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Lithuanian Borderland in 1609: View from Smolensk Chancellery*

Introduction

Early Modern Moscow-Lithuanian Borderland is well studied. Its trace is the best investigated one among the borderlines of Muscovy. The case of the Russian-Lithuanian borderline was the basis of important theoretical reconstruction (by M. Krom and also A. Frolov¹) in the sphere of the appearance of borders as signs of Early Modern states.

„Smolensk archive” and Sapiehas

New data for studying the Moscow-Lithuanian border is provided by the acts from the Smolensk Chancellery 1609-1611. The „Smolensk archive” is one of the „divided archives” of early 17th century (like also „Novgorod archive” and „Tikhvin archive” — term by Elisabeth Löfstrand). As in the archive of Novgorod Chancellery 1611-1616 the Smolensk archive collected the random samples of acts; the acts concerning previously unknown spheres of Muscovite day-to-day life were not bad preserved.

Traditionally the story of the Smolensk documents is considered as follows. They were the pure archive of Smolensk City Chancellery from the period of the siege 1609-1611 and some previous months. After Sigismund III took Smolensk it had become Polish military salvage and fall to Bereza estate archives. During Polish-Lithuanian „Potop” in mid-17th century Swedes had conquered it and the archive was taken to Sweden as also a trophy. In 1830s significant part of the archive was thieved by S. V. Solovjev and moved to Russia; then Solovjov sold some (all?) documents to Emperor’s Archaeographic Commission in St. Petersburg. In 1840s some acts were

* This article is an output of a research project „Territorialization of Politics of Difference: Internal and External borders in Russian History” implemented as part of the Basic Research Program at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE).

¹ M. M. Krom, *Changing Allegiances in the Age of State Building. The border between the Great Duchy of Lithuania and the Great Principality of Moscow*, [in:] *Imagined. Negotiated. Remembered. Constructing European Borders and Borderlands*, Münster 2012, p. 15-30; A. A. Фролов, *Феномен «чернокунства» новгородско-литовских соглашений XV в.*, „Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики”, 2013, № 3 (53), с. 143-144.

published by the Archaeographic Commission, some lost unpublished. Now they are distributed to two archive collections in St. Petersburg Institute for History: Collection 124 (S. V. Solovjov; the acts published in 1842 are also kept there) and Collection 174 (Acts before 1613). The other part of Smolensk Chancellery in 17th century fall into Sko-Klöster Collection of Brahe Comtes, then in 1893 the Brahe (or Sko-Klöster) Collection became a part of State Archives (Svenska Riksarkiv) in Stockholm.

However the fate of the „Smolensk archive” is not so easy. Among the acts distributed to three archive collections (one in Stockholm and two in St. Petersburg) one could find not only acts from inside Smolensk before and during the siege of 1609-1611. Significant part of the documents were the petitions of Moscow State Court members and also provincial gentry (mostly from Smolensk and other West Russian towns) to Czar Wladislaw Zhigimontowich, also letters by Vasilij Shujskiy’s adherents sieged in Troitsa to Moscow; letters by noble Muscovites to Chancellor Lev Sapieha with petitions for intercession. Many of the documents originated not from Smolensk but also from King Sigismund’s field camp near it. Probably the story of the Smolensk archive was more complicated.

In June 1611 the archive of the City Chancellery was taken not by „Polish-Lithuanian officials” but personally by the Great Chancellor of Lithuania Lev Sapieha. He also held the documents been accumulated during the siege of the City in 1609-1611m especially concerning the relations with different Muscovite civil acts. Then, according to Igor’ Tyumentsev, the archives of Lev Sapieha was kept for a while together with the field archives of his twice removed brother Jan Petr Sapieha, False Dmitriy II’s hetman; a kind of „diffusion” between the two archives happened². Bereza archive taken by Swedes in Lithuania in mid-17th which is known as „Smolensk archive” is mostly the remains of lost Lev Sapieha’s archive with some acts from field archives of his twice removed brother. Letters from Troitsa to Moscow (including two letters of Xenia (Ol’ga) Godunova), 1609, belong to hetman Sapieha’s archives, of course (Tyumentsev wrote about a number of postings taken by Sapieha’s soldiers³). These documents (from hetman’s field archives) had never been in Smolensk (they had the chance only after city conquering in June 1611, on the way to Lithuania).

In 1910 the documents from „Smolensk archive” were sent to Russia, to Jurij Gautier for publishing; Gautier started to study the Smolensk acts in

² *Русский архив гетмана Яна Сапеги 1608-1611 годов: опыт реконструкции и источниковедческого анализа*, Волгоград 2005, с. 8, 35, 36; S. Mirsky, N. Tupikova, N. Tyumentseva, *Новые документы архива Я. П. Сапеги*, „Canadian-American Slavic Studies”, 2014, Vol. 48, Issue 1-2, p. 179-211.

³ *Русский архив...*, с. 44.

1897, in Sweden. The publication of Smolensk acts held in connection with the Jubilee of Romanov's Dynasty in 1913 could not be called average: Gautier was in a hurry, did not make good titles and missed sometimes words, sometimes parts of the acts. The publication of some Smolensk documents provided 70 years before Gautier, in 1840s was done much better. Now the documents of Smolensk archive in Stockholm are preserved in the same order they were sent to Gautier in 1910, in boxes, mixed with each other. In 2014 the project of digital description of Smolensk collection started, with the support of Riksbanken Jubileumfundet. The idea is also to reconstruct its volume including the losses of 19th century.

The documents of „Smolensk Chancellery 1609-1611” were used by historians since its first publication in 1842 and especially after Gautier's publication in 1912. Gautier also started to study the problem of borderline conflicts in Spring-Summer 1609. These conflicts anticipated the king's direct invasion to Moscow State in late August from Orsha). Gautier had also revealed a group of acts from Smolensk Chancellery connected with that conflicts and linked that group with acts been held in Archaeographic Commission collections.

The last important work where the problem of Smolensk-Lithuanian borderland was considered is the book by S. Aleksandrov about the Smolensk siege 1609-1611. The researcher showed how brothers Gosiewskis had conquered parts of Porechje and Schuchje Court districts, plotting on the texts of Court peasants' petitions and reports by outposts' heads⁴.

Smolensk and Novgorod

The data from Smolensk archive is better to be studied in comparative prospective. Really, the data used by Aleksandrov is not unique; it is possible to place them in the context of similar documents of Moscow Time of Troubles. The closest analogue is the archives of Novgorod the Great, 1611-1617⁵. The both archives, from Novgorod and from Smolensk were taken entirely, without preliminary classification of acts and books. In Natalja Rybalko's paper the both City Chancelleries of Smolensk and Novgorod were considered as the two largest Chancelleries of Muscovite State⁶. I suppose such a characteristic is more connected with the extent of preservation of

⁴ С. В. Александров, *Смоленская осада 1609-1611 гг.*, Москва 2011.

⁵ E. Löfstrand, L. Nordquist, *Accounts of the Occupied City. Catalogue of the Novgorod Occupation Archives 1611-1617*, Serie 1, Stockholm 2005; Serie 2, Stockholm 2009.

⁶ Н. В. Рыбалко, *Приказная служба дьяков и подьячих в городах периода царствования Василия Шуйского*, [in:] *Государство и общество в России XV — начала XX века. Сборник статей памяти Н. Е. Носова*, Санкт-Петербург 2007, с. 277-307.

the archives (and the extent of its studying). But there could be found other two factors important to combine the two archives. The borderline situation of both cities determined similar specific traits in local gentry services (outpost, other borderline servings). In this direction the data from Smolensk looks more informative than the same from Novgorod.

The comparison of Smolensk governor Shein and Novgorod governor Prince Odoevskij is often in historical (including public historical) literature. The sum of known documents does not allow contrasting the two heroes of the Time of Troubles. They are too different and belong to different generations: Shein of 30 years old, typical product of adventurous civil war period who seized upon power in sieged Smolensk; and old boyar Prince Odoevskij who played the second roles in Novgorod government in 1611-1616 (died in 1616 in Novgorod still occupied by Swedes). No one could find in their fates the contrast of heroism and conformism. The date of Prince Odoevskij is much more the fate of a person whose carrier started in the age of Ivan the Terrible; Shein was a climber typical for the Time of Troubles. Musketeer Semen Igumnov in his petition in December 1610 addressed to „Muscovite State boyar and ruler Sovereign Mikhailo Borisovich (Shein)”⁷ (in the same time in Novgorod a petition could be addressed to „Czar Wladislaw Zhigimontovich”). That was the unique case; in most petition the Smolensk inhabitants after August 1610 usually addressed to „the Boyars of Muscovite state”.

The comparative analysis of the documents from Smolensk and Novgorod also shows sustainability of the border guarding system. The system of border-guarding in Smolensk-Velizh border has quite close analogies in the system of border-guarding on Swedish-Russian borderline after delimitation in 1618 (and especially — after contr-epidemic measures in 1629-1630). The documents on the Smolensk border of 1609 are the earliest data on the border-guarding in Muscovite tradition (in forest zone, not in steppe).

Borderline attacks during the Time of Troubles

Documents connected with the borderline control organizing in early stage of the Time of Troubles are of most interest for studying the issue of Russian-Lithuanian borderline. The same could be mentioned concerning the documents of the time of the king's army step up to Smolensk and first weeks of the siege. The documents are mostly the correspondence of Smolensk governors with outpost officers concerning the problems of en-

⁷ Явка стрельца Семена Игуменова приказа В. Г. Чихачева на стрельца того же приказа Никиту Иванова сына Сапожника, похваляющегося на него разными лихими делами за сказанную правду. 1610. 25.12, Архив Санкт-Петербургского института истории, кол. 174, оп. 2, д. 496.

forcing the border and including „Lithuanian events”. Numerous peasants’ petitions from the borderline districts are also well preserved. They include information on the attacks of brothers Gosiewskis and brothers Khripunovs (former Muscovite subjects) and then — about the gradual conquering of the Court districts by Lithuanians. The syncretism of the reports could be found when the Smolensk inhabitants after crossing the Lithuanian border made complains against the Lithuanian authorities who had accused them to be spies and in the same time told the Muscovite authorities about the moving of Lithuanian troops.

The struggle for North-Western parts of Smolensk area started immediately after the Jam-Zapolje armistice. After stopping the war in 1582 the argue for Velizh district started; because the points of the armistice did not regulate its borders. Moscow did not agree to transfer Velizh district to Lithuania because some parts of it belonged previously to Toropets. Shelamanoва showed that Moscow did not succeed to keep these parts because of very active position of Vitebsk elder Stanislaw Pac, who conquered lands in Smolensk, Toropets and Velijie Luki districts after 1583. A. Filjushkin also wrote about non-stopped border war in this territory. According to him, on September 17, 1583 Boyar Council together with czar Ivan IV discussed „attacks in Luki, Toropets and Nevel”⁸; then 2000 servicemen headed by Prince Eletskej were sent to guard the border. Czar at that time was in great depression, thus only generals had argued with each other in that council⁸. In 1583 Lithuanians destroyed number of villages and parish centers in the area and the village Ogryzkovo was the object of Lithuanians’ attacks also in 1584 and 1585, then it was connected to Velizh district⁹.

Ju. Gautier wrote in 1912 about the vanguard battles on the Velizh border in 1609 according to the order by governor Shein to outpost officer Bashmakov to stop robbery in Schuchje district. The activities of Lithuanians from Velizh did not stop all the summer 1609. On July 21 they tried to organize the road cleaning and bridge making in Schuchje district in order to cut the rye in the district they named belonging to Velizh area. In the same time 53 peasants of Elshovo ten had sworn to Simon Gosiewski. Outpost officers wrote to Smolensk that the local recruits who had been sent to the border were deserting; they asked governor for „true military powers” to defend the border. Officer Zhidovinov complained that on May 31 he had no chance to go from Porechje district to Schuchje district because of alarm

⁸ А. И. Филишкин, *Изобретая первую войну России и Европы. Балтийские войны второй половины XVI в. глазами современников и потомков*, Санкт-Петербург 2013, с. 170.

⁹ Н. Б. Шеламанова, *К вопросу об изучении источников по истории внешней политики России в конце XVI в.*, Москва 1962.

news. In the same time the musketeers and peasants from Porechje district refused to help him and sabotage his orders. In Schuchje district there was a local conflict: some of peasants followed their oath to Czar Vasilij Shujskiy, the others (headed by Lesunovs family) had sworn to Lithuania and received help from Velizh. On August 2 officer Bashmakov reported that local peasants who had already deserted to Lithuania started propaganda in Schuchje district for swearing Velizh Lord. At that point Bashmakov had no chance to stay against the upcoming Gosiewskis' invasion: he was hardly alone, the only gentleman with him, Boris Leskov was blind. Gautier wrote that Gosiewskis had continuously attacked these borderline districts to the extent that King Sigismund appeared from Orsha¹⁰.

The conflicts on the Velizh border started in March 1609 were not the immediate reaction to the alliance between Muscovite State and Sweden. It were described by the sources as a set of borderline attacks typical for the borderland in 15-17th cc. One could found mutual calling each other traitors by court peasants, swearing to „Velizh Lords” made the peasants firstly traitors, then — „Lithuanians”. Not only Gosiewskis started the attacks in spring 1609 but also former Muscovite subjects brothers Khripunovs.

The information on local geography of borderline in the documents of Smolensk archive adds a lot about the concrete infrastructure in this part of Smolensk area. In one petition Porechje peasants told the authorities that they had received news about how Aleksander Gosiewski plan to attack them: he „send his troops along three roads: through Schuchje district, directly throufg the wood and along the third road, through Surozh in boats (that means they would come along the Dvina river).

New political concepts of the Time of Troubles (treason, deserters) appeared in the lexica of acts in both the Chancelleries. Those concepts are very characteristic for the civil war and help to find the interpretation of locals as strangers: it appeared in bureaucratic discourse of acts but also had political and social senses. Different cases of usage provide different meanings. In the case of Novgorod documents the concept of treason appeared in the logic of struggle for estates; in Smolensk case — mostly in the context of struggle with Velizh neighbors for villages in Porechje and Schuchje districts. When parts of those districts were forced to swear to Lithuania by Simon Gosiewski the peasants who preserved to be Moscow subjects had complained that some of their former comrades had become traitors, followed the Lithuanians' orders and paved the roads from Velizh

¹⁰ Ю. В. Готье, *Предисловие*, [in:] *Смутное время Московского государства*, вып. 6: *Памятники обороны Смоленска 1609-1611 гг.*, под редакцией и с предисловием Ю. В. Готье, Москва 1912, с. IX-X.

to Porechje¹¹. However there were acts that vindicated the „traitors” also compiled in the context of „Russian-Lithuanian” opposition. According to the explanation of local peasants of Schuchje district some of them had to go to the Lithuanian side, but they had been forced by Lithuanians and Tartars „with sabers” in the same time there were no „previous felony”¹². Just simply these texts show that the situation in Smolensk-Velizh borderland in 1609 was not simple and Gosiewskis were not only just conquerors but had a kind of positive program (probably primitive enough). The report of officer Zhidovinov told in details about the „Lithuanian Jaremka” from Velizh agitation in Schuchje district all over the parishes where the peasants had sworn to Velizh Lords: „go to Velizh with Your gold coins!” That Jaremka also came up to his outpost near St. Nicholas parish in Plai and threatened local peasants forcing them to swear to Great Dux of Lithuania because „the only one your modest parish lost in Muscovite hands!”¹³.

Also the documents from Smolensk archive give examples of rhetoric concepts typical for the deposited city: siege service is a special merit; fear of futile charge of treason (slander, picking up red-handed evidences). In the conditions of repressive policy by governor Shein the concepts were actual indeed.

«The genuine border» described in Shein’s letter to Velizh elder Aleksander Gosiewski could not be based on any covenant¹⁴. The border in that place as Shelamanova had shown was traced unilaterally and the final borderline agreement was not achieved even up to 1667 (Andrusovo armistice)¹⁵.

Conclusions

The gradual conquering the parts of Porechje and Schuchje districts by Lithuanians according to the data of Smolensk archive was very similar to the processes studied by Viktor Temushev in the area of Gomel’-Starodub border century before. That was one of the most important points of the Smolensk archive data. Methods used in 1609 by Lithuanian elders in conquering parts of these districts were the same that had been used by Muscovite officials when conquering parts of Gomel’ and other Lithuanian districts. Temushev described the Muscovite methods as follows: first, border districts were proclaimed to be belonged to Moscow. Then they were connected with the old Moscow districts. Also „extortionate attacks in borderland in order to make life conditions insufferable” had been initiated¹⁶.

¹¹ *Памятники обороны Смоленска...*, документы 29, 30.

¹² *Ibidem*, док. 38.

¹³ *Ibidem*, док. 39.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, док. 25.

¹⁵ Н. Б. Шеламанова, *К вопросу об изучении...*

¹⁶ В. Н. Темушев, *Первая московско-литовская пограничная война 1486-1494*, Москва 2014, с. 38.

Very similar things one could see in Smolensk-Velizh border in late 16 — early 17th cc. but in opposite order. Originally after the armistice in Jam-Zapolje Muscovites archly tried to transfer Velizh to Lithuania without countryside district; the result of further borderline argues (as cruel as skirmish) was the unilaterally delimitation from the Lithuanian side in 1601¹⁷. Then Lithuanians insisted on the parts of Porechje and Schuchje districts to be Mikulino district of Vitebsk land: the same model of conquering that was used by Muscovites in late 15th c. AS Sgelamanova showed territories conquered by Gosiewskis were just that „Mikulino district”; after Smolensk itself had been conquered by King Sigismund in 1611 the issue of the border in the area lost its actuality and the districts were returned to Smolensk land.

In practice the relations between Lithuanian and Smolensk inhabitants during the Time of Trouble were not as cruel as it comes from the literal reading some documents of Smolensk archive. That was proved with the data studied by V. Nazarov and B. Florya in 1974¹⁸. The merry meeting of Aleksander Gosiewski and his troops in Velikie Luki is well known. The governor in Velikie Luki Fedor Plescheev clearly was a hostage of rebels who had usurped power in the town; thus he met Lithuanians as the emancipators. In this area of Easter Europe the final stage of the Time of Troubles was followed with numerous compromises and lical armistices¹⁹. The studying of the concrete borderline between Porechje and Schuchje districts from one side and Velizh district from the other — those „genuine border” that appeared in Shein’s letter to Gosiewski is the interesting direction for next research.

Streszczenie

Granica z Litwą 1609 roku – perspektywa smoleńska

Współczesna granica rosyjsko-litewska jest najlepiej zbadanym terenem spośród wszystkich obszarów granicznych Rosji. W artykule wykorzystano informacje z Archiwum w Smoleńsku, jednego z archiwów podzielonych, jak Novgorod Ockupationsarkivet i Tikhvin arkivet. Konflikty przygraniczne, które powstały w okolicach Wieliza w marcu 1609 roku nie stanowiły natychmiastowej reakcji Litwinów na sojusz rosyjsko-szwedzki. Dokumenty określają tę sytuację jako zaczepne działania przygraniczne typowe dla tych regionów w okresie między XV a XVII wiekiem. Stopniowa aneksja

¹⁷ Н. Н. Бантыш-Каменский, *Переписка между Россией и Польшей*, т. 1: 1487-1584, Москва 1861, с. 184-186; idem, *Обзор внешних сношений России (по 1800 год)*, т. 3, Москва 1897, с. 110-111.

¹⁸ В. Д. Назаров, Б. Н. Флоря, *Крестьянское восстание под предводительством И. И. Болотникова и Речь Посполитая*, [in:] *Крестьянские войны в России XVII-XVIII веков: проблемы, поиски, находки*, Ленинград 1974, с. 335-338.

¹⁹ *Сборник Русского исторического общества*, т. 142, Москва 1913, с. 4, 7, 10, 19.

przez Litwinów okręgów granicznych Porieczje i Szczuczje w 1609 roku w znacznym stopniu przypominała podobne procesy, jakie rozgrywały się w poprzednim wieku na granicznych terenach między miastami Homel a Starodub. W 1609 roku pojawiły się w dokumentach smoleńskich nowe pojęcia, charakterystyczne dla okresu wielkiej smuty, takie jak „zdradzić” lub „dezercerzy”. Były one częścią wizerunku „swoi” / „inni”, który charakteryzował w czasach wojny domowej w XVII w. dyskurs sztuki, polityki oraz nauk społecznych.

Słowa kluczowe: Archiwum Smoleńskie, wielka smuta, Sapieha, Szejn, Gosiewski, Wieliz.

Змест

Мяжа з Літвой 1609 года – смаленская перспектыва

Сучасная руска-літоўская мяжа – найлепш вывучаная тэрыторыя з ліку ўсіх прыгранічных раёнаў Расіі. У артыкуле выкарыстана інфармацыя са Смаленскага архіва, аднаго з падзеленых архіваў у „Novgorod Ockupationsarkivet” і „Tikhvin arkivet”. Памежныя канфлікты, якія ўзніклі ў наваколлі Веліжа ў сакавіку 1609 года, не былі вынікам неадкладнага рэагавання літоўцаў на руска-шведскі саюз. Дакументы называюць гэтую сітуацыю наступальнымі памежнымі дзеяннямі, характэрнымі для гэтых раёнаў паміж XV і XVII стст. Паступовы захоп літоўцамі памежных раёнаў Парэчча і Шчучае ў 1609 г. у значнай ступені нагадваў падобныя працэсы, якія разгортваліся ў мінулым стагоддзі на прыгранічнай тэрыторыі паміж гарадамі Гомель і Старадуб. У 1609 г. у смаленскіх дакументах з’явіліся новыя паняцці, характэрныя для перыяду Вялікай смуты, такія як „здрадзіць” альбо „дэзерцеры”. Былі яны часткай іміджу „свае” / „іншыя”, які ў час грамадзянскай вайны ў XVII ст. характарызаваў дыскурс мастацтва, палітыкі і грамадазнаўчых навук.

Словы-ключы: Смаленскі архіў, Вялікая смута, Сапега, Шэйн, Гасеўскі, Веліж.

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