanian situation in the article was juxtaposed with the Macedonian situation. "Just as the Greeks, the Serbs and the Bulgarians were appropriating Macedonia, before the [local] people became aware and stated clearly who they really were, Lithuania's eastern region is today being appropriated by the Poles, the Belarusians and the Lithuanians. This is no wonder: most of the inhabitants in Oshmiany, Lida, and parts of Svetsiany and Vil'na districts know three languages – Lithuanian, Polish and Belarusian, despite the fact that their family names, their past and their customs all indicate that they are Lithuanians and no-one else. If the [Roman Catholic] Church remains in Polish hands any longer, more districts will become Polonised."<sup>804</sup>

The significance of the article resulted from the fact that it contained a map of ethnographic Lithuania, which was compiled by Jurgis Čiurlys (1881-1959) following Erckert's atlas (Figure 27).<sup>805</sup> Moreover, four other maps were joined with Erckert's, all of which presented different ethnic boundaries (Koreva's (1861), Ianzhul's (1865), Kurschat-Kuršaitis and Verbickis' (1911) maps). The variations in the ethno-linguistic boundaries demonstrated not only the complexity of ethnic separation. This composite map depicting the Lithuanian ethnographic territory (-ies) also revealed that the Lithuanian nationalists were close to finally defining the country and making their choice. One of the major problems with the map was that despite Smetona's claim to be following Erckert, Smetona's and Erckert's cartographic pictures were not identical (Figures 19 and 27). Obviously, the basis of the 1914 map came from the individual map of the Latvian and Lithuanian territories in the French version. Yet Smetona used only part of it, removing Slonim and Grodno districts, while leaving the Lithuanian ethno-linguistic territories in Avgustov *guberniia*, even though these areas, as pictured on

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<sup>803</sup> Smetona, "Lietuvos etnografijos ribos," pp. 5-8.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>805</sup> Titled as: *R. D'Erkert'o Lietuvos etnografijos žemėlapis 1863 metų*. Despite the fact that the actual creator of the map was Čiurlys, I will refer to it from now on as Smetona's map, because of the map's political interpretation and contextualisation, which was developed by Smetona.

Erckert's map, had the same number of Lithuanian-speakers. Such an "oversight" becomes quite clear when the additionally marked ethnic boundaries are scrutinized using other sources. All of them presented a decreasing Lithuanian ethno-linguistic space in the southern and eastern parts of the region. In effect this meant, as the text of the article suggested, that Erckert had a "better understanding" of where the Lithuanian territory actually was.

As discussed earlier, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the works prepared by the imperial ethnographers and cartographers demonstrated the rapid change that was taking place in the ethnic situation in the North Western provinces. This can be attributed in part to the process of assimilation and also to the politicised (Russo-centric) interpretation of the ethno-statistical and ethno-confessional data. The decrease in the volume of ethnographic mapping and research being undertaken by the imperial authorities in the North Western provinces during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was replaced by a new wave of ethnic mapping and the reinterpretation of ethnic statistics. This time the initiative came from the modern national movements. The Lithuanian nationalists started to reconquer "Lithuania" and expand its boundaries.

Hence, Smetona's map was an example of this reinterpretation. He used Erckert as an "official" and "objective" source while building the Lithuanian case. This was regardless of the fact that Erckert had consciously abused ethnographic data in attempting to misrepresent the number of Poles in the North Western region, thereby discrediting their claims to the region. In 1914 Smetona reactivated Erckert's strategy (i.e. the one that was used in the French version of the atlas), which basically embraced the same principle of counter-Polonisation, only now by increasing the Lithuanian lands, making them the dominant ethnic majority.

This suggests that before the First World War the Lithuanian nationalists were still primarily concerned with the Polonisation (or de-Polonisation) of the Lithuanian lands, in the same way that the Russian authorities had been preoccupied with the same issue half a century earlier. Regardless of the fact that in the 1850s-1860s de-Polonisation and the subsequent attempts at Russification had caused the Lithuanians collateral damage, the conservative nationalists at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to some extent followed the Russian policy of the 1860s – Smetona argued that Polishness, apart from bringing the Polish language to the Lithuanian peasantry would also only result in poverty. In conclusion he stated that, "the mixed ethnographical region in Vil'na province will be more civilised only when the Lithuanian mind hatches out of its Polish shell."<sup>806</sup>

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<sup>806</sup> Smetona, "Lietuvos etnografijos ribos," p. 8.

### 5.3.2. The Lithuanian Scientific Society and geographical education (1907-1914)

The earlier investigations into the Lithuanian ethnic group, which were begun by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society and its North Western Section, were continued by the Lithuanian Scientific Society (LSS – *Lietuvių Mokslo Draugija*), established in 1907. The LSS's rules were based on the statutes of the IRGS and the Vienna Anthropological Society, thus allowing a broad spectrum of research. As a voluntary Lithuanian society, the LSS brought together most of the active and scientifically inclined intelligentsia. It became one of the major centres for the investigation and propagation of Lithuanian culture (by the year 1914 it had 650 members).<sup>807</sup>

The research of Lithuania and its territory as well as the undertaking of national geographical education constituted a part of the LSS's activities. During 1907-1914 two major projects on the identification and perception of the Lithuanian ethno-geographical space were undertaken. First, an attempt was made to publish an ethnographical map (1907-1909) and, second, the LSS announced a competition to write original Lithuanian school textbooks, one of which had to cover Lithuanian geography.

#### 5.3.2.1. The LSS's attempts to publish an ethnographic map of Lithuania

The initiator and creator of the map was Povilas Matulionis.<sup>808</sup> In 1909 the LSS formed a group comprising A. Paškevičius, J. Basanavičius, J. Tumas-Vaižgantas, J. Kukta, J. Šlapelis, D. Malinauskas and P. Matulionis to work on the publication of the map. The work did not start from scratch, because Matulionis had been preparing the map for some time by himself. Its preliminary title was *A Map of Lithuania and its Peripheries* (Figure 28).<sup>809</sup>

One of the problems that revealed itself during the compilation of Matulionis' map was the fact that a topographical nomenclature in the Lithuanian language had yet to be established. In the first proposal, which was sent to the Brockhaus publishers in Leipzig, the map had no names of habitats, rivers or lakes marked on it. Instead each toponym and settlement was marked with a dot and a number. The thinking behind this was that since the Lithuanianisation of the toponyms was still in progress, the map should be published

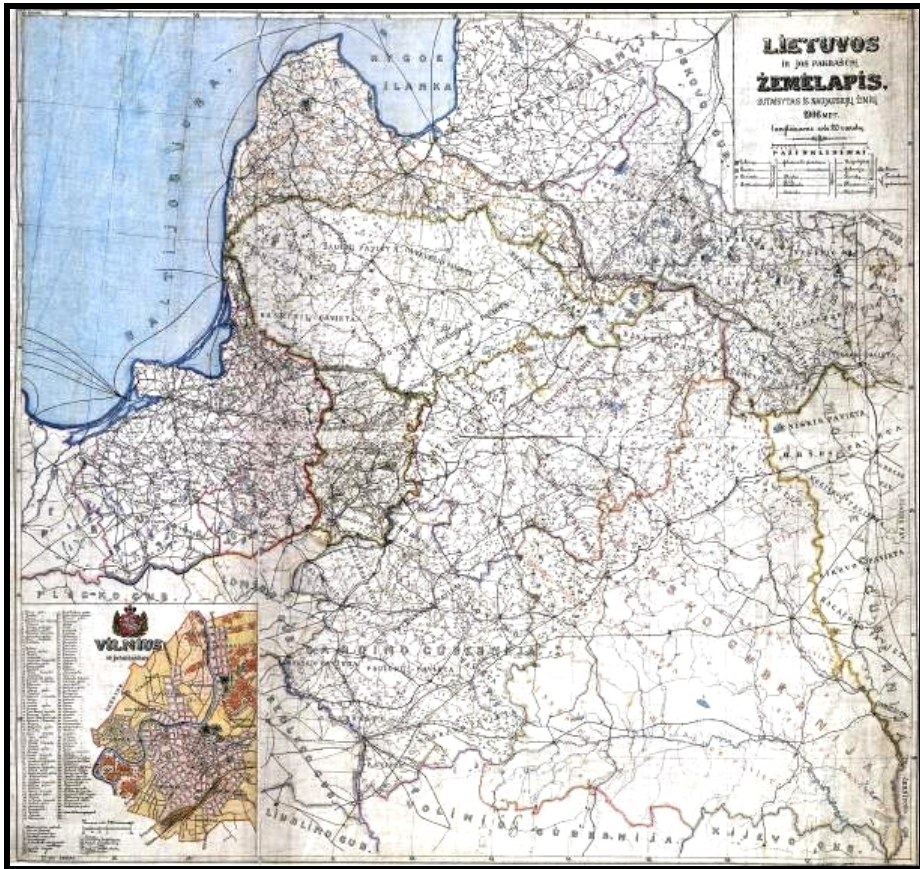
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<sup>807</sup> L. Gerulis [Liudas Gira], "'Lietuvių Mokslo Draugija' ir jos įsteigimas," *Lietuvių Tauta* (1907), vol. 1, part 1, pp. 149-160; D. Alseika, "Daktaras Basanavičius, kaipo Lietuvių Mokslo Draugijos įkūrėjas, vedėjas ir mokslininkas," *Lietuvių Tauta* (1928), vol. 4, part 2, pp. 163-184; Juozas Jurginis, "Lietuvių Mokslo Draugija," in: *Iš lietuvių kultūros istorijos: mokslas, kultūros ir švietimo draugijos* (Vilnius: 1975), vol. 8, pp. 37-51.

<sup>808</sup> Povilas Matulionis (1860-1932) - prominent professor in forestry and cartographer.

<sup>809</sup> Povilas Matulionis, *Lietuvos ir jos pakraščių žemėlapis sutaisytas iš naujausių žinių 1906 met.* (1906 (1909?)). Matulionis collected the cartographical and statistical data for the map during 1894-1906 ("Apie Lietuvos žemėlapiu sudarymą," *Lietuvių Tauta. 1907-1910* (1910), vol. 1, p. 571; Antanas Rukuiža, *Prof. dr. h.c. Povilas Matulionis gyvenimas ir darbai* (Chicago: 1960), p. 46).

as it was and filled with numbered dots, while only the greater administrative units such as *uezdy* and *gubernii* would be written in Lithuanian.<sup>810</sup>



**Figure 28.** Matulionis’ “A Map of Lithuania and its Peripheries According to the Newest Information from the Year 1906” (1906 (1909?)) (Courtesy of the National Museum of Lithuania)

The LSS soon realised that the publication of a coloured map would be expensive and after some consideration it was decided that its limited budget would allow only the publication of a monochromatic image. However, they were unexpectedly contacted at that time by a Lithuanian émigré living in the United States, Povilas Balutis, who was ready to publish his own monochromatic map of Lithuania, and so this LSS cartographic endeavour was put aside and remained unfinished.<sup>811</sup>

<sup>810</sup> Rukuiža, p. 98.

<sup>811</sup> “Apie Lietuvos žemėlapių sudarymą,” pp. 571-572; Jurginis, pp. 98-99; Samas, p. 178. Matulionis’ original map *Lithuania and its Peripheries* is still kept in the archive of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, in Vilnius. The map presented in Figure 28, which was reproduced as an unknown map from 1906 in a recently published album *Lithuania on*

Later, in 1911, independently of the LSS, a student at the St. Petersburg Archaeological Institute, V. Verbickis,<sup>812</sup> published the first large-format ethnographical map of Lithuania (Figure 29).<sup>813</sup> The sponsor of the publication was the “Lietuvos ūkininkas” cooperative, while the printing was undertaken by the Il’in cartographical print shop in St. Petersburg.



**Figure 29.** Verbickis’ “A Map of Lithuania with Ethnographic Boundaries” (1911)

As can be seen, the quality of the map was not very high, however, its value lay in its depiction of the Lithuanian ethno-linguistic boundary. In this respect Verbickis’ map somewhat contradicted the arguments of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, who promoted a larger national territory based on an ethnographical perspective, which was partially derived from historical criteria.

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*the map* ((Vilnius: 2002), pp. 162-163), closely resembles the description of the LSS’s cartographic proposal that was sent to the Brockhaus publishing house.

<sup>812</sup> V. Verbickis (1885-1979) – archaeologist and engineer. In 1910 Verbickis graduated from the St. Petersburg Institute of Archeology, and later, in 1915, the St. Petersburg Institute of Civil Engineering; between 1931-1938 he was the head of the Physics and Chemistry Department at Vytautas Magnus University.

<sup>813</sup> V. Verbickis, *Lietuvos žemėlapis su etnografijos siena* (St. Petersburg: 1911).

On this map only the western half of the Vil'na region was depicted as being Lithuanian while the border stretched right through the outskirts of the city, which on the map was presented as still being in the Lithuanian territory.

Despite the smaller Lithuanian space depicted, it was nonetheless still much larger than the area depicted in earlier imperial ethno-cartographical works. At the same time, Verbickis' map was considered to be precise, an assessment which was later reasserted by scholars who considered it to be a good illustration of the pre-First World War ethno-linguistic situation.<sup>814</sup>

During the war, the German authorities prohibited the use of Verbickis' map because of its depiction of the Lithuanian territories in Prussia and the fact that place names were written in Lithuanian. In 1916 the founder and head of the LSS Ivan Bassanovich/Jonas Basanavičius (1851-1927) was even arrested and interrogated about his involvement in the publication of Verbickis' map.<sup>815</sup>

The German occupation in fact facilitated the conceptualisation of Lithuanian territory. Without going deeper into the matter, it should be noted that between 1916 and 1918, and especially during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the Lithuanian intelligentsia managed to present the German authorities with an updated version of the area that constituted Lithuanian territory, which was smaller yet still resembled the Lithuania that was found on the ethnographical (though not ethno-linguistic) pre-war maps.<sup>816</sup>

### 5.3.2.2. Gabrys-Paršaitis' "Textbook on Geography" (1910)

As mentioned earlier, after the revolution of 1905 the imperial authorities permitted the opening of private schools by non-governmental organisations and individuals. A number of Lithuanian schools were opened soon after permission was granted. However, the teachers and intelligentsia promptly

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<sup>814</sup> Turska, p. 154.

<sup>815</sup> Jurginis, p. 104.

<sup>816</sup> In relation to this two significant figures should be mentioned – Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis (1880-1951) and Petras Klimas (1891-1969). While the former propagated the Lithuanian question in the West (through the *Office Central des Nationalités*, Lausanne), the latter published important studies on the national territory in the occupied Lithuanian lands. Selected works include: K. Werbelis [Klimas], *Russisch-Litauen: Statistisch-Ethnographische Betrachtungen* (Stuttgart: 1916); Petras Klimas, *Lietuva: jos gyventojai ir sienos* (Vilnius: 1917); Jean Pelissier et \*\*\* [Gabrys-Paršaitis], *Les Principaux Artisans de la Renaissance Nationale Lituanienne: Hommes et Choses de Lituanie* (Lausanne: 1918); K. Verbelis [Klimas], *Les Territoires de la Lituanie: Considérations Statistiques et Ethnographiques. Le Gouvernement de Vilna (Vilnius)* (Paris: 1919); [by the same], *Les Territoires de la Lituanie: Considérations Statistiques et Ethnographiques. Le Gouvernement de Kovno (Kaunas)* (Paris: 1919); [The same author together with d'Antoine Viscont (Gabrys-Paršaitis)], *La Lituanie Russe: Considérations Statistiques et Ethnographiques* (Geneva: 1919). Some of these books contained maps of Lithuania or its particular regions (for example, Vil'na or Kovno provinces). At the same time, in the United States Matas Šalčius published a large map entitled *Lietuvos žemėlapis / The Map of Lithuania* (New York: 1917), depicting yet another variant of ethnographic Lithuania.

realised that there was an urgent need for quality textbooks in Lithuanian. One of the solutions to this problem was to translate textbooks from other languages and supplying them with chapters written specifically on Lithuania and the Lithuanians. Another option was to write original books.

The first way was relatively simple and had already been practised for some time. The first textbooks on geography (with the exception of Juškytė's book) were basically translations with additional lessons on Lithuania. Some of these, such as Mečius' book became very popular and were reprinted several times.

Still, the LNM was especially eager to produce its own original textbooks. In 1906 the "Lithuanian Teachers Society" held a competition to write new school textbooks, but its own short existence (1905-1907) meant that the project soon came to a halt.<sup>817</sup> However, in 1908, the "Lithuanian Scientific Society" (LSS) took over the contest and began to look for authors who could produce quality textbooks. The Society established a special board for this purpose (consisting of individual sections on the Lithuanian language and literature, geography, arithmetic and history) and also opened a bank account for the collection of funds to publish these textbooks (most of the money was donated by Lithuanian émigrés living in the United States).<sup>818</sup>

These preparations were brought to a halt by an unforeseen complication. For a long time the Society's endeavours did not produce any significant results because very few members of the Lithuanian intelligentsia responded to their call. Although the board received 22 different textbooks (12 manuscripts and 10 printed) in 1908, these works did not correspond in their opinion to the general requirements for an award.<sup>819</sup>

In 1909 the LSS therefore announced a new competition to produce a textbook on Lithuanian geography. The winner of the contest was Gabrys-Paršaitis, whose work was entitled *A Textbook on Geography Dedicated to Lithuanian Schools*.<sup>820</sup>

The contest winner Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis (1880-1951) is known mainly for his active and controversial involvement with the *Office Central des Nationalités* (1912-1919), which he established together with the French journalist Jean Pélissier (1883-?). As one of the leaders of the Office, Gabrys promoted and propagated the Lithuanian cause in the West, sometimes in rather unconventional ways.<sup>821</sup>

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<sup>817</sup> Karčiauskienė, *Pradinio švietimo raida Lietuvoje*, p. 156.

<sup>818</sup> "Apie fondą vadovėliams leisti," *Lietuvių Tauta. Knyga 1 (1907-1910)* (Vilnius: 1910), pp. 570-571; 576.

<sup>819</sup> Jurginis, pp. 94-95.

<sup>820</sup> Juozas Gabrys [-Paršaitis], *Geografijos vadovėlis skiriamas Lietuvos mokykloms: su paveikslais ir žemėlapiais, žemėlapius braižė A. Levy ir A. Braks* (Tilsit, Paris: 1910).

<sup>821</sup> On his involvement with the *Office Central des Nationalités*: Alfred Erich Senn, "The Activity of Juozas Gabrys for Lithuania's Independence," *Lituanus* (Spring 1977), vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 15-22; Eberhardt Demm, "The Propaganda of Juozas Gabrys for Lithuania before 1914," *Journal of Baltic Studies* (Summer 1990), vol. XXI, no. 2, pp. 121-130; D. R. Watson, "Jean Pélissier and the Office Central des Nationalités, 1912-1919," *The English Historical*



Gabrys-Paršaitis was a capable politician and publicist who wrote numerous works raising the Lithuanians as a *Kulturation* in the eyes of the European nations. At the same time he was deeply concerned with the growth of Lithuanian education and wrote many brochures propagating schooling.<sup>822</sup>

The 1910 book was not Gabrys-Paršaitis' first attempt to write about Lithuanian geography. In the introduction to an earlier, smaller book entitled *A Short Description of Lithuania* (1905) he stated: "in this essay I do not want to give a full picture of Lithuania, all I want to do is simply to introduce it [Lithuania] to my fellow-countrymen."<sup>823</sup> This and later publications indicated Gabrys-Paršaitis' strong interest in questions of ethnicity and territoriality.<sup>824</sup> This interest as well as his desire to teach his "fellow-countrymen" influenced his decision to respond to the LSS call and write a new geographical textbook.

However, Gabrys-Paršaitis' less than judicious behaviour when dealing with the LSS soon caused him to become notorious among the Lithuanian intelligentsia. As mentioned earlier, the funds for the textbooks were mainly provided by Lithuanian émigrés living in the United States. For the publication of his textbook Gabrys-Paršaitis received 1,900 roubles, which was a loan that should have been returned once the book was printed and sold. Initially it was decided to print 3,000 copies of the book; however the author increased the number of copies to 5,000, which he supposedly managed to do by reducing the cost of the book. The LSS asked him to provide them with the accounts, which seemed somewhat unclear. Disregarding the LSS requests, Gabrys-Paršaitis started distributing the books by himself, thus violating his contract with the Society. From this moment on a major disagreement arose between the LSS board and the author. The author stopped corresponding with the LSS board (Gabrys-Paršaitis was living in Paris, having fled there to avoid punishment for his participation in the 1905 Revolution). This conflict deeply affected the reception of the textbook, with some Lithuanian pedagogues criticising the work as being a complete failure and not worthy of serious attention.<sup>825</sup> Soon after the publication of the book,

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*Review* (November 1995), vol. 110, no. 439, pp. 1191-1206; on Gabrys-Paršaitis personality, see: Alfonsas Eidintas, *Slaptasis lietuviu diplomatas* (Vilnius: 1992).

<sup>822</sup> Juozas Gabrys, *Jaunuomenės švietimas kitur ir pas mus* (Vilnius: 1906); *Skaitymo knyga mažiems ir dideliems* (Tilžė: 1908); Demm, pp. 121-128.

<sup>823</sup> Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis, *Trumpas Lietuvos aprašymas* (Vilnius: 1905), Introduction.

<sup>824</sup> During and after the First World War Gabrys-Paršaitis and other associates of the *Office Central des Nationalités* published different studies of the oppressed nations in Europe. The question of the post-war territorial divisions was of extreme importance; therefore the Office of Nationalities (at that time located in Lausanne, Switzerland) made maps that indicated the needs of many national minorities in Europe. See, for example, Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis, *Les Problèmes des Nationalités et la Paix Durable* (Lausanne: 1917); Inorodetz [Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis], *La Russie et les Peuples Allogènes* (Berne: 1918); J. Gabrys [Gabrys-Paršaitis], *Carte Ethnographique de l'Europe* (Lausanne: 1919).

<sup>825</sup> "Apie fondą vadovėliams leisti," *Lietuvių Tauta. Knyga 2, dalis 1* (Vilnius: 1911), p. 136; Jurginis, pp. 95-96; Eidintas, pp. 36-37. Professional Lithuanian schoolteachers were dissatisfied with Gabrys-Paršaitis' textbook because in their opinion it was unstructured and contra-

Gabrys-Paršaitis started intensive work on establishing the *Office Central des Nationalités* leaving the incident unresolved.

This beautifully illustrated “Textbook on Geography” introduced Lithuania to readers by beginning with a physical and hydrographic description of the land. The text then went on to present the administrative-territorial organisation of the Lithuanian-inhabited territories in the Russian and German empires, discussed economic geography and finished by describing ethnostatistics and the structure of the imperial governance.

At the beginning of the book the text simply stated: “Lithuania [is the name] we call the land inhabited by the Lithuanians.” Later it stated that while it was relatively easy to identify the borders of the former historical Lithuanian state (i.e. the Grand Duchy of Lithuania), ethnic Lithuania had no precise borders, because in the borderland areas the Lithuanians mixed with their neighbours.<sup>826</sup>

Contradicting this initial statement, Gabrys-Paršaitis’ later description revealed that Lithuania – according to him – did in fact have borders. Following the popular ethnographical distinction, he presented the administrative structure of four Russian *gubernii* (Kovno, Vil’na, Grodno and Suvalki) and almost all of Eastern Prussia. Although this structure was not clearly explained, in the rather fragmented and quite chaotic description of topography, hydrography, political and economic geography (it is interesting to note that the author discussed Lithuania’s trade with foreign countries while not even mentioning that this “Lithuania” was an integral part of the Russian Empire<sup>827</sup>) one can nevertheless form an approximate picture of the administrative units that comprised the constitutive parts of the national country, i.e. “Lithuania.”

Another notion highlighted in his description of the land (or rather, according to the text, almost independent state) was that it contained a significant number of ethnic minorities. The Belarusians, Jews, Poles, Russians, Germans, and Lithuanian Tatars etc., all formed a part of this multi-ethnic and multiconfessional territorial unit.<sup>828</sup>

This ambiguous definition of Lithuania and Lithuanian territory was well illustrated by the map (Figure 30). At first glance, it appeared that there was nothing special about this map – it was a physical map, with the administrative borders of the *gubernii* not visibly marked, while there was only a vague marking of the Russo-Prussian border. What made the map “Lithuanian” were basically the Lithuanised geographical names and the large captions: “Lithuania” and “Latvia.”

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vened the pedagogical methods that were propagated among Lithuanian teachers. Karči-  
auskienė, *Pradinio švietimo raida Lietuvoje*, p. 160.

<sup>826</sup> Gabrys, *Geografijos vadovėlis*, p. 61.

<sup>827</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-75.

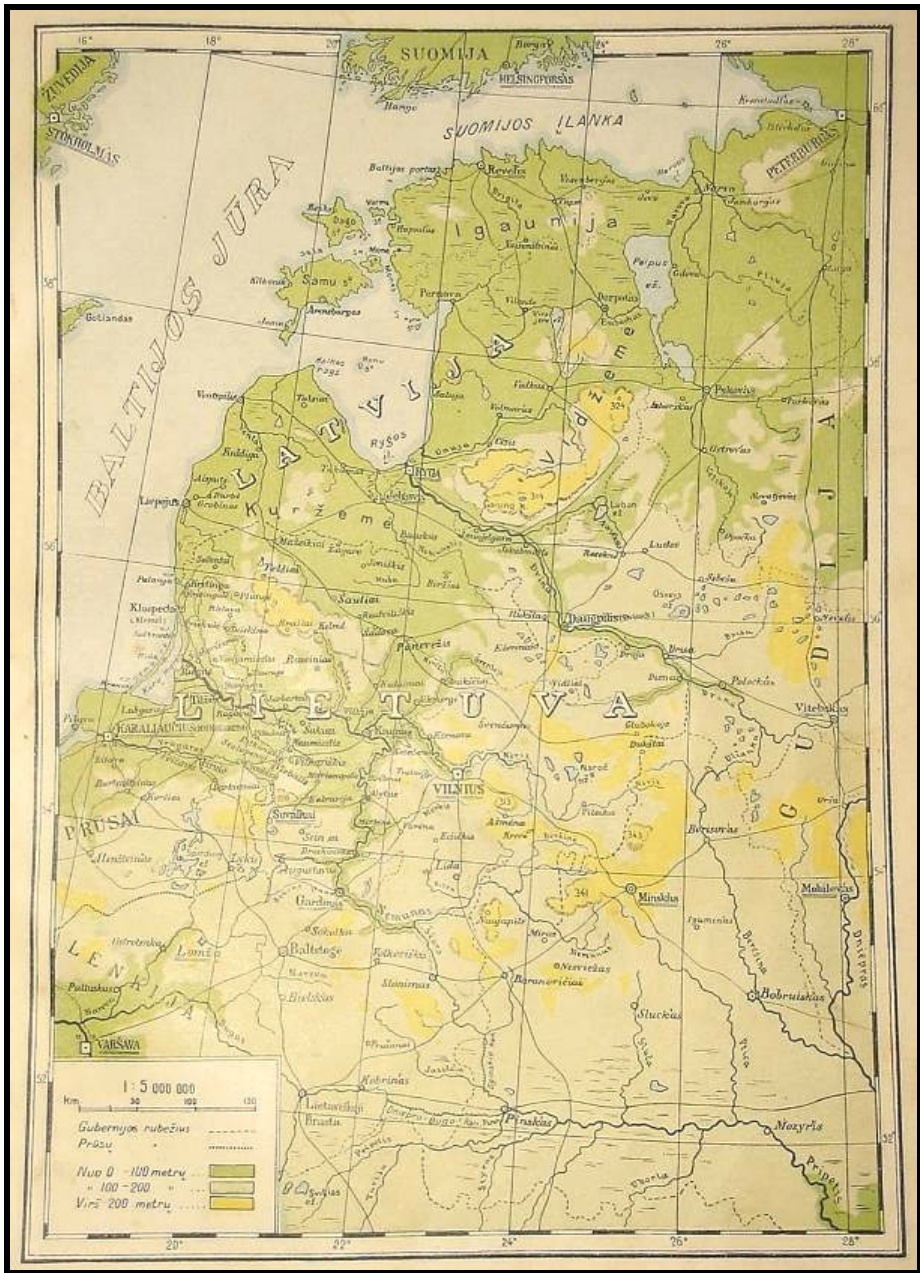


Figure 30. Gabrys-Paršaitis' map of Lithuania and Latvia (1910)

In this sense Gabrys-Paršaitis' visualisation of Lithuania did not differ greatly from Maciejauskas' maps – the focus of the image was on the unbordered territory. The caption “Lithuania” began in Prussia, close to Königsberg (on the map – *Karaliaučius*) and ended close to the border of Vil'na province. “Latvia” followed the same pattern covering Courland and

Livonia provinces. Yet most noticeable of all, despite it being a physical map, no Lithuanians or any other ethnic groups were marked on it.

Ultimately, perhaps, one might agree with the scepticism of certain LSS members concerning the value of Gabrys-Paršaitis' book. The lessons on the Lithuanians were unstructured and unclear. The final chapter, which dealt with the inhabitants, the government and administrative-territorial division of the Lithuanian provinces, merely enumerated different ethnicities, their numbers and approximate areas of habitation. Later, Gabrys-Paršaitis described the hierarchy of the local authorities according to their administrative units, which finally disclosed the fact that "Lithuania" was a part of the Russian state. The chapter ended with some revision questions, the last of which was: "What government is there in *Lithuania* now?"<sup>829</sup>

Before the outbreak of the war the LSS did not manage to publish any newly written Lithuanian geographical textbooks. Indeed, it was not until 1917, seven years after Gabrys-Paršaitis' controversial attempt, that Mykolas Biržiška (1882-1962) published his "Lithuanian Geography."<sup>830</sup> This time the book was very well received by the Lithuanian intelligentsia and was subsequently reprinted in 1918. It was a comprehensive and well-structured presentation of the Lithuanian geographical space, which clearly distinguished and explained the difference between *ethnographic* and *historical* Lithuania.<sup>831</sup>

In the end, the Lithuanian national territorial model was defined by its ethnographic structure, which consisted of an ethno-linguistic nucleus and the semi-Lithuanian peripheries – areas that contained either Lithuanian speakers and/or places and objects of national value.

### *Concluding remarks*

From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Lithuanian intelligentsia became actively interested in determining what constituted national territory. This was primarily related to the development of national pedagogy and education. During this period the authors of the various geographical textbooks and maps (Vileišis, Adomaitis-Šernas and Maciejauskas) lay the foundations for the actualisation of this question.

The earliest studies undertaken by Lithuanian ethnic cartographers revealed that the intention was to reconquer the "lost" national space, which was larger than that which had been delimited by the ethno-linguistic borders found in earlier scholarly works. The Lithuanian nationalists based their territorial arguments on both *historical/ethnographical* criteria (i.e. on remnants of the material culture in the peripheral non-Lithuanian areas, such as forms of houses, farm implements, decorations etc.) and *ethno-linguistic* criteria. This meant, as can be seen on Maciejauskas' map (1900), that it was

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<sup>829</sup> Gabrys, *Geografijos vadovėlis*, p. 77 [emphasis mine].

<sup>830</sup> Mykolas Biržiška, *Lietuvos geografija* (Vilnius: 1918 – 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1917).

<sup>831</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

convenient not to have a strictly delimited national space. Using various strategies of visualisation (such as using Lithuanianised toponyms, centring the map on an undefined and unbordered region, or entitling it “Lithuania,” etc.) the nationalists were striving to achieve the paradoxical – to obtain precision through imprecision – to picture their country. In parallel, a process of Lithuanianising of the map was also being actively pursued.

During the period following the ending of the prohibition on printing in the Latin alphabet (1904), especially after the 1905 Revolution, and until 1914, there was a noticeable increase in the political rhetoric calling for Lithuanian autonomy within the Russian Empire, as well as an intensification of the construction of Lithuanian territory in pedagogical works. The new maps continued to depict an abstract Lithuania (Maciejauskas (1905); Matulionis (1906 (1909)); Gabrys-Paršaitis (1910)), while at the same time gradually increasing the differentiation between the ethno-linguistic (Verbickis (1911)) and ethnographical (Juškytė (1905)) perception of space. Moreover, some of the Lithuanian nationalists openly advocated the theories which had been used by the Russian authorities in the 1860s during the period of Russification and de-Polonisation (Smetona (1914)). They reactivated and reinterpreted the ethnography and cartography of that time, adjusting these methods and strategies to their own nationalistic arguments.

It is obvious that just before the First World War the Lithuanian national intelligentsia was coming close to finally answering the question as to where Lithuanian ethnic territory was located. From this perspective the map that illustrated Smetona’s article was the most symptomatic representative of pre-First World War Lithuanian ethno-political mapping, which tightly bound politics, ethnography, cartography and nationalism. During the war the Lithuanian nationalists continued their attempts to construct the national territory they desired. One of the drawbacks they encountered was that the German occupation did not allow the joining of Russian and Prussian Lithuania.<sup>832</sup> However, as discussed in this chapter, it would seem that the Lithuanian nationalists had tactically decided to leave their Prussian counterparts outside Lithuania proper. This notion had appeared in the geographical textbooks published around 1905. Finally, the most decisive examination of the new Lithuanian territory (as well as its map) occurred in 1919, at the Peace Conference in Versailles, where the Lithuanian representatives, together with many other nationalists, had to prove that their country was worthy of appearing on the map of Europe.

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<sup>832</sup> Zenonas Ivinskis, “Lietuvos sienų klausimu,” in: A. Liekis (ed.), *Lietuvos sienų raida: mokslo duomenys apie lietuvių tautą, jos valstybę ir sienas* (Vilnius, 1997), vol. 2, p. 270.

## 6. General Conclusions

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Russian Empire was a multi-ethnic and regional state. Although the imperial authorities and the wider public may have rejected this notion or found it problematic to accept, it was a fact which was clearly evident in the research of Russian scholars. Throughout the current study I have attempted to demonstrate this point by analysing two processes: first, the gradual formation of the Lithuanian ethnic space on maps, and second, its transformation from an ethnographical concept to an ethnic or national territory. This study has also revealed that before the First World War Russia (from a territorial perspective) existed as a collection of administratively bound ethnic lands, thus contributing to the advancement of the idea of “imperial rule” and to the interplay between the concepts of “empire” and “nation.”<sup>833</sup>

To use Gorizontov’s term, the formation of the “empire of regions” developed from the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a result of a series of administrative-territorial decisions – i.e. through the organisation of the imperial space. As discussed earlier, it was not a consistent process. The policy of the Russian tsars vacillated between the unification and particularisation of the state. The attempts to introduce rational and optimal territorial governance depended on many factors, chief among them being the level of geographical and statistical knowledge of the land and its peoples. The various investigations of the Empire, launched at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, indicate that the imperial ambition to understand Russia was constantly growing. A geographical perception was largely dependent on the mapping of the country, and from this point of view it could be argued that the Empire only started to be visible in detail in around 1840, with the progress of the General Land Survey and the extensive topographical mapping undertaken by the officers of the General Staff. All this highlighted the ongoing “vertical” integration of the state.

In parallel to this, during the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the official separation of the “Russian” provinces from the border provinces/regions occurred. This was motivated by various historical, socio-political and socio-

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<sup>833</sup> As Miller and Rieber remarked, “one of the major problems of studies of imperial rule is to separate and identify the constituent elements of nation and empire in the building, maintenance and transformation of states and to analyse their dynamic relationship.” Miller, Rieber, “Introduction: Imperial Rule,” pp. 3-4.

cultural factors. It was especially visible in the case of the Western region during the reigns of Paul I and Alexander I. Arguably, this strengthened the fundamental *exclusiveness* of the ruling classes of these provinces, leading them to expect future territorial gains and the subsequent restoration of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This specific distinction was obvious when Paul granted these border provinces a “special status” and when Alexander made secret plans to transform Russia into a federal state.

Furthermore, a perception of the exclusiveness of the Western region was evident not only among the highest political authorities, but also among active civil society. The Poles and the liberal Russian circles, the most radical of which were the Decembrists, envisioned significant structural revisions of the Russian Empire. Their plans revealed that they believed that Russia would soon be undergoing a major territorial and political reform.

Although these grand plans came to little, the territorial regionalisation of the imperial space continued. From the 1830s onwards the tsars managed to integrate the Western provinces to some extent by stripping them of all their customary privileges, introducing common Russian laws, restructuring their administrative-territorial organisation, and gradually introducing “horizontal” policies of ethno-socio-political unification (through de-Polonisation, Russification, etc.). These policies made the Western region appear, at least externally, more consistent with the inner Russian provinces. And yet, despite these (rather unsystematic) attempts, the Western provinces continued to remain “different.”

Their exclusiveness thus depended on the specificity of the local population, which was predominantly non-Russian. Thus, while the imperial authorities envisioned Russia as a solid “Russian” state, scientists were starting to show that the Empire was not just regional, but also multi-ethnic. From the 1840s onwards, Russian ethnographers, geographers, cartographers and statisticians investigated the western borderlands, collecting, scrutinising and presenting information about these peoples. As a consequence of investigations undertaken by such organisations as the IRGS, from the 1850s to the 1880s a multi-ethnic picture of the Russian Empire was built up, which was clearly represented by the compilation of ethnographical maps. These maps indirectly conflicted with imperial policy and plans for integration and unification, because they presented a different structure of the state – one that was based on ethnic settlement.

Although ethnographic and administrative maps were based on a different system of boundaries, the imperial administrative grid nevertheless functioned as the connecting link between the commonly established imperial administrative units and the shifting ethnic borders, which were not officially recognized. In this way, I would argue that the imperial administrative divisions may be perceived as the lynchpin of territorial stabilisation and political control, i.e. they preserved the stability of the state and did not allow national movements to promote their territorial claims.

The first cartographical depictions of the Lithuanian ethnic group were made by Russian scholars who were influenced not only by the results of earlier ethnographical and statistical investigations, but also by the general policies of de-Polonisation and Russification. The Lithuanians were caught in the middle of the struggle between the Poles and Russians for control of the region and they gradually became a kind of tool that was used by the imperial government against the local Polish elites. The official policies (restrictive or otherwise) in the Lithuanian lands played an important role in establishing an anti-Polish Lithuanian national perspective. Several decades later, as a consequence of the ethnographic expeditions and ethnic mapping, the Lithuanian national movement began its own, separate project to define the Lithuanian national territory.

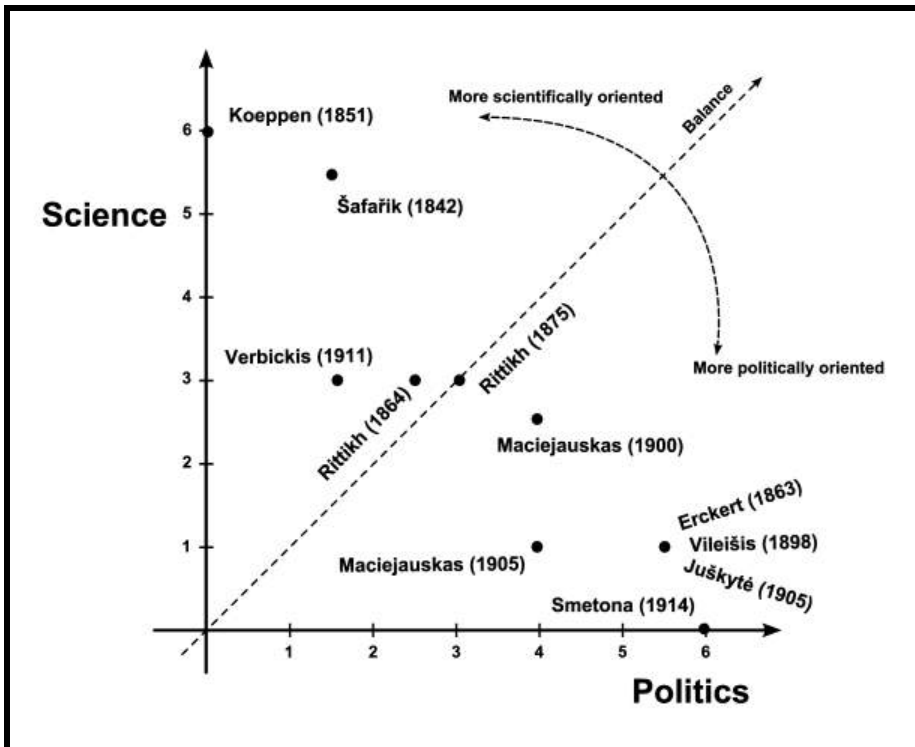
One of the goals of the cartographers and ethnographers was to separate the ethnic groups in the Western provinces by drawing their borders on maps. As demonstrated earlier, this was a very complicated task, especially in the areas inhabited by multi-lingual and multi-confessional populations. Each ethnographer faced a dilemma in trying to achieve a balance between statistical precision and cartographical abstraction. The investigators had to collect and process data that was often contradictory, update it with newly collected information, and then group and classify it. The maps they produced contained different means of visual expression: in the depiction of unbordered settlements and the marking of the distribution of peoples they used numbers and colours, and for border areas other specific signs.

Vil'na province was an extreme case in terms of this ethnic jigsaw puzzle. The Belarusian-, Lithuanian- and Polish-speaking populations comprised an ethnographic mass that was practically impossible to define, which meant that imperial researchers had to discover and employ new formulas in order to achieve their separation. Before the 1860s ethnic cartographers, ethnographers and statisticians concentrated on the smallest distinctive details of each non-Russian ethnic group (a good example of this was Koeppen's work). However, from the 1860s onwards, a tendency to establish binary constructions of separation became increasingly common, as, for example, with the distinctions between Catholic/Orthodox, Russian (or Belarusian)/Pole, Russian (or Belarusian)/Lithuanian, etc. This was due to the influence of ideology, the politicisation and subsequent simplification of ethnography and ethnic cartography. In the case of the Lithuanians these methods of distinction appeared after the 1863-1864 uprising, and the growth and spread of propagandistic ethnic cartography. However, as a consequence of this work it was not only the imperial authorities who were able to identify the inhabitants of the North Western provinces; at the same time the educated local population began to perceive its own ethnic (later transformed into national) space.

Therefore, every ethnic line placed on a map during this period not only allowed these peoples to be ethnographically *separated*, but also allowed the



territory to be nationalistically *disassociated* at the same time from “others” that were neighbouring it. Furthermore, although they came from different ideological standpoints, the “propaganda” cartographers (both imperial and national) argued about the fallibility of these lines. Because of the complex ethnic mix, maps could be interpreted in many ways. Maps designed to show the “smallness” of the Polish ethnicity, indirectly showed the “greatness” of the Lithuanian population. Erckert and Smetona stood on diametrically opposed ideological platforms, yet Smetona still based his construction of the national Lithuanian territory on Erckert’s maps, which had been originally designed to assist in the de-Polonisation and Russification of the region.



**Figure 31.** The classification of ethnic maps according to either their scientific or political orientation

In Figure 31, I have attempted to visualise the spread of the cartographic works discussed in this thesis. Naturally, this schema is highly unconventional and needs thorough scrutiny; however, it nevertheless provides a certain perspective on the development and tendencies in Russian imperial and Lithuanian national cartography. The position of each map on the graph has been established according to its more scientific or political inclination, as defined earlier in this study.<sup>834</sup> The contextual information presented in the

<sup>834</sup> See chapter 1.3.2.3, pp. 33-35.

preceding chapters enables each of the maps to be located on the graph, thus indicating the changing patterns in ethnic cartography depicting the Lithuanian ethnic borders.

From a chronological perspective, a certain change in ethnic cartography may be observed: the more scientifically oriented maps created during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century became more propagandistic and polemical after approximately 1860. This may be partly explained by the intensification of political propaganda against the Poles on the part of the imperial authorities, as well as by the later appearance of Lithuanian nationalist cartography. Despite the fact that the imperial maps, for example Rittikh's map (1875), were perceived by the Russian general public (including scholars and politicians) as being highly scientific products, some European scholars tended to interpret them as political messages that indicated strong assimilationist tendencies. Even those maps that showed the decreasing territory of the Lithuanian-speaking population were still useful for Lithuanian (and other) national activists, who tended to use the same maps to strengthen their counter arguments against the threat of assimilation, Russification, Polonisation, etc.

Therefore, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ethnographical maps became not only an expression of scientific exploration and discovery, but also complex instruments in political argumentation and propaganda. They were susceptible to being reinterpreted by people with very different ideological viewpoints.

The graph shows that the Lithuanian maps were mostly political, with the sole exception of Verbickis' map, which presented the Lithuanian ethnolinguistic borders (1911). As polemical instruments designed for use in national education, they did not aim at being scientific, by providing clarity or a balanced and logical presentation of information. It is interesting to note that the maps by Erkert, Vileišis and Juškytė can be placed on the same spot on the graph, because of their highly political and propagandistic orientation. Other Lithuanian maps were more elusive, especially those that depicted unbordered Lithuanian territory. Nevertheless, they served their purpose in presenting a visually convincing picture of the "should-be" national Lithuania.

Furthermore, these maps served as cartographical responses for countering the Russian and Polish points of view. The specificity of the Lithuanian maps was that even though they claimed to depict ethnographic or ethnolinguistic Lithuanian territory, they nonetheless emphasised Lithuania in geo-political terms. The appearance and continuation of this particular tendency can be traced from Vileišis' map (1898) to Smetona's cartographical construction (1914). One of the common features of both Lithuanian nationalist and Russian imperial ethnic cartography was the misrepresentation of Lithuanian territory. While the latter tried to reduce it, the former made it larger by using scientifically suspect historical-linguistic and historical-ethnographical methods of identification. Therefore, the paradox of the na-

tional Lithuanian territory at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was that regardless of the intention of the Lithuanian map-makers to depict contemporary ethnic Lithuanian territory, their maps usually presented ethnic borders that no longer existed.

This paradox becomes somewhat clearer, when we look at the textual descriptions in geography textbooks from this period. The inconsistency in the borders came about not only because the nationalists wanted to include already assimilated Lithuanians, but largely because some of the significant national symbols (the most important of which was the city of Vil'na) were located outside ethnic Lithuanian space. Perhaps, if Vil'na had been in the Lithuanian ethno-linguistic area, these cartographers would not have had so much difficulty in arguing about the correctness of their depiction of Lithuania, and instead of an ethnographical criterion they would have used ethno-linguistic criteria for identifying the borders.

Finally, it should be noted that from the common imperial point of view, the appearance of Lithuania was an exceptional and, at the same time, symptomatic example, illustrating the general pattern of the emergence of ethnic territories. The complex system of administrative-territorial division, combined with the political situation before the First World War, hindered the Lithuanian nationalists from delimiting the borders of the territory to which they laid claim. The inner imperial division did not allow any unauthorised administrative changes, although the Lithuanian politicians through their Duma representatives tried unsuccessfully to persuade the authorities to divide Suvalki province into Polish and Lithuanian parts. In sum, both the imperial "system" and "national" integration were more powerful processes. However, if we look at the local developments, the nationalists were gradually taking over and introducing their own form of cultural homogenisation, which was aimed at establishing a particular Lithuanian ethnic territory.

Later, after the First World War, the unresolved situation of Vil'na province resulted in a war between Lithuania and Poland, which destabilised the whole Baltic region. Only the emergence of much greater threats, such as those that came with the Second World War and the Soviet occupation, brought this conflict to an end. It was only during the fifty years of Soviet oppression and after the re-establishment of independence in 1990, that the borders between the independent republics of Belarus, Lithuania and Poland were finally established, although there are still substantial minorities of each ethnicity in each of these states.

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