

Abstract of the PhD Thesis by Adam Ćwikła (MA) entitled Peasant Issue in Polish Political and Legal Thought in the Area of Former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under the Russian Reign in the 19th Century (until 1862)

The following thesis aims at reconstructing Polish political and legal thought of the 19th century (until 1862) concerning the peasant issue, as well as defining the actual and legal status of peasants in the Congress Kingdom of Poland and Northwestern Krai of the Russian Empire, taking into consideration the changes initiated during the period of the Duchy of Warsaw.

The following thesis comprises an introduction, a conclusion and five logically connected chapters, fulfilling subject and temporal criteria. Introduction depicts the existing peasant issue of the 18th and 19th century in the area of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Chapter 1 presents the legal status of farmers of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth until the end of the 18th century, separately for the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and peasants residing in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It also depicts the first attempts of change of rural population's legal situation after 1764, based on the regulations of the Constitution of 3 May 1791, as well as during the Kosciuszko Uprising. The first attempts of peasant reforms introduced on private estates by particular estate owners are also presented.

Chapter 2 encompasses the analysis of farmers' situation during the times of the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815) on the basis of the Constitution of 22 July 1807, the decree of Frederick Augustus I from 21 December 1807, as well as applied civil legislation of the Napoleonic Code. This chapter also presents reconstructions of views of the thinkers of the discussed period concerning the peasant issue. Additionally, an analysis of answers given in the *Ankieta włościańska (Farmers' Questionnaire)* of 1814 is conducted.

Chapter 3 includes an analysis of peasants' legal situation in the first years of the Kingdom of Poland until the end of the November Uprising. Decrees of Alexander I and Nicholas I regulating the issue of direct farmers are analysed and views on farmer issue are described. The chapter also includes an account of a discussion concerning the peasant reform

during the November Uprising, on the basis of the press from said period and parliamentary debates.

Chapter 4 consistently presents the legal situation of farmers in the Kingdom of Poland in the period between uprisings until 1862. Ideas presented by the so-called "klemensowczycy" party, including count Andrzej Zamoyski, are reconstructed, and discussions taking place in "Roczniki Gospodarstwa Krajowego" newspaper, as well as activity of margrave Aleksander Wielopolski, are presented.

Chapter 5 characterizes the legal status of rural population residing in western governorates of the Russian Empire, on the basis of legislation of Alexander I, Nicholas I and Alexander II. Views on peasant issue presented by the thinkers of the described period are reconstructed on the basis of Polish-language periodicals. A legal analysis of Alexander II's Emancipation Reform of 19 February 1861 is conducted.

The dissertation is concluded with a summary of the conducted research.

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