

The Baltic States in the Political and Legal Thought of Pavel N. Miliukov During the Civil War in Russia of 1917–1920*

Baltijas valstis Pāvela N. Miļukova politiskajos un juridiskajos uzskatos pilsoņu kara laikā Krievijā 1917.–1920. gadā

Michał Patryk Sadłowski, Dr.

Department of History of Administration

Faculty of Law and Administration

University of Warsaw

Email: m.sadlowski@wpia.uw.edu.pl

The primary research objective of the article is to study Pavel Nikolaevich Miliukov's (1859–1943) understanding of the status of the states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia during the Civil War in Russia from 1917 to 1920, focusing on Miliukov's political and legal beliefs. As the leader of the Kadet Party, Miliukov had advocated the reconstruction of Russian statehood as close as possible to the 1914 borders, which excluded the existence of the independent Baltic states separately from Russia. The above considerations provide grounds for claiming that Miliukov's political and legal thought in this period was based on strong nationalism. In this sense, Miliukov, seeing the national awakening among the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, actively tried to oppose these processes.

Keywords: Miliukov, Baltic states, Russian Civil War; White Movements.

Galvenais raksta mērķis ir izpētīt, kā Pāvels Nikolajevičs Miļukovs (1859–1943) izprata Lietuvas, Latvijas un Igaunijas valstu statusu pilsoņu kara laikā Krievijā no 1917. līdz 1920. gadam, pievēršot uzmanību Miļukova politiskajiem un juridiskajiem uzskatiem. Būdams Kadetu partijas līderis, Miļukovs aizstāvēja Krievijas valstiskuma atjaunošanu pēc iespējas tuvāk 1914. gada robežām, kas izslēdza neatkarīgu, no Krievijas nošķirtu Baltijas valstu pastāvēšanu. Iepriekš minētie apsvērumi dod pamatu apgalvot, ka Miļukova politiskās un juridiskās domas pamatā bija spēcīgs nacionālisms. Attiecīgi Miļukovs, redzot Centrāl- eiropas un Austrumeiropas nāciju nacionālo atmodu, aktīvi centās pretoties šiem procesiem.

Atslēgvārdi: Miļukovs, Baltijas valstis, Krievijas pilsoņu karš, Baltā kustība.

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Introduction

The primary research objective of the article is to study Pavel Nikolaevich Miliukov's (1859–1943) understanding of the issue of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian statehood during the Civil War in Russia in 1917–1920. Miliukov is one of the paramount figures in Russia's academic, intellectual and political life at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. One of Miliukov's main research interests was an effort to determine the reasons why Russia's state (constitutional) system differed from those of Western countries. Apart from the research goals, such approach by Miliukov had a practical purpose, namely, an attempt to develop and describe tools that could potentially impact Russia's democratization.

As a researcher, he left behind an enormous body of work. His "Outlines of Russian Culture"¹ is one of the most popular publications of the late 19th and early 20th century in Russia. Today, the volume still constitutes an important synthesis of the Russian history. In a sense, it is also a relevant book for readers from Central and Eastern European countries, in order to better understand the roots of Russian imperialism and colonialism in the 19th and early 20th centuries. No less important are Miliukov's works on the history of the February 1917 Revolution² and the Russian Civil War³. These works are an essential part of the historical narrative that details the collapse of the Russian statehood in 1917, as well as the formation of the Soviet state in 1917–1922. One indication of their significance is the fact that a substantial number of Miliukov's books have been published in English, French and German.

Miliukov was a veteran politician: he was a leader of the Constitutional Democratic Party, a deputy of the Third and Fourth State Duma, the Foreign Minister in

the Provisional Government of Russia during the February Revolution of 1917, and was involved in anti-Bolshevik political activity during the Russian Civil War, as well as during his time in exile. In addition, Miliukov combined academic work and political activity with journalistic pursuits as the editor of prominent newspapers, including "Rech'" and "Poslednie novosti".

During the Russian Civil War (1917–1920), Miliukov was one of the best known, and certainly the most active, politicians in the entire anti-Bolshevik movement, especially in the White Movement. His activity focused mainly on two spheres: political and informational. As part of the latter, especially in 1919 and 1920, he developed an extensive propaganda campaign in Great Britain, emphasizing the need to fight the Bolsheviks. His goal was to rebuild the pre-revolutionary Russian state, hewing its new borders as close as possible to the former borders of the Russian Empire of 1914. The Kadet leader opposed the independence of the Baltic states. Therefore, Miliukov's activities were of great importance to the issues of the international legal and territorial statuses of the former Baltic governorates of the Russian Empire.

The research method and the current knowledge

This article analyses Miliukov's political and legal thought in 1917–1920, focusing on his views regarding the legal and international status of the Baltic states' territory, using historical-legal approaches (from legal history) and historical method. These considerations are based on the general findings regarding the definition of the essence of statehood by Miliukov, and especially – the Russian statehood. Currently, this issue is still little explored and worth analysing. Miliukov's activities,

academic research work and biography, as emphasized above, have so far attracted very limited attention from Western and Russian historians of state and law (legal historians)⁴, since Miliukov has mainly been the subject of research by few historians. It should, however, be noted that those historians have studied only selected aspects of Miliukov's activities.

The outcome of the Western historians' work includes four monographs. The first one was published in 1969⁵, the second in 1983⁶, and the third in 1996⁷, while the fourth, a German language source, was released in 1998⁸. Most important, however, is the fact that the three works mentioned above (authored by T. Riha, M. K. Stockdale and T. M. Bohn) deal with Miliukov's biography only with respect to the first stages of his career, while appraising Miliukov's political or state thinking in fairly general terms. An exception is a 1983 work penned by a Norwegian researcher Jens Petter Nielsen, published in Oslo, covering the evolution of Miliukov's political views during his exile (1918–1943). Nevertheless, the size of this publication is modest and it does not contain any references to the primary source material. On the other hand, in 1998, Anthony Kröner⁹ published a book on the debate over liberalism between Miliukov and Vasily A. Maklakov, which is an expansion of Mikhail Karpovich's research¹⁰. At this point, it is necessary to mention an unpublished doctoral thesis on Miliukov and the Kadet Party, defended at Oxford in 1962.¹¹ Besides, more than a dozen articles about Miliukov have been written in the West, but they do not address the issue discussed in this article.¹² In short, in Western scholarship, the topic of the state and law in Miliukov's political thinking is still unexplored. Nevertheless, it is necessary to note Julia Klimova's doctoral thesis of 2022, which is dedicated to the attitude of Russian liberals towards

national minorities during the revolution and the Civil War in Russia.¹³

Meanwhile, ten books comprehensively covering Miliukov have been written in Russia.¹⁴ The most detailed one of these, in terms of the source material, is a book jointly authored by researchers Alexander V. Makushin and Pavel A. Tribunsky. However, this source considers Miliukov's biography only up to 1905 (whereas Miliukov lived and worked until 1943). The eleventh book, a comparative one, simultaneously addresses Miliukov and the historian Alexander Aleksandrovich Kiesewetter, while the twelfth one, published still in the USSR, is dedicated to Miliukov and W. Churchill.

The main objectives of Miliukov's activity during the Civil War in Russia in 1917–1920

From the overthrow of the Provisional Government by the Bolsheviks until the defeat of General Peter Wrangel on the Crimean Peninsula, Miliukov was extremely active, working on a series of diverse activities. These activities included, among others: arrival on the Don at the turn of 1917/1918 to General Mikhail Alekseev, an attempt to reach an agreement with the Germans in Kiev in 1918, and active support for the anti-Bolshevik movement in Russia in the West. Miliukov's attitude to the concept of the Russian political system at that time was based on five main tenets:

- 1) Anti-Bolshevik stance;
- 2) Anti-Tsarist autocracy/*tsarskoye samoderzhaviye*;
- 3) State-orientation (rebuilding of state);
- 4) Unification;
- 5) Superpower and imperialism.

The first meant the need to defeat and eliminate the Bolsheviks from the Russian

state system, as well as the political and cultural reality. The second was the rejection of a return to autocracy, while not excluding, for example, the adoption of a one-man temporary military dictatorship in order to fight the Reds. This did not mean rejection of the adoption of a constitutional or parliamentary monarchy system. The third tenet denoted relying on the main principle of rebuilding the Russian state, in combination with the fourth one, i.e. unification of the state territory of Russia, preferably to the borders as close as possible to those of the Russian Empire in 1914. The fifth one was the reconstruction of Russia's superpower status.

The nationality issue in Miliukov's political and legal thought during the February Revolution of 1917 and the beginning of the Civil War in Russia

Before discussion of Miliukov's attitude regarding the nationality issue in Russia at the beginning of the Russian Civil War, it is necessary to explain how the Kadet leader approached this issue during the February Revolution of 1917. Instrumental to this process was the work of the Eighth Congress of the Kadet Party (convened on 9–12 May 1917), which was devoted mainly to the nationality issue and thus to the issues of autonomy and federalism in Russia. Miliukov stated in his opening speech that the basis of party's policy regarding decentralization and nationality would be the principle of unity/uniformity of the Russian state, and not deep federalization.¹⁵ Consequently, they would not decide to ground the division of the state on the basis of separate political and administrative territorial and national units.¹⁶ Therefore, the structure of the state they proposed was to be founded on the right to cultural self-determination

of national minorities living in Russia, to be ensured using the system of local government units. Miliukov also implemented this policy regarding national minorities when, in the late autumn of 1917, he went to the White Don.¹⁷

Miliukov's attempts at cooperation with the Germans in 1918 and the issue of the "Baltic coast"

In the spring of 1918, Miliukov changed his geopolitical orientation.¹⁸ He had presumed that the Bolsheviks could only be overthrown and the Russian state preserved in unity by cooperating with Germany, not the Entente. Hence, he tried unsuccessfully to persuade General Mikhail Vasilyevich Alekseyev, the leader of the White Volunteer Army, to support his idea. Therefore, in June 1918, he came to Kyiv to start negotiations regarding potential cooperation with Germany. One of the topics of these talks was the issue of the status of the territory of former Baltic governorates. However, in order to understand the context behind these talks, it is necessary to take into account the arguments that Miliukov used to convince his colleagues from the Kadet Party to orientate towards Germany.

In a letter to the Main Committee of the Kadet Party, written in June 1918 in Kyiv (but dated 25 May 1918 as allegedly sent from Rostov-on-Don), Miliukov stated that the party's primary task was the restoration of Russian statehood.¹⁹ According to him, this task could only be performed by the Volunteer Army in cooperation with the Germans. Notably, the process of restoring statehood was to be closely related to the territorial unification of Russia:

"The process of restoring statehood cannot be considered completed unless Moscow is

liberated and the independent/liberated [from the Bolsheviks] parts of Russia are not united. I now consider this task of unifying Russia as dominant over all others and for the achievement of which all sacrifices should be made."²⁰

Also on 17 June 1918, Miliukov was to present to his colleagues from the Kadet Party the conditions whereby the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Government would cooperate with the Germans. The first of these would be the revision of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk along with the "*restoration of the old borders*". This could suggest that the territory of the former Baltic governorates should constitute an integral part of the rebuilt Russian state. The second condition, in turn, concerned the creation of a strong, all-Russian structure of central government. Their competences and tasks would be defined in advance and would not always be the subject of an agreement between the central government and local authorities of individual parts of Russia.

Finally, on 21 June 1918, Miliukov and German Major Haase met for the first time.²¹ During this conversation, Miliukov had tried to convince his German interlocutor to do two things: unify Russia as quickly as possible and restore its borders to a shape as close as possible to the borders of 1914. Therefore, he pointed out that Russia could not give back either the Livonian or Estland governorates, although in the case of Courland he suggested that it could "*allow border corrections/improvements*".²² The same was to apply to Lithuanian and Belarusian lands. Only Poland, within ethnographic borders, was recognized by Miliukov as a separate state. Meanwhile, Miliukov argued that the Kadet Party had always advocated giving selected nationalities within Russia certain

local rights in the form of autonomy, but excluded federations.

Miliukov also raised the issue of the status and affiliation of the territories of the former Baltic governorates of the Russian Empire in his note of 11 August 1918, which was addressed to members of the Kadet Party.²³ When writing about the issue of borders, he noted that the only difficulty was in regards to Courland, for which he had agreed to "*improve the borders*". Importantly, the Kadet leader added: "*I don't know how we can give up Libau/Liepāja*".²⁴ Thus, Miliukov advocated for a Russian state that would have wide access to the Baltic Sea, in order to guarantee access to warm water ports there.

In the context of Miliukov's reflections on the state and law in 1918, his meetings on 20 and 21 September 1918 with the German professor Philipp Stein are of significant importance.²⁵ During these meetings, as well as in the second conversation with Haase, Miliukov argued that Russia was a "*European country*", which implied the need for it to have a "*Baltic coast*"²⁶. In this regard, Russia must ensure the security of St. Petersburg and "*should have an exit to Libau/Liepāja*".²⁷

Miliukov during the Jassy Conference

At the moment of the defeat of the Central Powers, Miliukov had changed his geopolitical orientation once more, and took part in the Jassy Conference of November 1918.²⁸ During the conference, Miliukov indicated that Russia would demand borders as close as possible to those of 1914.²⁹ While conducting negotiations with the Romanian politician Ion Constantin Brătianu on 18 November 1918, Miliukov mentioned the problem of the territory of the Baltic states.³⁰ Brătianu

tried to negotiate Russia's renunciation of the territory of Bessarabia. Miliukov said that this case was, at the time, one of many such problems for Russia. He further stated:

*"In general, we consider legal acts that were not issued by the Provisional Government to be illegal and have no legal force. Everything that happened after 25 October 1917, was not recognized by us. This is our general line that we are sticking to, and later – remains to be seen."*³¹

Hereby, Miliukov stated that from the perspective of law, all acts that were not issued by the Provisional Government or the bodies that were its legal successors were invalid. These were acts on the territory of the former Russian Empire, while the Romanian politician allegedly argued that according to the principle of justice, Bessarabia belongs to Romania because it was illegally annexed by Tsar Alexander I. Furthermore, if 50 years does not justify the annexation of Alsace, neither does 100 years. Moreover, according to him, only 200 000 people live in Bessarabia – Ukrainians, and 300 to 400 thousand Romanians on the left bank of the Dniester.³²

In response, Miliukov stated that if everyone used such arguments *"for Georgia, the Baltic Sea, for Lithuania, the fragmentation of Russia would not stop"*³³. He suggested that the first step forward should be to stop this process. *"The Russian people are very sensitive to the fact that their enemies robbed them in a moment of weakness"*.³⁴ Regarding this point, it is worth mentioning the account of Manuil S. Margulies, who, in his memoirs of the trip to the Jassy Conference, described a conversation with Miliukov.³⁵ The conversation allegedly showed that the latter was a strong opponent of the federalization of Russia.³⁶

Miliukov's arrival in London and meeting with Simpson

One of the effects of Jassy Conference, perhaps even the most important consequence, was the selection of a delegation that was to go to France and Great Britain to influence the governments of the Entente countries. Miliukov became its member. Travelling via Odessa, Istanbul and Italy, the delegation reached Paris. In the French capital, Miliukov, due to his attempt to cooperate with the Germans, was not welcomed by some of the country's main politicians. Therefore, based on consultations with Vasily Maklakov, among others, Miliukov went to Great Britain. There, he developed very active propaganda and political activities. Within this framework, his goals were to spread anti-Bolshevik propaganda, to advocate legal and international recognition of A. Kolchak's government, and to obtain material aid for the White Armies.

Miliukov arrived in London on 25 December 1918. One of his first meetings was with James Young Simpson (3 August 1873–20 May 1934).³⁷ The first meeting took place on 29 December 1918 and concerned, among others issues, the affairs of the Baltic states. The Russian politician convinced his British interlocutor that *"a united Russia, not Bolshevik Russia"* should be preserved and opposed the concept of *"independence of the borderlands"*, i.e., Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.³⁸ Miliukov recorded that Simpson was a strong supporter of the *"Baltic Union"* and *"independence of the borderlands"*.³⁹ In turn, on 30 December 1918, Simpson summoned Miliukov to the Foreign Office and *"asked [...] to tell me everything about the Bolsheviks that I thought was necessary for Balfour's lecture, which was going to Paris."*⁴⁰ At this point, it is worth mentioning one more meeting of Miliukov, namely with Alfred Eckhard Zimmern (1879–1957), which took place on 3 January 1919 in

London. In his diary, Miliukov wrote that Zimmern's book "On Nationalities"⁴¹ unexpectedly showed him a new critical perspective on the principle of self-determination. This was further evidence that Miliukov was looking for various critical arguments regarding the possibility of applying the principle of self-determination to smaller nations. In 1920, in his book on Bolshevism, he criticized the socialists for their unconditional support for the principle of "self-determination".⁴² He pointed out that the Baltic Province found itself in Russia on the basis of "the law of the growth of a large country".⁴³ On the other hand, based on the diary entry from 26 March 1919, one can conclude that Miliukov believed that no concessions should be made to the Finns, because the fate of that region would be decided by a civil war anyway, meaning the Denikin and Kolchak fronts. In this sense, this opinion could also be applied to the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians.⁴⁴

In turn, on 30 April 1919, Miliukov spoke at a meeting in the House of Commons. He criticised the policy of the Entente states, which, according to him, was conducive to the disintegration of Russia. He said:

*"The division of Russia, initiated by Germany, is receiving new sanction from the allies. New imperialisms of small nations, created on the basis of the principle of self-determination – the Baltic governments, Lithuania, Polish claims – all this is violating the unity of Russia."*⁴⁵

In this speech, Miliukov criticized, among other things, the British government for the fact that the Entente powers maintained various contacts with the states that emerged from the ruins of the Russian Empire, while at the same time ignoring the representatives of the Russian government in Omsk.⁴⁶

From the perspective of researching Miliukov's political and legal thought,

the entry in his diary of 7 May 1919 is important.⁴⁷ It contains an answer to the Eastern Committee of the Kadet Party regarding the foreign and domestic policy program. As to Wilson's program for world peace, Miliukov pointed out that it could be beneficial for Russia, provided that Wilson's 14 points were read in accordance with the principle of Russia's state unity and "practical exceptions to the principle of self-determination". Thus, Miliukov recommended recognizing Wilson's 14 points, if the US would base its policy on them, whilst allowing Russia to adopt an interpretation that was favourable to itself. One of the main adjustments he wanted to introduce was neutralizing the principle of self-determination, which would make it possible to institute Russia's borders as close as possible to what they were in 1914, excluding ethnographic Poland.

As to the Baltic Provinces, Miliukov argued that they should return to Russia, although with "wide autonomy". Miliukov advocated this policy by stating: "Estonians themselves are ready to go for it"⁴⁸. In this regard, Sergei Sazonov recommended changing this postulate to omit the Estonians and simply write that "the autonomy of the Baltic Country should secure the rights of the minority, primarily the Russian one".⁴⁹ Miliukov agreed to include a fragment about securing the rights of the Russian minority. As for Lithuania, Miliukov wrote: "Lithuanians can be promised more if they start honest talks, but not pre-empt and prevent unification on the basis of an agreement."⁵⁰ This means that Miliukov agreed to talks about the content of autonomy, but as a legal institution it was to be top-down – i.e. it was the central authority that, by its decision, was to grant, in this case, autonomy to the Lithuanians, but this could not be done under the agreement between the Russian central authority and the Lithuanians. This proves the desire to avoid federalization of Russia. In

this sense, the all-Russian supreme central authority of Russia (the Russian state) was to decide on the establishment of the autonomy, its form and the bodies of administration within this autonomy. Furthermore, Miliukov would prefer limiting it toward matters of cultural nature.

During his work in Great Britain in 1919, Miliukov gave many interviews to the press. For example, in the newspaper "The Morning Post" of 12 November 1919, Miliukov criticized another proposal to convene talks between the Bolsheviks and the forces of white Russia.⁵¹ As to Miliukov's position towards the Baltic states and Ukraine, this issue of the newspaper can be quoted:

*"Autonomy in all local affairs to all the Baltic States, but complete independence for them would be fatal alike to Russia, because she would be deprived of all her ports on the Baltic, and also to the States concerned, because they would have, as the Germans say, no Hinterland. [...] He is opposed to a confederation of the Russian State, that is to say, he would not have the link only one of States but would rather have as its basis a common Russian citizenship. In other words, he takes the Abraham Lincoln line, and would refuse to give to any State the right to secede. His ideal is federation not confederation, based on three foundations; first, a common territory; second, obedience to one authority; third, one single political representation."*⁵²

Regarding Finland, Miliukov said:

*"We are prepared to give practically national independence to Finland subject to two guarantees – one strategic, involving the safety of Petrograd, and the second, a common foreign policy. I may remind you that I fought Finland's battle under autocratic Russia."*⁵³

The above statement can be considered an extension of the thoughts expressed in an interview of 6 November 1919 for "Manchester Guardian".⁵⁴ In this interview, Miliukov voiced his views about the issue of federation and autonomy:

*"I am satisfied to be able to add that Russian Liberals do not think of Russian unity as of a restoration of the former centralised State of Russia. We hope the question will be solved in the spirit of conciliation with the reasonable strivings of the small nationalities. But in order for this conciliation to become possible we expect the Allies not to encourage the extreme and artificial claims formerly supported, if not created, by the Germans. Under Russian unity we understand the unity of territory, of subjection, and of political representation, the unity of the army and the foreign policy, the non-admission of the right of secession, the usual competency of federal administration; in short, everything comprised under the name of a real federation. A confederation seems to us an obsolete and unstable form. But there is plenty of room for a very large autonomy, territorial and national, within the limits mentioned."*⁵⁵

In this sense, Miliukov used the terms "federation" and "autonomy" interchangeably. However, he did not provide any specifics regarding the rights of "small nationalities" that would remain within Russia's borders.

Miliukov and the Russian Liberation Committee

Miliukov's presence in London in 1919–1920 was also related to his active activities in the Russian Liberation Committee.⁵⁶ In a brochure published by this organization

entitled “Russia and England” he criticized any policy of the Entente countries that could favour the dismemberment of Russia.⁵⁷ Simultaneously, Miliukov intensively agitated for the organization of intervention against the Bolsheviks. During numerous lectures and interviews, he argued that it would not be a fight for the return of the tsarist regime, but a fight “for the restitution of the Russian State, which had sacrificed so much for the common cause”.⁵⁸ In one of his first lectures in the UK, which was titled “Russia’s Struggle for Unity and Freedom”, Miliukov pointed out that the Russian contribution to the war in 1914–1917 was so great that Russia paid for it with “her national unity and of her very Statehood”.⁵⁹ Thus, the Entente powers should help Russia (which he defined as the anti-Bolshevik forces) in the fight against the Bolsheviks (which he defined as German allies). This was one of the main narratives of the Committee.

In 1919, the Russian Liberation Committee also prepared and published a document on Russia’s position towards the territory of the former Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire entitled “Memorandum on the Baltic Provinces Question”.⁶⁰ The contents thereof suggest that Miliukov may be their author or co-author. One of the main theses of this brochure was that thanks to the Russians, Estonians and Latvians were able to preserve their national and cultural life under the conditions of the German threat.⁶¹ All this leads to the main conclusion of the brochure that:

“Politically, the Baltic Provinces cannot exist as independent States, owing to their small area and weakness; they form a far too convenient base where any enemy of Russia (especially Germany) could freely deploy an army, however large, for the purpose of dealing a blow at the very heart of

Russia, as, owing to the defencelessness of the inner frontier, all ways would be open to Petrograd and Moscow.”⁶²

Analysing the content of Miliukov’s political and propaganda activity in Great Britain in 1919, it can be seen that it fully reflected the position of A. Kolchak’s government regarding the legal and political status of the former Baltic governorates and Finland. Miliukov, like Kolchak,⁶³ believed that the creation of an independent Latvia, Estonia and Finland would cut Russia off from the Baltic Sea.⁶⁴ Thus, Russia would lose access to the military and economic infrastructure in this region, in which it had invested significant funds, especially at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.⁶⁵ Importantly, they believed that the new states which emerged in the region could become German allies. This would leave the Russian capital, Petrograd, defenceless, and the roads to Moscow open.⁶⁶ From this point of view, they considered that strategic reasons spoke in favour of Latvia and Estonia being in the Russian state on the basis of autonomy, and Finland possibly having a limited legal and state separation from Russia.

Thus, although Miliukov could not stay in Paris in 1919, where the diplomatic activity of the Whites was concentrated in connection with the peace conference, he very proactively attempted to influence British politicians and society. At the same time, he tried to maintain active contacts with White diplomats, military and politicians.

The nationality issue and the problem of the Baltic states in “The New Russia”

Miliukov’s attitude to the nationality issue in Russia during the Civil War was also very clearly presented in a series of

articles entitled “Balkanization of Russia” in the magazine “The New Russia” in 1920. This newspaper was an important tool for influencing British public opinion.⁶⁷ First of all, Miliukov’s definition of the “Balkanization of Russia” process, analysed by himself, should be quoted:

“The [Balkanization of Russia] has become a current expression. It does not mean the liberation of forcibly annexed oppressed nationalities from a foreign yoke, as was the case in Turkey and is now the case with Hungary. It means creating new and artificial petty imperialisms, directly starting on endless wars, entering unnatural and momentary groups of alliances and practically serving as petty change for the conflicting ambitions of great expanding powers.”⁶⁸

The Kadet leader gave the following examples of Balkanization in the territory of the former Russian Empire:

“Estonia is now in an open conflict with Latvia; Lithuania prepares for a desperate fight against Polish claims; Georgia and Azerbaidjan expand over Armenian lands, not to mention the more serious violations of the national rights of defenceless Russia by Finland, Poland and Rumania.”⁶⁹

In this sense, the collapse of Russian statehood as a result of the Bolshevik coup of 1917 was, in the opinion of Miliukov, the cause of senseless international conflicts and thus destabilization on Russia’s former borders. He wrote:

“All this is the unavoidable result of forcible dismemberment of a national organism which grew up in process of natural expansion over the great eastern European plain in the dark centuries when no national consciousness was awakened in smaller

ethnographic units counting up to a hundred and, accordingly, a long process of physiological and racial fusion was going on undisturbed by any considerations of nationalistic ideology.”⁷⁰

According to Miliukov:

“To denounce that stage of the peaceful amalgamation of races would be equivalent to a useless attempt at remaking history.”⁷¹

Miliukov took the position that Russia cannot be compared to Austria and Turkey. Miliukov argued that the nature of the relationship between Russians as

“...national nucleus and other nationalities in Russia is quite different from that in Turkey and in Hungary (I purposely do not mention Austria, where the question would be subject to dispute). Not even the most fanatical enemy of Russian Czarism would risk a comparison between the former autocratic rule and the Turkish regime.”⁷²

According to Miliukov, even in the darkest period of nationalist politics in the Russian Empire, this policy could not “...be compare to [Madjarization] in Hungary”⁷³.

Miliukov believed that the core territory of the Russian Empire became part of it during the so-called peaceful colonization. The course of this process did not differ from those that took place in Western Europe, although Russia, due to its backwardness, went through these phases later. The situation was different on Russia’s western and southern borders, especially in the Baltic region and in Transcaucasia. There, according to Miliukov:

“Peaceful ethnographic amalgamation was here either stopped or prevented by

a lasting struggle of conflicting political centres. Ethnic limits, roughly spoken, were stabilised where they were found by political frontiers, established as a result of a prolonged armed struggle."⁷⁴

Political and military rivalry in these regions between Russia and its neighbours has led to the inhibition or prevention of the process of physical mixing and integration of the population. Such conditions allowed small nationalities to maintain or develop their national consciousness. Therefore, according to Miliukov:

*"Now at this particular moment in Russia it was the Russian Government itself which, far from attempting to [Russianise] the small nationalities on its outskirts, helped them very much to reach the first stage of national consciousness."*⁷⁵

The Kadet leader emphasized that in the key to the development of national consciousness of small nations on the border of the Russian Empire, the Russian state was nevertheless a positive force. All this, of course, did not result from the political idealism of tsarism. This was the result of a well-thought-out policy to secure its expansion, while supporting small nationalities that lived on the borders of the Empire against neighbouring countries. Of this, Miliukov wrote:

*"It was thus that the Russian bureaucracy of the old school helped the Finns to work out their national literature and to develop their literary language in competition with the Swedish language and cultural influence. This was also the reason why in Esthonia, Livland and Kurland, the Russian authorities took up the defence of the predominant local populations against the superior thin social layer of German conquerors and colonists."*⁷⁶

According to Miliukov, among the nationalities living in the Russian Empire, only Poles had their political representation and a tradition of their own statehood, which was destroyed against their will,⁷⁷ whereas about other nationalities living in the Russian Empire he wrote:

*"All the other nationalities had cast in their lot with Russia voluntarily in order to avoid some other, more oppressive, submission. In the process of common life they came under Russian cultural influence and their own national consciousness was slumbering, even in those cases where it had been awakened before annexation."*⁷⁸

The second exception to these rules were the Finns. According to Miliukov:

*"Finland is another exception to the general rule; but even in Finland (which before its union with Russia was not an independent state but only a province of Sweden) quite half a century passed in a state of somnolent inactivity."*⁷⁹

According to Miliukov, the opposition presented opposing views. He stated:

*"Opposition to the governmental view on national questions coincided with a general opposition against the rule of the autocracy. [Decentralisation] was an old slogan acceptable even for certain conservative groups of public opinion, while in more radical ones the idea of local autonomy on a territorial basis was more or less largely spread."*⁸⁰

According to Miliukov, the revolutionary events of 1904–1906 were the point that strengthened national awareness and the aspiration to obtain specific rights within the framework of functioning in the Russian Empire. However, the reform

of the political system in the form of issuing the so-called October Manifesto and the establishment of the State Duma raised hopes for the implementation of certain civil and political rights. This, in turn, meant that the nationalities living in the Empire focused not on separatist aspirations aimed at separating them from the common state and creating their own, but more on obtaining autonomy or specific cultural rights. That is why Miliukov titled the third part of his second article “Common Freedom before Self-Determination”.⁸¹ According to him,

“The fact is, that even such tendencies at separation as existed among the several nationalities, were obfuscated at the bright perspectives of the coming freedom, political, individual and national – for the whole of the Empire. For the time being, narrowly nationalistic tendencies were considered to be antiquated, and they were confined to such parties as were looked at with suspicion by the newly built democratic and Socialistic groups, as being too aristocratic or too clerical, to represent real popular aspirations.”⁸²

To support his thesis, he cited the positions of selected political or social forces representing such nationalities as Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, Georgians, Armenians, Ukrainians, as well as the Muslim population, who made specific demands for the introduction of autonomy or national rights within local government. In this context, he wrote:

“This was the state of mind of the nationalities in the Russian Empire at the moment when the prospects of a general liberation were bright and hopes ran high the reconstruction of Russia on a large basis of political freedom and local liberties, coupled with radical social reform.”⁸³

However, the chances for such changes and thus maintaining the cohesion of the Russian state were squandered by tsarism. Miliukov wrote:

“The last chance for the autocracy peacefully to transform itself into a new constitutional form passed with the forcible dissolution of the first two Dumas.”⁸⁴

The stubbornness of tsarism in avoiding the transformation of the state towards a constitutional monarchy and the support that tsarism received in 1907–1917 from the “artificially selected” nationalist majority in the Duma meant that the nationality problem in Russia was not solved until 1917. According to Miliukov, individual national minorities in Russia were primarily interested in gaining general rights and civil liberties, and then – in autonomy within a reformed Russia. He considered the rule of tsarism to be the reason for the failure of these trials.

Therefore, in the third article dedicated to the “Balkanization” of Russia, Miliukov described in detail his viewpoint on the external causes of the growth of national consciousness and nationalism among the nationalities inhabiting the border territories of the former Russian Empire.⁸⁵ He considered German policy towards Russia as one of the main sources of this phenomenon. Miliukov argued that the policy of stimulating national consciousness in order to weaken Russia by influencing the population living in its western parts was based on very detailed studies. Miliukov described the goals of this policy this way:

“...first, it was intended to separate Germany from Russia by a zone of Border States, thus weakening Russia’s force for any future war of revenge. In the second place – if it were not the first in importance – a new economic area, a Colonial-und-Wirtschafts-gebiet was to be created

*in the East, contiguous to German territories, thus restoring the equilibrium of agriculture and industry, to make Germany as self-supporting as possible.*⁸⁶

Importantly, the German policy of weakening Russia, which Miliukov described as nationalist, was synchronized with Bolshevik policy.⁸⁷ Miliukov pointed out the paradox that, in his opinion, Lenin and the Bolsheviks should be based on internationalism, thus negating concepts such as nation, homeland, or even state borders. Miliukov explained that the point in this case was that Lenin changed not the party program but the tactics of achieving his goals. Hence, Bolshevik and German propaganda had the same character.

In addition, Miliukov suggested German financing of Bolshevik activities. He wrote also that Finns, Estonians and Latvians

*“...were systematically recruited and trained, especially in prisoners’ camps, for propaganda and for military insurrections in Russia. Funds were found for publishing Nationalist periodicals, pamphlets, and more serious books for the aims of propaganda. Special books against Russia were ordered from Russian refugees in neutral countries, to appear in different languages.”*⁸⁸

He argued that Germany effected *“...use of the Bolshevik conception of [self-determination] for the sole aim of proclaiming as accomplished facts that the detachment from Russia of Poland, Lithuania, Kurland, parts of Livonia and Esthonia [...]”*⁸⁹

At the same time, he questioned the importance of internal, organic nation-building processes. This narrative was supposed to lead to the conclusion that the aspirations of individual nations for independence – whether within a federation or through independence – are artificially created. Therefore, in Miliukov’s estimation,

these nationalities can only have autonomy within the Russian state. To sum up, in his considerations from the spring of 1920, Miliukov saw three main sources of so-called separatism, which lead to the former Baltic governorates of the Russian Empire to form into Baltic states separate from Russia. Those sources were the inconsistent policy of tsarism; German politics, and Bolshevik practices. These factors would have important consequences; in his 1927 work on the Civil War, Miliukov identified one of the main reasons for the defeat of the anti-Bolshevik movement, especially the White one, was the inability to reach an understanding with non-Russian nationalities.⁹⁰

Conclusion

The main goal of Pavel Miliukov’s anti-Bolshevik activity in 1917–1920 was the reconstruction of the Russian statehood. For Miliukov, the reconstruction of the Russian state included:

- 1) Reconstruction of the borders of the Russian state, preferably similar to those in 1914 (excluding the territory of the former Kingdom of Poland). The demarcation of the borders was intended to secure the military, economic and political interests of the Russian state as a European power;
- 2) Creation of strong state power, based on centralized government administration;
- 3) Rejection of the idea and concept of state federalization. Miliukov softened his position on federalization only in connection with the so-called new tactic in mid-1920, when he stopped believing in the victory of the White Movement;⁹¹
- 4) Granting special rights of a national and cultural nature to selected nationalities, at most at the level and in the form of legal autonomy. In the scale of whole country, especially in public space,

the Russian language and therefore Russian culture were to dominate.

In accordance with the above goals and principles of Miliukov's policy, he argued that the territories of the former Baltic governorates should constitute an integral part of the Russian state. For Miliukov, the loss of the territory of the Baltic governorates meant a degradation of Russia's status in Europe.

Miliukov based his reasoning, argumentation and political views on his historical view.⁹² In this sense, his proposals would have Russian state was to go back in its development to the 17th and 18th centuries, and even to the Middle Ages. Miliukov, as an outstanding specialist in research on colonization processes in the history of Russia, could also be afraid of the occurrence of potential decolonization processes, which could threaten the existence of the Russian state in general. He refers the colonization processes in Russian history to analogous processes in other Western powers. Therefore, he argued that the history of Russia, although lagging behind that of the West, had similar features and development processes. Against this background, he believed that Russia, as an empire, had a positive impact on the cultural and national development of small nations on its territory. An example of this were the Estonians and Latvians, who, thanks to the Russian state, gained protection from the German population. Hence, it is not surprising that Miliukov strongly opposed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of 1918 and its consequences. Joshua A. Sanborn described this treaty as the culmination of the revolutionary processes in Russia and a key moment of decolonization.⁹³

The loss of ports on the Baltic Sea, which were intended to handle the export of Russian agricultural produce, was particularly painful. However, the most important thing was that the Russian navy would forfeit the ability to operate effectively

in the Baltic. These fears were linked to the idea that the territory of the former Baltic states would become a colony of other powers, which would pose a threat to the political and economic centres of the Russian state, i.e. St. Petersburg and Moscow.

The nations inhabiting the territory of the former Baltic governorates were to have guaranteed national and cultural autonomy and territorial self-government. This meant that Miliukov rejected any form of a federal system under which individual parts of the Russian state would have a strongly guaranteed legal and political independence. Despite the local government, the institution that unites the Russian state would be the government administration. He saw the time of the civil war as a moment of striving to ensure the unity of Russia, and not of detailed considerations about national-cultural autonomy.⁹⁴ It is difficult to speculate at this point what would happen in that case, but by analysing Miliukov's approach to the issue of nationality in Russia, and especially autonomy, one can come to the conclusion that such a model would enable the Russification of the non-Russian part of the Russian population in the future. Especially since in his earlier works Miliukov wrote, among other things, that nationality was a sociological phenomenon.⁹⁵ The above considerations provide grounds for claiming that Miliukov's political and legal thought in this period was also based on strong statism and nationalism. This was a manifestation of aggressive nationalism, which also developed within the ranks of the Kadet Party during the Great War and the Revolution of 1917.⁹⁶ In this sense, Miliukov, seeing the national awakening among the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, actively tried to oppose these processes. On the other hand, he connected the need to rebuild Russian statehood with the need to complete the process of building modern Russian nationalism.⁹⁷

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KOPSAVILKUMS

Pāvela Nikolajeviča Miļukova politiskās darbības galvenais mērķis Krievijas pilsoņu kara laikā 1917.–1920. gadā bija boļševiku izslēgšana no Krievijas politiskās un ekonomiskās dzīves. Saskaņā ar šo mērķi Kadetu partijas līderis centās atjaunot Krievijas valstiskumu robežās, kas būtu pēc iespējas tuvākas tām, kādas Krievijas impērijai bija 1914. gadā. Tāpēc neatkarīgu, no Krievijas atdalītu Baltijas valstu, t. i., Lietuvas, Latvijas un Igaunijas, izveide Miļukovam bija trieciens Krievijas valsts teritoriālajai vienotībai. Krievijas politiķi bija īpaši noraizējušies par vairāku svarīgu Baltijas jūras piekrastes ostu zaudēšanu. Reakcija uz šiem procesiem bija plaša politiska un propagandas darbība. Tās laikā Miļukovs Antantes lielvaru diplomātiem un politiķiem apgalvoja, ka centrālās jeb separātisma tendencēm starp nekrievu tautībām ir trīs galvenie cēloņi: kļūdainā carisma politika, kas nespēja piešķirt valsts pilsoņiem pamattiesības, vācu un boļševiku politika. Vienlaikus viņš centās pierādīt, ka atjaunotā Krievijas valsts garantēs tiesības nekrievu tautības iedzīvotājiem vietējā līmenī. Līdz 1920. gada rudenim viņš izslēdza iespēju atjaunot etniskās attiecības Krievijā, balstoties uz federālo modeli.

Iepriekš minētie apsvērumi dod pamatu apgalvot, ka arī Miļukova politiskā un juridiskā doma šajā periodā balstījās spēcīgā nacionālismā. Šajā ziņā Miļukovs, redzot Centrāleiropas un Austrumeiropas tautu nacionālo atmodu, aktīvi centās pretoties šiem procesiem.



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