

# The Formation of Imperial Loyalty in the Education System in the Northwest Region in 1905–1915

Olga Mastianica

Schools alone have been and always will be the best means of implanting a Russian foundation in the society of the region. Only with the assistance of the education system can the future generation adopt an unbroken bond between the northwest periphery and the Russian core.

—Kovna governor Petr Verevkin

The above affirmation by Kovna governor Petr Verevkin (1904–12) leads us to the conclusion that even after 1905, when discrimination against non-Russian languages and cultures in the educational system of the Northwest Region declined, officials continued to consider a state school education one of the most suitable measures to form and secure non-dominant national groups' loyalty to the Russian Empire. These changes have drawn quite a bit of attention from researchers, and historians have sought to explain how and under what conditions the national (non-Russian) education system was created in the northwest provinces between 1905 and 1915, and how the elites from non-dominant ethnic groups carried out the nationalization of the masses by harnessing formal (private primary school) and informal (the periodical press, pupil and teacher societies) educational institutions.

Yet, there has been practically no analysis of how attempts were made to instill imperial loyalty via the state education system in the region after 1905, or how central and local governments reacted to non-dominant

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The research for this study was funded by a grant (No S-LJB-17-3) from the Research Council of Lithuania. Epigraph source: Draft report by Kovna Governor Verevkin for 1908–1911, *Lietuvos nacionalinės Martyno Mažvydo bibliotekos rankraščių skyrius* (LNB RS), f. 19, b. 82, l. 16.

ethnic groups' attempts to use education to form other (non-Russian) loyalties among younger generations. In this study, just one aspect of the Russian Empire's post-1905 education policy will be discussed. In order to trace this history, first this chapter will provide an analysis of how general subjects like history, geography, and Russian language and literature were taught, and what status the tsarist government assigned these branches of learning and disciplines in primary and secondary schools as a means of entrenching imperial loyalty in the Northwest Region. After this discussion of formal educational institutions, I shift my attention to various informal means of education, including educational excursions for pupils and teachers, students' participation in historical and state celebrations, and student societies to understand their role in cultivating imperial loyalties. Through this analysis, I show that regardless of the liberalization of educational policy after 1905, the imperial bureaucracy continued to consider the teaching of history, literature, and geography an important means of indoctrination. Furthermore, despite some changes, there was still an effort to uphold narratives formulated much earlier.

### Teaching the History of the Northwest Region

After 1905, the teaching of general subjects like Russian history and geography relied on the same curricula and used the same methods used in the interior provinces of the Russian Empire. A constituent part of Russian history curricula and textbooks was the history of the Northwest Region based on the concept of history created by Nikolai Ustrialov in the 1830s.<sup>1</sup> The history of Russia written by Ustrialov used in secondary schools claimed that, in terms of its state structure and confessional and ethnic composition, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was as much a Russian state as the Duchy of Muscovy; the only difference was that the small Lithuanian nation also took part in its formation. Lithuanian dukes had adopted Russian culture and be-

1 For more about Ustrialov's concept of history, see Darius Staliūnas, "Poland or Russia? Lithuania on the Russian Mental Map," in *Spatial Concepts of Lithuania in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Darius Staliūnas (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2016), 40–45.

longed to the East Christian (Orthodox) Church, which made them the kin of the Russians in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The goal of establishing a union of the two Russian states had always thrived, but such a merger had been postponed “by accident,” that is, because of Lithuania’s union with Poland, which the latter needed much more than the former.

A similar conceptualization of the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was continued to dominate school literature printed after 1905 because the imperial academic community was actively engaged in publishing. Between 1905 and 1915, “new” Russian history textbooks written by Sergei Platonov, Sergei Ivanov, Ivan Kataev, and Ivan Skvortsov were published; in these new books, the material was divided thematically rather than chronologically, paying greater attention to the formation of Russian statehood, in addition to covering the Russian economy, and providing an overview of significant cultural phenomena and various kinds of illustrative material.<sup>2</sup> In the Russian history textbook published in 1909 by Platonov, a popular professor at St. Petersburg University, and widely used in secondary schools in the Vil’na educational district, the expansion of the Russian Empire was explained as the logical outcome of the Romanov dynasty’s actions in strengthening and defending their state.<sup>3</sup> Platonov called the Grand Duchy of Lithuania the “Lithuanian-Russian state,” where “the Russian element was superior to the less cultured Lithuanian one”; for example, in reference to the age of the Lithuanian Duke Mindaugas (1253–63), Platonov argued that cities were being built based on the Russian example, and stated that Russians commanded the duke’s warriors.<sup>4</sup> Lithuanian

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2 Oleg Abramkin, “Problemy otechestvennoi istorii v shkol’noi literature XVIII-nachala XX v.,” *Liberal Arts in Russia* 4 (2015): 496–512; Mikhail Studenikin, *Metodika prepodavania istorii v russkoi shkole XIX-nachala XX v.* (Moscow: Prometei, 2016), 46–57.

3 Sergei Platonov, *Uchebnik russkoi istorii dlia srednei shkoly: Kurs sistematicheskii v dvuch chastiach s prilozheniem vos’mi kart* (St. Petersburg: sklad izdaniia I. Bashmakova, 1914), 58.

4 Russian geography textbooks used in state schools in the Northwest Region also tried to instill the idea that from the beginning, Lithuanians were under the civilizing influence of Russians. For example, Alexandr Baranov’s Russian geography textbook, which was one of the most popular secondary school texts in the Vil’na educational district, stated that “based on their origins, appearance, customs, and primal faith (*pervonachal’noe verovanie*), Lithuanians are close to the Slavs. It was only due to the extended period of Polish influence that Lithuanians converted to Catholicism and practically forgot their true nationality (*nastoiashchuiu narodnost’*).” Aleksandr Baranov, *Geografia Rossiiskoi imperii s geograficheskimi kartami*

dukes did not engage in the capture of Russian lands, but there was a peaceful incorporation of Russian lands: “The inhabitants of the Russian lands themselves willingly agreed to be ruled over by the Russified Gediminid dynasty.” Much like Ustrialov, Platonov explained that the successful functioning of the “Lithuanian-Russian state” was disrupted by the unions of Krewo (1385) and later Lublin (1569), after which Polish influence began to increase, as did Polish lords’ oppression of the Russian peasantry. Platonov reached the unambiguous conclusion that Catherine II had succeeded in implementing “historical justice,” “to recover our Russian lands from the Rzeczpospolita (Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth).”<sup>5</sup>

In the new history curriculum (until then, a history curriculum prepared in 1902 applied in secondary schools across the Vil’na educational district), which the Ministry of Education prepared in 1913 to commemorate the three hundredth anniversary of Romanov rule, the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was also presented as the history of the “Lithuanian-Russian state.” The explanatory text for the system-wide Russian history course authorized by Mikhail Taube, the minister of education, on July 13, 1913, expressly demanded that “history teachers, when speaking about the formation of the Lithuanian-Russian state, explain in detail that both in terms of numbers and cultural influence, the Orthodox Russian element dominated in this state.”<sup>6</sup> According to the education minister’s instructions, “a detailed presentation of the conquests of the first Lithuanian dukes had to be omitted,” thereby perpetuating the idea of the union of the two Russian states during the period of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania promoted in textbooks. The educational aim in the teaching of history was to “turn children’s attention to the finest and most idyllic moments in the historical past, to instill love for their Fatherland (*otechestvo*), and to encourage devotion to the throne.” As such, the history teacher was an educator

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*i risunkami v tekste. Kurs gorodskikh i uezdnykh uchilishch. Vtoroe izdanie* (St. Petersburg: izdanie D.D. Polubariianova, 1887), 44. By Slavs he, first of all, meant Russians.

5 Platonov, *Uchebnik russkoi istorii*, 79.

6 “Obiasnitel’naia zapiska k sistematicheskomu kursu russkoi istorii,” *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia* XLVI (1913): 112.

whose primary role was to “nurture patriotism and love for the Fatherland (*otechestvo*).”<sup>7</sup>

The administration of the Vil’na educational district understood the role of the teacher in the educational process perfectly. It is no wonder that on the instructions of Vasilii Popov, the overseer of the Vil’na educational district (1899–1906), state gymnasium teachers of history, geography, Russian language, and Russian literature were given the task of preparing an anthology of historical articles to commemorate the age of Catherine II (i.e., the period when the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania were incorporated into the Russian Empire) on the occasion of the unveiling of a monument honoring the empress in Vil’na.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the official pedagogical publication *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* (Education in the Vil’na educational district), which was primarily oriented at teachers, included instructions on how history teachers could nurture patriotism, which were written by some of the most famous educators of the time.<sup>9</sup>

According to Konstantin El’nitskii, whose article “The Nurturing of Patriotic Feelings” was printed in the periodical in 1909, learning Russian history and geography, participation in commemorations of state holidays, learning patriotic songs, and reading suitable fictional literature would only produce results if and when history teachers were purposefully regulated, as “they have the easiest access to the pupil’s soul and can leave a distinct mark upon it.”<sup>10</sup> El’nitskii’s ideas were supported by local teachers. Fedot Kudrinskii (1867–1933), a Russian language and Russian literature teacher at Nesvizh teacher training college (he later worked in state and private

7 “Obiasnitel’naia zapiska k programme elementarnogo kursa otechestvenoi istorii,” *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia* XLVI (1913): 106.

8 *Imperatrica Ekaterina II. Sbornik istoricheskikh statei*. Izdan po raspriazheniiu gospodina popechitelia Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga V.A. Popova. Pod redaktsiei prepodavatelja Vilenskoii I gimnazii A. Turtsevicha (Vilnius: Tipografia A.G. Syrkina, 1904).

9 *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* was a supplement to the official pedagogical publication *Tsirkuliar po upravleniiu Vilenskimi uchebnymi okrugami* [Circular on the management of the Vil’na educational district], published in Vil’na between 1901 and 1915.

10 Konstantin El’nitskii, “Vospitanie patrioticheskogo chuvstva,” *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* 1 (1909): 569–75. For more about El’nitskii’s pedagogical views, see: Liudmila Smirnova, “El’nitskii Konstantin Vasil’evich (1846–1917),” *Istoriko-pedagogicheskii zhurnal* 3 (2011): 43–45.

girls' gymnasiums in Vil'na, and contributed to the anthology of articles in honor of Catherine II), was also convinced that lectures and excursions were an incorrect means of instilling patriotic feelings in children.<sup>11</sup> "There is no better way to instill love for the Fatherland (*otechestvo*) than the example of the history teacher, a son of the Fatherland, who himself embodies that love,"<sup>12</sup> he asserted in an article entitled "On National Upbringing," published in *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* in 1909.

The local education administration also sought to control teachers' professional activities and their social activism. On the initiative of the Vil'na educational district, there was a congress of Russian language and history teachers in Vil'na in March 1907, and in January 1908 there was an additional congress for Russian language and literature teachers. In February and March 1908, a congress was held for teachers of the physical and natural sciences, and in April 1910, one was held for drawing, draughtsmanship, and craft teachers. At these congresses, teachers could only discuss questions that had already been formulated by the board of the Vil'na educational district, while resolutions passed by teachers would have to gain the approval of the board chaired by the patron of the Vil'na educational district. During these conventions, during which the local education administration sought to ensure teachers' loyalty to the political regime, the idea was raised to devote more attention to knowledge about the Fatherland (*rodinovedenie*), a new way of teaching geography and history that was gaining popularity at the time in the Russian Empire.

At the congress of Russian language and history teachers held in Vil'na on March 7–11, 1907, Evstafii Orlovskii (1863–1913), who had a wealth of experience of teaching history and geography in Grodna state schools,

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<sup>11</sup> Kudrinskii was born in the Volhynia province into the family of an Orthodox priest. In publications released in Vil'na, he promoted the pedagogical ideas of Pirogov and Tolstoi, prepared a new digest of Russian literature, and promoted the idea in historical works about how the Polish nobility oppressed the Russian peasantry after the Union of Lublin, and viewed the Union of Brest (1596) as a plan by Poles to bring peasants who professed the Orthodox faith under their influence.

<sup>12</sup> Bogdan Stepanec (Fedot Kudrinskii), "O natsional'nom vospitanii," *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* 5 (1909): 206.

raised the issue.<sup>13</sup> Orlovskii was a member of the Northwest Region branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, and was very familiar with the new landscape teaching concept (*landshaftnaia kontseptsia*), which was so popular across the Russian Empire at the time. Advocates of this concept wrote many textbooks devoted to different regions of the Russian Empire.

The new landscape concept meant that learning had to begin with knowledge about the pupils' closest surroundings, objects, and phenomena they were well-acquainted with, and only move on to lesser-known objects and phenomena that were further away. This meant that, for example, when learning geography, pupils first of all had to learn how to sketch their own class and school, and then to learn about their city and their "motherland" (*rodina*). In this case, *rodina* was understood as the pupil's native land, as opposed to the "great Fatherland" (*otechestvo, otchizna*), that is, the whole Russian Empire.<sup>14</sup>

During the 1907 congress, Orlovskii also suggested considering the "fatherland" the province of the Russian Empire where the pupil lived. In his view, knowledge of the geography and history of the development of one province or another should make up the content for teaching "knowledge of the fatherland" (*rodinovedenie*).<sup>15</sup> Orlovskii recommended introducing

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13 Orlovskii was born in Vil'na Province, in the Ashmiany district. His father was an Orthodox priest, and he pursued his education at the Lithuanian Religious Seminary and at the Institute of History and Philology in St. Petersburg. Orlovskii had significant teaching experience: he was a history teacher at the Grodna State Boys' Gymnasium for twenty-eight years, and a geography teacher at the Grodna State Girls' Gymnasium for ten years. Besides his pedagogical activities, he was also an active social figure: in 1907 he helped found the Grodna Pedagogical Society, in 1891–1913 he worked at the Grodna Public Library and was an honorary member of the Grodna Orthodox Brotherhood of St. Sophia. He collaborated actively with the editorial board of the *Grodna Province News* (*Grodnenskie gubernskie vedomosti*): in 1890 he was responsible for its review section on works written about the history of the Northwest Region, and in 1892–94 he reviewed various historical periodical publications for the newspaper. He also prepared several research papers on the history of Grodna and a discussion of the events of 1812 in the Grodna province, and he researched the history of the Orthodox Church in Grodna and the Grodna province.

14 Marina Loskutova, "S chego nachinaetsia rodina? Prepodavanie geografii v dorevoliutsionnoi shkole i regional'noe samosoznanie (XIX–nachalo XX v.)," *Ab Imperio* 3 (2003): 159–98.

15 *S'ezd prepodavatelei russkogo iazyka i istorii srednikh uchebnykh zavedenii Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga, proiskhodivshii v Vil'ne v marte 1907 goda. Sektsia istoriia* (Vilnius: Tipografiia A.G. Syrkina, 1907), 17. Note that during the congress of teachers of the physical and natural sciences in February and March 1908, Orlovskii also spoke about the need to devote more attention to fostering knowledge about the geography of the Northwest Region, and to ensure the implementation of suitable teaching methods. *S'ezd prepodavatelei matematiki, fiziki, estetstvovedeniia i geografii srednikh uchebnykh zavedenii Vilenskogo*

the history and geography of the Northwest Region as a separate subject, thus removing it from the general Russian history and Russian geography course as had been the case. He envisaged allocating only three or four lessons to the history and geography of the Northwest Region. Further, judging from the descriptions of the Vil'na and Grodna provinces Orlovskii had prepared earlier, his concept of the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was no different from that presented in Ustrialov's, and later on, in Platonov's textbook. The descriptions of the Vil'na and Grodna provinces, which were aimed primarily at school-age youths, also said that during the times of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, "Russian civilization and the Orthodox faith took on a leading role," and the Russian language was the state language in which official documents and legal acts were written.<sup>16</sup> The majority of the population of Vil'na, the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, was made up of Russians already during the reign of the Lithuanian grand duke Gediminas (1316–41), and the Lithuanian dukes willingly promoted the Orthodox faith by building Orthodox churches in the city.<sup>17</sup> The scholarly papers Orlovskii prepared also accentuated the positive impact of the incorporation of the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania into the Russian Empire, which guaranteed more rapid economic and cultural development in the region and ensured the population's "return" to their true religion, Orthodoxy. That is why, despite recommending teaching the history and geography of the Northwest Region as a separate subject, Orlovskii basically promoted the same conceptualization of the history of the Northwest Region that Ustrialov had created.

Orlovskii was not the only one to suggest devoting more attention to the history and geography of the Northwest Region. At a congress of primary school headmasters and inspectors of the Vil'na educational district held in Vil'na in December 1907, discussions also turned to the fact that "dur-

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*uchebnogo okruga, proiskhodiashii v Vil'ne s 25 fevralia po 2-e marta 1908 g.: sektsiia geografii* (Vilnius: Tipografia A.G. Syrkina, 1908), 47.

16 Evstafii Orlovskii, *Uchebnoe opisanie Vilenskoi gubernii* (Vilnius: Gubernskaia tipografia, 1904), 10; Evstafii Orlovskii, *Uchebnoe opisanie Grodnenskoi gubernii* (Grodna: Gubernskaia tipografia, 1906), 8.

17 Orlovskii, *Uchebnoe opisanie Vilenskoi gubernii*, 10.

ing lessons, pupils should be given more literature to read about the history of the Northwest Region.”<sup>18</sup> In 1909, Aleksandr Pigulevskii, the district inspector who participated in the Vil’na educational district executive commission’s meetings to improve pupils’ moral, intellectual, and physical development, spoke about how schoolchildren had to be encouraged to become more familiar with the history and geography of the Northwest Region. Pigulevskii was convinced that this knowledge would benefit them in their future professional pursuits: “Our gymnasium and real (practical) school graduates are theoreticians. They have none of the knowledge that is necessary in practical life. They have no idea of their class plan, nor the districts or roads in their province, or their city plan, yet they know all there is to know about America, Africa, and Australia.”<sup>19</sup>

However, neither Pigulevskii nor Orlovskii received support from either the local education administration or the teaching community. For example, Sergei Nikonov, a Russian language and history teacher at the First State Boys’ Gymnasium in Vil’na who participated in the commission’s meeting, was quick to express his concerns. He suggested taking into account graduates’ future professional activities. He posed a rhetorical question to those who had gathered: “do we need to introduce knowledge of the fatherland? After all, later on, Vil’na will remain the fatherland for just half of our pupils. For gymnasium students who are studying in Vil’na, this city is their fatherland so long as their parents or relatives live here. After they complete their studies, many of them will never come back to Vil’na.”<sup>20</sup> Most teachers who took part in the Russian language and history teachers’ congress in 1907 were also convinced that introducing the history and geography of the Northwest Region as a separate subject could have some undesirable results. For example, Ivan Maksimov, a history and ge-

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18 “Soveshchanie direktorov i inspektorov narodnykh uchilishch Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga, proiskhodivshee v Vil’ne 15-22 dekabria 1907 goda,” *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* 2 (1908): 61.

19 *Protokoly zasedanii komissii pri upravlenii Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga po voprosu o merakh sodeistviia fizicheskomu, nraustvennomu i umstvennomu razvitiuu uchashchikhsia* (Vilnius: Tipografia A.G. Syrkina, 1909), 87.

20 *Ibid.*, 89.

ography teacher at the State Boys' Gymnasium in Gomel', was certain that "providing knowledge about one's native land can prompt the formation of a misconceived understanding that one's native land is something distinct or special when compared to other parts of the Russian Empire, and that it is not the same state."<sup>21</sup> Valentin Kotov, a history teacher at the Second State Boys' Gymnasium in Vil'na, believed that the national groups living in the territory might not approve of a separate and detailed account of the history of the Northwest Region as it was presented in school literature.<sup>22</sup> It could be that Kotov had in mind first of all the Northwest Region history teaching material prepared by Arsenii Turtsevich (1848–1915), which the parents of Polish pupils vehemently asked to be removed from the curriculum, even appealing to Boris Vol'f, the overseer of the Vil'na educational district (1906–08) on the matter in 1906.<sup>23</sup>

Turtsevich, a history teacher at the First Boys' Gymnasium in Vil'na, prepared some teaching materials on the history of "Western Russia" in the last decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> The introduction to his "West Russian history" digest, published in 1892, began with a clear declaration of the national-patriotic mission that schools had (by teaching history, language, and literature), highlighting the fact that it was especially important to learn the history of Russia's western periphery because young people there were at risk of adopting a tendentious or distorted explanation of historical facts from Polish history texts.<sup>25</sup> In the editor's view, the same kind of teaching material that had been used a quarter of a century earlier was

21 *S'ezd prepodavatelei russkogo iazyka i istorii*, 18.

22 *Ibid.*

23 "Secret note from the overseer of the Vil'na educational district Vol'f to the education minister Schwarz, March 19," 1908, *LVI A*, f. 567, ap. 26, b. 800a, l. 18.

24 Turtsevich was born in Minsk Province into the family of an Orthodox priest. He was a graduate of the University of St. Petersburg's Faculty of History and Philology. In 1872, he began his pedagogical career at the Shavli Boys' Gymnasium, later teaching at the First State Boys' Gymnasium in Vil'na. As well as teaching material on the history of the Northwest Region, he also prepared and published a separate biography of the Vil'na governor-general Murav'ev, a document anthology on the administration of the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the times of Catherine II, and in two separate papers, he presented a biography of Catherine II and the situation of the peasantry under the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

25 Arsenii Turtsevich, *Khrestomatiia po istorii Zapadnoi Rossii. Uchebnoe posobie dlia uchenikov starshikh uchebnykh zavedenii* (Vilnius: Tipografiia A.G. Syrkina, 1892), IV.

necessary (Turtsevich recalled governor-general Murav'ev's competition for writing a history textbook for the Northwest Region). Turtsevich's Russian history textbook, compiled in 1894, was widely used in both secondary schools in the Vil'na educational district, as well as in professional educational institutions (for example, in teacher training colleges); it also continued Ustrialov's concept of the history of the Northwest Region and featured a particularly strong anti-Polish discourse.<sup>26</sup> Turtsevich stated quite unambiguously that after the Union of Lublin, Poles had started to forcibly impose a foreign, Catholic, faith in the "Russian lands," along with a foreign culture, adding that the Polish nobility was engaging in the harsh oppression of Russian peasants.<sup>27</sup>

In September 1906, some of the Polish intelligentsia together with Vil'na mayor Michał Węśławski (1905–16), who represented the interests of Polish political parties in the Second State Duma, appealed to Vol'f, the overseer of the Vil'na educational district, asking him to remove from the curriculum Turtsevich's textbooks in which "the religious and national feelings of Polish pupils were being hurt."<sup>28</sup> However, the Overseers' Board, led by Vol'f, discussed this request but, nevertheless, decided to retain Turtsevich's textbooks because "they contained nothing that could insult the Poles."<sup>29</sup> Incidentally, the author of these textbooks, who was also invited to participate in the meeting of the Overseers' Board, promised to "change some sentenc-

26 For more about the teaching of history in seminaries, see: Vilma Žaltauskaitė, "Pasaulietinių dalykų – rusų kalbos, literatūros, tėvynės istorijos ir geografijos – mokymas dvasininkų rengimo įstaigose (XIX amžiaus antroji pusė)," *Archivum Lithuanicum* 15 (2013): 293–330.

27 Note that Turtsevich further developed his ideas later on. In 1911, (to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the abolition of serfdom), he prepared a separate paper in which he sought to prove how harshly the Polish *szlachta* oppressed Russian peasants during the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. For more about the anti-Polish discourse in the Russian public and academic discourses, see: Aleksandr Filiushkin, "Vgliadyvaias' v oskolki razbitogo zerkala: rossiiskii diskurs Velikogo Kniazhestva Litovskogo," *Ab Imperio* 4 (2004): 566.

28 "Secret note from the overseer of the Vil'na educational district Vol'f," 18. Andrzej Brochocki, a pupil of the First State Gymnasium in Vil'na, wrote in his memoirs that some of the pupils from the Vilnius Governorate were studying history at home. Therefore, the students compared information learned at home and during Turcevich's history lessons: "Obviously, none of the students dared to discuss with the teacher. However, after school, students of Polish descent broadly and with and outrage discussed the teacher's false interpretation of events of Polish history." See Andrzej Brochocki, *Na przełomie dwóch epok. Zapiski obszarnika*, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Oddział Rękopisów, inv. nr. 9874 III, s. 53.

29 "Secret note from the overseer of the Vil'na educational district Vol'f," 18.

es and expressions that could cause misunderstandings”<sup>30</sup> in the next edition of the Russian history textbook, but there is no evidence he actually kept this promise. Turtsevich’s textbooks were published in several editions with no indication that any amendments were made, and they were used in state schools across the Vil’na educational district.

The local authorities were obviously afraid of introducing changes into the history curriculum. At the congress of Russian language and history teachers held in March 1907, teachers suggested reorganizing Russian history teaching in the first through third grades at gymnasiums. Based on the history curriculum in use at the time, the history of the east was taught in third grade; teachers at the congress suggested teaching this in the fourth grade, and instead presenting a systematic history of Russia in the first three grades. According to Maximilian Kossakovskii, a history teacher at the Second Boys’ Gymnasium in Vil’na, most pupils only attended three grades, so upon leaving school, they would have a more systemic knowledge of Russian history; other teachers at the congress backed his opinion.<sup>31</sup> However, the Overseers’ Board did not approve of even this suggestion, demanding strict adherence to the history curriculum confirmed by the Ministry of Education. It even considered that a stress on the Russian aspect of the history and geography of the Northwest Region could have the effect of inciting separatism. According to a circular distributed on September 28, 1907 by Vol’f as overseer of the Vil’na educational district, the history of the Northwest Region had to be taught “within the framework of the general Russian history course, abiding by strict principles of objectivity and science.”<sup>32</sup> After 1905, the local education administration devoted more attention to teaching methodologies for this subject than to the conceptualization of the history of the Northwest Region, which had, in effect, remained unchanged since the 1830s. The administration paid particular attention to different visual instruments and their emotional impact.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> *S’ezd prepodavatelei russkogo iazyka i istorii*, 23.

<sup>32</sup> “Protokol zasedaniia popechitel’skogo soveta pri upravlenii Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga 28 sentiabria 1907 goda: Po rezoliutsii popechitelia Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga,” in *S’ezd prepodavatelei russkogo iazyka i istorii*, 36.

## The Significance of Visual Tools and Their Emotional Impact

The Vil'na educational district administration had paid attention to visual propaganda before. As Jolita Mulevičiūtė has noted, in 1885, Nikolai Sergiievskii, the overseer of the Vil'na educational district (1869–99), established a commission, which was made up of the directors of Vil'na gymnasia, folk schools of the Vil'na province, and the Vil'na Teachers' Institute; it was charged with organizing public readings with slides (glass plates with illustrations that were hand-drawn or printed using the decalcomania technique).<sup>33</sup> These regular popular illustrated lectures, mostly on history and geography, were held in the sports hall of the Second Boys' Gymnasium. Schoolteachers introduced listeners to the climate, nature, and customs of the lands on the empire's peripheries (Central Asia, the Crimea, the Caucasus, Transcaucasia) and foreign countries (France, China, India). However, according to the commission's activity reports, narratives about the tsars and their heroic deeds attracted the most interest.

In 1909, Emelian Pravosudovich, the director of a private boys' gymnasium in Vil'na who participated in the commission formed by the Vil'na educational district to propose measures to improve the moral, intellectual, and physical development of pupils, argued the following: “the stronger and more vibrantly important historical events that demonstrate our national heroes' chivalry and love of the Fatherland (*otechestvo*) are presented to students, the easier it will be to have an impact on a young person's heart. On hearing lively historical accounts about our national heroes (*natsional'nyie geroi*) who nobly served in the name of their Fatherland, a young boy will subconsciously orient his future activities in the same direction, even while still at his school desk.”<sup>34</sup> This was why Pravosudovich, like most school headmasters and teachers from the Vil'na educational district who took part in this commission, suggested devoting particular attention to various visual methods for teaching history. On November 11, 1909, immediately

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33 See: Jolita Mulevičiūtė, “Kova dėl vaizduotės: vizualinė Rusijos imperijos propaganda Šiaurės vakarų krašte,” *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis* 38 (2014): 129–47.

34 *Protokoly zasedanii komissii*, 81.

after the end of the commission's work, a separate museum of visual teaching material was established under the Kovna Schools Directorate (Muzei nagliadnykh posobii grafa M.I. Platova pri Kovenskoii direkcii narodnykh uchilishch) at the initiative of the board of the Vil'na educational district. This collection included historical and geographical teaching material illustrating "the cultural life of the Russian nation" and "the richness of nature in the Russian Empire."<sup>35</sup>

Between 1905 and 1915, the board of the Vil'na educational district as well as teachers who frequently participated in the congresses previously mentioned in this chapter, suggested devoting more attention to integrating the subjects of history, geography, and Russian literature. It seems they hoped to use this interdisciplinarity to achieve better results. Vissarion Alekseev, the overseer of the Vil'na educational district (1914–15), paid particular attention to the integration of history, geography, and Russian literature. He instructed state gymnasium teachers to prepare integrated history and Russian language and history and geography curricula.<sup>36</sup>

At the congress of teachers of Russian language and literature held in Vil'na in 1908, teachers were encouraged to devote special attention not just to the historical-literary importance of works of Russian literature, but also to the ideological, aesthetic, historical-social, and especially national (*natsional'naia*) significance of works of fiction.<sup>37</sup> In 1910 in the official pedagogical publication *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebno-m okruge*, Adrian Krukovskii, a Russian language teacher at the First State Boys' Gymnasium and the private V. M. Prozorova Girls' Gymnasium, both in Vil'na, shared his experience on how to effectively use Rus-

35 By 1911, the museum already had 1,928 different kinds of visual material. It had collected historical maps and school atlases prepared by Dobriakov, descriptions of the nations of the Russian Empire by Ianchuk, and Russian geographical images by Borzov. The museum was not particularly popular with schoolchildren: only fifty-nine schoolchildren visited it in 1910, 129 in 1911, fifteen in 1912, ninety-nine in 1913, and seventy-eight in 1914. For more information, see *Katalog muzeia uchebnykh nagliadnykh posobii grafa M.I. Platova pri Kovenskoii direkcii narodnykh uchilishch* (Kaunas: Gubernskaia tipografia, 1911).

36 See *Materialy po organizatsii shkol'nogo obuchenii na nachalakh nauchnoi pedagogiki* (Vilnius: Tipografia A.G. Syrkina, 1915).

37 *Protokoly zasedanii komissii prepodavatelei russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga, proiskhodivshikh 2–9 ianvaria 1908 goda v g. Vil'ne* (Vilnius: Gubernskaia tipografia, 1908), 15.

sian literature when teaching history. He suggested using works by Russian writers because “they are so good at presenting historical events, they become very close to the pupils’ hearts.” In this way, Krukovskii recommended using works by Aleksandr Pushkin to cover the times of Peter I; the work of Alexei Tolstoi to illustrate the times of Ivan IV; and the poetry of Vasilii Zhukovskii and Mikhail Lermontov to explore the events of 1812.<sup>38</sup> He also suggested paying particular attention to the commemoration of the anniversaries of the birth and death of Nikolai Gogol (1809–52), the Russian national (*natsional’nyi*) writer who declared “national unity” based on common statehood (*obshaia gosudarstvennost’*) and used standard Russian (*obshche-russkii iazyk*) in his work.<sup>39</sup> A separate resolution regarding the integration of history and geography was passed at the congress of teachers of the physical and natural sciences held in February and March 1908; it was approved by the Overseers’ Board under the board of the Vil’na educational district.

Sergei Medvedev, a history and geography teacher at the Vil’na Teachers’ Institute and the Vil’na Jewish Teachers’ Institute and one of the key participants in the meeting, stressed that a great deal of attention should be paid not just to Russian history, but to Russian geography as well, “so that the future son of the fatherland (*otechestvo*) is well aware of all the fields of modern life.”<sup>40</sup> That is why Medvedev, whose opinion was supported by other teachers at the congress, suggested dividing the geography course into two parts: physical geography and political-economic geography, and placing geography in the history-philology faculties. However, congress attendees insisted on devoting time to school excursions, a relatively new means of teaching history and geography.<sup>41</sup>

38 Adrian Krukovskii, “Otechestvennye pisateli v narodnoi shkole,” *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* 1 (1910): 22–23.

39 Adrian Krukovskii, “Gogol’ kak natsional’nyi russkii pisatel’,” *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* 5 (1908): 107–09.

40 *S’ezd prepodavatelei matematiki, fiziki, estetstvovedeniia i geografii*, 39.

41 For more about the excursions, see the chapter by Jolita Mulevičiūtė in this volume.

## School Excursions

In state schools in the Russian Empire starting in 1900–01, excursions became an increasingly important pedagogical tool. At the time, the Ministry of Education published circulars on the organization of excursions. The board of the Vil'na educational district only started paying more attention to school excursions in 1910, when it put out its own separate publication providing information on how to organize school excursions.<sup>42</sup>

At the congress of teachers of the natural and physical sciences held in February and March 1908, another topic of discussion was how much attention should be paid to “nearby” (*blizhnie*) versus “distant” (*dal'nie*) excursions, that is, those beyond the boundaries of the Northwest Region. Most teachers, including even Turtsevich, were in favor of excursions within the financial reach of students, which meant trips to nearby destinations, such as museums and archives, Orthodox churches, castles, and other architectural monuments in the Northwest Region. For example, in 1901, Turtsevich organized an excursion for the pupils of the First Boys' Gymnasium in Vil'na to Troki. During the excursion, he explained that there were many Orthodox churches, and also that Catholicism only started becoming more established during the seventeenth century in Troki. Until then, Russians had made up the majority of the population in the town, and Russian had been the state language. That is why he concluded that since its founding, Troki had “more Russian than Polish characteristics.”<sup>43</sup>

At this same congress, a resolution was passed requiring the Vil'na Pedagogical Museum (*Vilenskii pedagogicheskii muzei*) to prepare a separate catalogue of local points of interest and commence with archaeological excavation work.<sup>44</sup> In 1909, at the initiative of the board of the Vil'na educational district, Evdokim Romanov, the chairman of the Northwest

42 *Opisanie ekskursii uchaschchikhsia v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge za 1910 god. Po porucheniiu upravleniia Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga* (Vilnius: Tipografia Iosifa Zavadzkogo, 1911).

43 Arsenii Turtsevich, *Trokskii zamok (istoricheskii ocherk)* (Vilnius: Tipografia A.G. Syrkina, 1901), 19.

44 *S'ezd prepodavatelei russkogo iazyka i istorii*, 18; *S'ezd prepodavatelei matematiki, fiziki, estetstvovedeniia i geografii*, 56.

Region's branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, prepared separate recommendations to state secondary school teachers on how to organize archaeological digs in the Northwest Region.<sup>45</sup>

Some of the teachers who worked in the Vil'na educational district and some of its board members, however, were more in favor of distant excursions beyond the borders of the northwest provinces. Aleksandr Vrutsevich was the first to express this kind of opinion at the congress. He was a geography teacher at the Vil'na Real (Practical) School and a member of the Russian nationalist organization the Russian Borderland Union (*Russkii okrainnyi soiuz*).<sup>46</sup> He stated that schoolchildren should visit distant parts of the Russian Empire, and called on the teachers organizing these kinds of excursions to stress "how the situation of each corner of the empire changed once it became part of the Russian Empire, i.e., to illustrate the cultural mission that the imperial Russian government was performing in the land."<sup>47</sup> His opinion was supported by Semion Kovaliuk, the director of a private boys' gymnasium in Vil'na and chairman of the Russian nationalist organization, the Peasant (*Krest'ianin*), who participated in the commission to offer opportunities to accelerate the moral, intellectual, and physical development of students, which was formed by the board of the Vil'na educational district. Kovaliuk was convinced that distant excursions "would give pupils the opportunity to test their knowledge of geography, history, archaeology, and ethnography acquired from books, and allow them to get a better sense of the grandeur and might of the whole Russian Empire."<sup>48</sup> That is why when

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45 "Kratkie ukazaniia dlia soversheniia arkheologicheskikh ekskursii srednimi uchebnymi zavedeniiami Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga. Zapiska chlena vremennoi komissii po ustroistvu i upravleniiu Vilenskoi publichnoi bibliotekoi i muzeem E. Romanova," in *Protokoly zasedanii komissii*, 158.

46 Vrutsevich graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of St. Petersburg. Between 1905 and 1915, he was the editor of the periodical publication *Krest'ianin*. In an article in 1907 devoted to the opening of the Vil'na branch of the Russian Borderland Union (Vilenskii okrainni soiuz), Vrutsevich described the activity guidelines for the Russian population in the Northwest Region as follows: "State-wide matters are of secondary importance to us because with our weak local forces, we cannot expect to have any serious influence on one or another decision. We have a special task: to defend the state's interests here, as it is in this way that we can serve state-wide (*obsbchegosudarstvennym*) interests." Aleksandr Vrutsevich, "Otkrytie Vilenskogo otdela 'Russkogo okrainnogo soiuz'a,'" *Krest'ianin* 13–14 (1907): 195. I am grateful to Vytautas Petronis for the reference to this periodical publication.

47 *S'ezd prepodavatelei matematiki, fiziki, estetstovovedeniia i geografii*, 40.

48 *Protokoly zasedanii komissii*, 8. Kovaliuk was a graduate of the Vil'na Teachers' Institute. In 1912, he was

editing *Zor'ka* (Morning Star, 1905–12), the only periodical publication in Russian for children, for the Vil'na educational district, Kovaliuk presented visual material from the internal provinces of the Russian Empire alone.<sup>49</sup>

Grigorii Levitskii, the overseer of the Vil'na educational district (1908–12), also realized the importance of school excursions to distant locations. In 1910, he appealed to the directors of state boys' secondary schools, urging them to organize excursions to Siberia and the Caucasus. Students' parents paid for these excursions, and the Vil'na educational district helped negotiate a discount for train tickets. Levitskii was certain that “by familiarizing themselves with such far-off parts of the Russian Empire, their natural surroundings, the everyday life and customs of the local population, youths would be able to feel the whole majesty of the Fatherland (*otechestvo*), which would encourage them to love their fatherland even more, and work for the benefit of the Fatherland.”<sup>50</sup> However, Levitskii's proposed school excursions to Vladivostok and Murmansk never took place due to a lack of participation. On his orders, an excursion to Turkestan did eventually take place in 1911, thanks to the efforts of Sergei Medvedev, the director of the Kovna Boys' Gymnasium, who managed to persuade only thirty-four pupils from the whole Vil'na educational district to go on the school trip.

It is difficult to say what influence this excursion and others like it actually had on students' views of the Russian Empire. However, one participant of the Turkestan excursion, a seventh-grade student named Georgii Archipovich from the Pinsk Real (Practical) School, shared these impressions:

Before the trip, I had almost no understanding of what Turkestan, or the southeast part of the Russian Empire in general, was. Now I can imagine

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elected chairman of the Vil'na Russian Nationalist Union (Vilenskii russkii natsional'nyi soiuz). On April 18, 1912, Kovaliuk and other members of Russian nationalist organizations were received by the education minister Kasso. During the meeting, Kovaliuk drew the minister's attention to the fact that the Catholic clergy in the Northwest Region were seeking to teach religion in schools in Polish, thereby “polonizing” Belorussians, for whom religion had to be taught in Russian.

49 For example, the magazine *Zor'ka* featured illustrations with captions such as: “View over Volga, Tver', Kazan'.”

50 Circular published by the overseer of the Vil'na educational district, Levitskii, to the directors of boys' gymnasiums in the Vil'na educational district, November 19, 1910, *LVI A*, f. 567, ap. 1, b. 1856, l. 3.

just how large our great Fatherland (*nashe otechestvo*) actually is, how beautiful the Volga and the Caucasus are, and how desolate the natural surroundings of Turkestan are. Having visited all these parts of the Fatherland, my fatherland (*moia rodina*) has become especially dear to me.<sup>51</sup>

While we cannot determine whether these thoughts authentically conveyed what he felt, we can say with some confidence that his impressions, printed in an official publication, complied with the narrative promoted by the officials behind these excursions.

However, the Vil'na educational district administration had the goal of "correcting" the image of the "motherland" in a way that would better suit its needs. For example, this was done with Vil'na, where some of the students or their families originated. As Darius Staliūnas has noted, in the Russian discourse, Vil'na was undoubtedly treated as a Russian city early on: the origins of its name were Russian, Russians made up a significant percentage of the population since its very founding, and Eastern Christianity was established there first.<sup>52</sup> That is why, when visiting Vil'na, the pupils at boys' and girls' gymnasiums and teacher training colleges had to visit the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, along with other Orthodox churches and the monuments erected in honor of Murav'ev and Catherine II.<sup>53</sup> Visiting the Murav'ev museum was compulsory for students and future teachers, as was the tour of the Vil'na Public Library (*Vilenskaia publichnaia biblioteka*). It was at the library that students were shown legal documents from the period of the "Lithuanian-Russian state," written in "Russian, not Polish,"<sup>54</sup> giving further credence to the idea of Russian cultural domination in Vil'na and the general

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51 *Opisanie ekskursii vospitannikov srednikh uchebnykh zavedenii Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga v Turkestan letom 1911 goda* (Kaunas: Gubernskaia tipografiia, 1911), 178. Sergei Medvedev, the director of the Kovna boys' gymnasium, organized this excursion. Forty-three students from various boys' schools in the Vil'na educational district took part in this excursion. As in other cases, the authorities of the education district did not provide any financial support for it and only took care of discount for train ticket.

52 Staliūnas, "Poland and Russia?," 77.

53 For example, in 1910, forty-one school excursions were organized in the Vil'na educational district. Of these, twenty-eight named Vil'na as their destination.

54 A publication on school excursions from 1910 featured a detailed plan of what sights should be visited in Vil'na and, accordingly, the "narrative" about these sights that should be presented. See *Opisanie ekskursii uchashchikhsia v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge*, 119–22.

“Lithuanian–Russian state” promoted in history and geography textbooks. Thus, the local education administration, as well as teachers who organized “Russian” tours around Vil’na,<sup>55</sup> sent the younger generation the message that the Northwest Region and Vil’na, “its capital,” was not just a part of the Russian Empire, but also a part of Russian national territory.

### State Holidays and Commemorations

A “Russian” celebration to mark the birth of Nicholas II, son of Alexander II and the heir to the throne, was organized in 1868 at the initiative of Pompei Batiushkov, the overseer of the Vil’na educational district (1868–69). Pupils from Vil’na gymnasiums and rabbinical and folk schools (it is claimed that around a thousand schoolchildren participated) were invited to Antakalnis forest to celebrate with food and the singing of Russian songs.<sup>56</sup> After 1905, seeking to nurture patriotic feelings and respect for the ruling dynasty, the local education administration also encouraged active participation by pupils in the tricentennial of the beginning of the Romanov dynasty and commemorations marking the events of 1812, the Battle of Poltava, and the abolition of serfdom. In order to encourage their participation in anniversaries and public commemorations, the board of the Vil’na educational district sought to prepare local teachers ideologically by sending out separate instructions and encouraging teachers to organize suitable historical publications. In this way, at the initiative of the local education administration, the afore-mentioned teachers Orlovskii and Kudrinskii both wrote about events during the 1812 war in Grodna Province and in Vil’na; Dmitrii Dovgiallo, a history teacher in several state schools across Vil’na, wrote about the importance of the Battle of Poltava.<sup>57</sup>

55 For example, Flavian Dobrianskii, who initially worked as a history and geography teacher at the Vil’na Teachers’ Institute and was later appointed director of the Vil’na Jewish Teachers’ Institute, prepared three “Russian” guides to Vil’na. In 1882, he compiled a separate account about the Manuscript Department at the Vil’na Public Library in Church Slavonic and Russian.

56 See Vytautas Petronis, “Vilnius ir vilniečiai: miesto ir bendruomenių kaitos bruožai XIX a. antrosios pusės oficialiojoje spaudoje,” *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis* 1 (2016): 43–44.

57 Evstafii Orlovskii, *Grodnenskaia guberniia v 1812 godu (istoricheskii ocherk)* (Grodna: Gubernskaia

In order to ensure the deeper emotional impact of participating in state holidays and at commemorations of historic events, local teachers organized thematic excursions and illustrated lectures, taught patriotic songs, and encouraged students to write historical poems, organize theatrical performances, and participate in military parades. For example, as part of the celebrations marking the tricentennial of the Romanov dynasty, pupils at the First Boys' Gymnasium in Vil'na prepared a theatrical performance called "Life for the Tsar." At other state schools in the Vil'na educational district, six thematic lectures were organized using 176 slides, and a choir of three hundred children from different state schools across Vil'na was formed and sang songs, such as *Lord, Love the Tsar* and *Glory, Glory to the Tsar*, set to music by Mikhail Glinka. Pupils from the Keidany two-grade primary school wrote poems: "To Mark 21 February 1913" and "To Mark 300 Years of the Rule of the Romanov Dynasty."<sup>58</sup> Pupils from state schools in the Vil'na educational district went to Moscow to commemorate the events of 1812. One of the participants, Boris Chrypov, an eighth-grade pupil from the Bobruisk Boys' Gymnasium, shared his impressions: "During these days, I recalled the words of Karamzin: he who does not know Moscow, cannot know Russia. There are so many emotions linked to the Kremlin, its walls, and the Orthodox churches; this is where the Russian state emerged, this is the treasury of the Russian nation's historic treasures."<sup>59</sup> The feelings of this pupil, which were printed in *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge*, also reflected the central and local administration goals regarding how students should feel when participating in commemorations.

The speeches made by teachers marking these celebrations also had to echo the government's intentions. Iosif Iashchinskii, a history teacher at the Vil'na Real (Practical) School, stated: "The year 1812 was a year of glo-

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tipografii, 1912); Fedot Kudrinskii, *Vil'na v 1812 godu: v pamiat' stoletnei godovshchiny Otechestvennoi voiny* (Vilnius: izdanie upravleniia Vilenskogo uchebnogo okruga, 1912); Dmitrii Dovgiallo, *Petr Velikii dlia Zapadnoi Rusi: na pamiat' o 200-letii Poltavskoi pobedy* (Vilnius: Russkii pochini, 1909).

58 *1613–1913: Iubileinye torzhestva v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* (Vilnius: Tipografii Russkii pochini, 1913), 15, 22, 377.

59 "Vpechatleniia prisutstvovavshego na iubileinykh torzhestvakh v gorode Moskve v avguste 1912 goda," *Narodnoe obrazovanie v Vilenskom uchebnom okruge* 1 (1913): 28.

ry for Russia, while for Poles it was a year of failures and unfulfilled, empty dreams. During the War for the Fatherland, all Russians united, and this unity gave them the strong moral resolve to fight against foreign enemies who tried to suppress the Russian nation's national feelings (*natsional'noe chuvstvo russkogo naroda*).<sup>60</sup> In marking the tricentennial of the Romanov dynasty, Makarii Sidorenko, a history and geography teacher at the boys' gymnasium in Gomel', declared forthrightly in his speech: "In the age of Catherine II, the borders of the Russian Empire finally reached their natural limits," thereby again claiming that the expansion of the Russian Empire was the logical outcome of the Romanov dynasty's empowerment and defense of the Russian state.<sup>61</sup>

Students also had to recognize that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was as much a Russian state as the Duchy of Muscovy, whose successful "conglomeration" with other parts of the Russian Empire was interrupted by the Poles; they did so by writing essays on appropriate themes. For example, as part of the celebrations marking tricentennial, state school pupils from the Vil'na educational district wrote essays with titles such as "The Importance of the Russian Tsars in Liberating the Western Slavs," "Russian and Polish Relations in the Times of Mikhail Fiodorovich and Aleksey Mikhailovich Romanov," "Russian and Polish Relations during the Reigns of the First Romanovs," "The Patriotic Reign of Elizabeth," and "Alexander II: Tsar-Liberator and Tsar-Peacemaker."<sup>62</sup> In one school essay, Boleslav Zubritskii, an eighth-grade pupil from the Vil'na Real (Practical) School, claimed: "The addition of the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to the remainder of the Empire was a necessary step for the Russian government, for ever since the Union of Lublin, the Poles repressed the Russians, the true inhabitants of these lands."<sup>63</sup>

60 "The Meaning of the Patriotic War of 1812: A lecture given by the Vil'na Realschule teacher I. Iashchinskii, October 22, 1912," *LVI A*, f. 567, ap. 1, b. 1995, l. 21.

61 "A celebratory speech to mark three hundred years of Romanov rule made by the Gomel' Boys' Gymnasium history teacher, M. Sidorenko, February 21, 1913," *LVI A*, f. 567, ap. 1, b. 2161, l. 5.

62 *1613-1913: Iubileinye torzhestva*, 30.

63 "Russko-pol'skie otnoshenia pri pervykh Romanovykh (uchenik VIII klassa Vilenskogo real'nogo uchilishcha B. Zubritskii)," in *1613-1913: Iubileinye torzhestva*, 287.

## Schoolchildren's Societies

After 1905, Polish, Lithuanian, and, to a certain extent, Belorussian, activists worked intensely with the younger generation and tried to create national education systems using teaching measures that could only be used in illegal schools or in educational society schools; promoting their respective versions of history, and organized societies of teachers and students.<sup>64</sup> The use of voluntary societies to influence students was also hastily adopted by local Russian nationalist organizations in cooperation with the board of the Vil'na educational district.

In 1910, when the Polish youth sports organization Sokół was officially closed,<sup>65</sup> the Russian Social Organization (Russkoe obshchestvennoe sobranie) founded its own youth sports organization: Russkii sokol (Russian Falcon). The board of the Vil'na educational district also devoted quite a lot of attention to this organization. On March 15, 1913, Alexei Ostroumov, the overseer of the Vil'na educational district (1912–15), participated in a public display of the organization's military activities. There were also gymnastics exercises accompanied by Russian patriotic songs sung in the sports hall of the Second Boys' Gymnasium in Vil'na. In 1913, this organization was chaired by Mikhail Pavlovskii, the founder of a private boys' gymnasium in Vil'na.<sup>66</sup>

Based on the number of its members, which did not exceed a hundred, this youth sports organization lagged behind another school-age youth organization called Poteschnaia armia (The Happy Army), whose activities demonstrated a visible link between sports and state ideology.<sup>67</sup> This orga-

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64 The memoirs of graduates of State Boys' Gymnasiums of Vilna governorate often shows what students sought to resist the means of imperial loyalty by using various visual forms. Senior students used to damage their school uniforms that symbols of Russian imperial authority could not be seen on them. See A. Brochocki, *Na przelomie epok*, s. 49; Zygmunt Sielużycki, *Garść moich wspomnień*, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Oddział Rękopisów, inv.nr. 9852 III, s. 35.

65 The Polish youth sports organization Sokół was founded in Vil'na on November 11, 1905. The organization's board had a number of Polish National Democratic Party members.

66 *Otchiot Vilenskogo gimnasticheskogo obshchestva 'Sokol v Vil'ne' za 1913 god* (Vilnius: Tipografia I. Notesa i S. Shvailikha), 1914.

67 Vladimir Ekse, *Vilenskoe poteshnoe voisko ili gosudarevo delo, izlozhennoe voinskim iazykom zakonov i daiushchee otvety na vse voprosy ustroistva i obuchenii voiska po angliiskoi sisteme, no v dukhe Rosiiskom* (Vilnius: Tipolitografiiia T-va N. Matst, 1911). I am grateful to Vytautas Petronis for the reference to this text.

nization had its own militaristic elements: uniforms, a flag, and a pin with the inscription: “Fight for the Tsar and the Fatherland” (*Bor’ba za Tsaria i Otechestvo*). Also, in 1912, this organization of primary school pupils was chaired by General Fiodor Martson of the Vil’na military district, and its members were invited to join in a military parade organized to mark the Battle of Borodino.<sup>68</sup> According to the district inspector Aleksandr Pigulevskii, not only could this kind of youth element become “an accessory to the army,” but participation in the activities of such societies would encourage school children to “nurture love for the Fatherland and its ruler [*Rodine i ee Derzhavnomu Gosudariu*], on the foundations of a national education.”<sup>69</sup>

### Conclusions

After the revolution of 1905, neither the central government nor local education officials searched for methods to instill and ensure loyalty to the empire that were especially suited to the youth of the Northwest Region. General school subjects in the region such as history and geography were taught according to the same rules and employed the same teaching methods used in the internal provinces of the Russian Empire. For example, when teaching the history of the Northwest Region after 1905, it was basically Ustrialov’s conceptualization of Russian history from the 1830s that was taught; according to this narrative, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was considered as much a Russian state as the Duchy of Muscovy in terms of its structure and confessional and ethnic composition. A deeper knowledge of the “great Fatherland” had to be fostered through excursions organized for pupils and teachers, and the board of the Vil’na educational district oriented these educational trips more frequently toward St. Petersburg, Moscow, and more distant parts of the Russian Empire; “local” excursions also had

68 Russkii [?], “Obozrenie sobytii i okrainnaia zhizn’. Vil’na,” *Okrainny Rosii* 18 (1912): 271–72.

69 In 1913 and in the summer of 1914, special gymnastics courses were organized for state gymnasium teachers at the initiative of Pigulevskii. Aleksandr Pigulevskii, *Fizicheskoe vospitaniie i zadachi kratkosrochnykh gimnasticheskikh kursov dlia uchitelei* (Vilnius: Tipografia A.G. Syrkina, 1914), 5.

a purpose: “to demonstrate the Russian nation’s domination, cultural importance, and influence,” for example, in Vil’na. Thus, children were given the message that the Northwest Region was not just a part of the Romanov Empire; it was actually a part of Russian “national territory.”

During the events of 1905 and later, various non-dominant ethnic groups attracted the attention of members of the local education administration as a result of what was, in their view, an incorrect interpretation of the Northwest Region’s history. However, as the discussion of Turtsevich’s textbook in 1906 illustrates, the Vil’na educational district administration could only “hear” the complaints from non-Russians but saw no need to make any changes, especially since, in most cases, the active assistants of the board of the Vil’na educational district were local teachers. Attempts by certain teachers to devote more attention to the history and geography of the Northwest Region were rare. Furthermore, any desire to deepen awareness of the historical past and the natural resources of their surroundings had to be conveyed only as a stage in learning about the “great Fatherland.” However, in the view of the education administration, even accentuating the Russian history and geography of the region might appear to have separatist potential.

There are almost no sources that would allow us to understand what the results of this indoctrination actually were. One thing that is clear, however, is that the means described in this chapter may very well have had the opposite effect. By devoting more attention to the *Russian* history and geography of the Northwest Region in his lessons at Nesvizh teacher training college, the aforementioned Kudrinskii encouraged his pupils to take an interest in Belorussian folklore and analyze Belorussians’ way of life and customs. In his view, these kinds of “ethnographic studies” were intended to convince future teachers that, in terms of their origins, “language,” and ethnography, Belorussians were simply a part of the Russian nation.<sup>70</sup> However, as Konstantin Mitskievich, a student at the Nesvizh teacher

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<sup>70</sup> Kudrinskii published a paper in 1904 entitled “Belorussians: A Historic Outline,” where he explained that, based on their origins and way of life, Belorussians were part of the Russian nation. He viewed Belorussian as a dialect of the Russian language.

training college, wrote, collecting Belorussian songs and stories quite conversely inspired him to take an interest in the Belorussian language and reminded him that “Belorussian was precisely the language of my ancestors.”<sup>71</sup> Mitskievich (the future Jakub Kolas, 1882–1956) began to write poems and stories in Belorussian within the walls of this training college, and he soon became one of the most active figures in the Belorussian national movement. Thus, employees in the imperial Russian education sector who opposed giving greater attention to the history and culture of the Northwest Region were at least partially right; this attention had a potential side-effect: provoking non-Russian loyalties.

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71 Jakub Kolas, “Moia avtobiografia (1928 g.),” in *Izbrannyye sochineniia* (Minsk: Nauka, 1983), 10.