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THE POLES IN THE ACADEMIC CORPORATION
OF ST. PETERSBURG IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY
(THE 19TH – THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY)*

The topic «The Poles in St. Petersburg University» has its own historiographical tradition. A number of scholars writing about the history of Polonia in St. Petersburg as well as about St. Petersburg University have touched upon it to a certain extent: Yu. D. Margolis, T. N. Zhukovskaya, V. A. Dyakov, L. Bazyulev, F. Novinsky, J. Tazbir, R. Piotrovsky, V. V. Mihaylenko, L. Piskorsky, T. M. Smirnova and many others.

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It is also necessary to take into account a wider historiographical context connected with the study of the activity of the Poles in the Russian higher education institutions\(^2\). A range of significant problems concerning the history of the Polish student community and their participation in the social and revolutionary movements have already been set up; the topics related to the biographies of some outstanding University graduates of Polish origin have been considered. However, there are still a lot of issues left to be addressed. The purpose of this article is to formulate the principles for the future «collective biography» of the Poles in the academic corporation (lecturers) of St. Petersburg University from 1819 to 1917 (including the development of the selection criteria and methodology). Therefore, of special interest in the article are such aspects as the number of the Poles in the academic corporation, the problem of the Polish identity and the criteria of its assessment, the problem of the distribution of the Polish scholars across the University departments and fields of knowledge; types of academic and life strategies of Polish lecturers.

**The problem of identity: a Polish scholar or a scholar of Polish origin?**

At present there have been identified about 800 scholars working in 1819–1917 in St. Petersburg University as lecturers, some of whom taught at the same time or in different periods at two departments (given the institutional reforms in 1835 and 1849). The research has revealed that there were 183 lecturers at the Faculty of Law, 239 lecturers — at the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics, 115 — at the Faculty of Oriental studies, 253 lecturers — at the Faculty of History and Philology.

According to our estimation, about 5 % out of the total number of lecturers most probably were of Polish origin (the Faculty of History and Philology 7–10; the Faculty of Oriental studies 5–6; the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics 10–12; the Faculty of Law 15–17). Thus, the Poles comprised the second largest national group in the academic corporation of St. Petersburg University after the scholars of German origin (no less than 10 % out of the total number of the faculty members).

The approximation of the estimation concerning the number of the representatives of a certain national community in the academic corporation lies not so much in the source-related difficulty, but in the complexity of the national identity, which is the key and most debatable issue in such studies. Not only may the criteria of attribution to an ethnic group be different (family origin, self-identification, identification by the contemporaries, identification within the historiographical and cultural tradition, language, religion, social circle etc.), but, as far as a certain criterion (or a group of criteria) is concerned, a person’s identity throughout the life can change. Finally, a number of people can retain at the same time double identity (for instance, Polish-Russian). Taking it into consideration, a better approach may be to reject the rigid criteria of attribution to the Polish nation and to acknowledge that all the people who may have been considered Polish on the basis of one or more of the above-mentioned criteria will be the subject of our study. This approach will enable us to consider such people about whom the information is not sufficient at this stage of the research.

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It must be said that both assimilation and national self-identification in the case of each person was very individual. Thus, it is possible only to allege that Polish graduates in Russia had certain career and life strategies (patterns). As the events of 1917 were the turning point which challenged the issue of their national identity, this article will mainly focus on the group of scholars who had survived it.

**The strategy of the opposition**

The first career and life strategy can be classified as the Polish opposition. For example, Baltazar Fomich Kalinovsky (1827–1884), who was elected Adjunct-Professor at the department of national services and finances of the Law faculty in 1861, could be attributed to it. He was renowned for his active participation in the Polish revolutionary movement headed by I. Ogryuzko and S. Serakovsky. After his trip abroad in 1862, during which he met A. I. Herzen, he was dismissed from the University and exiled to Astrakhan, then — to Kazan and finally — to a remote place in the Altai mountains, Biysk. Kalinovsky continued his antigovernment activity in Byisk where his house became a meeting place for the exiled Poles. At the end of the 1860s he settled in Tula where he worked as a secretary of the statistic committee of the province. In 1873 he returned to St. Petersburg and began working as a defense lawyer and an assistant to his famous compatriot V. D. Spasovich. From 1878 he worked as an attorney.

Another famous Polish frondeur, a world-renowned scholar Jvan (Ignacy Niecislaw) Baudouin de Courtenay, was a privatdozent in 1870–1872, and Professor in 1900–1914 and 1917–1918 at the department of comparative philology and Sanskrit at the Faculty of History and Philology. Besides establishing his own philological school and achieving international fame, Courtenay came into the history of University as one of the few professors (obviously, in the period before 1917) who not only was politically persecuted but also imprisoned for his «separatist» article «National and territorial characteristic of autonomy». In this work he raised a range of issues vital for a Russian-Polish liberal. In particular, he addressed such important problems as a possibility of national and cultural self-identification within two and more nationalities and of autonomy and federalization in Russia as the future basis for its state structure. However, some parts of the article reflected radical political viewpoints of Baudouin de Courtenay: «No one regrets the death of the state in which lawlessness and inexorable cruelty triumphantly march across the country. And if we are still trying to prevent this death, we are doing it only for fear that the demise of the state monster might perforce bring about a lot of victims».

According to the professor’s service records, Baudouin de Courtenay «by the Special Tribunal of Petrograd’s Court of Justice involving the representatives of the social estates in 28, February – 29, May, 1914 was sentenced to two years for circulating the material inciting a riot and containing false statement about the activity of the government, which stirs up hostility towards it, the sentence being mercifully shortened by the Emperor to 3 months in 19, September, 1914» and that he was «resigned in 20, October, 1914». After the February revolution «by the order № 33 of the Ministry of National Education from 27, April, 1917 he was reinstated as an independent University professor».

Another Polish scholar of great world renown was Faddey Franzevich (Tadeusz Stefan) Zielinski (1859–1944). In 1884 Zielinski was given permission to teach Greek philology as a privatdozent at the Faculty of History and Philology; in autumn, 1887 he became Professor

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3 Бодуэн де Куртенэ И. Национальный и территориальный признак в автономии. СПб., 1913. 
4 Там же. С. 83–84. 
5 Формулярный список о службе... Ивана Александровича Бодуэна де Куртене // ЦГИА СПб. Ф. 14. Оп. 3. Д. 16328. Л. 50–68 об.
extraordinary at the department of Classical Philology, in 1890 was promoted to Professor ordinary at the same department. He retained this position until 1922 when he finally left Russia. In 1906–1908 Zieliński held the post of the Chair of the department of History and Philology. There is a large number of works about this prominent classical philologist and researcher. As far as the context of this article is concerned, it should be noted that he did not conceal his Polish origin, but took pride in it as well as in the recognition of his scholarly achievements in his historic homeland. During the WWI he made a stand for his compatriots.

In 1914–1916 he became the Chairman of the Council of the Polish scholars in St. Petersburg, and in 1916 he was a member of the delegation together with the other Russian Poles to convey the gratitude to the Ambassador of the USA in connection with President T. Wilson’s support of the independence of Poland. He also actively participated in the activity of the Polish Society of Friends of History and Literature.

It should be noted that it is not always easy to differentiate between Russian and Polish political opposition as the lecturers of Polish origin were often engaged in the Russian liberation movement. For example, «the struggle for the autonomy» of St. Petersburg University was inconceivable without the activity and articles of the member of the party of People’s freedom F. F. Zieliński. It is worth remembering that one of the key demands of the liberal opposition was the «autonomy» of higher education instructions. A more demonstrative example of the «autonomy» activists was Lev Petrażycki (1867–1931). Having graduated from Saint Vladimir University in Kiev, he made a brilliant career in St. Petersburg University. In 1897–1900 he was a privatdozent in the department of Encyclopedia and Philosophy of Law, in 1900–1902 — Professor extraordinarius, in 1902–1905 — Professor ordinarius, in 1906–1915 — ordinarius and finally in 1905–1906 — the Chair of the Law Department. Petrażycki (the member of the State Duma and Constitutional Democratic Party) became an independent Professor after signing «The Vyborg Appeal», for which he, among other signers, was given a 3-month sentence. Petrażycki continued to pursue a political career after February 1917, when by the order of the Provisional Government given to the Governing Senate he was appointed «Secretary of the First Department of the Governing Senate from 1, May, 1917 (by the law of 26, December, 1916) with retention of the position of Professor ordinarius in St. Petersburg University».

6 Формулярный список о службе… Ф. Ф. Зелинского // ЦГИА СПб. Ф. 14. Оп. 3. Д. 16329. Л. 276–287 об.
9 For example: Зелинский Ф. Ф. Университетский вопрос в 1906 г. // ЖМНП. 1906. № 8 (Август). Новая серия. Ч. IV. Отд. 4. С. 111–159.
11 See: Петражицкий Л. И. Университет и наука. Т. 1. СПб., 1907.
12 Формулярный список о службе… Л. И. Петражицкого // ЦГИА СПб. Ф. 14. Оп. 3. Д. 16331. Л. 38–45 об.
13 Там же. Л. 45 об.
The strategy of loyalty: serving the Russian State

Undoubtedly, most professors of Polish origin stuck to the strategy of loyalty. Before the reforms this strategy became a necessary prerequisite to a post at University (for instance, for such outstanding professors of the first half of the 19th century as Jakim Grigorievich Zembnizky or Vikenty Karlovich Vishnevsky). However, even after the reforms, according to our preliminary suppositions, most Polish lecturers kept following the same strategy which, by the way, enabled them to influence the policy of the authorities in the Polish issue. Obviously, the most indicative of this was the Faculty of Law whose lecturers were involved into state and public activity. For example, Jeronim Osipovich Krzhizhanovsky (1819–1875) worked at the Faculty during the crucial period. In 1850 he was elected Professor ordinarius in the department of the Polish civil law and jurisdiction and held this position until 1859, afterwards he became a member of the Council of the Ministry of National Education and an inspector in Warsaw educational district, ending his career as a Senator of the Russian Empire. Another distinguished lawyer of the turn of the 19th–20th centuries was Lyobomir Kleofasovich (Petrovich) Dyumsha (1860–1915), a privatdozent at the Faculty of Law, where he taught the foundations of Public Law of Europe and the USA and Public law of Russia. It was in this capacity that he had a fundamental impact on forming the generations of the Russian lawyers of the beginning of the 20th century. While teaching at University, Dyumsha also served in the Ministry of National Education and later in the Stationery Office. In 1902–1905 he was a member of St. Petersburg State Duma, from 1908 — a member of the board of the National Industry Support Society of the Kingdom of Poland, from 1908 — a member of the Preparation Committee for the neoslavic congress; he also was a member of the III and IV State Duma (within the Polish Kolo). In addition, Dyumsha founded the Polish Society of lawyers and economists, and published articles in such newspapers as «The Polish Voice» and «The Polish affair». During the WWI he served on the Special Committee for the evacuation from the Kingdom of Poland in the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Vladislav Ludvigovich Kotvich (1872–1944) also combined academic career at the Faculty of Oriental Studies with civil service. From 1900 he was a privatdozent in the department of Mongolian and Kalmyck Philology and the department of Manch Philology, and in 1917 was given a position of Assistant Professor. Since graduating from University in 1895 until 1917 besides teaching at University Kotvich served in the Stationery of the Ministry of Finance.

The strategy of integration

Finally, the third possible career strategy and a life choice was integration (eventually — assimilation) and a conscious self-identification as a Russian. The tradition in St. Petersburg University was started, most probably, by a famous Orientalist Osip Ivanovich Senkovsky (1800–1858), who consciously adopted the tactics of Russification. Curiously, the society was even more critical of Senkovsky as well as of another Pole, loyal to the government, Faddey Bulgarin, than of the Russian conservatives. We can refer to the epigram by A. Pushkin about visiting a popular Smirdin’s bookstore: «Whenever at Smirdin’s — you purchase nothing, but step into Senkovsky or Bulgarin».

16 Улымжиев Д. Б. Видный российский и польский монголовед Владислав Людвигович Котвич (1872–1944) // Вестник Бурятского университета. Сер. 4: История. Вып. 1. С. 174–182.
However, what used to be a conscious life choice in the first half of the 19th century, became a natural, albeit contradictory, process for the new generations of the Polish living in Russia due to certain reasons. As a rule, identification as a Russian engendered adopting Orthodoxy, although it was not imperative. For example, Orthodoxy didn’t prevent *Vladimir Danilovich Spasovich* (1829–1906) from remaining an active Polish public figure in a post-reform period, and Catholicism didn’t get in the way of Alexander Stanislavovich Dogel (1852–1922), who was one of the most zealous Russofiles in St. Petersburg University at the beginning of the 20th century. WWI challenged the patriotism of the Russian academic society. Interestingly, lectures of Polish origin took part in «the War of professors» which broke out in 1914–1915 — including members of the Constitutional Democratic Party, such as F. F. Zelinski. As far as St. Petersburg (Petrograd) University was concerned, they often were more active than native Russians. A. S. Dogel, Professor at the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics, put forward an unexpected idea at the meeting in 1, September, 1914. He suggested that professors not publish their works in German, not subscribe to German journals, and not purchase equipment and specimen for University laboratories in Germany and Austria-Hungary. He claimed: «As far as I can gather, it is the most propitious time when we can and have to dispose of the patronizing Germans’ care lasting for centuries and have everything which we used to take from our obliging neighbors done at home». V. M. Shimkevish, the Chair of the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics caustically commented on the suggestion by the Faculty’s Professor: «To begin with, before setting an aim, it is worth considering whether it is feasible». He pointed out that although it might be better not to purchase equipment and specimen in Germany and Austria-Hungary, it was not technologically viable — for example, radium salts for treating patients were available only in Austria-Hungary. Shimkevish agreed that it was possible not to publish works in German journals emphasizing that such «emancipation» should not take a form of the pledge, but should lay the foundations of the national editions. Eventually the Council, siding with V. M. Shimkevish, refused even to discuss the suggestion raised by A. S. Dogel. The Chairman’s and Council’s reaction to another A. S. Dogel’s idea about depriving German Professors, Honorary members of University, of their titles — was similarly negative: «War is temporary, but research work — something permanent and unfailing. That is why it is hardly productive to mix these aspects while discussing such matters». However, further events proved that A. S. Dogel anticipated the government demands. Alexander Dogel was one of the most demonstrative examples of «Russification» among the Polish intellectuals. Interestingly, his son, Valentin Alexandrovich Dogel, a renowned Russian and Soviet zoologist, in contrast to his father was Orthodox.

17 Формулярный список о службе… А. С. Догеля // ЦГИА СПб. Ф. 14. Оп. 3. Д. 16 329. Л. 178 об.
19 See for example: Зелинский Ф. Ф. «Война с искусством» // Вопросы мировой войны. Пг., 1915. С. 193–199.
22 Там же. С. 80.
24 Формулярный список… В. А. Догеля // ЦГИА СПб. Ф. 14. Оп. 3. Д. 16329. Л. 191 об.
The revolutionary events of 1917 raised the issue of ethnic identity even more acutely than WWI. However, it was rather about physical and mental survival of the whole strata of intellectuals in a new social and political environment than about individual national consciousness. Obviously, not everyone could cope. By 1922 no fewer than 120 lecturers out of 328 had left: some of them perished during the period of trouble, others fled from starvation in Petrograd moving to safer places and universities in Saratov, Perm, and Tomsk. All in all, according to the estimations made by A. V. Shilov, more than 50 people ended up abroad (including those who first moved to other higher education institutions in Russia)\textsuperscript{25}. Among them were F. A. Braun, G. V. Vernadsky, D. D. Grimm, P. P. Gronsky, A. A. Pilenko, M. I. Rostovtsev, N. V. Yastrebov etc. There were also a lot of Polish lecturers who left the country, both those who used to be in opposition to the government and those who were loyal. Within this context, it’s hard to say whether the main cause for the Polish lecturers’ emigration was their identity or the desire to escape from Bolsheviks. At the same time there were those who had to leave Petrograd against their will — 7 University Professors were exiled from the country, including a famous philosopher Nicolay Onufrievich Lossky, who had Polish origin\textsuperscript{26}. But for the intervention of the secretary of the Academy of Science S. F. Oldenburg, another renowned scholar of Polish origin, Orientalist Ignaty Julianovich Krachkovcky\textsuperscript{27}, the secretary of the Faculty of Oriental studies, might have been exiled too\textsuperscript{28}.

It is possible that a choice of staying in a new political environment meant, among other things, a choice of assimilation; at least it was what it led to. Therefore, members of the Constitutional Democratic Party and national Polish movement activists loyal to the former regime had no other choice but to emigrate. It is known that such eminent scholars as Baudouin de Courtenay, Zieleński and Petrazyczki, however different their lives were, after the revolution moved to Poland and contributed to the Polish academic glory. Other former graduates of St. Petersburg (Petrograd) University should also be mentioned among the contributors. For example, above-mentioned Kotvich moved to Lvov in 1923, where he worked as a Chair of the specially created for him department of Philology of the Far East (until eastern Poland was annexed by the USSR). He also presided in the Polish society of Oriental studies and edited a popular journal «Rocznik Orientalistyczny». A former privatdozent of the Department of Slavic Philology Stanislav Lvovich Ptashitsky (1853–1933) in 1919–1926 worked in Lublin University and also as a head of the local archive. In 1926 he moved to Warsaw where he headed the State Archives and founded the journal of Polish activists «Arheyon». Another former privatdozent, of the Department of Classical Philology, Stephan Samyuilovich Srebrny (1890–1962) worked as Professor in Catholic University of Lublin in 1918–1923, in 1923–1939 — as Professor in Vilnius University, from 1945 to 1960 he was the Chair of the department of Classical University education in the University of Torun. A former privatdozent of the department of World History Konstantin Vladimirovich Hilinsky (1881–1939) in 1919 became Professor in Lvov University, afterwards for some years he held the position of the Deputy Minister for Education in Poland.

It should be noted that not all Polish emigrants made a «Polish» choice. For example, Lossky taught in the Russian University in Prague and later became Professor in Bratislava University, in 1945 he moved to Paris, where he worked in St. Sergius Theological Institute, and in 1946 he settled in the USA and taught in the Russian Theological Academy in New York. One of the representatives of the Polish family of the Dogels (a distant relative of the above-mentioned A.

\textsuperscript{26} Там же.
\textsuperscript{27} Шилов А. Б. Из истории Петроградского университета... С. 257.
\textsuperscript{28} Формулярный список... И. Ю. Крачковского // ЦГИА СПб. Оп. 3. Д. 16334. Л. 133–142.
Dogel), a former privatdozent of the Department of International Law, Michail Ivanovich Dogel (1865–1936) ended up as Professor of Law in Prague University.

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All things considered, according to our study, it is possible to identify two groups of scholars of Polish origin, although the line between them is thin. Those who fall into the first group placed an emphasis or, at least, were aware of their Polish identity. The scholars in the second group remembered about their Polish origin, but perceived themselves rather as Russian scholars. As a rule, they came from the families where several generations had lived in the Russian environment. The completion of the biographical database of the University corporation enables to compare the careers of the «Russian» and the «Polish» professors. It is necessary during the next stage of the work on the biographical database to add information to the records (in particular, to include such aspects as religion, family, property, which will be more instrumental as far as the determination of the national identity is concerned, and will also serve to extend the research).

29 Nowadays the work is being done on the network resource: «The historical-biographical dictionary of professors and lecturers of St. Petersburg University» («Историко-биографический словарь教授ов и преподавателей Санкт-Петербургского университета») with the financial support of the project «The collective biography of Professors and university teachers of St. Petersburg University (1819–1917) — the network Dictionary of biography» (supervisor — R. S. Ganelin). URL: http://bioslovhist.history.spbu.ru.


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The purpose of this article is to formulate the principles for the future «collective biography» of the Poles in the academic corporation of St. Petersburg (Petrograd) University, national identity, the Poles in Russia, the history of higher education institution, Senkovsky, Boudain de Courtenay, Petrażycki, Zieliński

Keywords: St. Petersburg (Petrograd) University, national identity, the Poles in Russia, the history of higher education institution, Senkovsky, Boudain de Courtenay, Petrażycki, Zieliński

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