



Copyright © 2026 by Cherkas Global University
All rights reserved.
Published in the USA

European Journal of Contemporary Education
E-ISSN 2305-6746
2026. 15(3): 573-582
DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2026.3.573
<https://ejce.cherkasgu.press>

IMPORTANT NOTICE! Any copying, reproduction, distribution, republication (in whole or in part), or otherwise commercial use of this work in violation of the author's rights will be prosecuted in accordance with international law. The use of hyperlinks to the work will not be considered copyright infringement.



The Evolution of Educational Policy in Volhynia in the First Third of the 19th Century: Between Szlachta Autonomy and Imperial Control

Oksana Markevych ^a, Andrii V. Shevchuk ^{b, *}, Sergey I. Degtyarev ^{c, d}

^a Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, Zhytomyr, Ukraine

^b Zhytomyr Polytechnic State University, Zhytomyr, Ukraine

^c Cherkas Global University, Houston, TX, USA

^d Sumy State University, Sumy, Ukraine

Abstract

This article presents a comprehensive study of educational policy in Volhynia within the Russian Empire during the first third of the 19th century. It further develops the conclusion that in the annexed territories, a well-established Polish-language educational network of various types and levels had emerged, which rested upon szlachta traditions, independent financing, and authority among the local elite. Drawing on archival sources, the study specifies the charitable activities of the Polish community in the sphere of education. In the conditions of lost statehood, this philanthropy served as a means of preserving the national identity of the Polish szlachta. A particular role in the development of this system was played by patriotically minded figures (Adam Czartoryski and Tadeusz Czacki), who rallied nationally conscious compatriots around themselves to ensure that, in the absence of statehood, the younger generation would not lose its connection to Polish culture and education. Using the example of land surveyors' service, the article demonstrates how the state authorities attempted to use the established educational system for training personnel for the civil service.

After the suppression of the November Uprising, imperial policy shifted toward a course of systematic Russification: the closure of Polish schools, the prohibition of Polish as the language of instruction, and the tightening of control over students. It is concluded that educational policy in Volhynia evolved from tolerance to the deliberate dismantling of szlachta education, and that education itself served not only as a tool of cultural reproduction but also as an arena of political confrontation between the imperial center and the regional elite.

Keywords: Volhynia Governorate, educational policy, nobility, civil service, Polonization/ Russification of education, national identity.

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: shevchuk.istor@gmail.com (A. Shevchuk),
s.degtyarev@yur.sumdu.edu.ua (S.I. Degtyarev)

1. Introduction

The development of education must correspond to the needs of society and reach a level capable of addressing the challenges facing the state at each stage of its evolution. In this context, the development of education in Volhynia during the first third of the 19th century is of particular interest. These territories became part of the Russian Empire as a result of the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which led to a clash of mutually exclusive interests between the imperial system and the Polish population. On the one hand, the new authorities, seeking to consolidate their influence over the recently annexed territories, regarded education as an instrument of state policy: through schooling, they attempted to cultivate loyal officials, promote the Russian language and culture, and gradually integrate the region into the broader imperial space. On the other hand, the local Polish szlachta (*the Polish and Lithuanian noble estate*), which retained key economic and cultural positions, used the network of educational institutions to preserve its traditions, language, and religion and to raise a new generation of the Polish elite. The latter required the search for alternative sources of funding, since the supreme authorities were not interested in investing in the support of a disloyal population. This confrontation between two educational strategies left a profound imprint on the development of schooling in the region and determined its distinctive character, unlike that of other regions. The first third of the 19th century is particularly relevant, when the state authorities pursued a policy of cooperation with local elites and were tolerant of their establishment of Polish educational institutions on the condition of self-financing. Our task is to analyze the political conditions for the development of education in Volhynia in the first third of the 19th century, to identify the spheres of interaction and confrontation between the imperial and Polish educational strategies in this region, and to elucidate the role of szlachta charity as the main financial factor in the development of educational institutions.

2. Materials and methods

The main sources used in this study are normative legal acts published in the Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire. It has been determined that the specific features of the formation of education in Volhynia were defined at the legislative level. These sources indicate what the authorities sought to achieve, and they also proved rich in descriptions of events and the reasoning of their authors for the improvement of education ([PSZRI, 1830](#)).

Materials from the fonds of the State Archive of Zhytomyr Oblast were also examined, in particular Fonds 71 (Directorate of Public Schools of Volhynia Gubernia), Fonds 160 (Volhynia Board of Public Charity), and Fonds 263 (Volhynia Gubernia Land Surveyor) ([SAZHR](#)). The sources of Fonds 71 reflect the activities of the Directorate of Public Schools of Volhynia Gubernia, established on the basis of the Tsar's decree of 26 January 1803 and placed under the authority of the Ministry of National Education. The Directorate's competence included all state, parish, and private schools, gymnasiums, and boarding schools operating within the gubernia – thus, it served as the primary agent of state policy in the field of public education at the local level. The wide range of the Directorate's responsibilities determined the diverse nature of the materials preserved in the fonds. These include circulars of the Ministry of National Education, records of current office work, including financial reports of educational institutions, correspondence regarding the purchase of books and teaching aids, documentation on cooperation with other state institutions, records on the personnel of teachers and students, statistical data on the number of educational institutions and student enrollment, files on the establishment of new schools and boarding schools, and the like. In total, the inventory of Fonds 71 comprises 1,331 storage units for the years 1805–1918, which allowed us not only to reconstruct the network of educational institutions of Volhynia Gubernia in the period under study, to trace the dynamics of its financial and material support, but also to identify specific mechanisms for the implementation of government educational policy at the regional level, in particular in cooperation with the local Polish szlachta. Prior to the ministerial reform, matters of educational development in the gubernias directly concerned the Boards of Public Charity, although this is more weakly reflected in Fonds 160 due to its poor state of preservation. The involvement of files from Fonds 263 of the Volhynia Gubernia Land Surveyor allowed us to trace the significance of professional education in the performance of land surveyors' duties.

The study employed both general historical and special historical methods. Universal methods such as analysis, synthesis, classification, periodization, and generalization allowed for important conclusions regarding the general trends and certain changes in the policy of the Russian Empire in the sphere of education in Volhynia Gubernia. The comparative method made it

possible to identify the specific features of Volhynia in comparison with other regions of the empire. The historical-typological method enabled an assessment of specific achievements in Volhynia Gubernia.

3. Discussion

The development of education in the three Ukrainian gubernias of the period under study, in particular the three Right-Bank gubernias – Kyiv, Podillia, and Volhynia – has been the focus of attention of contemporary Ukrainian and foreign scholars. The English Slavist David Saunders, examining education in the Russian Empire, emphasizes the decisive influence of the Ukrainian territories, which effectively borrowed European educational practices and thus differed from the internal gubernias of the empire. He argues that educational concepts were developed by natives of the Ukrainian territories, although he focuses more on the Kyivan-Mohyla Academy and the activities of Teofan Prokopovych, without singling out the Right-Bank region (Saunders, 1985). The French scholar Daniel Beauvois devotes special attention to education, which, in his view, was intended to facilitate the integration of the landless szlachta into the new political realities, softening the consequences of its declassing. He was the first to point out the specific features of Volhynia Gubernia among the three Right-Bank gubernias. Drawing more on St. Petersburg archives, Beauvois described the political intrigues surrounding the opening of Polish educational institutions, as well as the considerations of contemporary high-ranking officials, including M. Speransky, who explained the high intensity of educational institutions here by the "excessive inclination to learning" of the local szlachta (Beauvois, 2007). The research was further specified by the contemporary Rivne-based scholar Olena Pryshchepa, who introduced a significant number of local archival sources into scholarly circulation (Pryshchepa, 2020). Although her study concerns the educational and cultural environment of county towns and small towns of Right-Bank Ukraine, considerable attention is paid to Polish and Russian educational traditions. The peculiarities of the development of education in the Right-Bank region were examined by Ihor Fytsyk. He focused mainly on the reforms during the reign of Alexander I, when the szlachta was actively involved in the development and implementation of imperial educational policy (Fytsyk, 2016). Sergey Degtyarev also points out that in the Russian gubernias there was a negligible number of educational institutions, even those that trained teaching staff. By contrast, in the Ukrainian lands, where a number of authoritative and popular educational institutions had long been functioning, this issue was not so acute (Degtyarev, 2014). The imperial authorities, taking advantage of this, attempted to establish a supply of professional officials to civilian state institutions, which were created against the backdrop of the development of the educational system. However, the number of such officials still did not meet the needs of the state (Degtyarev, 2013: 41, 45).

It is worth highlighting the studies devoted to individual educational institutions and aspects of educational-political transformations. Considerable attention has been paid to the Volhynia Gymnasium (from 1819 – the Kremenets Lyceum), which in terms of the level of knowledge could be comparable to a university (Karlina, 2021). The Polish scholar Andrzej Shmyt examines the Kremenets Lyceum as a phenomenon of the Enlightenment model of schooling, with broad access to education for the Polish szlachta (Shmyt, 2012). *He was the first to draw attention to the Lyceum as an institution for training land surveyors – confirming our view of the desire of the imperial authorities to use the solid educational traditions established by the szlachta for the training of qualified officials, especially given that the Volhynia Gymnasium became the first educational institution in the Ukrainian lands to train land surveyors, while the only other institution in the Russian Empire with such a function was the Konstantinovskoye Land Surveying School (named after Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich), reorganized in 1819 into a college and in 1835 into the Land Surveying Institute.* Polish private philanthropy in the sphere of education was studied by the Zhytomyr-based scholar Nataliia Seiko (Seiko, 2006). She specifically highlighted the key role of endowments (fundusze) in the development of local Polish education (Seiko, 2007). General issues of the development of education in Ukraine in the first half of the 19th century in the context of socio-political transformations were examined by Nadia Shcherbak (Shcherbak, 2005), and Yurii Nikolenko (Nikolenko, 2008). Despite the considerable number of works devoted to the development of education in Right-Bank Ukraine in the first half of the 19th century, the specific features of the development of education in Volhynia have received significantly less attention. The records of that period, preserved in the fonds of the State Archive of Zhytomyr Oblast, have not yet been introduced into scholarly circulation.

4. Results

As a result of the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Russian Empire incorporated territories that were more developed in cultural and educational terms than other imperial territories. In these lands, one of the first comprehensive European school systems – the school system of the Commission of National Education (KEN), established by a resolution of the Sejm in 1773 – operated actively and effectively. The material foundation for its existence was provided by the income from estates transferred to it after the abolition of the Jesuit order. In these territories, a network of parish and monastic schools was well developed, whereas in the Russian Empire the Orthodox Church had achieved little success in the field of education (Shcherbak, 2005: 174). In the spirit of the Enlightenment, curricula were modernized – natural sciences were introduced, elements of physical education were added, and instruction in the Polish language was promoted. Preference was given to the education of civic-minded citizens in the spirit of Christian morality and patriotism (Beauvois, 2007).

The territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was divided into ten educational districts (departments), four of which covered the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Two of these – the Volhynian and Ukrainian districts – included educational institutions of Right-Bank Ukraine (with the exception of the Piarist schools in Mezhyrichi Koretski and Dubrovytsia in Volhynia, which had separate subordination). Within these two educational districts, there functioned two district schools (Kremenets, Vinnytsia) and four subdistrict schools (Kamianets, Lutsk, Olyka, Zhytomyr). Under state control with the status of subdistrict schools were also eight Basilian schools (Volodymyr, Ostroh, Sharhorod, Bar, Ovruch, Kaniv, Uman, Liubar). The latter, like the Piarist schools, had little reliance on state financial assistance and were maintained at the expense of the Basilian order. There were also 18 parish schools, 14 of which were subordinate to the subdistrict schools. Parish schools, usually opened in urban settlements, provided students with sufficient preparation to continue their education in county schools. Thus, the three-tier education system provided for the hierarchical subordination of academic (public, secular) schools to the university as the principal educational institution, while parish schools occupied the lowest level of the hierarchy (Pryshchepa, 2020: 132).

The establishment of Volhynia Gubernia and the introduction of gubernia administrative governance changed the organization of the educational system that had previously operated there. In the internal gubernias of the Russian Empire, educational institutions were subordinated to the Boards of Public Charity (hereinafter – Boards), established by Catherine II in each gubernia. The organization of the Boards took place in accordance with the *"Institutions for the Governance of the Gubernias of the Russian Empire"* of 1775, under the leadership of the governor (PSZRI, 1830. Vol. 20. No. 14392: 230). Their composition also included two assessors each from the Upper Land Court, the Magistrate, and the Upper Court of Justice (Upper Assembly), for whom the organization of education in the region was not a priority. The organization of the gubernia Boards was based on the principle of financial independence. Upon the establishment of a Board, a one-time allocation of 15,000 rubles was made for its needs. These funds were managed by the governor, who not only controlled expenditures but also had to ensure the growth of the capital. These funds could be used as credit, and the interest replenished the Board's budget. Although the state authorities attempted to provide the Boards with sufficient sources of funding, the system established by Catherine II could not compete with the financial support provided by endowments (fundusze) or the Basilian order (PSZRI, 1830. Vol. 20. No. 14392: 232).

In Volhynia Gubernia, a Board of Public Charity was established immediately, with a wide range of powers in the sphere of education. *According to the "Institutions..." of 1775, the Boards were to maintain public schools, which were to be opened in all cities – understood in the Russian Empire as the administrative centres of counties (uezds) and gubernias – and in populous settlements (§ 384).* For the indigent, education was to be free, while for others a moderate fee was established. However, the state was in no hurry to abandon the existing educational system in the region. *Due to the poor preservation of Fonds 160 of the Board of Public Charity in the State Archive of Zhytomyr Oblast, we were unable to provide examples of the Board's activities in the sphere of education during this period. It should be noted that, of the 792 files preserved in this fonds, only 29 cover the period before the Polish November Uprising, and the majority of them concern the Board's financial activities (SAZHR, F. 160. Op. 1, Op. 1 dop.).* Moreover, the local authorities, fearing discontent among the szlachta, refrained from interfering in the activities of Polish schools for a certain time. Instruction was conducted in a pro-Polish patriotic spirit.

Already in 1802, Alexander I carried out a ministerial reform, establishing the Ministry of National Education (PSZRI, 1830. Vol. 27. No. 20406: 243-248). The next step was the creation of educational districts. The district system of dividing the territory of the Russian Empire on the basis of educational institutions was an attempt to adapt the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's experience of division into districts. Vilna, Grodno, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Minsk, Volhynia, Kyiv, and Podillia gubernias were assigned to the Vilna Educational District. The curator of the district was appointed Prince Adam Czartoryski, the Minister of Foreign Affairs (PSZRI, 1830. Vol. 27. No. 20598: 442). Tadeusz Czacki became the general inspector of schools of the district, which included Kyiv, Podillia, and Volhynia gubernias. These Polish figures regarded it as a "matter of honour" to unite magnates and patriotic szlachta around the idea of education and cultural development of Polish youth, and to create such a secular education that would in the future ensure Polish dominance in the region. To this end, they developed a concept with which they appealed directly to the emperor.

Already in October 1803, on the initiative of T. Czacki, a congress of the Catholic clergy was held in Lutsk. It was opened by the general inspector, who convinced those present of the necessity "for every Pole to know the Law of God, arithmetic, and his native, that is Polish, language." He then proposed opening 85 parish schools in Volhynia (for comparison, 26 in Podillia and 18 in the Kyiv region). These proposals were supported, and it was decided to open a parish school at every Catholic church and to maintain them from their revenues. The bishops obliged the clergy to allocate church tithes for the maintenance of schools, and the clergy – to open schools at the churches (Lysenko, Chernetskyi, 2002: 218).

On 14 July 1804, the emperor, following the proposals of A. Czartoryski, approved the regulation on the organization of schools in the Vilna Educational District. However, the Russian administration sought to place educational institutions under its control: parish schools were to be supervised by the "inspector" of the county school; county schools – by the director of the gymnasium; gymnasiums – by the administration of the relevant university. The system of guardianship by the Russian authorities over educational institutions provoked resistance from T. Czacki. On 30 July 1804, he proposed a new Statute for Parish Schools of Volhynia, Kyiv, and Podillia Gubernias (Lysenko, Chernetskyi, 2002: 210-223). These ambitious proposals were indeed supported by the emperor, and on 31 August 1807 a statute was approved which provided for the creation of a new system of supervision over primary schools, in which the main role was to be played by local nobles in the person of their marshal and the clergy (PSZRI, 1830. Vol. 29. No. 22605: 1250-1259).

Other initiatives of T. Czacki were also supported. Thus, a gymnasium was opened in Kremenets, which received a separate statute on 29 July 1805 (PSZRI, 1830, Vol. 28. No. 21849: 1137-1140). *In both cases, the state authorities supported the initiative of the szlachta and even agreed to open the gymnasium not in Kyiv, where there was a greater presence of Russian officials, or in the gubernia centre Zhytomyr, but in Kremenets – a town close to the border, which Daniel Beauvois interprets as a strategic move to also attract Poles from Austrian-ruled lands* (Beauvois, 2007: 232). In all cases, it was emphasized that funds for the maintenance of such institutions would also be allocated from the post-Jesuit estates, and the state also counted on other sources of funding.

The traditions of the Commission of National Education were revived, in particular through charitable support for education by the Polish community. T. Czacki proposed that two commissions be organized to manage the post-Jesuit capital: one for Kyiv, Volhynia, and Podillia gubernias, and the other for the five Belarusian and Lithuanian gubernias. The first was headed by T. Czacki himself, through whose efforts numerous funds were collected: within a short time, the capital amounted to 27,350,000 zlotys (352,500 silver rubles), of which 62,200 silver rubles were allocated for Volhynian schools; 414,666 assignation rubles for the Kyiv gymnasium; 4,930 silver rubles for county schools; and, in addition, specifically for Kremenets – one-time deposits of 25,000 silver rubles. Significant revenues to the gymnasium treasury came from Count Olizar (140,000 zlotys) and Countess Platter (15,000 zlotys) (Koliadenko, 2002: 65). From these funds, pensions were paid to teachers (SAZHR, F. 71. Op. 1. Spr. 180: 2, 5).

T. Czacki expected that wealthy landowners would ardently demonstrate the vitality of the Polish national idea and regarded this as their "civic duty." D. Beauvois describes the inspector's efforts in this area skeptically and notes that his ambitious plans were not destined to be fully realized (Beauvois, 2007: 238); nevertheless, charitable support for education by the Polish in

Volhynia reached a scale unprecedented in the Russian Empire. Charitable assistance was provided in various forms: aid to educational institutions, students, teachers, and support for extracurricular education. It was provided through the allocation of funds, land, premises, teaching aids, and personal labour for their benefit (improvement of facilities, delivery of lectures, concerts, exhibitions, etc.). An example of interaction with the authorities and a demonstration of loyalty is the case of the donation of a portrait of the Emperor to the Zhytomyr Gymnasium by the drawing teacher of that gymnasium, Sobkevych. For this gift, the teacher received a letter of gratitude from the School Committee. The estimated value of the portrait was 120 rubles (SAZHR. F. 71. Op. 1. Spr. 213: 2). Assistance was also provided to primary educational institutions in establishing libraries and museums (Shcherbak, 2005: 410).

However, the most significant material foundation for the establishment of educational institutions was endowments (*fundusze*) – a form of charitable donation for the founding and operation of an educational institution, whereby funds could be paid annually from a specified estate or property (land, shops, pharmacies, houses) of the *szlachta* in the form of a clearly defined sum. N. Seiko distinguishes several types of endowments: perpetual endowments, one-time endowments, scholarship endowments, boarding-house endowments (*konwikty*), and registered endowments (Seiko, 2007: 120).

The Polish *szlachta* became the first social force in the region to undertake the development of schooling on such a scale. For example, Sofia Potocka in 1815 revived the former family foundation in Nemyriv in Podillia. A. Czartoryski opened two schools in 1819 on his estates: in Medzhybizh in Podillia and in Klevan in Volhynia. The Sapieha family in 1822 financed the establishment of a school in Teofipol in Southern Volhynia. In 1803–1822, about 13,000 students studied in these schools (Fytsyk, 2016: 110).

A prominent place among the donations of the inhabitants of Volhynia was occupied by the foundation of Jan Lerneta. The sum of 30,000 silver rubles was intended for four students from impoverished families born in Volhynia, regardless of their social estate or religion (Shmyt, 2012). After the closure of the Kremenets Lyceum, the endowments were transferred to the Lutsk Gymnasium; however, due to available vacancies, the director of the Zhytomyr School managed to secure the transfer of funds for the education of two students under the Lerneta foundation (SAZHR. F. 71. Op. 1. Spr. 192: 3). Certain criteria were set for the recipients: students had to be from Volhynia Gubernia of any religion, have a certificate of absence of chronic diseases, and be capable of learning. They were required to have completed at least the 2nd grade, and preferably the 4th. But most importantly – the endowment was intended for poor children, so the marshal of the *szlachta* or the city governor of the town where the child was born had to certify that the parents could not afford to educate the child themselves (SAZHR. F. 71. Op. 1. Spr. 192: 3-4).

Since funds came exclusively from patrons, control – and not only financial – was entrusted to a supervisory board, three members of which were to be elected by the *szlachta* assembly (*sejmik*) (Beauvois, 2007: 251). It is worth emphasizing here that the *szlachta* had a different experience from the Russian nobility in independently resolving particular affairs, and even in matters of education they demonstrated an activism and autonomy uncharacteristic of the Russian nobility.

Also noteworthy was the approach to the system of student accommodation. There were so-called *konwikty* (student boarding houses), which were divided into "endowed" and "private" ones. The inhabitants of Volhynia raised funds for the maintenance of 17 students. Students were placed with families of good repute, 8 to 10 persons per family. This system provided additional care for the students and the opportunity for local families to earn a living.

Such efforts produced significant results. Among the eight former "Polish gubernias", the educational system in Volhynia Gubernia was the most extensive. Volhynia ranked second in terms of the number of students, which was explained by the large number of *szlachta* families. On the eve of Alexander I's reforms, there were between 11 and 13 educational institutions of various scales, most of which had been established through endowments and private initiatives. The dominance of the Vilna Educational District, which included Kyiv, Volhynia, and Podillia gubernias, is best evidenced by a comparison of student numbers in the six districts existing at that time in the empire: over 30% of all students (in schools of all levels) in the empire were enrolled in institutions of the Vilna District. According to I. Fytsyk, the average number of students per gymnasium in the Vilna Educational District was 217 persons, and per county school – 137 students; for other districts of the Russian Empire, the respective figures were 58 and 75 students. In total, in Volhynia, Podillia, and the Kyiv region, over one hundred Polish schools were opened through

charitable efforts (Fytsyk, 2016: 110). In 1813, county schools and gymnasiums of the Vilna District were attended by about 13,000 students, whereas in the Kharkiv District – 8,150; in the Moscow District – 6,500; in the Dorpat (Tartu) District – about 6,000; in the St. Petersburg District – 4,650; and in the Kazan District – 4,200 (Fytsyk, 2016: 112).

The supreme authorities sought to use this highly developed educational system for their own purposes. Already two years after the opening of the gymnasium, the authorities initiated the training of land surveyors for state needs, funded from government coffers. A. Shmyt emphasizes that these officials were trained exclusively for the needs of the state, referring to them as "tax geometers" (Shmyt, 2012: 83-85). At state expense, 36 students aged 15 and older, who were fluent in Polish and Russian, were to be educated. During their studies, they acquired knowledge of algebra, geometry, trigonometry, drafting, drawing, and practical work skills, as well as improved their Polish and Russian. The duration of study was three years, and the state expenditure for training one specialist was 150 rubles per year. Capable graduates were sent primarily to serve in Volhynia, Lithuania, Kyiv, Podillia, and Minsk gubernias, as well as, by order of the Land Survey Department of the Senate, to other gubernias. Students who studied at state expense were required to serve for four years as a land surveyor, and in the absence of a vacancy – to remain in another state position (Shevchuk, Markevych, 2024: 83).

For representatives of the landless szlachta, education and entry into civil service allowed them to legitimize their status and achieve career advancement. This is confirmed by the career path of I. Remburtovysh, a native of Volhynia, who after completing his studies entered the school for land surveyors and, thanks to his excellent achievements, was appointed county land surveyor of Rezhitsa County in Vitebsk Gubernia in 1814 by a decree of the Senate upon the recommendation of his superiors. However, in 1818 he was released at his own request, and in 1827 he entered service at the Podilian Appellate Land Survey Court (Shevchuk, 2019: 51).

Daniel Beauvois notes that not all szlachta members aimed to complete their education and enter the service of a hostile empire. He cites examples of student numbers by grade at the Vinnytsia Gymnasium for 1824, when in the first year there were 139 students, while in the sixth year of study – only 22 (Beauvois, 2007: 266). Similar statistical data are presented in Appendix B.19 of the doctoral dissertation by Olena Pryshchepa (Pryshchepa, 2020: 548). If there was such a large discrepancy between graduates and entrants, what motivated the szlachta to enter educational institutions? One reason may be the very organization of education itself. Although the state sought to transform these institutions into centres for training officials, Polish educators managed to create an atmosphere of learning, creativity, and Polish cultural revival (Beauvois, 2007: 262). The Polish enthusiasts managed to create an atmosphere of learning, creativity, work, and the revival of Polish culture. For example, in Kremenets there was a separate curriculum that did not correspond to the spirit of the other educational institutions, even those of the Vilna District. In order to satisfy the secular tastes of the szlachta, which provided funds for maintenance, much attention was paid to dancing, horse riding, and fencing. The first four years of the ten-year course were devoted to in-depth study of foreign languages – French, German, Latin, and Italian. This made education even more thorough than home schooling (Beauvois, 2007: 261).

We can only guess what efforts T. Czacki had to make to respond to the constant reproaches from the ministry that the ministerial budget had to be adhered to, and that the astronomy course was not suitable for gymnasiums (Beauvois, 2007: 230).

With the accession of Nicholas I, the situation changed dramatically. The new emperor was not prepared to tolerate "suspicious Polish schools," and therefore, on 15 November 1830, even before the outbreak of the November Uprising, the then Minister of Education, Prince Lieven, received an order to "completely eliminate instruction in the Polish language" (Beauvois, 2007: 237). The uprising only accelerated the de-Polonization of education. A number of measures painful for the szlachta were carried out. The emperor ordered the closure of all Polish educational institutions and the creation of Russian ones in their place. It was planned to strengthen state control over the educational sector, develop new content for it, limit the activities of private educational institutions, and establish strict control over teaching staff. In pursuit of these plans, already in 1831 alone, 245 Polish educational institutions were closed in the Right-Bank region (Horokhov, 2014: 18). Teachers and students suspected by the authorities of assisting the insurgents were subjected to persecution.

At the beginning of 1831, Volhynia and Podillia gubernias were removed from the Vilna Educational District and incorporated into the Kharkiv District. However, in January 1832, a new

educational district – the Kyiv District – was created, which included Volhynia, Kyiv, Podillia, and Chernihiv gubernias. These organizational changes made it possible to control more effectively the educational institutions of the Right-Bank region and to weaken the influence of Polish aristocratic circles on them. According to a decree of the Ministry of Education, all existing educational institutions in the region were reorganized, and the Polish language was banned. Thereafter, it was used only for teaching the Catechism. Students who wished to study it could do so for an additional fee outside of school hours. The Kremenets Lyceum was closed, and its material and technical base became the foundation for the opening of St. Volodymyr University in Kyiv (Shostak, 2005: 137).

The uprising also brought significant changes in the attitude towards Polish charitable activities. The authorities began to criticize Polish schools, calling them "traps for catching Orthodox Ruthenian children into papism." Charity on the part of the Polish community also changed – from financial and endowment-based, it became mostly activity-oriented and non-monetary, with the exception of old perpetual endowments, which began to serve the development of Russian educational institutions (Seiko, 2007: 120). There were frequent cases where heirs failed to fulfil their endowment obligations. For example, according to the report of Father Vikarevych, teacher Fedor Mykulynskyi, who died in 1828, bequeathed to the Zhytomyr County School an endowment of 1,500 silver rubles for the education of two poor students, and by that time 600 rubles in interest had accrued. In 1834, the school applied to the Zhytomyr County Court to receive the promised capital (SAZHR. F. 71. Op. 1. Spr. 219: 1-18). The new state policy caused great disappointment in local society, which primarily criticized T. Czacki, who "took several million zlotys from private hands and reluctantly handed them over to a hostile government" (Seiko, 2007: 118-119). The measures taken by the state authorities after the Polish November Uprising and their consequences for the development of education and culture in the region require a separate study.

5. Conclusion

The most favourable conditions for the development of education in Volhynia existed during the first third of the 19th century. The network of szlachta educational institutions in the annexed territories of Right-Bank Ukraine was entirely Polish-language and comprised educational institutions of various types and levels. Despite the imperial authorities' attempts to impose their own political views on the local population through educational reforms, they were forced to take into account the interests of the szlachta. Moreover, it was precisely the annexed territories that demonstrated a high level of educational development: the system was well-conceived, enjoyed authority among the szlachta, possessed independent sources of funding, and its traditions were on a par with European ones. It is also indicative that, having lost statehood, the Polish szlachta did not wish to lose its connection with its own culture and identity – on the contrary, education became a major means of preserving their national identity.

An important role in this was played by the fact that in 1803 the Vilna Educational District was headed by A. Czartoryski, and T. Czacki became general inspector of schools in the district. The educational process was conducted by Poles, instruction was carried out in the Polish language, and textbooks were also in Polish. The material support of educational institutions came not only from the state treasury: during this period, charitable activity in the sphere of education became widespread. The szlachta willingly invested funds in the education of the younger generation – opening and maintaining educational institutions. In general, education at that time was distinctly estate-based: at the beginning of the 19th century, students of the Vilna District constituted about 30 % of all students in schools (of all levels) in the empire, with the largest number of such institutions operating precisely in Volhynia.

The situation changed radically after the suppression of the Polish November Uprising, when imperial policy turned towards the systematic Russification of education. The authorities not only consistently weakened the material and ideological dependence of schools on the szlachta, but also actively imposed their own educational model. This was achieved through: the opening of a network of Russian schools with the parallel closure of Polish ones; the introduction of instruction in the Russian language and the prohibition of Polish; the establishment of control over students not only within the walls of educational institutions, but also beyond them. Thus, the evolution of educational policy in Volhynia during the first third of the 19th century evolved from relative tolerance by the imperial authorities towards Polish-language szlachta education, the study of its experience and the use of its achievements for the purpose of training qualified officials, to deliberate dismantling. This demonstrates that education was not merely an instrument of

cultural reproduction of the szlachta, but also an arena of political confrontation between the imperial centre and the regional elite for control over the cultural and political socialization of the younger generation.

6. Acknowledgements

The research reported in this paper was produced as part of the project 'Historical Memory and Memorialization Practices as Tools for Countering Anti-Ukrainian Destructive Narratives: National and International Dimensions' (State Registration No. 0126U001457) with support from Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science.

References

- Beauvois, 2007** – Beauvois, D. (2007). Rosiiska vlada i polska shliakhta v Ukraini. 1793–1830 rr. [Russian authorities and the polish nobility in Ukraine, 1793–1830]. Lviv: Kalvariia, 296 p. [in Ukrainian]
- Degtyarev, 2013** – Degtyarev, S. I. (2013). Zv'yazok osvity ta tsyvil'noyi derzhavnoyi sluzhby u Rosiys'kiy imperiyi pershoyi polovyny 18 st. [The connection between education and civil service in the Russian Empire in the first half of the 18th century]. *Sumy Historical and Archival Journal*. XX: 41-46. [in Ukrainian]
- Degtyarev, 2014** – Degtyarev, S. I. (2014). Tsyvilne chynovnytstvo Ukrainy u kintsi 18 – pershii polovyny 19 st.: monohrafiia [Civil officialdom in Ukraine at the end of the 18th – the beginning of the 19th centuries: monograph]. Sumy, 472 p. [in Ukrainian]
- Fytsyk, 2016** – Fytsyk, I. (2016). Pravoberezhna shliakhta v osvitnomu prostori Rosiiskoi imperii (persha tretyna 19 st.) [The Right-Bank nobility in the educational sphere of the Russian Empire (first third of the 19th century)]. *Kyivski istorychni studii*. 1: 108-115. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.28925/2524-0757.2016.1.14> [in Ukrainian]
- Horokhov, 2014** – Horokhov, S.V. (2014). Polsko-rosiiske protystoiannia v osvitnii sferi na prykladi Kyivskoi hubernii na poch. 19 st. [The Polish-Russian conflict in the field of education: the case of the Kyiv governorate in the early 19th century]. *Naukovi pratsi istorychnoho fakultetu Zaporizkoho natsionalnoho universytetu*. 38: 18-63. [in Ukrainian]
- Karlina, 2021** – Karlina, O.M. (2021). Volynska himnaziia (Kremenetskyi litsei) pershoi tretyny 19 st. yak zarodok maibutnoho universytetu [The Volyn gymnasium (Kremenets lyceum) in the first third of the 19th century as the precursor to the future university]. *Naukovyi visnyk Uzhhorodskoho universytetu. Seriiia «Istoriia»*. 1(44): 18-25. [in Ukrainian]
- Koliadenko, 2002** – Koliadenko, S. (2002). Kremenetskyi litsei v systemi osvity Volyni (XIX – 30-ti rr. XX st.) [The Kremenets lyceum in the Volhynia education system (19th century – 1930s)]. Zhytomyr, 131 p. [in Ukrainian]
- Lysenko, Chernetskyi, 2002** – Lysenko, S., Chernetskyi, Ye. (2002). Pravoberezhna shliakhta (kinets 18 – persha polovyna 19 st.) [The Right-Bank nobility (late 18th – first half of the 19th century)]. Bila Tserkva: Vydavnytstvo TOSK, 394 p. [in Ukrainian]
- Nikolenko, 2008** – Nikolenko, Yu.D. (2008). Polityka rosiiskoho tsaryzmu v haluzi osvity shliakhetstva Pravoberezhnoi Ukrainy v pershii tretyni 19 st. [The policy of Russian tsarism regarding the education of the nobility in Right-bank Ukraine in the first third of the 19th century]. *Hileia*. 17: 26-35. [in Ukrainian]
- Pryshchepa, 2020** – Pryshchepa, O. (2020). Osvitno-kulturne seredovyshche povitovykh mist i mistechok Pravoberezhnoi Ukrainy (kinets 18 – pochatok 20 st.). [Educational and cultural environment of district towns in Right-Bank Ukraine (end of the 18th – beginning of the 20th centuries)]. Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 591 p. [in Ukrainian]
- PSZRI, 1830** – Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii [Complete collection of the laws of the Russian Empire]. Sobranie Pervoe. Sankt-Peterburh: Pechatano v typohrafyy II Otdeleniya sobstvennoi Eho Ymperatorskoho velychestva Kantseliaryy. [in Russian]
- SAZHR** – Derzhavnyi arkhiv Zhytomyrskoi oblasti [State Archive of Zhytomyr Oblast].
- Seiko, 2006** – Seiko, N.A. (2006). Dobrochynnist poliakiv u sferi osvity Ukrainy (19 – poch. 20 st.) [Polish philanthropy in the field of education in Ukraine (19th – early 20th centuries)]. Monohrafiia. Zhytomyr: ZhDU, 318 p. [in Ukrainian]
- Seiko, 2007** – Seiko, N.A. (2007). Fundushova dobrochynnist polskoi hromady Ukrainy ta yii vplyv na rozvytok systemy osvity pochatku 19 st. [The charitable activities of the polish community

in Ukraine and their impact on the development of the education system in the early 19th century]. *Ukrainska polonistyka*. 3-4: 116-122. [in Ukrainian].

[Shcherbak, 2005](#) – *Shcherbak, N.O.* (2005). Natsionalne pytannia v politytsi tsaryzmu u Pravoberezhnii Ukraini (kinets 18 – pochatok 20 st) [The national question in tsarist policy in right-bank Ukraine (late 18th – early 20th centuries)]. Kyiv. 616 p. [in Ukrainian]

[Shevchuk, 2019](#) – *Shevchuk, A.V.* (2019). Podilskyi hubernskyi apeliatsiinyi normalnyi sud (1818–1840): zasnuvannia, kadrovyi sklad i sotsialnyi portret [The Podillia provincial court of appeal (1818–1840): founding, staff composition, and social profile]. *Eminak: Naukovyi shchokvartalnyk*. 2: 43-55. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.33782/eminak2019.2\(26\).290](https://doi.org/10.33782/eminak2019.2(26).290) [in Ukrainian]

[Shevchuk, Markevych, 2024](#) – *Shevchuk, A., Markevych, O.* (2024). Sluzhba zemlemira u Volynskii hubernii naprykintsi 18 – v pershii tretyni 19 st.: ulashtuvannia, kadrovyi sklad, diialnist [The service of land surveyor in Volyn province at the end of the eighteenth – first third of the nineteenth centuries: organization, staffing, activities]. *Ukrainskyi Istorychnyi Zhurnal*. 2: 77-97. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2024.02.077> [in Ukrainian]

[Shmyt, 2012](#) – *Shmyt, A.* (2012). Kremenetskyi litsei yak zrazok prosvitnytskoi modeli shkoly na terytorii Ukrainy u pershii polovyni 19 stolittia [The Kremenets lyceum as a model of an enlightenment-era school in Ukraine in the first half of the 19th century]. Kremenets, 235 p. [in Ukrainian]

[Shostak, 2005](#) – *Shostak, I.* (2005). Lutsko-zhytomyrska diietseziia naprykintsi 18 – pershii polovyni 19 stolit [The diocese of Lutsk and Zhytomyr in the late 18th and first half of the 19th centuries]. Ostroh: Bilyi Dunaiets, 204 p. [in Ukrainian]

[Saunders, 1985](#) – *Saunders, D.* (1985). The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture, 1750–1850. Edmonton, 415 p.