Lithuanian Paths to Modernity

VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

EGIDIJUS ALEKSANDRAVIČIUS

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To Leonidas Donskis

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Preface

Krzysztof Czyżewski

MODERNITY AND HISTORIAN'S LITHUANIA

I worry about 'progressive' history teaching... The task of the historian is to supply the dimension of knowledge and narrative without which we cannot be a civic whole... The necessary condition of a truly democratic or civil society – what Popper dubbed the 'open society' – is a sustained collective awareness of the ways in which things are ever changing, and yet total change is always illusory.[1]

Tony Judt

Here is the country called the Republic of Lithuania, once erased from the map of Europe, small and unvanquished, similar in that perhaps to Portugal and Ireland, member of the European Union, which did not share the fate of Languedoc, Savoy or Transylvania and was able to claim its independence. A traveler visiting here from the west or north will find open borders, Eurozone and a mosaic of languages and ethnicities, religions and traditions, just as it used to be in the distant past. The borders with the neighbors belonging to the Moscow's sphere of influence are guarded by a visa regime and the fear of a return to

[1] Tony Judt and Timothy Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century*... [I worry about 'progressive' history teaching... The task of the historian is to supply the dimension of knowledge and narrative without which we cannot be a civic whole. [...]The necessary condition of a truly democratic or civil society – what Popper dubbed the 'open society' – is a sustained collective awareness of the ways in which things are ever changing, and yet total change is always illusory.]

authoritarianism. There are still tension and conflicts between the ethnic majority and minorities that account for 20 percent of the country's population, but establishing a democratic state with Lithuanian as the official language, for many years regarded as the language used only by peasants, coupled with a strong civic-national identity turned out to be possible without ethnic cleansing or bloodshed. Although the Grand Duchy of Lithuania ceased to exist many years ago, and all attempts at its restoration failed in confrontation with History, it does not mean that its spiritual tissue is dead – still alive are people who regard themselves citizens of the Grand Duchy and their premonition to be "the last ones" is contradicted by representatives of younger generations who in spite of the changes taking place before their eyes, or perhaps because of them, join the "inheritors of the whole" of the multicultural heritage of Lithuania. There was a time when modernity was associated here with nationalism or internationalism in the service of the Spirit of History, but the country's real road to modernity led through a symbiosis of tradition and continuation of the democratic processes with their roots in the cultural matrix that amalgamated historical, civic and national identities. The best proof of the fact is the contemporary Lithuanian historiography which – in dialogue with the policy of remembrance and the literary narrative of the times past – was able to achieve autonomy, be critical in its analysis of the past and try more to understand history than subordinate it to an apology.

This is how our story of Lithuania Anno Domini 2016 could begin. It differs significantly to the story once spun by Czesław Miłosz in his introduction to Wiktor Sukiennicki's *East Central Europe during World War I*, a story of a country which built its statehood in the Middle Ages to lose it at the brink of modernity. Miłosz attributed to his professor of law at the Stefan Batory University in Vilnius the intention "to write an epilogue to the history of his homeland, so that everybody could learn how the Grand Duchy, which lasted until 1914, at least as an idea, has ceased

to exist."[2] Therefore, he could write about the country whose patriots referring to themselves as "Lithuanians" belonged to the past, and compared it to historical realms such as Languedoc, Savoy or Transylvania. This new story, reflecting new Lithuania, is told by Egidijus Aleksandravičius and a whole generation of historians who liberated Lithuanian historiography from international isolation and local domination of national myths. You could call them "a new generation of Miscreants" referring to the affinity with their nineteenth century patrons who – being dedicated patriots and devotees of a strict moral code – did not feel at ease in the corridors of power or lodges nursing rituals detached from life; they valued freedom of thought and unruly citizenship, denounced the provincial imitation of foreign ways and uncritical infatuation with one's own nationality; they were sensitive to social solidarity and civic education.

Egidijus Aleksandravičius' *Lithuanian Road to Modernity* is a fascinating testimony to the challenges of dramatic dilemmas and deepening self-awareness of a historian, but also a public intellectual who together with other Lithuanians of his time goes beyond freedom – towards modernity. Freedom in Lithuania, similarly to what happened in all countries of the Central and Eastern Europe, was during the last two centuries a sacred cause for which many have given their lives. Therefore, historians and other co-authors of the civilizational narrative of this part of Europe, have for generations developed their skills in the service of national independence. But ,what for them and for their posthumous disciples stood for the culmination of their patriotic and academic aspirations, time of euphoria associated with the recovery of the free homeland, for Aleksandravičius and "new Miscreants" was only the beginning of a new era. The author of a book about the cultural rebirth of Lithuania in the mid-nineteenth century, was well aware when he began his academic career that the challenge of his time is to face up to the

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[2] Czesław Miłosz, *Sukiennicki, Andrzejewski* [in:] *Zaczynając od moich ulic*. Kraków 2006, p. 459.

legacy of the past in a way that allowed to enter into a dialogue with the modern world and to overcome every anachronism that could cause the future of his fellow citizens to escape once again beyond the horizon. The struggle of the former guards of remembrance in the reborn Lithuania, was fought about the future, or – in other words – about this understanding of history which opens to the world, is both innovative and critical and forms an important part of the development of the potential of a modern society. Facing the challenge took a real revolution in the construction of the historical narration, a new historian workshop developed in the service of modernity.

Egidijus Aleksandravičius' book is not only about Lithuania's path to modernity. To a large extent, it is also a book about construction of a modern narrative about the history of Lithuania, in this case, covering the period from the Spring of Nations until the Fall of Communism and beyond. One would like to repeat once again "and beyond", because reading texts by this author, who specializes in the nineteenth century, confronts the reader constantly with his contemporary realities and encourages reflection on the past that opens to him prospects of the future and asks questions about tomorrow. The key to this book is inseparability of the subject and the language used to talk about it. The Lithuania of Aleksandravičius aspires to modernity and can be told only by a historian who possesses a well corresponding workshop: interdisciplinary and analytical, developed in a dialogue with one's own tradition and focusing on the historical thought in other parts of the world, sufficiently autonomous so as not to be subject either to the weight of the rigid forms of telling a historical narrative and the pressures of current policies, especially the policy of remembrance.

The best testimony to the importance the author attaches to the issue of the workshop is the very structure of the book. Thus, he breaks down the linear arrangement of the narrative, so characteristic for dissertations of researchers of history who usually arrange it along a chronological timeline. Already the

first part of the book heralds such a structure dedicating it to the period "before the dawn", i.e. before the declaration of independence by Lithuania, issued by the Lithuanian Tariba on March 16, 1918. The third and at the same time last part of the book follows the chronological arrangement of the story, focusing on the analysis of the collapse of the state during World War II, collaboration with the Nazis and the Soviet regime, the period of Sovietization, and finally the rebirth of Lithuania and the era of post-communist transition until the present day. Between these two parts, the author, with premeditation, inserts the chapter titled "Changes in Historiography" which analyzes different traditions and circumstances of the Lithuanian schools of historical studies, points out their limitations and anachronisms, indicating also challenges that modern historians face. Reading the essential for the interpretation of the entire book essay under the telling title "Lost in freedom: great historical narratives competing in the post-Soviet Lithuania," we are well aware that it is impossible to understand the history of modern Lithuania, and especially its society emancipating from the rule of totalitarian systems, without changing the very narrative about the past, possible only through the development of modern research methods.

The problem of formation (Bildung) of the modern paradigm of being Lithuanian and adaptation of the historian workshop to it on the threshold of the new millennium is for Egidijus Aleksandravičius a topic-obsession he returns to continually for nearly forty years of his research, travelling and organization of international cooperation, teaching, and his many social engagements. Even the nineteenth century itself, the period of history in which he specializes, seems to be ancillary to his, an many of the Miscreants', chief concern – liberation from the civilization of marginalization to which history has condemned this part of Europe after the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Union and disappearance of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from political map of the world. In the first part of the book, Aleksandravičius

shows that the nineteenth century, from its very beginnings, was a real hotbed for ideas and processes of modernization, which made modern Lithuania possible in the future. One can wonder whether this study of the epoch of Simonas Daukantas and Antanas Baranauskas already at the very beginning of his scientific work, inspired the young historian, who in the Soviet parlance would be called "a nationalist", to seek Lithuanishness in the modern. Perhaps, the situation looked different and it was the pressure of time and generational experience that sought for itself an identity free from clichés of nationalism and *homo Sovieticus* that made him venture into the land of spirituality in search for the material to build a modern worldview composed of the elements of the Enlightenment, Romanticism and Positivism still palpable in Vilnius, where he studied, or in Kaunas, where since 1992 he has worked at the restored Vytautas Magnus University. Important for us is not so much an answer to this question but realization that these two realities are inseparable in Egidijus Aleksandravičius' civic and scientific work. Such state of affairs is also due to the fact that the essays composing the book, coming from different periods of time and written for different audiences, retain integrity, complement each other and blend into a coherent, lively narrative whose greatest strength is the author's passion to understand and to argue with the world on the most important issues which he finds by no means only a contribution to an academic research or discussion, but a question of to be or not to be.

What would be the most important hallmarks of Aleksandravičius' Lithuania which are revealed to the reader in the perspective of more than two centuries of the country's march to modernity? We should here, even for a short time, consider more closely the secrets of the workshop of "the new Miscreant", as we determined earlier that both influence each other. Given that some of the issues associated with it have already been pointed out, and also that this text is not the proper place for a detailed deliberation on these issues, we suggest focusing only on two,

in our opinion, most symptomatic aspects of the new historiographical narrative co-created by one of the greatest contemporary Lithuanian historians.

The first aspect of the historiosophical narrative constructed by Egidijus Aleksandravičius that we would like to draw attention to is the English-language audience of the book, and not only of this book, as most of the texts composed were written either directly in English, or delivered in the form of papers at international conferences. The author himself refers to that at the beginning of his work, unobtrusively touching on an issue which, in our opinion, entails important consequences for its content. He writes, thus, about his "repeated attempts to make a turn away from a historical narrative *for myself* and *about myself* toward an engagement to explain to a wider world as coherently as possible everything that worries – and is important to – us, contemporary Lithuanians".[3]. Aleksandravičius joins in this way the respectable society of Central European artists and intellectuals who by extensive travels and meetings with different milieus abroad, often sharing in the fate of emigrants, experiencing ignorance and misunderstanding, especially from in response to the West, decided their mission was to initiate Western readers into their native culture and their own historical experience. It is this attitude, for example, which made Czesław Miłosz write *The Captive Mind* and *Native Realm*. We are not, however, interested at the moment in the mentioned above mission connected also with the reception of the Central European cultural experience by the West. Important for our reflections, is the impact of the Other, a receiver from a different culture, exerted on the language, the narrative structure and the very discipline of thinking of the author. The mentioned above books by Miłosz became world-famous (particularly *The Captive Mind*),

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[3] [my repeated attempts to make a turn away from a historical narrative *for myself* and *about myself* toward an engagement to explain to a wider world as coherently as possible everything that worries – and is important to – us, contemporary Lithuanians.]

but had also an immense influence on the formation of local historical narrations (in this case the influence of *The Native Realm* was probably even greater). Nobody had written about Poland and Lithuania in this way before! The same goes for the historical essays by Aleksandravičius. We do not mean here an easy and dangerous for our author comparison with the Nobel Prize winner. We only try to draw attention to the fact that the historian's entering into a dialogue with the Other carried significant substantial consequences. Although the author of *The Lithuanian Road to Modernity* often uses the plural person for his narrator, and attributes his reflections to the Lithuanian school of historiosophy, and often gives voice to other historians to whom he feels related to, his book is neither a summary or translation of what was previously published in Lithuania or about Lithuania. Egidijus Aleksandravičius is a writer who consciously goes outside the backyard of his nationality or scientific expertise, and to whom a communion with the reader / listener from a different cultural perspective allows changing the perception of himself. As a result, his narrative broadens its own cognitive scope, it becomes more critical and empathetic at the same time, free from claims of exclusivity, taking into account different points of view, but not abandoning the risk of forming an authentic vision, in a word, one that is able to express "us, contemporary Lithuanians".

Aleksandravičius and "new Miscreants" are not destroyers of historical traditions, they do not build a new world on the ruins of the old one. The primary value, as it seems, is continuation of tradition and building of a modern narrative about Lithuania on the foundation of continuity, embracing differences and different perspectives of perception of the historical reality: it tries to understand and not to reject often contradictory ideological attitudes conditioned by the place and time of their crystallization. Continuity, which does not contradict innovation, is the second feature of Aleksandravičius' historical workshop worth paying attention to in the conclusion of our considerations, because it

determines to a large extent how the Kaunas historian understands and co-creates the Lithuanian path to modernity.

Writing a historical narrative based, on the one hand, on ensuring its continuity, and on the other hand, on its innovative transformation as a condition *sine qua non* of modernity may seem inconsistent. The fact that it needs to be this way was argued by Tony Judt in his answer to Timothy Snyder who asked him about the main challenges facing a European historian today. The author of *Postwar*, the deepest and probably the best-written narrative about the history of Europe after 1945, seems to be particularly close to Egidijus Aleksandravičius' explorations. He looks with reserve at the "progressive" treatment of history, one that easily rejects or discredits achievements of the past, simultaneously laying claims to originality and creative thinking, but really lacking any foundation in the knowledge of facts, their contexts and correspondences, moving instead in the void of sophistry and failing to find an appropriate orientation for its references. This is the reason why Tony Judt defends the workshop of the historian who would never use the past for the sake of current issues or underestimate the knowledge and skills required for passing history to others. What, then, should a constructive action be based on? "Our job is to say to someone: this is a large couch with a wooden frame – it is not a plastic table. If you think that it's a plastic table, not only will you be making a category error, and not only will you hurt yourself every time you bump into it, you will use it in the wrong ways. You will live badly in this room, but you don't have to live quite this badly in this room That is to say, I profoundly believe that the historian is not here to rewrite the past. When we re-label the past, we do it not because we have a new idea of how to think about the category 'furniture'; we do it because we think we have come to an improved appreciation of what kind of furniture we are dealing with. A piece of furniture marked 'large oak table' may not always have been labeled thus. There must have been times when it seemed to people to be something else: the

oak, for example, may have been so obviously part of it because everything was made of oak that no one would speak of it. But right now, the oak counts more because – e.g. – it's an unusual material. So what we are dealing with is a large *oak* table, and it's our job to bring out the emphasis.[4]

The historical essays by Tony Judt should be read as a significant part of the process of building of the Lithuanian civic community after almost two hundred years that passed since the Russian and Prussian invaders put an end to the political existence of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This process includes creation of a "narrative identity" – to use Charles Taylor's term – able to re-establish relations with the past while maintaining the continuity of tradition. The metaphor of living in a room with furniture perfectly highlights the process that Aleksandravičius deals with in his book. We may easily find here many "shades of oak" of this real Lithuanian table which was previously described as "big" and "wooden" and its "oakenness" escaped historians' notice at different times for different reasons: it could have been insignificant, too controversial, anachronistic, convenient to enemies, illegible ... It took the generation of the "new Miscreants" and their

[4] T. Snyder I T. Judt, *Reflections* ..., p. 298. [Our job is to say to someone: this is a large couch with a wooden frame – it is not a plastic table. If you think that it's a plastic table, not only will you be making a category error, and not only will you hurt yourself every time you bump into it, you will use it in the wrong ways. You will live badly in this room, but you don't have to live quite this badly in this room. That is to say, I profoundly believe that the historian is not here to rewrite the past. When we re-label the past, we do it not because we have a new idea of how to think about the category 'furniture'; we do it because we think we have come to an improved appreciation of what kind of furniture we are dealing with. A piece of furniture marked 'large oak table' may not always have been labeled thus. There must have been times when it seemed to people to be something else: the oak, for example, may have been so obviously part of it because everything was made of oak that no one would speak of it. But right now, the oak counts more because – e.g. – it's an unusual material. So what we are dealing with is a large *oak* table, and it's our job to bring out the emphasis.]

overwhelming will to express the voice of modern Lithuanians to change the situation: not to turn away from the table, or relativize its existence, but to seek to encompass it in its entirety. Aleksandravičius is able to bring out the "shade of oak" both in his micro- and macro-narratives that build the book. He rescues from oblivion Kazimierz Kotryn, a university librarian, reformer of the Vilnius Masonic Lodge, whose efforts to teach Hebrew and Lithuanian as academic subjects he perceives as the seeds of democratic processes. Another good example of a modern practice of civic integration in a multicultural society is the person of Professor Antoni Muchliński who believed that the secular Jewish education should not be implemented at the expense of religious education, and consequently recommended to study Talmud and the rationalist thought of Maimonides. Other examples, such as Mykolas Biržiski, leftist with a gentry pedigree, or Michael Romer, one of the "last citizens " of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, who devoted himself to foundation of the Lithuanian state after the First World War, are part of a larger story reevaluating the common notions of the total Polonization of nobility and exclusively peasant origins of the Lithuanian national-independence movement. They both believed that class and ethnic division did not go hand in hand which is confirmed by the statistical data, read again by the author of the book, proving that Polonization concerned not only nobility, but also peasants. Another very important macro-narrative of Aleksandravičius' book are changing attitudes to the heritage of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, which for centuries have been a subject of negative propaganda, starting from tsarina Catherine, through Polish and Lithuanian nationalists, later by Soviet ideologists, until contemporary xenophobic populists. Of course, there was also the other side of this phenomenon of falsification of history by its uncritical idealization. Aleksandravičius does not disregard any of the options, but perceives the "oak shade" in the third way, one that weighs arguments, considers the revised matrix of federalization and civic ethos in the context of

the European Union membership, and finally, remains faithful to a forward-looking vision of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, bearing all the hallmarks of a modern utopia that can become dangerous if attempted , but without whose existence a further civilizational development is not possible.

Egidijus Aleksandravičius' writing abounds in similar examples of establishing of a new narrative identity referred to the past and connected with it widening of the scope of understanding of history. As a result, the contemporary Lithuanian historiography, whose mature and important voice this book undoubtedly represents, becomes more hospitable to ideas and people once belonging to the great and extremely varied political organism of the historical Lithuania. Various causes contributed to the fact that at some point in history they were excluded, abandoned, betrayed or forgotten. With Aleksandravičius, we are able to learn about and understand them. However, his greatest merit lies in his ability to show these processes in a long duration, in the continuity of the tradition that is still alive and ready for a change, and by no means a final one. His work tells us that it is not enough to become a historian of Lithuania's modernity, you have to be modern yourself.

Acknowledgements

For two decades my efforts to explore the ways and byways taken by Lithuania in its journey toward modernity laid a lot of mental traps for me. Even more treacherous were my repeated attempts to make a turn away from a historical narrative *for myself* and *about myself* toward an engagement to explain to a wider world as coherently as possible everything that worries – and is important to – us, contemporary Lithuanians. In this way there came about English-language texts occasioned by international conferences and research projects carried out jointly with scholars from the Western world.

Even though some of the papers collected in this volume originated thanks to international academic projects, looking at them from a longer perspective I became increasingly aware that my English-language works represented the fundamental topics that mainly interested me for the whole of nearly four decades. What are now metaphorically called Lithuania's paths into modern times began together with the first Spring of Nations at the beginning of the 19th century. The complicated history of how the old Lithuanian identity transformed itself into contemporary ethno-linguistic Lithuanianism was and still is the locus of an unquenchable academic thirst.

The 1990s were a time of euphoria as Lithuanians became free to join in the flow of the Western world. This period forced the historian to turn face-forward to the future while not only trying to get his bearings in the maddeningly complex fractures of consciousness taking place in the transition but also feeling

the weight of responsibility that pressed on the shoulders of those called to be guardians of memory. There was at least one agonizing question: what kind of past is demanded by a future that we could believe in and aim to work towards? This query in turn demanded the courage to raise problematic issues and to doubt. Perhaps the reader will find in these pages one or two proofs of this intricate torment.

Be that as it may, in putting all these essays together I sought to create a meaningful mosaic. Therefore, to make my view of the world clearer and its exposition more coherent, I decided to have some of my texts translated from Lithuanian to English. I did not try too much to even out the linguistic differences. A few of the texts I wrote in my own English, others are the fruits of translators' labors. At any rate, by and large they have stayed such as they were when published in one journal or book, or another.

In the course of the long history of the emergence of these texts, there were a number of colleagues and academic friends, interaction with whom provided me with strong sources of influence, inspiration, and insight. Since very long ago Professors Antanas Kulakauskas and Leonidas Donskis from Vytautas Magnus University and Violeta Kelertas from the University of Illinois were the first to observe me embarking on my intellectual path. For this I am immeasurably grateful to them. More recent publications as well as the temptations to get involved in entirely new research were due to Professors Karl Schlögel (University of Viadrina) and Stefano Bianchini (University of Bologna), for which I thank them. I owe a large debt to my friend, Dr. Mykolas Drunga, a philosopher, translator, and excellent journalist. He not only translated some important texts for this book but was also my best reader and interlocutor. And it would be a big transgression not to thank my publisher and old cohort Dr. Arturas Mickevičius, who took on the risk of publishing this volume.

Part I: Before Down

A Lost Vision: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Political Imagination of the 19th Century

Once upon a time there was a country called the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. If it has disappeared from the maps long ago, it does not mean it did not continue for a few centuries its intangible existence, similar to that of Languedoc, of Savoy, or of Transylvania. On the eve of the First World War, it even still had its patriots who defined themselves as 'Lithuanians' not in the ethnic sense but as inhabitants of the Grand Duchy.

Czesław Miłosz

Lithuanian springs are unpredictable. Despite this, spring is a very important season in the emotional imagination of Lithuanians. One of the oldest cultural events in Lithuania is the Poetry Spring – an international poetry festival. Is it perhaps because Lithuanians are a nation of poets, and not of epics?

Elders remember a snow that would cover the unkept bushes and blossoming tree leaves on the streets and in the courtyards of Vilnius. Back then, Stanislaw Morawski, a course mate of Adam Mickiewicz at Vilnius University, put to paper the following poetic riddle:

What is that land, where oak trees grow,
where May is witness to the drifting snow.
You await spring only in August;
What is that land?[1]

The Lower Nemunas river recluse himself – doctor, memoirist and poet – answers that it is of course Lithuania.

May 2007 was hot and full of unexpected events, first and foremost in the realm of history and politics. A ceremonial session was held on the 2nd of May in the Lithuanian Parliament in Vilnius in commemoration of the Constitution of May 3. The past and modernity intermingled even more, because at the same time, a session of the Polish Parliament took place, and information technology opened up the possibility for the representatives of both nations to be together in one space at the same time and feel the bond of a common memory. For Poles, May 3 is a regular holiday that has entrenched itself in its cultural memory. For Lithuanians, this date today is a real challenge evoking stormy memories.

It is ironic that 200 years ago, the Constitution remained in essence a piece of legal and political fiction. This statement was not able to carry out its role as a catalyst for bringing about deeper changes in society, but as years passed, it became a symbol of freedom and law, which reminded Poles and Lithuanians of their lost hope and the suffering that they encountered. However, the Constitution painfully highlighted the fate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, its political end, and transfer to a romantic past attested by Adam Mickiewicz in "Konrad Wallenrod" and "Grażyna".

For the first time in Lithuania's history, the Constitution of May 3 brought Lithuanians to a crossroads of political choices, one path taking them towards preserving the relics of the state's sovereignty, and the other – towards democracy. Like the Sword of Democles, even today, a question hangs in the air of what is more important: the freedom of the nation or democratic order? Can the freedom of a nation exist without the freedom of the individual or the citizen?

The political class of Lithuanians tried various solutions during those 200 years. However, back at the end of the 18th century, the Constitution raised the question of reducing the

statehood of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the country's elite was offered to sacrifice their state in the name of a common future with the Poland. Therefore, in a certain sense, this may have meant the final end of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. *Finis Lituaniae*.

The political elite of Lithuania accepted this choice with some reservations. However, the most important thing was that the *obywatele Wielkiego Księstwa* (citizens of the Grand Duchy) gave the remains of their own sovereignty over to Poland at the same time when Poland itself was experiencing a similar fate; it was also erased from the political map of Europe. Is it not a paradox of history, when one dying political body gives itself up to the will of another dying political body?

This sad fact is proof of the complex fate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during an epoch of great change. At the turn of the 19th century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania experienced something unique: it was dying, but by losing its political existence, it began to expand in a domain that 200 years later would be called a virtual space. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as a phenomenon of political reality, disappeared in the clutches of the Russian Empire, however, its historical reality, historical memory, vision and identity turned to an object of undermitting interest. Having lost its place in the political map of Europe, a fight was begun to recover the history. Following Albert Wijuk Kojałowicz's two-volume "Historiae Lithuaniae" published in the 17th century, almost 150 years passed until a separate history of the nation was started to be written again. Yet another important fact: "History of the Lithuanian Nation", written in Polish by Lithuanian nobleman Teodor Narbutt, has not been surpassed to this day either in its breadth nor in its endless love for his homeland, expressed in its romantic proclamations.

This particular structure of the historical consciousness of the nation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was an important factor for the maturing of its political vision. This Grand Duchy of Lithuania remained through a long period of uprisings and

defeats of the 19th century. However, the Lithuanian revival movement, as the rise of Poland to a new political life at the beginning of the 20th century, led astray the vision of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania into the labyrinth of nationalism.

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The catastrophe of the 18th century that struck the Commonwealth was particularly fatal for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It did not happen at once, but the government of the Russian Empire began erasing from the maps of Europe, bit by bit, the name of not only the Grand Duchy of Lithuania but also that of the Kingdom of Poland. Since the Grand Duchy of Lithuania did not have equal rights and was not an equal partner in the union with the Kingdom of Poland, and as it had a melting pot of civilisations with lands they had seized from the Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians, it had more problems involving its historical-civilisational identity. Immediately after the annexation, the government of Catherine the Great had very clear plans for how to exploit the Russian aspects of Lithuania's history, swallowing this former neighbour into the middle of the Russian Empire as the fruit of Russian political creativity.

The eternal weapon of the strong – *divide et impera* – was applied to Lithuania with no exception. Catherine the Great and locals working in the name of the newly conquered land at once presented themselves as the defenders of the poor from the *Lithuanian and Polish nobles*. An empire, in which serfdom had achieved a form that almost mirrored Eastern slavery, began to play the role of defender of the poorest peasants in those lands where the spirit of freedom had been put out with its own weapons. Thus the double standards and different faces of the empire – one facing towards the West, while the other shown to the people of the Empire – were a Russian tradition.

At the end of the 18th century, the government of the Russian Empire had no doubts about the existence of the Grand

Duchy of Lithuania: it was a state, a political-territorial creation, the highest layer of its inhabitants being the boyars who understood themselves being citizens of that state, and sometimes even flared with the spirit of self-sacrificing patriotism. Civic pride, *obywatelstwo Wielkiego Księstwa*, at the beginning of the 19th century, was recognised by the official Russian government as characteristic of Lithuanians.

When the nobility of Lithuania and Samogitia went to St. Petersburg to make an oath to Catherine the Great, the government of the empire considered the impact of one option or another on their image abroad. In a certain sense, the change of monarch was not depicted as the obvious outcome of the conquest but rather as a process of change executed by the ruler, a process which was made to look like a conscious decision on the part of the Lithuanian nobility. The Russian Tsar became the Grand Duchess of Lithuania.

On the one hand, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania disappeared from the political map of Europe, but on the other hand, by becoming an integral part of the Russian Empire, it survived as an idea of a state. The existence of the title of Lithuanian Grand Duke denoted a desire to rule the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, supported by the practices of the *old regime*. For the Russians, it was very important to stress that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was not Poland, and that it was precisely the Poles that were the destroyers of the Grand Duchy's separate status and its earlier Russian Orthodox origins. At the time, the Russian origins described in the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as written by Russian authors loyal to the government, were so exaggerated that all traces of Lithuanian political civilization went unnoticed. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania became an arena of constant partitions, where the only arguments that arose were whether the once strong land of Vytautas (Vitold) should belong to the Russians or the Poles. Thus, in the common opinion of the 19th century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania went from being a subject of history to becoming an object of it.

For Russians, it was a *severo zapadniy kray (north-western province)*, while for Polish nationalists, it was a part of Poland.

In the Muscovite and St. Petersburg aristocratic elites, the fanatical defence of the idea of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had to serve one of the most important goals: to create an elite class that was more or less indifferent to the Commonwealth, and loyal to the Russians. This line of thought gradually moved from political declarations to academic offices and the salons of high society, and resulted in attempts at corrupting the Lithuanian aristocracy with titles and privileges.

The government of the Russian Empire went to great lengths to win the war in history books as it was won during the battles by Suvorov. They did so successfully for more than one hundred years, but that was not all that happened. One thing was clear: while the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was merely an object of historical-political partitions for Russians and Poles, the *citizens of the Grand Duchy* experienced deep changes in their identity.

Being an object of politics and not a main player in it made things ever more difficult for the citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. At the end of the 19th century, as the democratic and more populist elements made their way into public life, the old ethno-political consciousness of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania splintered into Lithuanian, Polish, and Belarusian groups, each founded and built upon nationalism. It was a process that the Russian government noticed, and to a certain degree thought they could succeed in controlling. In fact, they fared better in destroying the legacy of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania than garnering for the empire the long-awaited support from nobles and representatives of the Young Lithuanian movement, who represented a pro-Russian leaning.

Indeed, there were more contradictory elements in the consciousness of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania than there were unambiguous clarifications. Researchers have observed that in the sense of traditional feudal loyalty, the elite of Lithuanian society were far from being disloyal to this stance of the

Russian government. For a long time after the partitions, the gentry (boyars, *bajorai,* or in Polish – *sliachta*) of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania held the same old views about a political nation that identified with the state, the republican institutions of self-government, and with the very nobility of the boyars that were ruling through these institutions. This nation got along with the institution of the monarchy. And it was this nation that was becoming a prospectively fertile ground on which to show loyalty to the Russian emperor.[2] This was particularly apparent during the rule of Alexander I, when the Russian government quite openly respected the political traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and supported the views of the conservative boyars.

Though at the end of the 18th century the delegation of the boyars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in St. Petersburg was essentially forced to play the role of one of the partners of the Commonwealth, demonstratively severing the ties of the union with Poland and giving an oath to Russia, the drama was in fact more complex. First of all, as mentioned above, this showed that the games played by Catherine the Great with the symbols of the Grand Duchy's statehood would not go unnoticed by Lithuanians. The fact that Lithuania was not Poland may have looked attractive in the eyes of Russians. The Grand Duchy was not the Kingdom. The Russian tsar, Polish king, and Grand Duke of Lithuania were the titles bestowed on new rulers until the war of 1812. On the eve of the war, as the army of Napoleon was approaching, there were even ideas being tossed around about the restoration of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, spearheaded by supporters of Mychal Kleofas Oginski. The title of ruler of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, though decorating the uniform of the country's conqueror, still served as a reminder that there was such a state.

However, after the collapse of the French campaign, and with the Congress of Vienna finally securing the new borders of Europe, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was doomed to the will and

experiments of the Russians. Although the gendarme of Europe was constantly reminded of Poland, the ancient lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had been forgotten in the West. The Romanovs found less and less need for the use of the memories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. *"Lithuania is in the past..."* rang repeatedly in the sighs of the Grand Duchy's grand poet Adam Mickiewicz.

* * *

The gauntlet thrown down by the conquerors of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania forced it to take up arms more than once. After the clamour of weapons died down, the battle moved to the fields of memory and history. This was well-understood by famous patriots of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania such as Tadeusz Czacki, Teodor Narbutt and Simonas Daukantas as well as historians, thinkers and other important social figures. "Yes, Lithuania and Poland were erased from the maps of Europe, but we still have our civil law," said Tadeusz Czacki in a work published in 1800 about Lithuanian law. The existence of a political nation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the minds of him and others was still considered to be a mark of the tradition of Lithuanian law, the Lithuanian Statute that was left in force in the lands of the old Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This is why "*litwiny*" (Lithuanians) had to recognise its deepest layers. The spirit of the nation of Gediminas and Vytautas lay in the civil law of Lithuania. These ideas, which formed the lifeblood of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania after the catastrophic end of the 18th century, were expressed legally, while the slogans of the May 3 Constitution were hoisted behind the scenes, as was the case of the Vilnius Philomats. Long live the Lithuanian Statute! Long live the May 3 Constitution!

The signs of an ethnic-cultural union rising from the depths of the nation's consciousness were already provoking contradictions in the understanding of *Lithuanianness* and the changes it

was undergoing, however, on the eve of the 1863 Uprising, these contradictions had not yet impeded their living side by side. For *citizens* of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the most important characteristics of Lithuanianness were still *freedom, love and loyalty to the Lithuanian Statute*. Before the 1863 Uprising at least, this was expressed by some authors who professed revolutionary proclamations. One of the heralds of the Lithuanian rebirth, poet and bishop Antanas Baranauskas, is the best example of the painful, and in the end unsuccessful, attempt to reconcile the old and new ideas of Lithuanian identity. Having passionately defended common Lithuanian and Polish emancipation efforts before the anti-Russian uprising of the 1863, he stayed true to this idea until the end of the 19th century and to the end of his life. To him, Lithuania's separateness still did not mean anti-Polish sentiment, which was a characteristic attitude of many important figures of the Lithuanian revival. For Antanas Baranauskas, the tradition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was unquestionable.

Antanas Baranauskas defended his view in polemical writing with another herald of the Lithuanian revival, the Aušra newspaper, which was the first Lithuanian newspaper:

Poles in Lithuania did not rule either five centuries or five days, because Lithuania was never a province of Poland, but simply a nation joined in union with Poland, preserving total self-rule. From here it emerges that the successes and responsibility for everything that was good or bad that was decided and carried out by Lithuania from 1386 until 1795 does not belong to the Poles but to Lithuanians themselves, as do their fate and misfortunes of accusers for themselves.[3]

Today, a view such as that of Baranauskas would mean that the entire legacy of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, including the May 3 Constitution, is both Polish and Lithuanian in terms of historical heritage, independent from considerations of whether it is good or bad.

What was fatal for the legacy of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 19th century, was the change of the understanding of a nation, which, to use the words of Czesław Miłosz, shifted from a political civilization to a *philological product*, with the symbols of freedom and law eliminated from Lithuanian identity, leaving only language and the works of the people. For older Lithuanians – the citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and their descendants – language had not yet become the unifying sign of identity. But at the same time, there was no doubt that the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was highly important to the further life of the *philological product*. Thus this malleable metaphor of Czesław Miłosz must be treated with reservation. Young Lithuania awoke to a *philological and historical product*, however, the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by the educated Jonas Basanavičius and Jonas Šliūpas was re-written very selectively, venerating the pagan times of the Gediminas dynasty and Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania, omitting however the many historical adventures of post-Union Lithuania. It is this attitude that bishop Antanas Baranauskas fought against. His hard stance turned him from a herald into a renegade and Polonophile in the eyes of many Lithuanians. The defence of the idea of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was certainly not an easy activity.

The most difficult trial weighed on the old strata of Lithuanian citizens, the descendants of the boyars. For them, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was the cradle of the historical consciousness and their own understanding of Lithuanianness. Not wanting to choose a one-stratum Polish or Lithuanian nationalism, these *non-Lithuanian-speaking Lithuanians* experienced a real tragedy. The suffering so characteristic of the beginning of the 20th century emanates from an open letter from the Belarusian lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania printed in the newspaper *Vilniaus žinios* in 1906 (published, it must be added, in two languages: a Lithuanian translation and the Polish original). The editorial office was very moved by

the letter, submitted by Mrs. S. Wojnilowicz, which professed concern for the fate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. First of all, the noticeable work of the dismantling of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania:

With a heavy heart I took my quill in hand, in order to write a complaint from the depths of my aching soul, because of the wrong that is going on in our homeland of Lithuania. The poorly understood patriotism of Messrs makes Lithuania small, which is what our enemies and Poles delight in; enemies delight in the fact that a small little country, made up of three provinces, and incomplete ones at that, is not intimidating for them. The Poles are delighted at the number of unexpected gains…[4]

This is a rather typical document expressing the Grand Duchy's citizen-homeland mentality. It is possible to differentiate *enemies* and *Poles* in it even under the conditions imposed by the Russian censure. Poles are not enemies, but they are *others*, they are not *us*, they are not the same as Lithuanians in Lithuania. Konstancja Skirmuntt laid these views out more radically, constantly defending the case of *Lithuanians who don't speak Lithuanian* from Polish and Lithuanian nationalists.

S. Wojnilowicz regrets that the basis of the idea of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the legacy of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was being ripped away piece by piece:

…in Vilnius it sounds almost that whoever speaks Polish in Lithuania is Polish. It's understandable that our genius poets and scientific heroes are considered their own, because Lithuanians, those who speak Lithuanian, kindly offered them, and only because they took over Polish from their ancestors as their mother tongue. This is harming all of

Lithuania, which is something you Sirs must pay for, because you yourself created this division while we all suffer. Did Mickiewicz, while writing "Lithuania, my Homeland", think that he was a Pole? Did Kondratowicz, while writing "Lithuania, my land of birth, my holy land", also feel that he was a Pole?

The emotional reasoning of the author is finished with even more painful accusations for the short-sightedness nationalism of Young Lithuania:

Did too few Lithuanians who spoke Polish die in the gallows, from bullets, in Siberia? Did they die for Poland? … They died for Lithuania, because we are Lithuanians … We can speak different languages, but we should feel like we are children of the same mother. I would like to speak Lithuanian, but I am certain that those who speak no Polish, would suffer as much for their homeland.

Similar testimonies from citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania can be found in the Polish press, however, it is clear that these were not popular or welcomed views. They fought with the programmes of both Lithuanian and Polish nationalism. An idea was planted that all the hymns of the citizens for the respect of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were nothing more than archaic superstitions. Thus, the sunset of the virtual Grand Duchy of Lithuania approached.

* * *

As we already know, the political and social paths of Poland and Lithuania finally split during World War I. Scuffles in churchyards ended in fights on the battlefields near Hrodna, Suwalki, and even near Širvintos. The partitioning of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, begun at the end of the 18th century by our enemies (marked most importantly by the splitting of the Lower Nemunas), was now continued by our own hands by the partners of the former union. The contours of the old Lithuanian state still glimmered in the imagination of history. Patriots and citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lithuanian Poles (or to put it in another way – the preservers of the multi-cultural identity of the old Lithuanian state) painfully lost and became disillusioned, retiring to the periphery of public life. Many people, similar to Stanislovas Narutavičius, the signatory of the Act of Independence

of Lithuanian, signed in 16 February, 1918, were disillusioned with the reality of the new state. Sentiments towards the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and its federalist dreams cost Gabrielius Narutavičius (Gabriel Narutowicz) – the first President of Poland and brother of the signatory of the Lithuanian declaration of independence – his life.

Indeed, even after a century of Russian rule, Grand Duchy of Lithuania "*on the eve of the First World War … still had its patriots who called themselves 'Lithuanians'.*" In Poland, this was still remembered in the circles of Marshall Józef Piłsudski. In Lithuania, the most consistent defender of the idea of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was Professor Mykolas Römeris who had chosen Lithuania.

Historians as well as others, frequently talk about the last *citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*. However, time is merciless in asking: is this all in the past? Or do we know who the last was, or who the last are? Perhaps, Czesław Miłosz? It is doubtful whether it is possible to answer this directly and unambiguously. Or maybe it is better to hope that the political vision of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, lost in the catastrophes and crossroads of world wars in the 20th century, did not disappear without a trace and the past did not die a second time as long as we live and remember it.

1 Morawski, S. *A Few Years of My Youth in Wilno [Vilnius] (1818–1825).* Warszawa, 1924, p. 458.

2 Beresnevičiūtė-Nosalova, H. *Lojalumų krizė: Lietuvos bajorų politinės sąmonės transformacija 1795–1831 metais.* Vilnius, 2001, p. 15.

3 Baranowski, A. „Czy kosciol katolicki wynarodowial litwinow*". Przegląd katolicki, 1883, nr. 38,* p. 1 (605).

4 S. Wojnilowicz laiškas. *Vilniaus žinios,* 1906 m. lapkričio mėn., nr. 264.

Hebrew studies at Vilnius University and Lithuanian Ethnopolitical tendencies in the First part of the 19th century

The purpose of this article is not a scientific one: Hebrew studies as a pure science remains beyond our research work. At the same time this is not an attempt to display the life of the Vilnius Jewish community of the time in an orderly and coherent fashion. Neither the size of the article nor the competence of the author would permit this. Separate research would have to be conducted. Our aim is to clarify the attitudes of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, centered around Vilnius University and around it, towards the cultural aspects of Jewish life in Lithuania and to show how closely related these were to the formation of the modern Lithuanian nation. It is also important to emphasize the fact that this minimalist, as it were, understanding of the research task influences the modest means of my proof: for the most part my conclusions are hypothetical, stimulating further research and not aspiring to final clarity.

My question has not been specially analyzed. The only book in Lithuanian historiography, shedding light on the history of Lithuanian Jews, was published before World War Two by Augustinas Janulaitis. The author concentrated more on the juridical aspects of Jewish community development, paying little attention to its sociocultural aspects. Especially important for us is the diploma paper of Janulaitis's student at Kaunas University, Adam Giršovičius, "The Development of Jewish Schools and their Legal Status from 1772 to the reform in Lithuania 4.04.1859" (1938).[2] Giršovičius's research work is still relevant.

Unfortunately, however, it has not been published yet, and the privately owned manuscript is not widely known. On the other hand, the works on the history of Lithuanian Jews appearing abroad, as a rule, view the object of research in a rather isolated manner; i.e. there is no tracing of emancipatory ideas of the Jews in Lithuania, no connection with the Lithuanian intelligentsia's searching for ways to end the antagonistic socio-ethnic fighting between isolated classes and communities, no ways to create democratic, civil and political principles for the Lithuanian community in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The article is based on periodicals of the time, the manuscript heritage of K. Kontrimas, J. K. Gintila and A. Muchlinski, which are stored in the archives and libraries of Lithuania.

The beginning of the nineteenth century, its first three decades, was a complicated period for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania annexed to the Russian Empire. During this period, ethnopolitical traditions dissolved. The absolutism of the Romanovs quickly destroyed the beginnings of community democratic processes and annihilated the achievements of the four year old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's (Rzeczpospolita) Sejm. Feudal social relations, which conditioned both the modernization of the Lithuanian nation and the situation of the Jews as well as that of the other ethnic and religious minorities, were preserved for another half a century. As the majority of the Lithuanian nation – the peasants, so the abundant societies of the Israelites were distanced and themselves were removed from political life and pushed into the periphery of limited possibilities of spreading their culture.

In this archaic, conservative, ethno-cultural structure of Lithuania, an especially important part was played by the imperial Vilnius University (1803–1831) which attracted almost all the intellectual potential of the country, drew in prominent European scholars to its activity and at the same time introduced local society to the cultural achievements of the West. All the newest methods of changing the social and even the political

structures of society were born in the University surroundings. Using the relative autonomy of this institution, professors and students matured their ideas, exceeding the limits of the legal political thinking and absolutism in the Russian Empire.

Kazimieras Kontrimas (1772–1836), for many years the university secretary, a librarian and chronicler, was the catalyst for progressive ideas; his name was associated with the majority of important projects and cultural activities. He was the initiator and editor of several newspapers, an active organizer and reformer of the Vilnius Masonic lodge (the famous reform of "The proud Lithuanian" lodge, 1818). It was only with his knowledge that the illegal societies of the Filomats, Filarets, Szubrawcy and etc. were formed. On the other hand, not many personalities appeared in the Lithuania of that time who were and even now are being portrayed in such various colors. In the eyes of some people, K. Kontrimas was the "Benjamin Franklin of Vilnius", others, like J. Senkovskis, saw in him a renegade. If the life behind the scenes had been revealed at the time, K. Kontrimas might have been called the "Speranski of Vilnius". In a word, this was a figure of initiative, mystery and contradiction and, no doubt, importance in the intellectual life of the country. The shrewd critic of social and political movements, K. Kontrimas, can best be portrayed by the maxim taken from his notebook: *"Equality is an enchanted rod on which people are caught, especially during the time of revolution. People are similar one to another, but they are not equal and if equality could be introduced, it would not unify the people, but would only bring out their competitiveness."* Another view is also especially important in interpreting the projects of K. Kontrimas and his attitude to the situation of Lithuanian Jews: *"The Motherland is all the country, all the nation, which speaks the same language and follows the same laws of government protecting everybody equally, where all inhabitants live connected by ties of brotherhood..."*[3]

The situation of Lithuanian society, which was divided into isolated classes and religious and ethnic communities, was very

far from K. Kontrimas's ideals. This is especially true when speaking about the situation of the Jews, which was special against the background of local, ethno-political and cultural structures, and in the context of their (the Ashkenazi's) situation in Eastern Europe in general. The *Litvaks* (Lithuanian Jews began to be called by this name at the time) were distinguished from the fellow-Jews in Germany and the Polish Commonwealth by the extremely large concentration of their communities in the cities and towns. In Vilnius, it was much bigger than anywhere else (it was much more difficult for the Jews to settle in Warsaw during the 18th and 19th century). The formula "a state within a state" or "a nation within a nation" was especially clearly expressed here. On the other hand, the Jews of ethnographic Lithuania, i.e. Vilnius and Kaunas provinces, differed from other Litvaks living in the orthodox lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Hassidic ideas spread in the southeast territory of the 18th c., whereas up to 1815, Vilnius and all the western communities of Lithuanian Jews were veritable fortresses of orthodox Judaism, withstanding in the main attacks of Haskalla ideas from Berlin and Hassidic fanaticism.[4] This was conditioned partly by the situation and the standard of living of the nations and the religious communities where the Jews lived. On the other hand, from the middle of the 18th c., the cultural traditions arose from the religious and philosophical teaching of Vilnius. Here Gaon played an important role. In addition, there are grounds to claim that the differentiation according to wealth among the Vilnius and Kaunas Jews was smaller than that between the Jews living in Warszaw and Polish communities, which was conditioned by the faster development of industry. It was also different among the Ukrainian Jews who constantly remembered Cossack outbursts of anti-Semitism. Finally, we can observe the same situation among Lithuanian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian Jews: both the economic and cultural state of the people was much better in West Lithuania, so people were more tolerant and peaceful with respect to the Jews in their socio-psychological attitudes.

The views of K. Kontrimas towards the Jews were similar to the views of the Four Year Sejm reformers. He clearly saw that the situation and the anti-Semitism of the separate layers of society was primarily harming the State and the nation where the Jews lived, while conditions for maximal fanaticism were created within the Jewish community itself. Like many other supporters of capitalism in Lithuania, he thought that the cause of the isolation of the Jews and their alienation from the people they lived with was not in the Hebrew community itself but was conditioned by the intolerance of the ruling classes towards the Jews, and especially by insufficient attention to the education of the Jews. This did not occur by chance. While development of industry had already dictated convictions naturally towards democratization and integration of the society in Poland, Lithuania saw no such material self-interest. There remained only cultural and educational means – which were rather Utopian – for the attainment of greater community integration through Enlightenment. Hence, K. Kontrimas's aspirations were to orient the intelligentsia towards such activity through Hebrew Studies at the University. It is not by chance that the initiative to educate the Jews and find ways of better communication between the local inhabitants and the Jewish communities did not originate as in Poland with the Jews themselves but with the local educated people.[5] That which in Germany was accomplished by the followers of Moses from Dessau (Moses Mendelssohn), who tried to translate Jewish literature and even the Talmud into German and to introduce the Jews to European rationalism as well as to natural science, was projected in Lithuania by the people in the surroundings of K. Kontrimas at the University and the Masonic lodges.

From ancient times, *Universitas et Academia Vilnensis* taught classical languages, prepared text books of Latin and Greek language, but not much is known about the situation of Hebrew Studies in the main educational institution of Lithuania. The teaching of Hebrew language at the University is mentioned in

historiography since it is difficult to imagine the higher learning of Catholic priests without knowledge of it. However, it remains unknown how this was accomplished and for how long. It seems that up to 1807, Hebrew studies were neglected.[6] K. Kontrimas and others in the Filomat organization at Vilnius University took care of this subject. The organization of Hebrew Studies was not the main goal of K. Kontrimas; it was merely part of a bigger project. Further, obviously, the formation of a Department of Hebrew Studies and an Institute of Oriental studies at Vilnius University were intended. S. Žukowski started to prepare specialists of Hebrew language. It is presently difficult to evaluate the lectures of this teacher. The material remaining in the Lithuanian archives, concerning the textbook of the Hebrew language by Požarski,[7] published by the Ministry of Education of Russia, permits us to speak about S. Žukowski's qualifications only in part. Perhaps we can only judge him by his great popularity at the University. Two of his more outstanding students are mentioned in literature: M. Borowski and the future administrator of the Samogitian diocese – J. K. Gintila,[8] who will be discussed separately later.

At about 1820, K. Kontrimas started a wider campaign dealing with teaching Hebrew and other languages. He had presented a memorandum to Duke A. Czartoryski, a trustee of Vilnius University, where he pointed out the reasons for his activity: *"Since the Hebrew language has already been introduced in the University, it would be useful to have a Department of Arabic languages which could possibly be the beginning of (in the near future) an institute which would serve all of Europe and could be the center of Oriental Studies and Eastern languages. In some years, the Turkish, Persian, Tatar, Armenian and Manchurian (languages) could be introduced in this institute."*[9]

In the memorandum, K. Kontrimas argues the necessity of his project in social and political motives. According to him, these things are necessary for the Russian Empire so that it could govern its believers of other faiths, i.e. Jews and Muslims

and, secondly, this is required by the far-reaching Russian diplomatic plans in the East. In addition, we can add that not all his motives were mentioned in this official paper. One thing is clear: he was concerned primarily not with Hebrew and Oriental studies but the practical possibilities of applying them. One more fact often mentioned in Lithuanian historiography is that at the same time Kontrimas presented the University with a 15 paragraph memorandum on the establishment of a lecture center on the Lithuanian language. He brought up the point that this had already been done at Königsberg University (by the way, a chair of Hebrew Studies was functioning there as well) and stressed the importance of historical scholarship. But again, just as in matters of Oriental studies, it was not the scientific-research aspect that was dominant in the memorandum. The social and cultural aspect was emphasized first of all: "all the students of the Senior Theological Seminary from the Samogitian diocese as well as some candidates from the teachers' seminary should practice Lithuanian language and style. Those intending to get jobs in districts where the Lithuanian language is used widely would benefit by these studies as well as those investigating the northern countries, the history of their medieval period which has not been studied by scholars and which is waiting for us, the children of these barbarians, who once flooded the south and west regions of Europe to reveal it."[10]

The idea suggested by K. Kontrimas about the establishment of a lecture centre of the Lithuanian language and the plan of a Hebrew Department is a highly eloquent example of coincidence. The rise of these two languages, which had been left beyond the limits of civil life, to the status of university subjects of study demonstrated the beginning of democratic processes. One has to remember the linguistic situation in Lithuania in the first half of the 19th c. After all, in the entire territory of the former state – the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – the Polish language as means of communication between noblemen dominated in the upper layers of society. Gradually its function in political life

changed: after the uprising in 1831 against Russian domination, an intensive Russification of administrative life began. The people, mostly peasants, spoke in different dialects of Lithuanian language in Vilnius and Kaunas provinces, in the eastern region they spoke Slavic languages and dialects formed by the influence of Polish and Bialorussian. A specific Litvak Yiddish language predominated in the cities and towns. The urban Lutherans used the German language. In Trakai, the Karaite language was also spoken. The Lithuanian Tatars expressed themselves in their own way. The backward conservative and natural economy enabled the separate ethnocultural communities to live in such a way that only a small part of them was bilingual or trilingual. It was only the intellectual and merchant class from the Jewish community who learned some Polish or Russian. The Jews, settled in towns or village inns, communicated with their clients in the limited sphere of material relationship which narrowed the possibilities to learn languages and to integrate. Therefore, K. Kontrimas's projects at Vilnius University reveal a certain understanding of Lithuanian ethnopolitical tendencies and the wish to influence these tendencies. The years demonstrated how slim the chances for such an activity were.

As has been mentioned above, one of the most outstanding students of J. F. Žukowski was the priest Jonas Chrizostomus Gintila (1788–1857), a man who is portrayed and characterized differently both by his contemporaries and by later researchers. J. K. Gintila may well be called the father of Lithuanian Hebrew Studies. It so happened that as a Hebraist, J. K. Gintila surpassed his teacher, G. Žukowski, but remained unknown to the world of scholarship, and, on the other hand, making a career in the priesthood earlier than his other contemporaries, he was awarded tsarist orders and titles and, therefore, became the butt of his colleagues' restrained mockery. At times he was even hated. At the end of the century, he became the administrator of the Samogitian diocese and facing great opposition in Lithuania and the Vatican, he was a not consecrated bishop. The reason

for this is usually thought to be the obedience of J. K. Gintila to the czarist government, although the degree of his renegade activity has not been characterized by any serious research up to our time. Therefore, while reading the newspapers of the 19th century as well as the reminiscences of his contemporaries, we come to suspect that J. K. Gintila was not popular among Lithuanians and especially the priests not only because he cooperated with the Russian government but also because of his Hebrew studies. His fanatical interest in the Talmud and religious arguments with Jewish intellectuals appeared rather suspicious to the superstitious and poorly educated public.

Thus, personality of J. K. Gintila today remains mysterious and controversial: his historic portrait is far from being reconstructed and is often evaluated with bias. Having been born into a poor gentry family in Western Lithuania (Samogitia), like many young people of the time who sought education, J. K. Gintila reached Vilnius in 1807. His scholarly development is more or less clear. From 1808 to 1812, he studied at the Senior Seminary in the Theological Faculty at Vilnius University. Not satisfied with his studies, he went to lectures at the faculty of Physics and Mathematics. In 1813–1815, we find his name in the lists of the Liberal Arts and Literatures students. His consecration to the priesthood was no obstacle for him. He was especially influenced by the lectures of professor E. Grodek, an expert in Classical literature and Greek language, but mainly he was interested in Hebrew studies and exegetic problems.

His teacher of Hebrew was S. Žukowski; he learned the fundamentals of exegetics from Professor L. Borowski, who up till 1820 expressed himself intensely in Hebrew as well. Later, he took up Slavic philology and Polish literature. Having become an adjunct at the University, from 1817 to 1822, J. K. Gintila worked as a senior teacher of exegetics and as Professor L. Borowski's deputy at the Theological Faculty. At the same time (1821), he defended a thesis on "Christian Morality."[11] There is a predominant opinion in Lithuanian historiography that J. K. Gintila was

a very poor teacher who could perform his duties only owing to intrigues. This opinion was formed by his student, the later rival for the infula of the Samogitian bishop, the famous educator of the people and a Catholic leader of Lithuanian revival, Motiejus Valančius (Maciej Wolonczewski).[12] This opinion is difficult to check now. The opponents usually are tendentious in describing each other.

In the primary sources of the archives of Vilnius University, nothing can be found that would substantiate it. According to M. Valančius, J. K. Gintila was also a poor scholar of Hebrew. However, he could hardly judge the works of J. K. Gintila, which were not published, as he took no special interest in Hebrew. The memoirs of A. Muchlinski, a student at Vilnius University and Professor of Oriental Studies at Petersburg University, are much more valuable. According to him, J. K. Gintila was an industrious and erudite man. From the end of the third decade of the 19th c., while living in St. Peterburg and working as the assessor of the Roman Catholic college, he dedicated himself to Hebrew studies, and if he had lived in Germany or England, he would have been famous as a prominent scholar of the highest level. "*J. K. Gintila used to spend all his days with book and pen in his room, and left the room only to find new riches,*" remembers professor Muchlinski. His flat looked like a museum: the shelves and tables were bent from the weight of books, the walls were covered with maps, pictures and portraits. He would work without resting. Even in his old age, just before his death, he would sit down at the writing table at 5 o'clock in the morning and rise from it late at night. All his income was invested in enlarging his library. With this aim, he would travel to Germany and Austria. He would buy the rarest and most expensive books in Leipzig, Vienna, Berlin and Petersburg. In this fashion, he purchased at least half of the Graff second-hand book-shop, famous at the time in St. Petersburg. There were some 30,000 books in his library. Besides classical authors and Church scriptures, many publications and manuscripts were dedicated to Hebraistics."[13]

This is how A. Muchlinski portrayed J. K. Gintila. We could best qualify J. K. Gintila as a Hebrew scholar by his works, his manuscript heritage, which is rarely mentioned and has not been seriously examined. (At present, his texts are partly or should be found in the library of Kaunas Seminary). How does A. Muchlinski characterize heritage of J. K. Gintila? According to him, J. K. Gintila left many texts, notes and studies. J. K. Gintila's correspondents and like-minded friends abroad used his material and investigations. However, it is unusually sad that his writings were not published. Among the most meaningful works, A. Muchlinski mentions two volumes of excerpts from the Talmud and some notes about the coming of the Messiah and the Christian religion written in Hebrew, a treatise on the real conning of the Messiah, a big Hebrew-Polish dictionary, and other works.

Before World War Two, the librarian of Kaunas Seminary K. Sendzikas looked through and registered the remaining books and manuscripts from J. K. Gintila's library and published the results of his work.[14] In addition to the manuscripts already mentioned, some dictionaries prepared by J. K. Gintila are important. It appears that he prepared several dictionaries for publication: Hebrew-Yiddish-Polish; Hebrew-Chaldean-Babylonian-German-Polish, a small Polish-Hebrew dictionary, etc. For our study, two works of J. K. Gintila are important: "Nauka po polsku dla mlodziezy wyznania starozakonnego" ("A manual for young Jewish people to study the Old Testament in Polish") published in Vilnius in 1817, and 37 years later in Alsėdžiai, the manuscript prepared for publication in the Hebrew alphabet, "Sepher hatinuch oder christliche Lehr reimische Katolische Kirch... von Bellarmin ibersetzt mit Anhang in litauische Sprache von Priester Johann Christostom Gintilla. Alsad 1854, 135 p." ("A Christian Manual written in Lithuanian and Jewish").[15]

A specialist and expert in the History of the Lithuanian Jews will see the missionary direction of his work at once, his efforts to convert the Jews to the Catholic faith. It is clear that at that

time, this was equivalent to the maximum assimilation of the Jews. However, was the case of J. K. Gintila so simple? After all, the occupants of Lithuania – the government of the Russian empire – had the same aims. From the point of view of the Jews, both the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church tried to assimilate the Jews and therefore were totally unacceptable to the Jewish community. However, in speaking of Lithuanian ethno-political tendencies, these circumstances are very important. Lithuania at that time suffered greatly from oppression: the Catholic Church itself was persecuted and discriminated against. Therefore, it is not clear at whom J. K. Gintila was directing his missionary activities. Defending Catholicism at that time meant fighting against the Russian government; it meant stressing the difference between Lithuania as a Catholic country and the Orthodox Russian Empire. Secondly, how to explain the fact that in 1817 the Catholic Primer for Jews was written in Polish, while in 1854, the same missionary work was produced in Lithuanian (in the Samogitian dialect)?

It was mentioned already that the ruling classes of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – the gentry and in part the Catholic priests – adopted the Polish language. Polish was an official language of the Lithuanian State, until 1793 which was with Poland. But in the middle of the 19th c., even the Polish language was removed from the throne of the state language: Russian was introduced into official and political life. Hence, the language situation became quite complicated in Lithuania; at the very least it was a three storey structure of three languages. Russian and then Polish were at the top of the hierarchy. The Samogitian dialect of Lithuanian, used mostly by the common people, Bialorussian, different dialects in the Eastern periphery of Vilnius province and Jewish, spoken by at least a tenth of the country were at the very bottom of the structure. It should be mentioned that Lithuanian Muslims (mostly Tatars) and Karaites spoke their own languages. In the larger cities, German was used in official life. It was understood by the educated people and Russian

bureaucrats, among whom there were many Germans from the Baltic provinces. This was the tradition inherited from the old Lithuanian state which gradually disappeared in the first half of the 19th c. The new bourgeois democratic tendencies were forming, inevitably leading towards ethnic and class integration, without which a modern nation cannot possibly develop. Therefore, the integration* of social groups in Lithuania, under conditions of Russian occupation, was clearly in conflict to the prospects of the future Lithuanian State. If the Lithuanian Jews are integrated on the basis of the Russian language and Orthodox religion, it means that a new ethno-political structure is being formed – "*gente Judaicus, natione Ruthenus*" (that was Russian imperial interest); it means that the tradition of the Lithuanian State and the concept of citizen will be totally eroded. We can say that in large part this did occur.

However, the situation in Lithuania was even more complicated: if we were to say that the Jews were being integrated on the basis of the Polish language, which was indicated by J. K. Gintila in his book for Jewish young people written in Polish, then the circumstances for another ethno-political structure to appear were created. This could be expressed by the formula *"gente Judaicus, natione Polonus"*. This tendency was also expressed in the Lithuania of the time though the Russian government strove to suppress its manifestations. This tendency was obvious among the common Lithuanian people. During the first period of Russian occupation (what a paradox!), it was not Russification but Polonization that achieved the greatest effect on the integration of Lithuanian society. The Lithuanians were especially threatened with losing their separate ethno-political status, i.e. state identity, and with becoming *"gente Lituanus, natione Polonus"*, i.e. with preserving only their regional and ethnographic differences from Poland's. However, Lithuanian texts by J. K. Gintila in the Hebrew alphabet reached neither the Jewish community in Lithuanian cities nor the J. Zavadski printers in Vilnius, who were being negotiated with for publication. The social effect of

this work was zero. But the idea of publication itself is very important to explain the development of Lithuanian culture. Even so, the absolute majority or the Jews learned neither Lithuanian nor Russian nor Polish up to the First World War. They stayed in their traditional Yiddish world of Lita.

If we were to stop at this point, several questions would remain unanswered. If we are to believe the encyclopedia's assertions,[16] why did Gintila, the high Church dignitary, who was so concerned about the conversion of the Jews to the Catholic faith and dedicated all his years to the studies in Hebraistics for missionary aims, become the most controversial historiographic figure? Why were the priests, bishop M. Valančius and others from the ranks of the Cathotic wing of Lithuanian national movement, so sceptical about J. K. Gintila's works? Finally, was it necessary to study the Bible and Hebrew philology so deeply if he wanted to write the Catechism for the Jews in Lithuanian language and Hebrew letters? He could certainly have managed to do this with the knowledge received at Theological seminary.

One answer to these related questions might lie in the fact that due to the enormous estrangement between the Jews and other groups of 19th C. Lithuanian society, even the adoption of the new faith by a member of the Jewish community or even his baptism did not guarantee that the neophyte would be left in peace.

However, there were other reasons for the negative attitude of the Catholic priests towards J. K. Gintila. They are to be found in London and in the activity of the Bible Society, founded in Russia in 1812. The missionary work of this society bypassed the plans of the Vatican, and in Russia, it was banished soon after its recognition. The censure of the Bible Society, enforced by Pope Leo XII in 1824, Pope Gregory XVI in 1834 and Pope Pius IX, was sufficient reason for Catholic society to condemn J. K. Gintila.

In addition, new ideas about the integration of all faiths based on the Bible were cautiously being raised among some of the Vilnius university professors. This stimulated Hebraistic studies and discussions with the rabbis, which J. K. Gintila enjoyed

very much. However, in the absence of deeper studies, it is now difficult to guess how K. Kontrimas and his supporters imagined this integration. It is impossible to discern on what confession or ritual ecumenical convictions of Vilnius citizens were based. They did not necessarily have to be based on the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. And even if they were, it cannot be unequivocally claimed that J. K. Gintila's mission towards the Jewish community was to be maximally assimilationist. At this point, we have to stress once more that these speculations and suppositions are highly hypothetical. We do not pretend to answer such complicated questions in a simple fashion.

* * *

Work of Professor A. Muchlinski (1803–1877) needs to be mentioned separately. First of all, it is worthwhile to remember his qualifications since the presentation of J. K. Gintila as Hebraist requires a critical characterization of the author of the memoirs. A. Muchlinski was born in Vilnius, most likely in a family of Lithuanian Tatars. At the beginning, he studied at Vilnius University and his interest in Oriental studies was connected with K. Kontrimas's plans. It is known that K. Kontrimas concerned himself with the preparation of specialists of the Eastern languages. Thanks to him and the efforts of the Masonic Lodge, ("The Proud Lithuanian") J. Senkowski, later a well-known orientalist, was sent to Egypt. However, A. Muchlinski received no support from the Vilnius intelligentsia for himself for the simple reason that after the 1831 rebellion against Russian domination and the subsequent closing of Vilnius University, he was forced to look for educational opportunities at Petersburg University. From there, A. Muchlinski was sent to Turkey and Egypt in 1932. He brought back some especially valuable manuscripts for the University of Petersburg, among them the writings of the Arab geographer Achmed al-Katib. Later, A. Muchlinski worked as a professor in the Department of Turkish languages at Petersburg

University. From 1846 till he retired, A. Muchlinski worked at the central library in Warsaw.[17]

Among the major works of A. Muchlinski, there are no special works of Hebraistics which would allow us to evaluate him as a specialist of this field. Here we have to seek the help of indirect sources of information. From 1847 up to 1859, in the process of the reform of Jewish state schools A. Muchlinski was appointed by the Minister of Education in Russia as an expert – so called *visitator* of the Jewish schools in the Western province, i.e. the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania.[18] The fact that A. Muchlinski was recommended by Petersburg University would mean that he was selected from others because of his knowledge of Hebrew philology and history of Jewish society. This is also verified by A. Muchlinski's report to the Ministry.[19]

An official secular course of education for the Jews in Russia obviously had the intention to Russify them. This aggressive striving for assimilation was not expressed with respect to the Jews only but it oppressed all the inhabitants of Lithuania (especially after the suppression of the 1863 rebellion). Therefore, the attempt to form a network of public Jewish schools in Lithuania was condemned to failure, and aroused the opposition of the Jewish community. A. Giršovičius, who analysed the circumstances of this reform of Jewish education, has mentioned that secretly the Russian government had foreseen the decreasing of the program of the Jewish religion to a minimum and tried to take the Talmud, the basis of the spiritual life of the Jewish people, out of the teaching program.[20] *"The aim of education of the Jews is to bring them closer to Christians and to destroy the harmful prejudices which are supported by the Talmud,"* it said in the first point of the Tsar's edict on 13 February 1844. This meant that the government was striving to assimilate the Jews totally. This was the reason, no doubt, why reform did not succeed and from 1859 the Russian administration stopped intruding into the matters of Jewish confessional training.[21]

What attitudes of A. Muchlinski are revealed in his reports? First of all, it must be said that he saw the hopelessness of the means used by the Tsarist government. Secondly, A. Muchlinski, like all citizens of Vilnius, thought about the possibilities for the ethno-political integration of Lithuanian society, i.e. he saw the problem of the Jews through the eyes of citizenship. Integration for him meant the manifestation of civil consciousness in the society as a whole and among the Jews separately. The national separation of the Jews and their special religious development for him, just as for J. K. Gintila, were not to be questioned. Therefore, even in his official reports to the Ministry of Education, A. Muchlinski tried to demonstrate that secular education of the Jews could not be accomplished at the expense of their religious training. He suggested that the teaching of the Talmud be expanded, but like the German *Haskallah* (or latter *Musar* – the Lithuanian version) ideologists in the 18th century, he stressed the importance of the teachings of Maimonides and his rationalism. In addition, it was pointed out indirectly that the perspectives for Jewish education depended on the legal situation of the Jews within the Russian state and on the possibilities for educated Jews to attain careers in politics and administration in the society as a whole.[22] All these principles revealed in the reports can be connected with the democratic traditions of Vilnius University and with the tasks which were raised by the successors of K. Kontrimas's Oriental program.

Ending the analysis of Lithuanian ethno-political trends and tendencies in the 19th C., it is worthwhile to emphasize the situation at the turn of the century, when the Democratic wing of Lithuanian society, the members of the national movement who had fought for the plan of Lithuanian autonomy in 1905 and during the elections to the Russian Duma, found common interest with the Jews and successfully co-ordinated their electoral programs that were directed against the conservative wing of the gentry. For the best of their common motherland Lithuania. The possibilities for such political understanding were already

present in the thinking of Lithuanian intellectuals in the first part of the 19th century.

1 Janulaitis, A. *Žydai Lietuvoje.* Kaunas, 1923.
2 Giršovičius, A. „Žydų mokyklų vystimasis ir jų teisinė padėtis nuo 1772 metų iki 1859. V. 4 reformos Lietuvoje“, 1938.
3 Skwarczynski, Z. *Kazimierz Kontrym. Towarzystwo Szubrawców.* Łódź, 1961, p. 72.
4 Lastyk, S. „Z dziejów Oswiecenia żydowskiego“. In *Ludzie i fakty.* Warszawa, 1961, p. 68.
5 *Ibid.,* p. 82.
6 *Vilniaus universiteto istorija 1803–1940.* Vilnius: Mokslas, 1977, p. 93.
7 „Byla dėl hebrajų kalbos gramatikos“. Lietuvos centrinis valstybinis istorijos archyvas (LCVIA), Lithuanian Central Historical State Archive, f. 567, folder 2, files 1357 and 1363.
8 *Vilniaus universiteto istorija*, p. 93.
9 Quoted from Skwarczyński, *op. cit.,* p. 36.
10 *Mūsų kalba,* 1978, nr. 3, p. 38. Also see Lukšienė, M. „Kazimieras Kontrimas ir jo memorandumas dėl lietuvių kalbos“. In *Kalba ir mintis.* Vilnius, 1980, p. 168.
11 Biržiška, V. *Aleksandrynas, vol. 2.* Chicago, 1963, p. 411.
12 „A. A. administratoriaus Gintilos biografija“. In Valančius, M. *Raštai,* vol. 1. Vilnius, 1972, p. 486–491.
13 Muchliński, A. „Wspomnienie o s. p. Gintylle“. In *Pamiętnik religyjno-moralny,* 1958, nr. 1, p. 30–35.
14 Sendzikas, K. „Hebraiški rankraščiai Kauno seminarijos bibliotekoje“. In *Bibliografijos žinios,* 1938, nr. 5, p. 196–197. „Kun. J. K. Gintilos asmeninė biblioteka“. In *Bibliografijos žinios,* 1939, nr. 4, p. 123–125.
15 Biržiška, V. *Aleksandrynas,* vol. 2, p. 414.
* Note the difference between the concepts of “integration” and “assimilation”: “integration” is concerned mostly with ethnopolitical aspects, whereas “assimilation” has to do with ethnographical or ethnocultural aspects.
16 *Encyklopedia powszechna.* Warszawa, 1869, vol. 9, p. 909–911.
17 Lastyk, S., *op. cit.*, p. 86.
18 Skwarczyński, Z., *op. cit.*, p. 36.
19 S. Orgelbranda. *Encyklopedia Powszechna.* Warszawa, 1901, vol. 10, p. 339.
20 Giršovičius, A., *op. cit.*, p. 80.
21 *Ibid.,* p. 71.
22 *A. Muchliński's report.* Lithuanian Central Historical State Archive (LCVIA), f. 597, folder 2, file 144 and 129.

The double Fate of the Lithuanian gentry

Lovers of metaphors may wonder what is meant by *double fate.* Most historians would write vividly of one *destiny* or state that there are *many destinies.* It is a question of *one* or *many.* I would agree with those who think that there are no identical people, and their destinies are not the same. People who are used to the textbook version of the Polonization of the Lithuanian gentry may get the impression from the title of this paper that *the double fate* is connected especially with the question of the national identity of the upper class of society. It would not be a big mistake to think that the destiny of the Lithuanian elite was similar to that of the Poles. In that case, the idea of a different destiny for the Lithuanian gentry would appear well founded: part of the Lithuanian gentry took part in the Lithuanian national movement and the life of the restored Lithuanian state The national identity of the Lithuanian gentry is and will remain one of the most challenging questions in Lithuanian historical scholarship.

Here, however, we are dealing with a different kind of double fate. It is the *historiographic destiny* of the Lithuanian gentry, described in works of historians in the last century, and their destiny, connected with some unexpected tendencies in the Lithuanian gentry's life, recently raised from the past. What is unexpected about the historical problems of the Lithuanian gentry? What is the difference between historiographic destiny and real destiny? How can the difference be traced? The answer

is this: It is well known that, since the time of *Aušra (Dawn),* the Lithuanian gentry have been considered to be foreign to the Lithuanian nation. The roots of modern Lithuanians have mostly been connected with the countryside. The ideological grounds of young Lithuanian nationalism ("We are the nation of peasants") were also acceptable to theorists of *class struggle* in the Soviet period. With the help of textbooks, this opinion has become the universal view. The historic consciousness of several generations of Lithuanians has been based on this historiographic view. Only after our singing revolution and the restoration of in-dependence were societies of the Lithuanian gentry, as well as the Society of the gentry of Žemaitija, established, and a new interest in family trees arose. How can this be explained? Can this tendency be seen as a desperate attempt to compensate for the poverty of our society or an imitation of the descendants of the Russian gentry? Or, perhaps, this can be interpreted as a rightful, authentic, spontaneous reaction to something hidden by history that has become free, together with some other general characteristics of Lithuanian society. Such unexpected circumstances allow us to trace the double fate of the Lithuanian gentry (historiographic and real).

Historiographic Fate

Nowadays, nobody would be surprised by the statement that historians do not always tell the truth. Like their readers, historians are children of their epoch. A historian who tackles problems that are not interesting to his contemporaries would not be understood by members of his society. Of course, there are exceptions – some works were better understood by later generations than by contemporaries. Those who do their best to satisfy their readers' curiosity usually do not serve the muses; they serve the readers. In this way, a *history* that has more in common with the present than with the *past* may be created – one may choose

among the more primitive examples of Soviet historiography. However, some deviations in historiographic destiny are connected with more complex reasons. It is not always possible to explain them. Over several centuries of historical science there were all kinds of deviations: falsification of historical sources, as well as unjust accusations of falsification. For instance, for several decades, Teodoras Narbutas – the author of the nine volume *History* – was considered to be a falsifier of Lithuanian annals until later investigators proved that the Lithuanian chronicle of Bychow really existed. On the other hand, even a historian who does not falsify facts deliberately may misinterpret past events for some other reason. The historiographic destiny of the Lithuanian gentry seems to be determined by such circumstances.

Reading the works of prewar Lithuanian historians, one can see that the focus of researchers was not the upper stratum of society, the Lithuanian gentry. Konstantinas Avižonis's *Lietuvos bajorai Vazų laikais (Lithuanian Gentry in the Vaza Period)* and Augustinas Janulaitis's *Lietuvos bajorai ir jų seimeliai XIX amžiuje (Lithuanian Gentry and Their Seym in the XIX Century)*[1] published before World War II, are notable exceptions. However, there is no denying the absence of the investigation of the gentry in Lithuanian historiography. There are a number of books on the history of the peasants, but none on the history of the gentry.

For six decades after the publication of Janulaitis's book, no one wrote about the fate of the Lithuanian gentry in modern times. One of the reasons was that this stratum of old citizens was considered to be foreign, totally Polonized and even socially dangerous. The concept of complete Polonization determined the Lithuanian gentry's role of the dead. Lithuanian historians were inclined to search for something close (not foreign) in Lithuania's past. *Searching for Lithuanians in the history of Lithuania* was the aim of the young historians of the 1930s, who gathered a round *Lithuanian History,* edited by A. Šapoka[2]. Therefore, everything that was considered *not Lithuanian* (or not only Lithuanian) was

not found interesting by local investigators. This especially concerned the processes and events of the nineteenth century that determined the character of the modern Lithuanian nation. To cut a long story short, historians did not write about the Lithuanian gentry because they were considered to be foreign.

However, this was not the only reason not to create a picture of the gentry in Lithuanian historiography. The relations between the landlords and the country people were very important too. In the period of the national movement and later – between the World Wars – there was a strong feeling of the gentry's injustices toward the people...

Baisioji baudžiavos skriauda per amžius slėgė valstiečius ir kruvinu skausmu rusena širdyse kiekvieno lietuvio, kilusio iš šiaudinės pastogės. Skriaudos nepamiršta ir gyvieji palikuonys. Lietuvos dvaras – sinonimas išnaudojimo, neteisybės, priverstinio nutautėjimo.

(The dreadful offense of serfdom oppressed the peasants and iš štili burning painfully in the hearts of Lithuanians who came from the countryside. Their living descendants do not forget the offense. The Lithuanian estate is a synonym for exploitation, injustice and compulsory denationalization.)[3]

These words were not written by some Soviet author but by Vanda Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė, who published her article "Lietuvos bajorų palikuonys" (The Descendants of the Lithuanian Gentry) in *Sėja,* a magazine out of Chicago.

However, in making this statement, the Lithuanian diaspora historian was trying to draw conclusions that were quite unlike those made by Soviet writers. In Soviet Marxist historiography, the peasants' hatred for the lord's manor had to fit into the methodological categories of absolute class conflict (as this was necessary for the ends of Marxist – or, more accurately, pseudo-Marxist demagogy, which could be summarized, if we simplify grossly, in the following words: feudal lords abused the peasants, exploited the workers and used the fruits of their labor, and so are not worthy of being remembered). Since historical

scholarship is to some extent a tool to serve memory, this Marxist position helped remove the gentry from the list of topics for research. Vanda Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė herself has called attention to another side of the same problem. She noted that, when discussing the social conflicts between the lord and the peasant, ...it is often forgotten that a system of social injustice ruled not only in Lithuania but also in most of Europe for many centuries... Many people should remember that there were not nearly as many harsh injunctions in Lithuania in this terrible system of serfdom as in Germany, where the "ius primae noctis" was supported by law.[4]

Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė has tried to show that social distancing in the past is not an obstacle to present-day Germans to feel respect for traditions of their feudal knights and "exploiters," while the German people today include the descendants of both plebeians and nobles. To be convinced of this, we simply have to consider how much research German historians and those of other Western European countries devote to research on the culture of the nobility and to the writing of works on the everyday life of their historic elites.

Most Lithuanian historians, especially in Soviet times, chose a different path. The past was, so to speak, "degentrified." When they wrote about Lithuanian intellectuals, they had to find "representatives of the people." If they did have to deal with the noble origins of one or another activist, often they passed over this fact in silence or referred to it as unimportant. Thus, for example, in writing the biography of Dionizas Poška, his noble origins (he was the owner of a medium-sized estate with its peasants) are completely overshadowed by the descriptions he created in his works of the rising peasant (Samogitian and Lithuanian serfs). Dionizas Poška's heroes, as a literary critic might say, almost totally upstage the respected and influential personality of the nobleman of Samogitia. All of this was already evident in nineteenth-century Russian cultural politics for the so-called Northwestern territories. For it was important

for Russian imperial policy to show that the "Lithuanian people" had been, and were, a placid peasant community, for whom the rebelliousness and ambitions of "Polonized gentry nobles" to re-establish the old Lithuanian state were quite foreign. To put it another way, attempts were made to convince the Russian (and European) society of those times that Lithuanians were a people without a nobility of their own, without their own political elite, and so without their own traditions of political life. Thus the nineteenth-century Russian strategy of a "degentrified" Lithuania was reflected in the pages of Lithuanian historiography. All members of the upper class of Lithuania became "Poles" in this literature.

Another trend of Lithuanian historiography was less noticeable; it appeared before the Second World War, but gained strength only in the postwar diaspora. Its first representatives can be considered to have been the brothers Vaclovas and Mykolas Biržiška, along with Vanda Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė, who has already been mentioned. The latter had already begun research on nineteenth-century nobles' estates in Samogitia for her Master's thesis at Vytautas Magnus University. However, this short work, published in the 1930s, was written in a very cautious manner and did not touch upon the wider circumstances of the fate of the gentry.

In his memoirs, Mykolas Biržiška, who was a leftist – although of gentry origin – offered a very realistic assessment of the mission of the Lithuanian gentry in the period of national revival. For him, the gentry as a class was a relic of the past. Making a show of oneself as a noble seemed to him a hollow pastime. Attempts to maintain older traditions of a ruling class for the new Lithuanian nation seemed unreal and might even complicate Lithuanian identity. Professor Biržiška contemptuously recalled the story of the founder of the Lithuanian nobles' association, which operated between the two world wars. Jonas Gediminas Beržanskis, who called himself a prince and who came from a small village in Pluogas in the parish of Viekšniai:

Now if he had devoted those twelve years that he gave to finding documents to prove his princely status to collecting historical material about his own region in those very same archives, how much he could have contributed to Lithuanian historical research![5]

Wrote Biržiška in his book *Lietuvių tautos kelias į naująjį gyvenimą (The Lithuanian People's Road to a New Life).* Jonas Beržanskis, who was a well-known contributor to the Lithuanian national renaissance periodicals *Aušra* and *Varpas* was not considered to be psychologically abnormal, but from a social point of view his attitude seemed bizarre.

However, Mykolas Biržiška's sceptical attitude referred only to attempts by the gentry to maintain itself as a conscious (self-conscious) class in recent times. He treated the role of the gentry in Lithuania's past with respect, disagreeing with those who defended the theory of total Polonization of the gentry. He wrote,

For a long time now, it has been correctly repeated that Lithuanianism... survived only under a thatched roof. But it is incorrect to draw from this statement the conclusion – as is often done – that only rural Lithuanianism was maintained. It is true that this formed the older, strongest and oldest foundation for a new Lithuanian culture, but it must be added that the survival of Lithuanianism was also supported by the gentry, which also lived under thatched roofs, and whose influence was felt both in the countryside and in Lithuanian culture.[6]

The ideas of this professor, who found himself in exile, went along with the argument offered by Mykolas Riomeris in 1915: that it is wrong to think that the Lithuanian gentry was Polonized in its entirety. Class boundaries and ethnic boundaries were not the same in Lithuania. According to Riomeris, this simplified interpretation of Lithuanian ethno social structures was the product of political demagogy that could provoke a Lithuanian modernizing pathology. Riomeris demonstrated that Polonization affected not only the upper ranks of the Lithuanian

society but also the peasant class, especially in the southeast part of the country.

In the last decade, the beginning of which practically coincided with the new surge of Lithuanian national renaissance, this historiographical tendency was revived by a group of Lithuanian historians of the younger generation grouped around the publication, *Historical Research in the Lithuanian Renaissance.* So far, nine volumes of this series have appeared.

The basic thesis of this school refers to the fate of the gentry as upholders of the old political traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It denies the statement, which up to then dominated Lithuanian historiography, that the Lithuanian people began modernization with an incomplete social structure: that is, without a noble class. In opposition to this established opinion, efforts were made to demonstrate *that only the Lithuanian noble class itself reached modern times in an incomplete state.*[7] A large part of this social class was Polonized, and this class's social activism was almost totally absorbed into that of the Polish people. In general, interest in the history of the gentry has grown sharply so that it is likely that historical attitudes to the fate of the gentry may be considerably modified.

* * *

It is possible to reconsider the situation of the Lithuanian gentry at the close of the 19th century because of the existence of a broad range of historical sources. Even the use of old and well-known statistical facts can give impetus to the development of new interpretations, allowing us to explain the real relations among class, native language and national identity in Lithuanian society.

In order to evaluate the gentry statistically, we can once more use the first general census of inhabitants of the Russian empire of 1897 (earlier statistics did not include such information).

However, it must be kept in mind that, in the 1897 census, nationality was established according to only one criterion – native language.

Thus, in 1897 about 2.7 million people lived in the in the territory of present-day Lithuania that belonged to Russia (in contemporary Lithuanian historiography it is customary to equate the Lithuanian territory of the 19th century with those districts whose centers now belong to the Republic of Lithuania). Of these, 87.3 percent lived in the rural areas and villages, while 12.7 percent lived in towns. Class structure was as follows: peasants formed 73.4 percent, townsfolk, 20 percent, and nobles, 5.2 percent, with the percentages for other classes not being indicated. The native language of 58.3 percent of people living in present Lithuanian territory (except the Klaipėda region) was Lithuanian. In the census for Samogitia, Lithuanian and Samogitian were indicated separately, 13.3 percent were Jewish and 10.3 percent, Poles, 14.6 percent spoke one of the Eastern Slavic languages.

The class structure of towns and bigger cities was as follows: 56.9 percent were townsfolk, 29.2 percent were peasants, 8.2 percent nobles, 2.4 percent were administrators, 1.1 percent were merchants and 2.2 percent representatives of other classes. From the point of view of native language, the demographic structure of towns was as follows: 42.1 percent of Lithuanian townsfolk said that their native language was Yiddish, 24 percent, Polish, 21.5 percent, one of the eastern Slavic languages and 7.8 percent said it was Lithuanian. It is not possible from these statistical facts to determine what languages dominated public town life, but it is known that it was Polish and Russian. Lithuanian, like Yiddish, was most often a means of communication among those people for whom this was their native language.[8]

Now let us analyze relations between language and class. The inhabitants whose native language was Lithuanian (or Samogitian) – and only these are considered Lithuanians in historical

works – belonged to the following classes: 93.3 percent were peasants, 3.9 percent were townsfolk and 2.5 percent were nobles. However, in the Kaunas administrative district this breakdown was a little different among those whose native language was the Samogitian dialect: 86.6 percent peasants, 6.3 percent townsfolk and up to 6.7 percent nobles (and this after all uprisings and their repression!)

These figures seem to confirm the claim for the peasant basis of the Lithuanian nation. But, on the other hand, we should look more closely at those figures which we have not paid much attention to up to now. The native language of almost one-third – 27.7 percent – of the nobles by birth, living on what is present-day Lithuanian territory, was Lithuanian. There were even more such nobles in the Kaunas administrative district – 36.6 percent. Of course, the native language of the majority of Lithuanian nobles (59.4 percent) was Polish.[9]

Even in the Vilnius administrative district, the number of nobles who considered Polish their native language was less than in the whole Lithuanian territory – on the average, just 51.6 percent. The native language of 32.5 percent of the nobles in the Vilnius administrative district was Bielorussian, while 10 percent was Russian and 4 percent (!) Lithuanian. In all, nobles in the Vilnius district comprised 4.4 percent of all inhabitants (In the Kaunas district they comprised 6.4 percent and in the Suwalki district, only 0.6 percent).

On the other hand, among the people who lived in the territory of present-day Lithuania and whose native language was Polish, it was not the nobles, but the peasants, who dominated: the latter comprised 40.9 percent, while nobles formed 30.2 percent and townsfolk, 26.4 percent.[10]

During the period of national renaissance, as well as later, the integration of the gentry into modern Lithuanian national social structures took place very painfully. Land reform acts of the 1920s carried out by the governments of Independent Lithuania were the most important and radical means used

to alter the economic basis of the noble class. During the interwar period, between ethnic nationalism and the Bolshevik threat, the heirs of the gentry felt very uneasy in Lithuania. The conflict with Poland over Vilnius heightened Lithuanian suspicions. In regard to "Polish-speaking Lithuanian gentry," Vanda Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė has noted that:

During the period of independence, most former nobles who took part in the work of establishing our state hid their noble origins. Some of them were afraid that the persecution of those of noble origin might begin among us as it had in Bolshevik Russia, while others simply were trying to avoid the derision of their fellow citizens.[11]

The most amazing example of this was the wife of the famous poet Henrikas Radauskas. It was only before her death that she admitted to V. Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė that her mother had been a real princess, Czartoriska, and showed her their family coat of arms, the Vytis (an armed knight on horseback, the state emblem of Lithuania).

At the present time, observing how the descendants of Lithuanian nobles are creating organizations, it has to be admitted that the historiographical fate of the nobility deviated too much from its real fate. Thus there is a need to expand interdisciplinary research in these fields, and these might be of help in current life. For there is a real danger that the interest felt by the descendants of the nobility in family histories will turn into comical examples of pomposity and amateurism.

1 Avižonis, K. *Lietuvos bajorai Vazų laikais* (Lithuanian Gentry in the Vaza period).

2 Šapoka, A. *Lietuvos istorija* (Lithuanian History).

3 Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė, V. „Lietuvos bajorų palikuonys" (The Descendants of the Lithuanian Gentry). *Sėja,* 1974, nr. 3, p. 25–45.

4 *Ibid*.

5 Biržiška, M. *Lietuvių tautos kelias į naująjį gyvenimą* (The Lithuanian People's Road to a New Life). Los Angeles, 1952, 1957.

6 *Ibid*.

[7] *Lietuvių nacionalinis išsivadavimo judėjimas (ligi 1904 m.)* (Lithuanian National Liberation Movement [until 1904]). Vilnius: Mokslas, 1987, p. 52–54.

[8] Aleksandravičius, E., Kulakauskas, A. *Carų valdžioje: Lietuva XIX amžiuje (Under the Tzars: Lithuania in the 19th Century).* Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1996.

[9] *Ibid*.

[10] *Ibid*.

[11] Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė, V. „Lietuvių bajorų palikuonys“ (The Descendants of the Lithuanian Gentry). *Sėja,* 1974, nr. 3.

Political goals of Lithuanians, 1863–1918

Introduction

Lithuania can be compared with other nations which achieved statehood in the Middle Ages only to lose their independence early in the modern era. Unlike most of these nations, Lithuania almost lost its ruling class, the nobility, as well. It has been justly noted that the long period of time between the era when the Grand Duchy of Lithuania flourished and national rebirth in the 19th century has led to idealization and mythification of the distant past. Meanwhile, the more recent period of union with Poland has been passed over in silence, ignored, or evaluated very harshly.[1]

The modern new Lithuanian nation supposedly rested on a new social base consisting of emancipated peasants and the democratic intelligentsia. While substantially true, this very general thesis conceals the true complexity of the ethno-political, ethno-social and ethno-cultural structure of Lithuania of that period. Recently, historians have begun to question assertions about the complete Polonization of the Lithuanian nobles. It is to be remembered that many descendants of the Lithuanian gentry entered into the Lithuanian national movement at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. On the other hand, Lithuanian historiography (and much Polish and Russian historiography) equates nationality with language or ethnography, ignoring the ethno-political past of Lithuania, the relationship between the traditions of common statehood with the Polish kingdom and the visions of the future on the part

of modern Lithuanian nationalists. Forgotten is the tenacious tradition of patriotism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania which sought political union with Poland in the 19th century, voluntarily joining the Polish nation. This part of Lithuanian history melts into the pages of Polish history.

The purpose of this article is to raise alternatives to established conceptions of the history of the Lithuanian movement during the 19th century. This interpretation is admittedly rather controversial and in part hypothetical, focusing on formal, juridical-state aspects of the Lithuanian movement which in many ways influenced the development of political thought and the advocacy of an independent Lithuanian state.

Lithuania and the Lithuanians in the 19th century

The Lithuania of the 19th century was not merely a land of dream, myth and history as was later depicted by the poet Oscar Miłosz. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania annexed by Russia at the end of the 18th century was much more than an ephemeral conglomeration of exotic groups. It was a state with well-defined borders and forms of political civilization which were cultivated by the nobles of Lithuania even after the Russian occupation.

In present-day terms, the concept "Lithuania" has two meanings: on the one hand, it means the Lithuanian state and the territory and ethnopolitical community governed by it, and, on the other, the area inhabited by Lithuanians in the ethnographic sense. Of course, the borders of ethnographic Lithuania have never quite coincided with the territory of the Lithuanian state. If at the beginning of the 19th century, immediately after its incorporation into Russia, "Lithuania" clearly meant a former state, an ethnopolitical category, then by the end of the century, Lithuania more and more often meant the territory inhabited by Lithuanians, or the "Lithuania proper" *(Lithuania propria).* But at this same time, the term "Lithuania" was still used to refer

to the entire territory defined by the Grand Duchy's borders in 1772 (sometimes the term "historical Lithuania" was used instead in order to emphasize its difference from ethnographic Lithuania). Both of these concepts existed at the same time, reflecting real socio-political divisions. For the Lithuanian nobility, Lithuania meant the Grand Duchy dismembered by Russia, while for the growing democratic intelligentsia, Lithuania meant an ethnographic reality.

The question of what Lithuania was, and what it should be in the future was kept firmly in the background by the long period of Russian rule and complicated ethno-social situation inherited from the times of union with Poland. This was by no means an exclusively Lithuanian problem. The mature Polish national movement experienced similar difficulties. As late as 1915, the Polish geographer W. Nalkowski argued as follows: *"Today, Poland exists only as an ethnographic concept; it is like a shoal remaining after a political dam has been washed away, a shoal which waves try to deepen."*[2] Roman Dmowski, the leader of the "National Democracy" movement, admitted that "we are unable to define exactly the territory of the future Polish state, because even in our aspirations it has not become clear. But probably no one doubts that Poland, neither within its historical borders nor strictly ethnographic ones, is not viable as a state."[3] The historic union of Poland and Lithuania lay at the centre of political discussion for both Poles and Lithuanians.

Alongside the concept of "Lithuania", a second ethno-political concept was also prominent in the political discourse of the 19th century, that of "Samogitia" *(Žemaitija),* denoting the western part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by the Baltic sea, the Duchy of Samogitia. In 1840, when the Russian government began to increase the severity of its administration in Lithuania, it forbade the use of the terms "Lithuania" and "Samogitia" in official communications. The Russian effort to efface the old names from official maps and from society's memory showed that Lithuania (and Samogitia) continued to be conceived as a

former state and an ethnographic category. The Russian administration henceforth used the term "Northwestern Territory" in place of "Lithuania" in all official communications. Although, as Tadeusz Kosciuszko once put it, a nation is not a name,[4] this move of the Russian government was a great blow to Lithuanian society at the time. Nevertheless, the Governor General of Vilnius, Eduard Baranov, reported in 1865, *"Samogitia remained as an old historical geographical term and was ruled by the diocese of Telšiai. To this day, the law acknowledges the name of the diocese of Telšiai or Samogitia. This simple name often reminds Lithuanians of a time of freedom and is therefore contrary and harmful to [Russia's] state unity because it may serve the propaganda purposes of national and political liberation."*[5]

As already mentioned, the term "Lithuanian" referred both to the 19th century descendants of the Grand Duchy's citizen-nobles, who had often entirely forgotten the Lithuanian language, and to representatives of the ethnolinguistic Lithuanian community, the peasantry and the educated class (the term "Samogitian" was sometimes used synonymously). At the end of the 19th century, the former group tended to express its Lithuanian ethnicity with the Latin formula *gente Lithuanus natione Polonus,* while the latter group, which until then had been composed of social outsiders seeking democratic social reforms and equality, often regarded the nobility with contempt and mistrust.

With the democratization of the political movement, and the domination of the arena of social struggle by the plebeian element, the Lithuanian nobility had to choose whether it would identify with the Lithuanians or the Poles. The archaic Lithuanian-Polish construct of the nobility's national identity was not likely to be accepted by modernized Lithuanians. Lithuanian nationalism, similar to that of other nations, demanded very clear and universally comprehensible signs of nationality. Language usually became the sign. Of course, Lithuanian nobles in the 19th century almost never used the Lithuanian language

as a means of communication among themselves; at the same time, however, they did not consider language to be the only indicator of national identity. Some made utopian attempts to harmonize the past with the future, the nobles' interests with those of the peasants, Polish political pretensions with the desires of a youthful Lithuanian nationalism. Nevertheless, the upper sectors of Lithuanian society gradually lost their class identity and had to choose new directions of existence leading either to modern Lithuanian or Polish ethno-social communities; this class, which had been relatively monolithic, split. From it emerged part of Lithuania's Poles and Lithuanians who "did not speak Lithuanian."

The Uprising of 1863 and the Lithuanian Political Program

The Lithuanian political program in the uprising of 1863 was not recorded in any document. It can only be reconstructed in the most general terms, using indirect evidence, for example, protocols from interrogations of Lithuanian rebels and the periodicals of the time.

The uprising in Lithuania was part of a movement involving both partners of the former Polish-Lithuanian Union. At the time, this armed anti-Russian movement was usually referred to as the "Polish rebellion" or the "Polish war"; but the term "Pole" meant, first of all, a citizen of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Therefore, this appellation applied as well to that sector of Lithuanian society which fought for the restoration of its old statehood. The Russian authorities, seeking to break up the anti-Russian forces in the western areas of empire, attempted to depict the whole affair as a Polish revolt against Russia, foreign to Lithuanians. They attempted to prove that there was no impulse toward political liberation in Lithuania itself, no sign of independent local thinking about statehood. However, I. Bibikov,

the governor-general of Vilnius, described a far different reality in a letter he wrote to the Tsar before the uprising: *"for the sake of truth, one must admit that nobles in the Samogitian region, and people of Samogitian descent in general, appeared as much if not more opposed to the government than the Poles, and one cannot in the least maintain that this feeling is borrowed from the latter, and not inborn to them."*[6]

On the other hand, Lithuanians at this time made no proclamations of independent statehood. Perhaps only the famous Russian democrat Alexander Herzen, in his London-based periodical, *Kolokol,* alluded to such ideas: *"Let Lithuania, Byelorussia and the Ukraine be with whomever they choose, or with no one; if we could only know their will, unfalsified and true."*[7] In texts of that time, the frequently discussed question "with whom" – with Poland or with Russia – showed that Lithuanian society and its political thinking had matured to the point that it could conceive of itself as a separate ethnopolitical community, but that it had not developed to the point that it could conceive of itself as an independent state. Indeed, during the rebellion, the archaic tradition of union with Poland was revived and expanded; in place of the former Commonwealth, the rebels planned to create a triple federation of Poland, Lithuania and "Russia", a territory consisting of lands of Eastern Byelorussia and part of the Ukraine.[8] The editor of a newspaper published by Lithuanian insurgents, *Žinia apie lenkų vainą su Maskoliais* [News About the Polish War with the Muscovites], Mikalojus Akelaitis (Akieliewicz) wrote that in this triple state, Lithuania should be composed of four of the northwestern provinces of the Russian empire: those of Vilnius, Kaunas, Minsk and Gardinas. The rebels were using the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as their justification for sovereignty, promising democratic government and guarantees for all linguistic and cultural groups to develop their own ideals of spiritual life.

During the uprising, the old traditions of statehood dominated. One of the greatest democratic leaders, the Catholic priest

Antanas Mackevičius, wrote in a letter from his prison cell: *"My thirst to do good for the people gave me the strength and the possibility to arouse the people, and with no other purpose than to try to rouse it so that it would become aware and would declare whether it is with Russia or with Poland that it wishes to be joined. This right [to national self-determination] already exists in Europe, and it could not be expressed in any other ways than by means of an uprising ... because Lithuania lacks many conditions for an independent revolution and at the same time any means of achieving something lasting for the future. I wanted to aid Poland, and to demand help from it for a revolution in Lithuania, and by this means to win for the people a temporary recognition of citizen's rights ... and sooner or later they would have had their say concerning their destiny."*[9] In other words, the ideological leaders of the Lithuanians believed that in order for Lithuania to develop its own political life further, it must first free itself from Russia's grip, restoring itself in one form or another with its 1772 borders. Only then would it deal with the problems involving its partner – the Polish kingdom.

As for the shape of Lithuania' political future, the historical literature distinguishes four different conceptions. One group, the White party led by J. Geysztor, envisioned Lithuania as the province of Poland; a second group saw it as an equal member of federation; a third, for example, K. Kalinowski, strove for a separate Lithuanian state; and the fourth group, for example, bishop Motiejus Valančius (Wolonczewski), emphasized a free ethnocultural status in general and was indifferent with regard to different states.[10] Although this classification of political aims outlines attitudes which did not by any means enjoy equal popularity, none of these social groups or forces sought to join Lithuania's future to that of Russia. In this very difficult geopolitical situation, the alternatives for Lithuanians were either to regain partial sovereignty shared with other members of a federation within the makeup of Poland, or to remain within the Russian empire and cease being Lithuania.

The Nobility's Federalist Ideas at the Turn of the Century

The nature of the federalist idea in Lithuanian history at the end of the 19th century is best expressed in the words of one of the democratic leaders of the nobility, A. H. Kirkor: *"Does Lithuania, in order for it to be with Poland, have to cease being Lithuania? NO! I am Lithuanian, and that feeling within me will never be destroyed… I have a heart and feel sympathy for Poland to the degree that its destiny is linked to ours."*[11] This emotional confession, written in Polish on the eve of the 1863 rebellion, reveals, one could say, the typical attitude of the Lithuanian nobility. Attempts have been made to compare these relations to the historical-political situation of other nations: with the Scottish position toward the monarchy of Great Britain, with Czech or Hungarian attitudes toward the Hapsburgs, and etc. But, just as the character of the Polish-Lithuanian Union until 1795 was a singular phenomenon,[12] so also were the relics of that union under conditions of a century-long Russian occupation.

The suppression of the 1863 uprising was a great blow to Lithuanian society, especially the nobility. Massacres, emigration to the West and exile to the East, the confiscation of many estates and the levying of heavy taxes on all landlords, a decree forbidding the intelligentsia (except clergy and physicians) to work in their own country, and the campaign of cultural Russification: all of this changed the shape of political sentiments. With the entrance of the peasantry (which, after the reforms of 1861, gained the rights of citizenship) into the arena of political life, and the growing assertiveness of the new Lithuanian intelligentsia, the nobility gradually began to lose its dominant position. It became merely one among several Lithuanian political forces. In the political program of the nobility, however, conservative attitudes were barely concealed by modern slogans. Faced with the rising varieties of Lithuanian and Polish nationalism, the better part of the *gente Lithuanus natione Polonus*

were becoming only *natione Polonus,* consigning the problem of their roots to history and family albums.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a group known as the *krajowcy* (the countrymen), which became especially active after the revolution of 1905, arose among representatives of a certain part of the nobility of Lithuania. The ideological basis of this group was the old tradition of the Grand Duchy's statehood which had sustained the rebels of 1863. The model of the envisioned Lithuanian state was basically identical to that which was outlined in the rebels' program. Seeing the Russian empire as the main arena of its political aspirations, this group, like its predecessors, was oriented towards the union with Poland, differing from the mid-nineteenth century as almost none of the *krajowcy* raised the idea of an armed uprising. After 1905, there was increasing discussion of the gradual restoration of Lithuania's statehood – but parallel with democratic reform in Russia, rather than on its ruins as had been often imagined in the past. As Lithuanian and Polish nationalism developed, the supporters of aristocratic federalism drew closer to socialist and social democratic ideas. Conservatism blended with socialist utopias, giving rise to a variety of ideological hybrids and anachronisms. The beliefs of the *krajowcy,* however, were more in line with modern nationalism. As such, they emphasized the primacy of historical-political statehood over ethnographic concerns and the right to national self-determination. The *krajowcy* esteemed historical arguments above all else. In 1915, Michal Römer urged Poles to *"recognize Lithuania as an individual whole," explaining that "for us, there is only one path: the recognition and public proclamation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as the formation of a historical state."*[13] In this way, it would be possible to sway those Lithuanians who were set against the Poles and, therefore, against re-establishing traditional ties of federation with Poland.

B. Limanowski's model was a characteristic amalgam of krajowci-style aristocratic federalism and socialist ideas, connecting the old problem of relations with Poland with that raised

by a territorial state based on historical Lithuania. In such a state, ethnic Lithuanians would have constituted a minority. Limanowski proposed dividing the state into three cantons. From the Latvian territories, which had once belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Inflanty), Limanowski hoped to create a third Inflanty canton alongside the cantons of Vilnius and Kaunas. The second would have been dominated by the populace speaking Byelorussian dialects, the third by Lithuanians, and the first by Latvians. Limanowski's futuristic visions were not based only on historical and political arguments. He had in mind the common ethnic background of Latvians and Lithuanians, and was convinced that *"both, Lithuanians and Latvians, seeking to preserve their national identity, must first of all come closer to one another and join amongst themselves. Their ally is the Polish nation."*[14] Although these plans were utopian, different elements of them would later arise in political or diplomatic discussions.

Towards Independent Statehood

The idea of an independent state came to maturity in the Lithuanian national movement in the final decades of the 19th century, but these plans could not be brought into the open due to various political circumstances. Most particularly, the Lithuanians were not strong enough to rid themselves of Russian domination on their own. Plans for the restoration of an independent state intertwined with the traditional problem of Polish-Lithuanian relations and the projection of those relations into the future. It is essential to distinguish here between the problem of Lithuanian statehood in general and the question of the creation of an independent state. The first problem was liberation from Russia and the restoration of the erstwhile state; the second, which arose while Lithuania was still a part of the Russian Empire, was a choice to be made by the modern Lithuanian nation regarding

union with Poland. Plans for the creation of an independent Lithuanian state meant the distinction of Lithuanian political interests from those of the Polish liberation movement. Whereas the latter reflected the desire for historical union, the former reflected a desire to live a political life independent from that of Poland.

The formation of a program for independence began with the emergence of a new democratic intelligentsia (mostly of peasant origin) in the political arena. *"The idea of Lithuanian independence was too great a matter, and it could be born and was born only out of struggle, only from a life or death conflict between an ever more parasitical old ruling class and a new generation, revolutionary in a national sense."*[15] Because that old class of nobles in Lithuania inclined towards a common state with Poland, this internal argument about the guiding principles of the political future within Lithuanian society is, in the historical literature, frequently turned into a simple Polish-Lithuanian conflict. Polish nationalism struggled in its own way with the conservative political tradition and rejected the possibility of restoring the old united state in a confederate or federal form.

It was not hard for the new generation in the Lithuanian movement to understand that Lithuania was not Poland, but problems did arise in the argument with the "old ruling class" over whether to enter into federation with Poland or not.

The need for independence and a historical path separate from that of Poland was acutely felt by Lithuanian émigré activists, especially in the United States. Perhaps the best example is Dr. Jonas Šliūpas, who already in the 1800's had begun agitating to reduce Polish influence in Lithuania with the help of the Russian administration, an activity for which he was widely criticized in Lithuanian society. In 1887, in a pamphlet published in New York entitled *Litwini i polacy* (Lithuanians and Poles), he was one of the first to raise the idea of independence from the Poles. Later, periodical publications of various political orientations, both in and outside Lithuania, considered the

possibility of accomplishing these tasks and created elitist principles of action which, at the turn of the century, entered into programs of Lithuanian political parties.

One of the first parties to develop a well thought out political program for Lithuanian independence was the Lithuanian Democratic Party created by activists grouped around the journal *Varpas,* published illegally until 1905. The party's political program, with respect to the statehood, was formulated by one of its leaders, Povilas Višinskis as early as 1901.[16] In his essay *Credo,* Višinskis expressed the goal of creating an independent Lithuanian state more clearly than ever before: *"Our ideal is a free, sovereign Lithuania, which has rid itself of despots both foreign and homebred and trampled darkness underfoot, and like other free nations, concerns itself with bettering its economic state and marches forward..."*[17] Though impassioned in its style, Višinskis's essay articulated very precisely the idea of independence as well as the democratic nature of the projected Lithuanian state.

The Lithuanian Democratic Party, whose founding congress took place on 17 October, 1902, inscribed the goal of independence in its draft program. The first lines of this draft program stated, "A free Lithuania, independent of other nations – such is the ultimate goal of our Lithuanian Democratic Party."[18] Višinskis filled in the details of his conception of a national democracy: more concretely, *"...our political goal is an independent Lithuania in its approximate ethnographic borders, ruled by its own inhabitants with an Assembly (Seimas) in Vilnius. Those serving in the government, the legislature, the judiciary, etc., must be elected by means of the general, equal, secret and direct vote of all adult inhabitants of Lithuania irrespective of whether they are Lithuanians, Jews, Poles, Catholics, Lutherans, men or women... Jews, Germans, Latvians, Russians, Poles, Tartars and others whom fate has brought to Lithuania – all are inhabitants of Lithuania, and they must be guaranteed with rights equal to those of Lithuanians..."*[19]

The party program ignored Russian law and openly stated the goal of statehood. After constitutional reforms and the declaration of democratic citizen's rights of Tsar Nikolai II in 1905, the development of Lithuanian political goals continued. It was necessary not only to restore an independent state but also to realistically evaluate means of attaining that goal. A preliminary step in the quest for independence was to secure political autonomy. Lithuanian leaders understood that conditions were not yet ripe for separation from Russia. The demand for autonomy, on the other hand, could openly fit into the framework of constitutional struggle.

Ideas which up until then had been only in the minds of separate individuals, and aims for Lithuania's future written in the programs of the various parties, all coalesced at the Great Assembly of Vilnius, a gathering of representatives of Lithuanian society in the fall of 1905. The decisions of the assembly marked the maturation of the idea of an independent Lithuania that culminated in the Declaration of Independence of 16 February, 1918.

The Great Assembly of Vilnius posed a concrete goal in the conditions of the 1905 revolution: political autonomy within the framework of Russia. It was understood that this was only a transitional stage on the way to accomplishing the ultimate goal of independence. Competing and even half-formed parties (the Lithuanian Democratic Party, the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, the National Lithuanian Democratic Party, and etc.) joined to sign the documents and thereby gave witness to the maturity of the Lithuanians' political culture.[20] The Vilnius assembly brought together about two thousand representatives of society from every area of Lithuania. The sheer number of participants would seem to ensure that the sentiments expressed at the meeting reflected the convictions of the large majority of Lithuanians. Although a few representatives of the "old class of citizens" did take part (for example, S. Narutavičius and D. Malinauskis), most of the nobility deliberately stayed away. There

was little doubt that the political claims of the nobility would find little support among the majority of Lithuanians. The time when a small percentage of the privileged nation's inhabitants could determine the fate of the entire nation was coming to a close.

The Lithuanians' goal for independence gained new intensity after the beginning of the First World War, that is, when the Germans occupied Lithuania. The changed political and geopolitical situation made it possible to move from words to deeds in modelling the political future. It was one thing to found the state on the basis of an ethnographic principle, but quite another to determine the ethnographic borders of Lithuania. Particularly in the south-eastern area, these were very difficult to define because of that area's ethnic and religious makeup. Lithuanian politicians like Petras Klimas had to act like Roman Dmowski in Poland: they understood that Lithuania as a state could not be formed according to either strictly historical borders or strictly ethnographic ones. They were, therefore, inclined to renounce the historical territories of Lithuania, making up four Russian administrative units (the provinces of Vilnius, Kaunas, Suvalkai and Gardinas), in which, according to the 1897 census, ethnic Lithuanians would have made up one third of the inhabitants, and to reduce this territory to a "healthy third."[21] Following from political discussions and research, and also from the situation at the German-Russian war front, the southeastern border defining Lithuanian territorial-political aspirations (a line running along Medila, Narutis and Berezina) gradually took shape.

Compromises and Anachronisms

In attempting to identify the differences among Lithuanian political goals, distinguishing archaic and modern principles of political thought, conservative and forward-looking forces in Lithuanian society, and various other groupings and movements, it is essential to emphasize that all these things changed

rapidly over the course of years, combined amongst themselves, and underwent redefinition in discussions at various levels, in movement programs, and draft constitutions. Tactical and strategic circumstances often compelled Lithuanian groups to disguise their aims. Ideas, dreams and proposals spreading along the surface of mass consciousness looked rather different in the salons of the intelligentsia and the backroom political dealings of Vilnius.

Because the formation of a Lithuanian identity distinct from Poles or other Slavs was not yet completed, it was quite hazardous to inquire too deeply into the vast heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Moreover, to young Lithuanian nationalists, the attempt to bring that heritage back to life seemed counterproductive. The creation of complex ethno-political structures (for example, projects for a multi-layered federation, a confederation, or a cantonal Lithuanian state in the territory of the former Grand Duchy) threatened to renew tendencies toward Polonization; the old argument of Lithuanian statehood, however useful, also carried with it the understandable danger that the illustrious past could consume any plans for the future. This was the source of the sentiments described by Czesław Miłosz in a dialogue with Tomas Venclova: "*In 1918–1939, the Lithuanians saw no appeal in all that was close to me in Vilnius: the krajowcy, dreams of federalism, and Masonic liberals who had once joined Pilsudski. It seemed that they were more inclined to deal with the anima naturaliter endeciana, for in that case at least there was a clearly visible enemy.*"[22] This is especially apt as a description of the sentiments dominating Lithuanian newspapers at the time. On the other hand, in political consultations, it was sometimes attempted to reconcile the plans of the conservative wing of Lithuanian social democrats for realizing statehood, and those of the national democratic, or shall we say, the nationalist wing.

The first attempts of this kind are recorded at the time of the 1905 revolution, connected with the activity of the so-called

Vilnius autonomists and with Masonic lodges working under the leadership of the lawyer T. Wroblewski.[23] In the winter and summer of that year, "Lithuanian and Polish irredentists" sought a compromise. The most prominent *krajowcy* activists – L. Abramowicz, V. Abramowicz, J. Klodt, L. Krywicki, W. Wroblewski, and T. Wroblewski-met with Lithuanian activists, among them representatives of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party and the National Lithuanian Democratic Party – F. Bortevičienė, J. Vileišis, P. Višinskis, and also, indirectly, A. Smetona. Those forces came together for a brief moment and then once again went their separate ways.[24]

Although social conflicts among Lithuanians intensified interethnic Lithuanian-Polish conflicts, the search for compromises among Lithuania's Poles, non-Lithuanian-speaking Lithuanians and representatives of the nationalist wing of Lithuanians nevertheless continued through the period 1908–1914. It gained a clearer form during the First World War. In March–April 1915, an attempt was made to create a Vilnius section of the Lithuanian-Polish Information Bureau. At the end of the same year, a joint General Committee to Aid War Victims was created at Freibourg. Indeed, the feverish search for compromises continued until even December 1918.

At the same time, one did not have to wait long to see that a Compromise – in the form of a projected confederation with Poland – was anachronistic and unrealistic in the context of the great geopolitical changes taking place in Eastern and Central Europe. The only elements unifying the different regions and national minorities of Lithuania would have been either the Polish-speaking descendants of the old nobility or the social democratic principle of internationalism. Neither of these principles was acceptable to the majority of the Lithuanian people. The conservative "old class", the nobility still sustained by the hopes of romantic social ideas, could not construct a future on its illusions. Social democratic principles (partly transformed into Bolshevism) were not at the time so compromised as they

would yet become, but contempt for the old common existence with Russia created distrust towards these political projects which in one way or another implied closer ties with the empire. Here the national instinct of Lithuanians added to the rejection of the option of Russian socialism and guided politicians in search of ways leading to independence from "despots both foreign and homebred."

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7 Cited in: Genzelis, B. *Švietėjai ir jų idėjos Lietuvoje.* Vilnius, 1972, p. 100.
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17 Blinda (P. Višinskis), „Credo. Kilk ir kelk!" *Varpas,* 5, 1901, 50–51.
18 *Ibid.*
19 Demokratas (P. Višinskis), „Demokrato Balsas". *Varpas,* 9/10, 1905, p. 93; Miknys, R., op. cit., p. 6.
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[22] Miłosz, Cz. Venclova, T. „Dialog o Wilnie“. *Kultura I,* Paris, 1979, pp. 7–8.

[23] Miknys, R. „Vilniaus autonomistai ir jų 1904–1905 m. Lietuvos politinės autonomijos projektai“. *Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos,* t. 3: *Lietuvos valstybės idėja.* Vilnius, 1991, p. 183, 184.

[24] *Ibid.*

Associational Culture and Civil Society in Lithuania under Tsarist Rule

I.

Questions about the culture of civil society and free associations figure especially prominently in the public sphere of post-Soviet societies today. However, though there have been a few rather superficial studies in political sociology and some investigations of public opinion, these issues have yet to elicit systematic scholarly interest. This is true of Lithuanian historiography, as well: the emergence of civil society and the development of a network of free associations is, if not wholly forgotten, then discussed from a limited, one-sided perspective.

The situation in this area of historical research is rather special. On the one hand, social and cultural phenomena evolving in the 19th and early 20th centuries were never forgotten. Various civic alliances and societies commanded the interest of Lithuanian historians as well as that of their Russian and Polish counterparts. From the Freemasons and student organizations at the Vilnius (Wilno) Imperial University during the first third of the 19th century to the Lithuanian cultural and academic societies at the beginning of the 20th century, all such phenomena have received quite a bit of attention in historiographical publications.

The level of research on Lithuanian associational culture prior to 1914 is quite high; the period of Lithuania's national revival belongs in the group of topics most popular among historians. Paradoxically, associations and various less formal – partly illegal – groups of civic activism were, until very recently,

characterized only as forms of the national movement. These organizations have yet to be sufficiently explored in terms of civil society, as Lithuanian historians have never considered them the main point of social development.

On the other hand, all of these organizations were described and interpreted in the context of anti-tsarism, liberation, and the national movement. They were deemed interesting not for exemplifying the genesis of a culture of free associations and civil society, but for their significance in the project of national re-birth. In other words, they were treated as means for a cause, not as ends in themselves. In some respect this characterization also suits the book on cultural organizations of mid-19th century Lithuania written by the author of this chapter.[1] Even so, one can rightly say that research on the history of organizational life does have its own hundred-year history. These tendencies can also be noted in the most recent studies.[2]

The conceptual and methodological starting positions reflect that research on Lithuanian history has amassed a huge amount of facts and sources; however, this gives the impression they haven't been read in a contemporary idiom. The difficulties attending the formation and survival of civil society in the post-Soviet climate today heighten the importance of, and interest in, the emergence and survival of such a society in times past.

The purpose of this article is to review the most important features of the evolution of civil society and the culture of free associations during the period of Russian rule. Following the traditional division of that epoch into four phases – first, to the 1830 anti-Russian insurrection in Lithuania and Poland; second, the period from 1831 to 1863; third, the persecution of Lithuanian publications and culture, from 1864 to 1905; and fourth, the boom period of Lithuanian associational culture, from 1914 to 1915 –, we will seek to throw light on the specific developmental path of society in a Russian-occupied land.

II.

The first signs of modern social and associational life in Lithuania appeared at the time the Grand Duchy of Lithuania collapsed along with its partner in union, the Kingdom of Poland. Lithuania became part of the Russian Empire and gradually had to share the fate of those nations destined to languish in the largest "prison of nations". Lithuanian noble and intellectual elites were pushed away from direct political life or were included in the Russians' official project, namely the integration of an occupied country. For this reason, social and cultural life in the beginning of the 19th century became more active. In some respects it played a role in national compensation. Vilnius University, the largest establishment of higher education in the Russian Empire, gradually became a centre for liberal voluntary associations. In the epoch of the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Commonwealth of the Two Nations), the civil sector of Lithuania was undoubtedly better developed than that of Russia.

III.

At the same time, tsarist Russia gradually transformed into a state of very controversial civil society, which, according to the British political philosopher John Grey, can exist under many different types of government.[3] Russian and Western historians alike continue to discuss the scope for the transition of individuals from subjects to citizens of Russia. In other words, a question still remains regarding the development of civil society and associational culture under an autocratic regime. The usual claim is that Russia did not escape totalitarianism either before or after 1917 because it has never had a civil society. The state monopolized every activity, and no autonomous society existed outside of its all-pervasive scope. In fact, most social historians

have joined the chorus of historians of the Russian state and institutions in finding either a fragmented society incapable of self-organization or a polarized class struggle that contributed to the revolution in its most extreme form.[4] Russian civil society was just beginning: itprimitive, shapeless, and amorphous.

Some recent publications by historians of civil society in Russia show a slightly different interpretation. But how could a civil society and public sphere, as well as thousands of associations, exist under an autocratic government? American historian Joseph Bradley views the idea of free associations in Russia before 1917 as follows:

> In freely constituted and publicly validated associations, educated Russians acted as if they were in civil society…Under autocracy, voluntary associations not only gave civil society meaning, they made an essential contribution to the process by which Russian subject were becoming citizen.[5]

But if even Bradley's insight is correct, what were the conditions of social and civil development in the different parts of this Empire? What was the difference between the associational culture of Russian society and those of the Baltic *gubernii* or the Polish Kingdom? There are many signs of differences between the previous Commonwealth partners, Poland and Lithuania. These differences increased under Russian rule.

What does recent historical and sociological knowledge tell us about all of that? It seems the picture of Russian society painted by Joseph Bradley is a bit too optimistic. What was good for Russian intellectual life was not necessarily good for a country like Lithuania. Russian authorities used very different standards. For Lithuania it started from the ignorance of ethnic and national needs and ended in a brutal policy of Russification. From 1864 to 1905 the prohibition of Lithuanian publications, education in the Lithuanian language and other atrocities proved this point in a very direct way.

The problem in this investigation is that the long century of Russian domination in Lithuania was extremely contrastive. Throughout the 19th century until World War I the development of society in general and the earliest growth of civil society in particular fell into several highly distinct periods, comparable to processes peculiar to Russia as a whole.

To continue this comparative effort, we must compare the development of associations in Russian and the other Baltic (Latvian and Estonian) societies. Many shocking differences in the development of the public sphere exist, but again, with very comparable results. For decades, Lithuanian society was much more concerned about conspiracies than about positive and so-called "organic" work. That is why short periods of flourishing associational life ended with conspiracy and uprising. Only in the last decades of the century were "organic" (legal, positive, cultural and economic) reasons fully accepted by main-stream Lithuanian society. Somehow it affected even the neighbouring countries. As stated by Latvian historian Andrejs Plakans, the national activists – when urging the Latvians to transform their numerical preponderance into a dominant cultural and economic presence – had to avoid the appearance of attacking the autocratic political system, especially after the insurrections in Lithuania and Poland in 1863.[6]

IV.

First, it should be repeatedly stressed that although 19th-century Lithuania was long a part of autocratic Russia, that is not to say it was very loyal to Russia. Historically linked with the Polish Kingdom, Lithuania shared the destiny of non-conformist people, but the conclusion of that process for the Lithuanian people was even more dramatic than it had been for the Poles. The anti-Russian uprising at the end of the 18th century, participation in the Napoleonic war against Russia in 1812, uprisings

in 1830–1831 and 1863, the national revolution of 1905: these events influenced Russian polities in the country. Yet, despite the fact that Russian autocracy was very suspicious of the autonomous civil society and liberal national moods in the newly annexed country, Lithuanians managed in the late 18th century and the first half of the 19th century to create a wide public sphere and an associational life based on the model of the Western European enlightenment.

It must not be forgotten that the tenacious tradition of the independent Grand Duchy of Lithuania had a strong influence on society in the 19th century. Lithuanian nobles and gentry cannot be compared with their Estonian and Latvian (and Baltic German) compatriots. They were not the "foreigners", but rather mostly descendants of the native political elite. It is a well-known fact that the upper classes of Lithuanian society were in some respect culturally Polonized, alienated from the people. This makes for the true complexity of the ethno-political, ethno-social and ethno-cultural structure of mid-century Lithuania. But it is a proven fact that many descendants of the Lithuanian gentry, especially from the Western part of the country, i.e., Samogitia, entered into the national and cultural movement of Lithuanian people of this period.

Historians have determined that after partitions of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Lithuanian elite really were forced to turn from political involvement to other spheres of public life: charity, education, arts and science. This shift ignited and fuelled the start of associational life in Lithuania. The political and social elite, mostly the noblemen, became more and more engaged in associational life and really dominated it. The beginnings of civil society in Lithuania support the recent trend of Western historiography that problematizes the traditional concept of civil society and associational culture as an exclusive product of the middle class. Historians and social theorists have long assumed a link between the institutions of civil society and the middle class. In a venerable sociological narrative, market

capitalism and the bourgeoisie are the preconditions of civil society and public sphere. Recently, this concept has been made more flexible. Even Habermas developed his previous arguments further, recognizing the potential role of educated gentry and noblemen in creating civil society.[7] Lithuanian noblemen were a good example of that trend: numerous representatives of the noble estate filled classes at Vilnius University. After the year 1831 they also accounted for a substantial number at the universities in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Socio-economical stagnation of Lithuania influenced that lower part of the noble estate to take a place in the middle class of Lithuania's societal structure.

V.

There are some historians who argue that Lithuanian Masonic organizations were among the first associations to be active in the public sphere. The *golden age* of this network was 1813–1822. Masonic organizations promoted education as well as economic and social progress. At the same time it is a complicated task to recognize various conspiring and semi-conspiring organizations as civic associations. The whole interpretation of history of Lithuania's public sphere depends on the answer to this question. It was at once civic and secret – not public.

The first period lasted from the end of 18th century until the regime of Nicholas I had established itself and the Insurrection of 1830–1831 had been crushed. In Lithuania, this was a period of moderate cultural autonomy and of highly active intellectual and social life; at the centre of all this and directing the trends was the University of Vilnius, then the largest and academically most capable of all the Empire's universities, and certainly the singular most important institution in the development of the surrounding society. The university professors and students, as well as members of the liberal aristocracy and even some civil servants, joined societies devoted to philanthropic, public

health-oriented, publishing, educational, and cultural activities. It may safely be asserted that the cultural level of Lithuania's voluntary associations surpassed that of the Empire's and even that of its two capitals.

One of the first modern voluntary and professional associations was the Imperial Vilnius Medical Society, the first of its kind in Lithuania and Poland. It was founded in 1805 by Professor Joseph Frank of Vilnius University. The German scientist was very loyal to the Russian authorities. Medical Society itself avoided any relations with illegal activities. It pointed to rise of Medical science in Lithuania. The Society took its proper place among similar societies in Europe, and a number of famous scientists from Russia and abroad were listed among its corresponding members. It was likely these circumstances that permitted Vilnius Medical Society to escape all Russian repressions and thus survive until 1939; it was the only such association to be spared. In the mid- to late 19th century, the medical society continued its activity albeit under the significantly more restrictive supervision of the Russian administration, which was very suspicious of any activity that could have possibly had any links with the social problems and national traditions. The society continued to play a remarkable role in Lithuanian public life even during this stricter period. It is clear that the Russian autocracy was forced to cooperate with this well-organized society, as it simply had no other means of managing the country's most painful problems of public health.

Another traditional field in the activities of voluntary associations was charity. The Vilnius Philanthropy Society (1807) was established by the same Vilnius University professor, Joseph Frank. This society attracted many Lithuanian aristocrats to join in its philanthropic activities; it organized concerts and raised money for charity. In 1817 it initiated an elementary school in Vilnius for poor children; the school was the first in Lithuania to use Lancaster's educational methods. In 1853 one of the Society's members, Edward Romer, initiated the establishment of

a music school of the Society. Formally accused of supporting anti-Russian rebels, the association was closed by Russian authorities in 1864.

The most active Vilnius professors entered Masonic lodges, especially the famous *The Assiduous Lithuanian.*. Some intellectuals, dissatisfied with the local masons' divorce from social reality as well as their mysticism and elaborate symbolism, set up the Society of the *Szubrawcy* (Reprobates) in 1817. This society published the popular satirical magazine "*Wiadomosci brukowe*" in which pages of social criticism fought against obscurantism. Members of the society in general ridiculed the arrogance of clergy, taking issue with their vanity, self-seeking tendencies and their oppression of the serfs. The activities of the society were marked by strong rationalism, typical of the enlighteners of the 18th century. Understandably, the *Szubrawcy* clashed with the ideas of romanticism so rapidly gaining ground. Society members were even accused of cosmopolitanism and a lack of patriotism.[8]

Many of the *Szubrawcy* were also involved in the Vilnius Typographical Society, set up in that same year, 1817. The aim of this society was to raise the necessary funds for publishing books. The most popular periodical of that time, *Dziennik Wileński,* was published by the Society.

In the first quarter of the 19th century, social changes and the intellectual climate of Lithuania were significantly influenced by free associations created by university students in Vilnius. The role of academic organizations connected with the University was very important for the emergence of civil society in Lithuania.

The first student societies were set up in 1804. Typically, their activities centred around self-education and studies. The most important such society was the secret organization called *Towarzystwo Filomatów* ("Society of Philomaths"); famed Polish-Lithuanian poet Adam Mickiewicz was among the six founders of the Society. Seeking to influence as many young people

as possible, the Philomaths established and headed a number of independent legal and semi-legal organizations: *Union of the Friends, Promieniści* ("Union of the Radiant"), *Zgromadzenie Filaretów* ("The Society of Philarets") – which existed until 1822, when they all were shut down by the Russian administration.[9] Vilnius youth and student organizations headed by the *Philomaths* united more than 400 members.

These societies were accused of participating in a Caranonari-style anti-Russian conspiracy. Leaders were incriminated for anti-government actions and jailed. The popularity of this society was so great among students and the younger generation of Vilnius inhabitants that it later became the legendary example for new generations of Lithuanians.

VI.

The first three decades of the 19th century were distinguished by the remarkable growth of the associational structure and culture, and the Russian regime did create some legal conditions for a sort of cultural (and social) autonomy. But in 1831 the famous revolt against the Russian domination erupted in Poland and Lithuania. As retribution for this insurrection, the Russian government closed the university in Vilnius and, a short while later, all other institutions of higher learning. The entire institutional structure pertaining to culture and the association network was destroyed; the intellectual milieu was scattered. Only a few cultural and scholar societies, such as the Medical Society, were spared.

The period from 1831 to 1863 was one of repression, restriction, and fledgling hopes for a liberal thaw. The crushing of the insurrection struck a strong blow to the country's societal organizations. Until 1855 these losses were counterbalanced by the editorial rooms of the periodical press and the rather conservative salons.

When Nicholas I was replaced by Alexander II in the middle of this period, social and cultural life revived somewhat. The Agricultural Society, the Vilnius Archaeological Commission, and the Museum of Antiques, all aiming to be more than simply learned societies, were founded.

The establishment of' the *Komisja Archeologyczna Wileńska* ("Vilnius Archaeological Commission") became one of the most important and illustrative events in the history of free associations of the 19th century. The short but extremely active period of the commission lasted ten years, from 1855 to 1865. It should be noted that the commission really was a volunteer scientific society with more than 200 local members and a number of foreign constituents. Unofficially it was called the Vilnius Society of Science.[10]

Initiated by Eustachy Tiszkiewicz, a rich nobleman from a famous Lithuanian family, the commission started out with a specific interest in history and antiques, but from the very beginning it also strived to become the general scientific society of Vilnius. Three years later, members of the commission were openly calling themselves the Scientific Society of Vilnius, but officially these plans never materialized into reality.

The founders initially aimed at collecting books, manuscripts, and all documents related to the history of Lithuania. The continuation of that plan resulted in the first public Museum of the Antiquities in Lithuania, opened in the historic building of the former Vilnius University. Following the example set by some Scandinavian learned societies (this especially by Tyszkiewicz as president of the Archaeological Commission), the development of the newly founded institution was related to the ambitious plans to restore the university in the capital city of Lithuania. Lithuanian historians have evidenced how close the members came to achieving their goal. The collection included coins, weapons, paintings, and works of decorative arts. The Department of Fine Arts of the Commission was founded to protect and display the exhibits of the museum; it

also published a scientific journal dedicated to the presentation and examination of all questions of archaeology, history, statistics and culture of Lithuania[11].

Unfortunately, the story of this institution, too, ends with the onset of the new anti-Russian revolt of 1863: Tsarist authorities dissolved the Archaeological Commission, confiscated the museum collections, purged any exhibits "saturated with the important attitude" and handed the rest over to the newly established state library.

The Agricultural Society became extremely important and very close to the positive dream of the Russian authorities. Indeed, it was one of the most influential economic associations of that time, with its members mostly involved in the planning and implementation of the Peasant Reform and the Abolishment of Serfdom. It must be said that Alexander II and his reformist government recognized Lithuanian landlords from the Society as the most progressive potential partners for abolishing serfdom in the Russian Empire.

The Agricultural Society also played an impressive role in education and in the progress of rural economy. In some respects this organization could be compared to the *Vol'noe Ėkonomicheskoe Obshchestvo* (Free Economic Society) in St. Petersburg, while also sharing similarities with the Agricultural Society of the Polish Kingdom. On the other hand, many of its members were of the traditionally independence-seeking type. During the uprising of 1863–1864 many members of the Agricultural Society took part in the leading structure of the "Whites", the right wing of the revolutionary underground.

The development of free association culture traditionally depends on the existence of an educated urban society and upper social classes. But as shown earlier, Lithuanian urban development was extremely weak and the society had to be built on and around rural fundaments. It is for this reason that the Lithuanian gentry was so crucial in the emergence of the free associations.

The self-organizational network of the Lithuanian peasant community was in some respects unique. The masses were awakened by a network of temperance societies or fraternities, which had been initiated by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and which embraced nearly 90 percent of the peasantry in the final years leading up to the abolition of serfdom. It is quite complicated to put that type of movement in the context of civil society. On the one side, it was still an old-style religious fraternity based on the authority of the Catholic Church. There were many of these fraternities in Lithuania even before the 19th century. But this time the principle of sobriety provoked a new trend in the Lithuanian social sphere. The prohibition movement was supplemented by peoples' desire for a brighter life, education, health, etc. In the period between 1858 and 1864 the movement challenged an upsurge of printed material in the Lithuanian language.[12] Numerous propaganda pamphlets were published in Lithuanian. The *spiritus movens* of action bishop Motiejus Valančius (Maciej Wołonczewski) and his followers created the plan for the first Lithuanian-language newspaper aimed at the peasant population. The idea of the newspaper was presented to the Russian authorities, but unsuccessfully. The increasing momentum of this movement and the growing intellectual and cultural role of the Catholic Church became a thorn to the Russians. Bothered by their influence, Vilnius General-governor M. Murav'ev banned temperance societies in the Spring of 1864.

VII.

The fledgling societal activation burst into another anti-Russian insurrection in 1863, the suppression of which proved catastrophic to Lithuania. Again, only the Vilnius Medical Society survived the repressions. Voluntary civic activities were driven underground or usurped by the Russian bureaucratic apparatus. Lithuanian culture was doomed to the darkest part of its history:

the Lithuanian language, in the form of the publicly written and spoken word and even its use in schools, was banned. Aggressive Russification and the local reaction to it pushed Lithuania's development far off the path on which the Latvian and Estonian nations had embarked. The conditions for the development of Russian associational culture were also substantially different. Thus toward the end of the 19th century, Lithuania was a most-backward and benighted backwater, with the most constricted of societal relations. Even more significant is that this repression occurred at a time when Russian society itself was taking power, becoming increasingly developed. The only way for the idea of liberal and civic society in Lithuania to survive was to take underground action. Illegal periodicals, elementary schools, theatre circles, etc. somehow helped the spirit survive, but these were not sufficient means for developing higher cultural standards.

Today, in delving into the development of associational culture prior to 1914, we must pay primary attention to the beginning of the 20th century. Before 1904 there were practically no legal possibilities in Lithuania for the emergence of social action cells. Periodicals were printed exclusively abroad and clandestinely transported to Lithuania, whereas social networks were conspiratorial and openly politicized. Such limitations put a mark on the whole further development of associational culture. Only with the lifting of the ban on Lithuanian-language[13] activities and with the onset of some civic freedoms in 1905 did a truly vital rebirth of civic societal and social life begin. The leaders of Lithuanian society clearly understood what chasms of backwardness had to be bridged. During the years between 1905 and 1914 a multitude of associations, societies, and cooperatives sprang up not only in the cities and towns, but also in the countryside, thereby showing the enormous social energy that had accumulated during the long decades of the persecution of Lithuanian culture.

First, mention must be made of the Lithuanian Scientific Society Lithuanian name, established in 1907, which gradually

became the main actor of Lithuanian cultural life: a new type of association based on democratic ideas and needs of revival. Financial resources were collected from its members and also came from successful representatives of the new-born Lithuanian bourgeoisie. The Society established the scientific journal *Lietuviu tauta,* and organized annual conferences on Lithuanian heritage and history, folklore and ethnography. The library and archive also played a very important role in this general rebirth.

The Lithuanian Scientific Society mobilized the main activists of intellectual and cultural movement and created preconditions for the revival of the flourishing academic life of Lithuania.

At the same time, Lithuania's associational culture was fragmented and contradictory. Relations of competition and, to a lesser extent, cooperation influenced the country's Lithuanian, Polish, Jewish, Belarus and even official Russian culture. At this time, the national idea had challenged the archaic sociocultural tradition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The heritage of heterogenic, multilingual, multi-religious culture became the root of conflict. A once-common civic network was now divided among Lithuanian, Polish, Jewish and Byelorussian organizations. These associations sometimes competed for influence in Lithuanian life, but mostly understood the common past and future of the country.

A colourful illustration of these tendencies can be found in the artistic circles of Vilnius, which had by then become a bit cosmopolitan. This art scene was marked not only by conflicts and ethnic tension but also by tolerance and attempts at collaboration. In 1908 an effort was made to bring together artists of varying nationalities, including local Russian, Polish, Jewish, and Lithuanian artists. Countless exhibitions, an intensive cultural life, multiethnic art, close links with European art centres: all of these reflected the newly flourishing arts in Vilnius prior to 1914.[14]

Separate from that common market of arts, Lithuanian artists created their own organization, unveiling the important artistic potential of the revived people. Inspired by the idea of national rebirth, young Lithuanian artists who had studied at the art academies of St. Petersburg, Krakow, Munich, and Paris formed the Lithuanian Art Society Lithuanian name? (1906), which became a real centre of Lithuanian national art until the First World War. With its main aim being to create a new professional circle of Lithuanian artists and artworks as the part of the national idea, the society organized the first Lithuanian national art exhibitions. The members of this association tended to develop and apply the unique character from their heritage of Lithuanian folk art.

Other sectors of Lithuanian culture were not any less covered by the free association network. Musical and choral societies and theatre companies were less developed than those of the Estonians and the Latvians, but even so, the *Kankles* society in Vilnius and the music and theatre societies in other towns played a remarkable role in developing not only the national arts, but also a common imagination and free association culture of Lithuania.

An important part of the public life of Lithuanians took student organizations outside their native country. Because there were no higher education institutions in their home country, Lithuanian students were most concentrated in Moscow and St. Petersburg, less often in Warsaw. Lithuanian student associations also figured in Paris, Krakow, and Freiburg. After their return to Lithuania, these young people made strides to adopt Western civic habits in their own country.

Lithuanians of that time were referred to as migrant people. By the year 1914 more than 600,000 Lithuanians had left for Great Britain, the United States and Canada. In some respects, historians could claim that the new civil society of the Lithuanians was born outside of their native country. Immigrants and re-emigrants brought home the civil habits of the more developed societies.

VIII.

In conclusion, we need to point out the different development processes of civil societies and voluntary association culture in different places in the Russian Empire, the biggest "prison of nations" of that time. Lithuanian history exposes one of the sad stories of national oppression. Having once developed the foundation for associational life, later, in the second half of the 19th century, Lithuanians were forced to act in a real cultural underground, unpleasant conditions for liberal associations and learned societies. But even in these bad conditions, they maintained the ability to survived. Prior to 1914, cultural, artistic, educational, scholarly, economic and other societies of Lithuania attained such a level of maturity that, together with the political parties, they were able to take advantage of geopolitical circumstances and secure not only the reestablishment of Lithuanian statehood at the end of the First World War, but also the emergence of conditions conducive to liberal democracy.

1 Aleksandravičius, E. *Kultūrinis sąjūdis Lietuvoje 1831–1863 m.: Organizaciniai kultūros ugdymo aspektai*. Vilnius: Mokslas, 1989.

2 Ilgiewicz, H. *Wileńskie towarzystwa i instytucje naukowe w XIX wieku*. Toruń: Marszałek, 2005; Griškaitė, R. „Kelios refleksijos ilgai lauktos knygos tema, arba dar kartą apie skirtingą požiūrį į bendrą istoriją". In *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis,* 2005, nr. 2, p. 135–162.

3 Gray, J. „Totalitarianism, Reform, and Civil Society". In *Totalitarianism at the Crossroads*, ed. E. F. Paul. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1990, pp. 97–142, here p. 100.

4 Bradley, J. „Subjects into Citizens: Societies, Civil Society, and Autocracy in Tsarist Russia". In *American Historical Review*, 107, 2002, no. 4, pp. 1094–1123, here p. 1140.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 1139.

6 Plakans, A. *The Latvian*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1995, p. 95.

7 Habermas, J. „Further Reflections on Public Sphere". In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Cr. Calhoun. Cambrige, MA: MIT Press, 1992, pp. 453–454.

[8] *A Short History of Vilnius University*, ed. J. Kubilius et al. Vilnius: Mokslas, 1979, p. 114.

[9] Aleksandravičius, E., Kulakauskas, A. *Carų valdžioje. Lietuva XIX amžiuje*. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1996, p. 124 (Polish translation: *Pod władzą carów. Litwa w XIX wieku*. Kraków: Universitas, 2003).

[10] Aleksandravičius, E. *Kultūrinis judėjimas* (note 1), p. 44–45.

[11] *Pamiętniki Komisji Archeologycznej Wileńskiej*, no. 1 (1856).

[12] Aleksandravičius, E. *Blaivybė Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje. Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos, 2*. Vilnius: Sietynas, 1990.

[13] Merkys, V. *Knygnešių laikai. 1864–1904*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1994, p. 383–386.

[14] *Lithuania: Past, Culture, Present*, ed. S. Žukas. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1999, p. 142.

The Union's Shadow, or Federalism in the Lithuanian Political Imagination of the late 19th and early 20th centuries

Introduction: A Forgotten Thought

The course of the Lithuanian National Rebirth in the 19th century was strongly influenced not only by popular ethnocultural needs but also by a remembrance of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's statehood and by visions both of liberation from Czarist Imperial rule and of regaining sovereignty. At the same time this involved the even more complex issue of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's relations with its long-standing and mighty partner (perhaps even patron), the Kingdom of Poland. The energy of liberal Lithuanian nationalism burst forth in strongly expressed attitudes both toward tormentors in the East and toward centuries-old allies in the West. The Polish and Lithuanian tradition of anti-Czarist liberation, sprinkled with the blood of rebels, was what in the latter half of the 19th century undoubtedly forged Polish ideas of liberty and merged them with Lithuanian aspirations. But in the approach to the 20th century this tradition of common struggles noticeably weakened and was upheld largely by the gentry-related segment of Lithuanian society ever more torn by a historical dilemma already formulated in mid-19th century by Adomas Honorijus Kirkoras: in order to be with Poland, must Lithuania necessarily cease being Lithuanian?

The political rebirth of Central East European nations shows many instances of how after throwing off the shackles of former masters the new actors on the international scene fell prey to problems of coexistence amongst themselves. There simply were and are no ethnically substantially homogeneous countries in

Europe. With centers of power changing, some minorities became titular nations, while the representatives of former masters in those nations took on the role of minorities plagued by an arrogant memory. The new titular communities traumatized by age-old oppression eventually started to treat their own minorities in the way that, in the former *prisons of nations*, they once had been treated themselves. These tendencies and their worst consequences in the sphere of theories and political forecasts had been recognized by 19th century thinkers and social leaders.

One of the most important features of the common Spring of Nations was the steadily voiced concern of politically engaged leaders about how to balance the aspirations towards liberty evinced by newly emancipated or nationally ever more conscious peoples with their national egoisms. In the middle of the 19th century it was already obvious that liberation from the Habsburg or Romanov empires could lead to strife among the newly formed nations. Up till even today we can see the outcomes of national conflicts in the Balkans and Central Europe. Hence it was natural for political thinkers of that epoch to place great hopes in the development of federalist ideas. To their mind, it was federalism alone that could harmonize the conflicts threatening to break out following the demise of archaic empires. For neither the Ottoman nor the Austrian nor the Russian empires were essentially nationalist. The concept of cultural autonomy that had taken shape in Austrian politics even today is capable of eliciting wonder and of giving positive examples of political behavior. Today it is evident that the imperial great states had raised barriers against some of the worst effluents of nationalism. When these barriers gave way, new dangers arose. Various versions of federalism eventually not only became a tempting hope that it might be possible to avoid wars between the great nations not only (in accordance with a customary assumption of historiography) as a means of spreading one's international prestige (pan-Germanism or pan-Slavism) but also as a means for the movements of peoples slowly awakening to the *Spring of Nations*

to assert themselves. Thus it is plausible to see the flowering of federalist ideas as a sign that this or that nation was maturing politically and crossing the threshold from political syncretism and an archaic mindset to a fuller modernity.

On the political horizon of the Lithuanian Rebirth taking place in the late 19th and early 20th century, were there any signs of federalism? Were these federalist images, such as they were, just some handy means dictated by historical conditions? Or did they rise up as a final goal envisaged for the political future? What place in this political landscape was occupied by relations (possibly federalist ties) with Poland? Finally, did Lithuanian federalist images differ from Polish ones? These and other questions are still waiting for historians and researchers of political ideas to answer them. Here we would like to try out certain possibilities of interpretation. To put a sharp point on this, it is worth emphasizing that what is needed first of all is, at the very least, some serious reflection (at least one weighty polemical paper) on the way the traditions of the archaic Grand Duchy of Lithuania gave rise to federalist phenomena. This is the burden of the present essay.

This author has to acknowledge that he was on the verge of finding a possible answer several decades ago, having written a paper on the political aspirations of Lithuanians from 1863 to 1914, first published in the Lithuanian diaspora journal *Metmenys* and subsequently in the English-language *Journal of Baltic Studies* and in the Polish-language journal *Znak*.[1] Later the most important conceptual insights were presented in a book written jointly with Antanas Kulakauskas: its title translated into English would be *Under the Czars. Lithuania in the 19th century*.[2] In this book we attempted to lay out that variety of conceptions and aspirations which in the texts of the 19th century Lithuanian National Rebirth and in later historiography were literally hidden from view by the term *unija* (*union*), used ever more metaphorically. That is, the impression arises that federalism could not have become a separate topic of research

in our historiography simply because if someone at the turn of the century thought about federative ties with Poland he would automatically have been put down as holding *unionist views*. And such views could have been advanced only by a Polonized Lithuanian, thus someone who was no longer a Lithuanian, but a Pole. To someone thinking like this, certain Lithuanian personalities of those times – Antanas Baranauskas and Mykolas Römeris – must either have been no federalists, or have ceased to be Lithuanian. In order to prevent similar-minded people from being crossed off the list of Lithuanians, Piotr Lossowski dared to articulate a very bold theory about two roads taken by the Lithuanian rebirth movement at the beginning of the 20th century[3]: the first (and more important one) was represented by Jonas Basanavičius; the second (which lost out and was forgotten) was exemplified by Antanas Baranauskas. The latter road was left open to those sundry Lithuanians who were of *unionist persuasion*.

Nowadays, with historiography having gotten richer, contexts of research having changed, and current reality pointedly suggesting new theories and temptations, it must be acknowledged that when reading the numerous essays by Polish historians devoted to Polish federalism[4] the feeling crops up about our lack of intellectual determination to make a further step and assert that there was a very specific, even if possibly marginal, current of Lithuanian federalism, not investigated up to now. It is like a privilege[5] extended by Polish colleagues and confirmed by an unwritten tradition of Lithuanian thought.

The movement of the tradition of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's statehood over the thresholds of the Rebirth as well as the challenges of ethnonationalism of the last decades have been frequently discussed from a variety of viewpoints, with new tools of historical investigation amply tested. But one can only guess why the term *federalists* did not gain currency in the turn-of-the-century Lithuanian movement nor why it was not used by Soviet and post-Soviet Lithuanian historiography,

although in Polish historiography it was the federalists who made up the most colorful contingent of past heroes. On the other hand, it's perhaps not worthwhile giving in to a peculiar nominalist temptation and thus to believe that what is most important to a historian is how he names a certain phenomenon of the past. Perhaps it's not the name that hides difficulties of comprehension, and perhaps it's enough to try to describe the past while sticking to the words that are usual and familiar? I will not pretend to have the unambiguously true answer.

Recent years saw several attempts to throw light on connections between the traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the political programs of Lithuanian Rebirth. The most lucid interpretation was set out in 2009 by Rimantas Miknys in an article titled (in English translation) as "The Tradition of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's Statehood in the Program of the Lithuanian National Movement: Theoretical and Practical Aspects."[6] But even in this essay supporters of the federalist idea did not receive rights of independent existence; i.e., conceptually the work remained within the trenches of traditional Lithuanian historiography. These trenches were deepened and strengthened, but their theoretical topography had not changed. Still, Miknys, as the most prominent scholar of the activities and works of Mykolas Römeris, comes closest to the border beyond which historians should begin freeing their terminology from entanglement in the metaphors of *Unionist views* and opening up new, more diversified ways of solving the most complicated questions of modern Lithuanian history.

From an Antiquated Union to a Modern Federation

Let's recapitulate: in the post-Insurrection period of Czarist repressions, bans, and persecutions, a Lithuanian with *Unionist views* was, in the eyes of the activists of the main current of the Lithuanian National Rebirth Movement, somewhere between

being a bad Lithuanian and no longer being a Lithuanian but a Pole. Exceptions were allowed for, and greater mercy was shown to, such heroes of history as Antanas Baranauskas:[7] a man of Unionist views, but still a Lithuanian. (Or perhaps a federalist? Or even a *krajovcas*?) But in his case too there is a tendency to ignore or just superficially allude to his pro-Polish political views without delving into them in order to understand and articulate his cherished visions of Lithuanian relations with Poland. In order not to simplify things we will state that it isn't at all easy to find direct proofs of these views, but this is also not to deny the presence of signs suggesting a certain tendentiousness of the Lithuanian cultural memory.

It has already been remarked that Lithuanian historiography treats partisans of the political traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania on the threshold of the 19th century to the 20th either as inhabiting a space on the periphery of the Polish political nation, or as denizens of a genderless, nationless environment – somewhat similarly to the *tuteishi* existing in a certain syncretic state. The only difference is that while the latter failed to reach the heights of individualized consciousness, the former (called *krajovcai*) exhibited exceptionally subtle, perhaps even the highest, forms of reflective self-identity and consciousness. Thus the term *krajovcai* (*Krajowcy* in Polish) adhered to that group of people who at the beginning of the 20th century believed both that a political continuation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the maintenance of traditional relations with Poland were possible. But it is no thanks to Lithuanian historians that the *krajovcai* have been recognized as a Lithuanian societal group. Rather, they emerge as a special variety of Poles, as Lithuanian Poles. What a mental threshold was crossed by the Polish historian Dariusz Szpoper when he authored a biography of Konstancija Skirmuntaitė! By titling his book *Gente Lithuana, Natione Lithuana*, he symbolically recognized the right of this descendant of the Pinsk aristocracy to be a Lithuanian.[8]

Eventually a certain specific version of a renascent Lithuania's political imagination and its relations with Poland became dominant: it called for basing a new Lithuanian commonality in independence on its gradual separation from the historical heritage of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy and from the path of Poland's political development. There's no special reason to seriously doubt this fateful explication of our history's turns. Throughout the 19th century there took place a process of painful crystallization of goals for the political future, although only the end of the First World War allowed the Gordian knot to be cut. Lithuanian political aspirations in the national movement are usually explained by the following common sense stages: a defense of the national culture soon growing into political activity; then attempts at formulating the idea of an autonomy within the Russian empire, later maturing into plans for an independent Lithuanian state. Thus the growth process of political consciousness is first of all contingent on relations with the Russian empire, the *de facto* sovereign power on Lithuanian territory.

At the same time the understanding grows that the rights of a historical Lithuania to a separate political status can become part of a program only in the context of reviewing old union ties with Poland. In this way it became a tradition for historians to conceive of Lithuania as somehow tied to Russia, even though in reality such a structure never existed (other than a Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic within the confines of the Soviet Union). Here the issue primarily concerns desiderata, the limits of political imagination, and more or less expressed programmatic ideas.

An undeniable historical turn is represented both by the the Russian Emancipation Reform of 1861 (its significance for Lithuania was equated by Mykolas Römeris with that of John the Baptist for the Christian Church) and by the crushing of the anti-Russian Revolt of 1863–1864 in Lithuanian and Polish lands. What visions of Lithuanian liberation and of future political ties came to the fore in this period of epochal fracture?

The most radical account is still that of Bronius Genzelis in his book *Švietėjai ir jų idėjos Lietuvoje* (Heralds of Enlightenment and their Ideas in Lithuania). There this scholar of Lithuanian political thought distinguishes four important visions, arising in 1863, for Lithuania's political future. According to this model, already predominant in Lithuanian historiography, a *White* group headed by Jokūbas Geištoras saw Lithuania as a province within a reconstituted Poland. A second *Red* group (Antanas Mackevičius) envisioned a Lithuania in equitable federation with Poland. A third, also Red but comprising the most ardent *Revolutionaries* (Konstantinas Kalinauskas, Edvardas Jokūbas Daukša) dreamed of an independent Lithuanian state that would continue the traditions of the multinational Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In this classification a fourth attitude, that of Bishop Motiejus Valančiaus, was indifferent to the goals of the revolt and to Lithuania's political perspective, as long as the interests of the Roman Catholic faith and Lithuanian ethnic culture were not violated.[9] Genzelis's scheme is still fairly serviceable in current investigations of Lithuanian political history (and it isn't contradicted by the the most recent work of Merkys and Miknys), but it does have some weak points.

First of all, it is difficult to prove much about attitudes that Bishop Valančius and his circle might have harbored towards Lithuanian statehood and its possible relations with a future Poland – there just is no direct evidence or testimony about this at all. Although sound intuition and historical parallels allow for good guesses, these do not add up to decisive argumentation and clear programmatic guides.

Moreover, Genzelis's classification leaves practically no room for a possible mid-19th century idea of a Lithuanian autonomy within the Russian Empire, an idea that could naturally have grown in the context of *organic action* (in opposition to armed resistance) and that indeed was nurtured by some leaders of the early 20th century Lithuanian movement. But the history of Lithuania in the 19th century had, even before the 1863

Revolt, provided examples, difficult to forget, of endeavors to contemplate, and to restore the statehood of, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania within the confines of Russia. There were the attempts by Mykolas Kleopas Oginskis and other early 19th century loyalists to advance the Lithuanian cause by making use of the international circumstances at hand. This perspective, however, has not yet been properly analyzed. It can only be surmised that under the conditions of Lithuania's Soviet occupation it was not seem attractive to resurrect these phenomena of Lithuanian federalism as objects of scholarly study, if only because they might indirectly support Lithuania's accession to the Soviet Union as well.

In 1863 and for a period immediately thereafter Lithuanians not only lacked an organized, independent, and separate layer of political actors but also did not create any systematic programs articulated in the language of contemporary scholarship or even popular rhetorical agitation; rather, they just produced isolated records and haphazard impressions, leaving historians to make reconstruct the past and make judgments based on letters, memoirs, and occasional remarks in essays devoted to other purposes entirely. There are testament-like documents, the most remarkable of which is the treatise of the rebel leader, Rev. Antanas Mackevičius, written on death row. There the thought, expressed more clearly than anywhere else, shines forth that the logic of federalism (along with the fostering of political connections with Poland) is commanded not only by the traditions of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's statehood but also by the realization that *Lithuania by herself lacks many of the conditions for a self-sufficient revolution and for the achievement of a self-sustaining future*. Hence the necessity for a harmonization with Polish aspirations. Lithuania and its political stratum did not possess independent power, imagination, and conviction to act in total separation from its former Union partner. In other words, Mackevičius's explanation suggests that envisioning a restoration of the federative tie resulted not just from an adoration of

the former Union tradition but also from an understanding, dictated by sober common sense, that Lithuanians by themselves were too weak to achieve the desired result. And again, this perspective of resuscitating the Polish-Lithuanian Union was looked upon not as a final goal but as a necessary prerequisite for democratically achieving something *self-sustaining for the future*. A legendary figure of the Revolt expresses, on his deathbed, his faith that by aiding the Polish insurrection the Lithuanians could expect Polish help for Lithuania's liberation and its struggle to have civic rights recognized at least temporarily for its own common people. Only then would the Lithuanian nation sooner or later be able to speak the word about its own destiny.[10]

The present level of historical knowledge does not allow us to determine more exactly to what extent political realism dictated federalist, autonomist, unionist, or other attitudes on the part of Lithuanians, and to what extent these federalist attitudes flowed in the same current of political ideas that was then rather broad in the West. We should not forget that the impulses toward a universal utopia of federalism arose not only from an experience of big nation conflicts and of their self-aggrandizement, but also from an aspiration by oppressed nations to free themselves. How much was federalism (whether or not this term was used) just a way station on a rising nation's path to freedom? How much, on the contrary, did it beckon as an ideal embodiment of the highest goal? Was it just a means, a realistic scenario out of cruel necessity; or was it the supreme objective? Answering this question would mean getting a clearer grip on the independent role of the federalist attitude in the formation of the Lithuanian political imagination.

Historians are used to arguing that the political aspirations of the 1863 revolt in Poland and Lithuania integrated the restorative ideas of the Republic of Two Nations and the logic of modern federalism. Let us leave aside the question of how successful and politically functional this imaginative mixture

was.[11] It's more important to realize that it was breathtakingly attractive to young Lithuanian hotheads at the time they decided to take up arms. One of those inspired by Lithuanian federalism, Boleslaw Limanowski, wrote the following in his memoirs: *What first of all mattered to us, Lithuanians, i.e., the young people descended from historical Lithuania, was that Lithuania tie its movements to those of Congress Poland, that it march leg-to-leg, shoulder-to-shoulder in step with Poland. We knew that Congress Poland alone was too weak to achieve independence on its own strength, much less was a Lithuania left to its own devices capable of throwing off the shackles of the Czar's despotism. Nevertheless, it was a mistake later on to look upon our efforts at bringing Lithuania closer to Congress Poland as being just an aspiration to create a centralized state for the exclusive benefit of the Polish nation. exclusively. In reality we were seeking to restore the Republic in its old boundaries, but we were also Republican federalists who not only aspired to guarantee the rights of all nations about to enter the Republic but also, as Populists [ludowcy], supported the feelings of national selfhood than awakening in the Lithuanian-Belarus population. And when I say "we", I have in mind the conscious and politically active youth.*[12]

Limanowski's language very pointedly reveals a rather common viewpoint of those times, one foreign neither to Geištoras's *Whites* nor to Mackevičius's or Kalinauskas's *Reds*. And even if we do not know exactly how the whole idea of a revolt might have appeared to the veterans of the first generation of the Lithuanian rebirth movement headed by Simonas Daukantas, we can unhesitatingly affirm that at least Mikalojus Akelaitis, who regarded Daukantas and Valančius as his ideological patrons, would have embraced this idea. The message transmitted at the request of the Revolt's leadership in the Lithuanian newspaper Žinia apie lenkų vainą su maskoliais (News of the Poles' war with the Russians)[13] was expanded upon in his other writings and correspondence with 19th century activists.

In his political activities after the Revolt as an émigré Akelaitis actively propagated the remembrance of the Union while emphatically identifying himself as a Lithuanian and claiming to represent Lithuanians. Thus on March 19, 1869 he wrote J. I. Kraszewski from Paris: "*Three years ago, as you know, I invited my countrymen to get ready to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Union of Lublin. With tears of happiness I must confess to you that my plea did not fall on deaf ears… We are planning to organize an international congress here, but most importantly, we would like to turn into reality a Slavic conference to be held in Pest. Following the example of Lublin, it would bring together in unity the Czechs, Galicians, Hungarians, and Austrian Serbs. The principle of this unity would be legitimated by a joint international congress. I will let you know later the results of these efforts. Now I'm only asking you to lend your influence and connections to help realize this idea.*"[14]

A skeptical historian will say that nothing impressive came out of this. But for the history of ideas and of the political imagination what counts most is the fact of an idea being defended. Even if we suspect that Akelaitis is boasting a bit in claiming to be the first to call attention to the universal qualities of the Lublin Union so important for the future of Central and Eastern European nations (even today Polish politicians and political historians talk this way in European Union forums), we have to recognize that for him, an activist of the Lithuanian emigration, the Lublin Union shone like a guiding star.

Akelaitis consciously and ardently defended the statehood of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy in union with Poland and connected that with Europe's federalist perspectives. In a letter to Kraszewski four months later he reported: "*On the 11th of this month we celebrated here the anniversary of the Lublin Union, as had been announced earlier… At 1 p.m. in the Batignolles School with many emigrants in attendance the awards were presented together with the medals created to mark the 300th anniversary of the Union… The event was presided over by the veteran Colonel*

Kaminski. First the Act of Union was read, then Sivinski spoke on behalf of the Crown, finally I spoke in the name of the Lithuanians… I described the Union of Lublin as a road sign in a broad avenue on which humanity must go forward to the future. One cannot turn away from it on pain of entering wrong ways, landing on winding paths, or worse, falling into murderers' hands, as happened to us, when we were forced off that path."[15]

The author of the letter ascribes a symbolic, even mystical significance to the Union, hails it as a good example for Europe to follow, and undoubtedly sees Lithuania's place in such a universal federation. At the very same time he was actively concerned about topics in Lithuanian history and spent much time thinking about dictionaries and establishing Lithuanian periodicals. The horizon of Union federalism coincided in his mind with his perspective on calling up a modern Lithuanian national awakening.

A certain historiographical paradox is provided by a polemic started by Augustinas Janulaitis[16] and continued by Juozas Kudirka[17] concerning Akelaitis's alleged Pan-Slavic views during his later émigré period, i.e., when he became a contributor to *Auszra*. How could it happen that though not holding Lithuanians to be Slavs Akelaitis nonetheless tied together images of Lithuania's future with the ideas of Pan-Slavism? This might puzzle only those who fail to appreciate the theoretical attraction that a federation of newly arising Central Eastern European nations might have had as just a way station toward a much more general federation. Being no mean philologist and historian, Akelaitis doubtless knew that the Hungarians, too, were not Slavs: still, he envisioned an important place for them in that same broad federation.

Nationally conscious and active Lithuanian leaders in the emigration (there were only a few of them, and in the second half of the 19th c. only they had an opportunity to legally express themselves in public), though often quarreling among themselves, were all more or less committed to federalist images.

Thus another veteran of the 1863 Revolt, the *Auszra* contributor Andrius

Višteliauskas-Vištelis in a letter to the same J. I. Kraszewski vowed: *"Even though I'm not a separatist, I always stress that Lithuanians and Poles are distinct in nationality, although I love good Poles like brothers and am not ashamed to call Lithuanians a nation – not like Mr. Mikalojus Akelaitis (now Akieliewicz) from Marijampolė, who in Polish fashion calls Lithuanians the common people… I am Lithuanian in the full sense of that word and dearly wish that all nations merge into one while preserving their language and geographical autonomous separation, with one universal language for common communication freely chosen by all. A dream?! Indeed it is, but still it has and leads to a goal, to one sheepfold with conscientious blockheads who would not shear too much wool from these sheep so that this wool wouldn't lead to ravages called wars!"*[18]

Not too much different were the views espoused by one of the leaders of the *Aušra* circle, Jonas Šliūpas, who like Mikalojus Akelaitis was under the influence of Limanowski. The only difference was that Akelaitis was drawn to Limanowski by their mutual revolutionary experience and ethnic heritage as well as Akelaitis's activity in the *Želmuo* Society (to which he in turn drew Limanowski) and his ancient conception of Lithuanianism, whereas Šliūpas was attracted by Limanowski's profound socialist thought. According to Rimantas Vėbra, a student of the political thought of the Lithuanian Reawakening movement, Šliūpas developed the thesis that in the 19th c. the world's nations were affected by two contrary processes: one sought the integration of all nations (*their unity and centralization*), the other *left everything that's important to separate "federations"*.[19] The federalism of Šliūpas appears to be very situational and realistic. Eventually he regarded it as both the thoretical future of mankind and as a practical means of achieving the Lithuanians' political goals.

The political imagination of the early phase (encompassing the last two decades of the 19th century) of the Lithuanian Rebirth movement was strongly marked by federalist ideas,[20] but this aspect is still awaiting serious attention from historians. In the meantime the following assertion by Vėbra, formulated in 1970, still seems to stand: in spite of the widely declared maxim that *Lithuania is for Lithuanians* and dreams of reestablishing Lithuanian independence, a *majority spoke of Lithuania's belonging "to a free state" on a federal basis*.[21]

A universal federalism as a futurist vision was very attractive in the 19th century and held in its thrall both the attention of the (re)emerging nations' intellectual leaders and the strategic interests of the world's superpowers. For the latter federalism was a new weapon in the game of dividing the world. Ideological fracturing gained in depth at the onset of the 20th century, yet the humanist utopias of national self-determination for an independent life and of peaceful international co-existence did not disappear. On the contrary, before World War I they had become livelier than ever. And they were never so deeply submerged than in the trenches of the imperialist world war.

Lithuanian federalism: before independence or after it?

In the eyes of Mackevičius and many other revolutionary democrats (including the Russian émigré ideologue Nikolaj Gercen), an uprising together with the Poles meant, to begin with, the aspiration to fashion such conditions of political liberty for Lithuanians that they would be able to determine their own future themselves. To be with somebody – Russia, Poland, or (later) Germany – or to remain separate and independent: that was then the overriding question. We can see here a certain controversy of political attitude. We must fight together with the Poles so as to separate ourselves from Russia and obtain the possibility of a free choice: but fighting alongside the Poles means, as

it were, chosing beforehand a direction as between union and federation, doesn't it? Isn't that putting the carriage before the horse? A perspective without theoeretical clarity? Of course, not just the logic of theory, but reality itself dictated the conditions. The quest for greater frredom of choice counseled engaging in common actions with Poland, for expecting any concessions with respect to political liberty (or autonomy) from the Russian Empire was completely out of the question. In Russia itself there existed practically no organized groups nor any individual democrats who could conceivably have entertained any such thoughts. There might have existed such stirrings in the minds of some radical Russian émigré personalities, but the voices of neither Gercen nor Bakunin were really heard in the Empire itself. Much less so if they spoke about any prospects for captive Lithuania.

Even in theoretical deliberations the linear logic of revolution – Lithuania's liberation – independent existence – free self-determination as to building something permanent for the future with whom? – did not take hold. But it's obvious that in the Polish federalist imagination, enmeshed as it was in the Jagellonian political tradition, it was even harder for the following assumption to assert itself: that Lithuania first had to achieve its own freedom and only then resolve to accept (or reject) any federalist version. True, Limanowski, in his list of duties required of Poland, as the liberation front's stronger actor, did include providing support for the self-determination of the Lithuanian, Bielarus and even Latvian nations. However, in general, the imagination of the Polish federalist and the whole Jagellonian political tradition most often prescribed the following chronology for the political future: a common struggle against Russia; liberation and fixing of federal relations; finally, all the guarantees for self-rule.

On the other hand, the federalist images prevalent amiong the *krajovci* in the Vilnius region were primarily built up from below: the reconstituted Grand Duchy of Lithuania had, from

the very beginning, to be a construction of autonomous territories, and only then had to be federated or confederated with the Polish state. The Socialists and Social Democrats, fiery in promoting their ideas, were particularly drawn to imagine a populist anarchist federation. But the Lithuanians, when thinking about the various possible shapes a future universal federation of European nations might take,[22] did not seem to consider the possibility that Lithuania itself would become a federated state. Limanowski's socialist utopia foresaw an anarchistic network of self-governing communities at the base of such a federation. The available data suggest that even if Lithuanians engaged in reveries (or even negotiations) about Lithuania's alliances with other free nations, the prospect of internal federalization was utterly inacceptable.

We may state that the Lithuanian federalist imagination was constrained by two conditions. First, Lithuania had to become a political and international subject and then decide. Second, any possible Polish-Lithuanian federative constructions had to be seen in the broader context of a European federation of nations, so as to secure a certain balance. All this is rather directly attested to by the 1902 documents of the Lithuanian Social Democrats: *Recognizing every nation's right to be concerned with, and make decisions about, its own welfare, the Lithuanian Social Democratic party will attempt politically to create a democratic Lithuanian republic, federated with neighboring nations situated at the same level of social and political growth* (my italics – E. A.)[23]

Lithuania's political leaders, at least those on the left side, apparently understood that a true federation required a certain symmetry and comparable weight on each side. Even in the most utopian reveries of the National Reawakening Lithuania could not command sufficient political weight to ensure that a bilateral construction with the Poles wouldn't come out dangerously skewed. For this reason images of a broader multi-national federation came to be preferred by Lithuanians to those

of just bilateral relations with the former union partner. This thought must be investigated further but seems to be supported by the earlier impressions that joseph pilsudski received from his meetings with Lithuanian Social Democrats. In a letter to the PPS leadership he was enraged that he had *to talk further about a "federation" with who knows whom and who knows why and they couldn't even say that they wanted a federation with Poland and not with somebody else...*[24]

The future Polish marshal was iritated by the circumspect position of the Lithuanian Social Democrats, one whose more inclusive conception of a universal federation of free nations combined with a dose of political realism did not allow Pilsudski just to wantonly waive the Lublin Union flag and the Lithuanians to submit to the pressure of Polish domination, patronage, and self-interest. On the other hand, it is difficult to say how deeply the question of similar *political stature* was reflected upon at the very beginning of the 20th century. However, the signs of Lithuanian political efforts accentuating, first, the closest goals (autonomy) and, second, those furthest down the road (an independent state within ethnographic boundaries), always testified to desirable federative ties to free neighboring nations, which almost always included Poland, but not Poland alone. Obviously, the tendency was to avoid commitment to an exclusively two-nation federation, erected on the map of the former Republic of Two Nations.

There are at least two plausible explanations as to why this happened. First, it was because the emancipation of the Lithuanian nation itself, chafing as it had been under a multi-layered national oppression, collided with the Polish quest to fortify the positions of Polish identity in the eastern borderlands (*kresy*). And second, because a newly established or reconstituted state of Lithuania would evidently have been asymmetrically situated, possessing neither equal rights nor rqual power to guarantee the Lithuanians' becoming a modern nation.

If we were to ask, how much importance the Lithuanian movement of those times attached to the federalist principle itself, we would have to say that common sense and political realism forced preoccupation with more mundane and simpler everyday tasks. Long and detailed treatises on federalist topics – there was no one, and no one had the time, to write such things. For some that could have been a distant and perhaps unreal possibility; for others, the formal similarity to historical reality as formed by the Lublin Union was enough to reject (or accept) federalism. Serious difficulties would await us if pursuing Łosowski's thought about two paths of Lithuania's Reawakening, we would try to understand those who, like Bishop Baranauskas, were convinced that the most realistic way for Lithuanians to recreate their self-rule and advance their rights was to preserve their traditional ties with Poland. Perhaps there still are unread documents and texts that would allow us to grasp what in his old age the bishop of Seinai really thought about Lithuanias's future perspectives, but the hope for that is very slim. What we have are just some indirect and cautious indications that he maintained, first, a very hostile attitude toward socialism and liberalism and, second, believed in tradition (including the political one).

Even though more research is needed in this area, we can already understand something on the path of this *imagined second Lithuanian awakening*. As a conservative thinker Baranauskas was convinced that the Union of Lublin was worth resuscitating. For it does not clash with the deep interests of the Lithuanian nation. Already in his famous answer to Basanavičius's editorial in the first issue of *Aušra* Baranauskas defended the idea of the Union and argued that blaming the Poles for the de-Lithuanization of the upper classes was totally unjustified: members of the Lithuanian gentry themselves eventually chose the ways they expressed themselves culturally and linguistically. According to the Bishop, Lithuania was never a province of the Kingdom of Poland, and the Poles never ruled it. Everything that turned

out to be bad or good came out of Lithuanian heads and hands, and there's no reason to blame the Poles for things they didn't do.[25] We must emphasize that in defending the Union idea in the seriously conservative Polish press (his text was published in *Przegląd katolicki*), Baranauskas in a very principled manner demonstrated that Lithuania is a historical and political fact, not just "a Lithuanian people" (*lud Litewski*). Confronting the aušrininkai in this way, he no less than they stood up for the traditional sovereignty of the Lithuanian state and the historical rights of the Lithuanian nation.

It's a different matter entirely how he conceived of the historical Lithuanian nation, the Lithuanians themselves, how he envisaged their future, and what system and relations of state he thought to be optimal. Even though later he refrained from openly expressing his political views and he did not live to see those times of revolutionary change with respect to which any actions of his might have disclosed his real attitudes, it's highly probable that Lithuania's federation with Poland, as an act of historical justice, was for him the most important part of the future horizon – both in seeking Lithuania's liberation and in thinking what would come after it.

On the level of the political ideas that decisively influenced the evolution of the Lithuanian National Reawakening, there's little doubt that socialist and nationalist ideals seemed to be the most attractive, but overgrown with elements of a Christian or liberal worldview mixed into sometimes seemingly incongruous amalgamams. The differences between the socialist and nationalist worldviews were best reflected on issues of federalism. Socialist dreams unconditionally stimulated the imagination of a federalist future (including the United European Nations idea so close to the present-day European Union), while nationalism strengthened the faith in the possibilities afforded by separate, independent political existence.

Choices for Lithuanians: the Diagnoses of Mykolas Römeris

Lithuanian historiography has long stood on a threshold; and if we had stepped over it as an unquestionable thing we would have started to speak about the second unsuccessful road of national rebirth that was taken by Antanas Baranauskas, Konstancija Skirmunt, and Mykolas Römeris. But in this concluding episode of a polemical essay we will not be closely tracing the footsteps of this noted political actor, thinker, constitutionalist, and praticing jurist as he was modeling Lithuanian statehood. Römeris was a unique witness to Lithuanian points of view and an expert, swo that looking at his texts we can begin to understand some of the publicly undeclared views that political activists had about the perspectives of a federation and its possible partners as well as the doubts and phobias that accompanied it.

In a famous book, already a classic of social thought, entitled *Lietuva. Studija apie lietuvių tautos atgimimą* (Lithuania, A Study of the Lithuanian Nation's Rebirth),[26] Römeris showed the Polish intelligentsia and political elite that the new Lithuanian nation, serious, independent, conscientious, and sturdy to boot, is a cultural, social, and political fact that has already happened. It may be said that in the eyes of literate, Polish-speaking society

Römeris thereby became a theoretical expert on modern Lithuanianism. At the same time he was a subject of independent thought and political behavior who knew how to merge the political traditionalism characteristic of the liberal *krajovci* (a desire to recreate a modernized Grand Duchy of Lithuania while coexisting with a geographically close and historically affiliated natural partner, a newly reestablished Poland) with the federalist vision that was slowly conquering Europe's imagination.

A man of quiet rationality, Lithuanian patriotism, and a Polish spirit of self-respect, Römeris was a man whom more

deeply-thinking Lithuanians trusted, while Polish liberals often saw in him someone who could without great tendentiousness explain to them the Lithuanians' behavior and what the Lithuanians hoped for. Thus, even after many years, we can search his diaries for answers to a host of unsolved puzzles concerning national choice. Not doubting in the least that it would be valuable for researchers of various persuasions once again and repeatedly to test their mettle by reading and reflecting on this source, we will take on a humbler task and return to a source often cited by historians, Römeris's 1915 treatise (memorandum) *Litwa wobec wojny*, which thanks to Wiktor Sukiennicki in 1970 found its way from the Hoover Institution Archives to the journal *Zeszyty Historyczne*,[27] published by the Polish émigré *Instytut Literacki* in Paris.

Römeris's memorial is welcome to the researcher because of its penetrating practicality and its peacemaking position. The document came about as a confidential expert evaluation for the Polish Supreme National Committee (*Naczelny Komitet Narodowy*); its purpose was not only to offer a professional analyst's objective analysis, but also to direct the attention of Polish activists working for Poland's liberation to a political decision that a conscientious statesman, the memorial's author, favored.

The First World War was just the moment when the thoughts and motives, not always overtly declared, of Lithuanian activists became clearer. A war involving the Great States, especially between those that toward the end of the 18th had partitioned the Republic of Both Nations, was an important part of the future imagined by Poles and Lithuanians alike. Those thinking realistically, however, could not envision any solution for Polish and Lithuanian freedom other than one that involved some kind of breakdown in Russia, either a revolution, or a war, or both at one and the same time. Both the *varpininkai* and the even more left-wing activists of the Social Democratic wing began, from the 1890s onward, to ponder and voice the thought that neither the Kaiser's Germany nor the Czar's Russia would grant Lithuania

freedom. The geopolitical circumstances giving birth to the possibility of liberation were, of course, connected with the deteriorating relations between two empires and a premonition of approaching war. It was thought that just one Russian-oppressed nation alone would not be capable of winning the fight for its freedom so it had to look for allies in this struggle among its neighbors enduring ther same fate.

Therefore one cannot but assent to Vėbra's thought that in seeking to achieve the objective of Lithuanian freedom *it was supremely important to talk about the necessity a Lithuanian and Polish union – a union not with a feudal, but with a democratic Poland. So at that time* (in the 1890s – E. A.) *there arises the idea of opposing blocs*.[28]

In the Lithuanian press there begin to appear articles – not too deep and more suited to the propagation of political ideas than to the analysis of possible future scenarios – about the geopolitical perspectives that would determine Lithuanian choices. On the eve of the 20th century many Lithuanian activists from the political center and left did not yet see any opportunity for solving problems of Lithuanian statehood using just one's own resources and without outside help. A majority of them grasped the fact that almost everything would depend on the international situation and on the conflict between Russia and Germany; they also hoped for the Germans' success.[29] The Lithuanian periodical press did not directly discuss the question of why the Germans were regarded as better than the Russians, but common sense would lean toward the interpretation that it was basically because in Lithuania Russians were the lords and oppressors, while those Lithuanians who lived in Germany had better opportunities for fostering their culture.

One more circumstance needs to be attended to in seeking to understand the formation of Lithuanian political consciousness just prior to, and at the beginning of, World War I. Since the entire Lithuanian movement was burdened by a sense of weakness

and, moreover, it was (justifiably) believed that the outcome of the war would determine with whom the Lithuanians would have to negotiate their aspirations to liberty, it was dangerous very openly and unambiguously to discuss or declare one's choices about which neighbors it would be better to align oneself with. This perceived-to-be-necessary caution might explain why, in the available sources, federalist ideas were not developed or spelled out in detail. From the point of view of contemporary public communications at that time, the declared aspirations to independence, bracketed by very murky visions of federalism, had to be as neutral as possible with respect to either a Russian or a German victory in the war.

The confidential text of Römeris is a different matter. It was based not only things that could be evident from the Lithuanian press and political documents but also on insights derivable from conversations in closed political conversations and drawing rooms. Römeris was above all concerned conscientiously to characterize those Lithuanian political actors with whom a Polish leadership might evetually have to engage in a dialogue about possible federative relations, both when striving for freedom and when it had already been secured. Most relevant to our topic are those parts of the document that touch on its description of the way different Lithuanian political groupings looked at federative ties with the state of Poland.

First, the greatest oponents here were what Römeris called the clericals, having in mind the partisan Christian Democrats and their non-partisan allies. According to him, *being tolerant of the real Poland, they particularly hate Polishness in their own land. Thus they would treat negatively everything that strengthens Polishness locally. Now, as war is raging, there is much leaning toward Germanophilia (in spite of former contacts with the Russian government), so that Lithuanian clericals will oppose Lithuania's joining with Poland.*[30]

Nevertheless Römeris calls attention to those attitudes of the Lithuanian Christian Democratic wing which depending on the

situation might still be favorable to the idea of an external federation with Poland. But there is no way they would be in the least inclined to look at all favorably on the idea of an internal federation, that is, a Lithuanian state constructed out of autonomous territories.

What Römeris is here attempting is to convey to the leadership of the Polish Supreme National Committee (NKN) his sympathetic disposition toward the Lithuanian Democrats. He writes that in their attitudes with respect to Poland and Poles *there is none of that special animosity nor is their a prejudicial prior commitment to Lithuanianize the Polish element in that country... From the Poles, as from the other nationalities living together... they require not just loyalty in a legal sense, but also a readiness to fulfill their duties to the country. That means being guided by its welfare and needs, and in deciding on goals and activities to listen to that country's people and not to treat Lithuania as a "borderland" serving not Lithuania's welfare but the welfare and interests of the "parent state."*

In trying to get Polish leaders to look at Lithuanian aspirations through his eyes, Römeris clearly hoped to influence the Poles' political behavior. He describes the Lithuanian Democrats and their political inclinations (both with respect to their political texture and their significance for international relations) in a way suggesting not only that he shares their beliefs himself but wishes them to be implemented in reality. The way he presents his views to the Polish leaders is probably the way he presented them to his Lithuanian friends and allies as well. These views concerned the internal arrangements of a Lithuania that observed democratic and civil rights, a Lithuania that, as the text of the *memorial* shows, he tried get the Polish leaders to become accustomed to. Speaking as a liberal Lithuanian democrat and defending what essentially are his own views, Römeris is urging Poland to welcome a Lithuania of the following sort and to talk with the creators of such a Lithuania about future federal ties: *Lithuanians, including the democrats,*

are more inclined to envisage Lithuania's separation from Bielarus while Lithuania (ethnographically conceived wirh Vilnius) coexists with Latvia... Recently this Lithuanian conception has become slightly more popular in Polish circles, recognizing that eventually in such a Lithuania Poles would constitute a very serious minority, touching directly on their own ethnographic territory around Vilnius...[31]

Römeris's text reveals the existence of diverse Lithuanian federalist perspectives comtemplated by political leaders and broader social strata in Lithuania. In summary, these *orientations* appeared as follows:... *among the common people, in the general context of freedom, Germanophilia, understood as the fact that Russia had lost, was popular. It was also widespread among the Lithuanian clericalists. The Nationalists are of two persuiasions: some tend towards Muscovy-philia, while others, not believing in Russia, incline toward Germanophilia. The Socialists show some Germanophile tendencies, while the Democrats have dissociated themselves from Muscovy-philia and from Lithuanian hopes for a Russian victory the most, as well as from Germanophilia.*[32]

Römeris was sure that there was no point in discussing federalist ideas with clericalist and Nationalist representatives because these *would under no circumstances agree with tying Lithuanian aspirations to the idea of Polish independence*. He based this assumption of his on the good knowledge he had of the ideologies and social strata involved. The only person he thought it would pay to negotiate with was Antanas Smetona, whom he showered with compliments. *He is a Nationalist*, – said Römeris, – and he fights against Polishness and against what he takes to be Polonization, but he has no prejudices against the Poles, unlike other Nationalists. What's most important is this: *If a realistic proposal of connecting Lithuanian interests with Polish independence were peresented to him* [Smetona], *perhaps he would let himself be convinced. I am not certain of this, but it's likely he is the only person from the Nationalists with whom it*

is worthwhile to talk. I don't see any similar personalities in the clericalist camp.[33]

Even a limited acquaintance with the political thought of Römeris suggests that historians of ideas still have a lot left to do in terms of reading, and/or reading better (i.e., less superficially or selectively), some highly important texts. On the other hand, it is already clear that Römeris's knowledge and interpretation (which must be presumed to be dependable) of the political ideas entertained by Lithuanians at the turn of the 20th century suggest that their attitudes displayed an uneasy combination of (1) faith in some kind of a federalist perspective and (2) fear of various dangers arising from the asymmetry that Lithuanians might become subject to in a two-nation federation with the Poles.

As much as the historical continuity of the ancient Polish-Lithuanian statehood was tempting, to that same extent the possibility of Polonization and the probability of Lithuania's taking on the role of *strategic servant* was causing anxiety. The political expectations that Lithuanians then had were undoubtedly shaped by the geopolitical situation at the end of World War I and immediately thereafter. Although it was natural for Lithuanians to seek contacts with other liberation-aspiring national movements, once the *Spring of Nations* had blossomed into freedom it proved difficult to resist the lure of nationalist egoism. Federalist visions and explorations of ways to reinstate traditional ties with the Poles were obscured by smoke rising up from armed conflict and even the bilateral *cold war*. After the onset of Poland's and Lithuania's catastrophe, Antanas Smetona at the end of 1940 met in Lisbon with representatives of the Polish government in exile and is reported to have uttered words to the effect that it had been a mistake to build a state on narrowly conceived ethnic foundations. Now couldn't this have been a reference to possibilities neglected in the run-up to the February 16th of 1918? Today, as Lithuanians live together with Poles in a common European Union and recollect the good sides

of the Union of Lublin, the thought crops up: ideas and times sometimes painfully go past each other, but at other times they beautifully coincide.

1 Aleksandravičius, E. „Politiniai lietuvių siekiai 1863–1914“. *Metmenys*, t. 61, p. 22–41; *Journal of Baltic Studies,* 1992, vol. 3, p. 227–238; *Znak,*1992, nr. 3, s. 48–62.

2 Aleksandravičius, E. Kulakauskas, A. *Carų valdžioje. Lietuva XIX amžiuje.* Vilnius, 1996.

3 Łossowski, P. „Dwie drogi odrodzenia kulturalnego i narodowego Litwinów: (Baranauskas i Basanavičius)“. *Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, XXXI, 1996, s. 154.

4 Here the harvest laid up by both scholarly research and intellectual polemics is rich indeed. For a long time fashions were dictated by Lewandowski, J. *Federalizm. Litwa i Bialoruś w politice obozu belwederskiego (XI 1918–IV 1920).* Warszawa, 1962, and Grunberg, K. *Polskie koncepcje federalistyczne. 1864–1918.* Warszawa, 1971. And even though they didn't specifically investigate the evolution of the idea of federalism, J. Bardach, J. Ochmanski, P. Łossowski, J. Jurkiewicz, and many other Polish authors broadened the horizons of the history of Poland's relations with Lithuania and counted up the successes and failures of federalism.

5 That this topic coninues to hold the unabated interest of researchers of political thought in Poland is illustrated by Grygajtis, K. *Polskie idee federacyjne i ich realizacija w XIX i XX w.* Częstochowa, 2001.

6 Miknys, R. „Lietuvos Didžiosios kunigaikštystės valstybingumo tradicija lietuvių tautinio judėjimo programoje: teorinis ir praktinis aspektai“. *Lietuvos Didžiosios kunigaikštijos tradicija ir tautiniai naratyvai*, ed. A. Bumblauskas and G. Potašenko. Vilnius, 2009, p. 117–143.

7 See Aleksandravičius, E. *Giesmininko kelias.* Vilnius, 2003.

8 Szpoper, D. *Gente Lithuana, Natione Lithuana. Myśl polityczna i działalność Konstancji Skirmuntt (1851–1934).* Gdańsk, 2009, 487 p.

9 Genzelis, B. *Švietėjai ir jų idėjos Lietuvoje.* Vilnius, 1972, p. 100–101.

10 The testimony of Antanas Mackevičius, published as: „Antano Mackevičiaus parodymai“. *Lietuvos TSR istorijos šaltiniai*, t. 2, Vilnius, 1965, p. 82–83.

11 Grygajtis, K. *Polskie idee federacyjne...,* s. 36–39.

12 Limanowski, B. *Jaką drogą doszedlem do socializmu, Socyalizm, demokracya, patryotyzm. Wydawnyctwo w celu uczczenia czerdziestoletniego jubilieuszu pisarskiego1860–1900 Boleslawa Limanowskiego.* Krakow, 1902, s. 94.

13 The language used to present the project of a state federated with Poland is straight from the people: "*You see three symbols on the shield, representing*

our three nations like three children of the same parents. The Eagle is Poland, the Vytis is Lithuania, the Archangel is Belarus. Poland as it is now has the gubernyas of Augustavas, Plock, Podlasia, Lublin, Masuria with Warsaw, Kaliszt, and Sandomir. Lithuania has Gardinas, Vilnius, Livonia, and Kaunas with Samogitia. Belarus embraces Volhynia, Podolia, and Ukraine. See: *Karo archyvas*, vol. 1, 1925.

14 Akelaitis's letter to J. I. Kraszewski, dated March 17, 1869. In *Lietuvių kultūros veikėjų laiškai J. I. Kraševskiui*, ed. by B. Genzelis. Vilnius, 1992, p. 126–127.

15 Akelaitis's letter to J. I. Kraszewski, dated August 17, 1869. *Ibid.* p. 129.

16 Janulaitis, A. *Mikalojus Akelaitis.* Vilnius, 1969, p. 65–67.

17 Kudirka, J. „Mikalojaus Akelaičio (1829–1887) socialinės pažiūros", *Lietuvos TSR mokslų akademijos darbai,* A serija, 1980, t. 2 (71), p. 24.

18 J. A. Višteliauskas's letter to J. I. Kraszewski. In *Lietuvių kultūros veikėjų laiškai J. I. Kraševskiui...,* p. 188.

19 Vėbra, R. „Lietuvos politinio savarankiškumo idėja". *Problemos,*1970, nr. 1 (5), p. 59.

20 Vėbra's essay suggests that federalist ideas were dominant in the left wing of the Lithuanian national movement, although they were to some extent present in realist liberal thought as well. See Vėbra, R. „Lietuvos politinio savarankiškumo idėja", p. 62–64.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

22 A very rare though symptomatic case was an article published in *Varpas* (1903 m. nr. 9/10, p. 219–222) promoting the idea of a United States of Europe. Interestingly enough, this article appeared soon after a controversial call for the re-Lithuanization of Lithuania's gentry. Was this another sign of a distant connection?

23 Quoted in Miknys, R. „Lietuvos Didžiosios kunigaikštystės valstybingumo tradicija lietuvių tautinio judėjimo politinėje programoje". *Lietuvos Didžiosios...,* p. 15.

24 „Gadałem juz parę razy z ich przedstawicielami, no i dalej jak do <federacji> nie wiadomo z kim i nie wiadomo dlaczego, dojść nie mogłem; nie mogli nawet wyksztusić, że chcą federować się z Polską, a nie z czym innym... No, a zgodzicie chyba, że z samą zasadą <federacji> chyba nie sposób federować się..." – quoted from Grygajtis, K. *Polskie idea federacyjne...,* p. 53.

25 See Aleksandravičius, E. *Giesmininko kelias...,* p. 169–179.

26 It's a paradox that it took almost a hundred years for a Lithuanian translation to come out. On the other hand, the book's publication is a joy: Römeris, M. *Lietuva. Studija apie lietuvių tautos atgimimą.* Vilnius, 2005.

27 Litwa wobiec wojny. Poufny memorial Michala Romera z sierpnia 1915, *Zeszyty Historyczne, z.* 17, 1970, s. 56–127. See Riomeris, M. *Lietuva karo*

akivaizdoje, t. 3. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1993, p. 203–227, for a translation into Lithuanian of a fragment, written down by Alfred Erich Senn, of this memorial much before its Polish publication by Sukiennicki. The Lithuanian fragment was published by Egidijus Aleksandravičius together with Raimundas Lopata.

28 Vėbra, R. *Lietuvos politinio savarankiškumo idėja...*, p. 64.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 212–213.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 215.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 216.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 216–217.

Part II: The Turns of Historiography

The Challenge of the Past: a survey of Lithuanian historiography

WHAT DOES old Lithuania look like from the distance of time? Could someone characterize its past briefly? Let's take one example of that kind of effort:

> *Once upon a time, there was a country called the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. If it has disappeared from the maps long ago, it does not mean it did not continue for a few centuries its untagible existence similar to that of Languedoc, of Savay, or of Transilvania. On the eve of the First World War, it even still had its patriots who defined themselves as "Lithuanians", not in the ethnic sense but as inhabitants of the Grand Duchy. However, as it was a mosaic of linguistic and ethnic groups of various religions and traditions, the former Grand Duchy was already the scene of conflicts between nationalities each aspiring the statehood of its own.*

This ultimate abstract of Lithuanian history belongs to famous Polish writer of Lithuanian origin – the winner of the Noble prize – Czesław Miłosz and his preface to the book by another descendant of Lithuanian gentry former professor at Stanford university Viktor Sukienicki *"East – Central Europe during the I World War."* Such a point of view is not usual for current Lithuanian historical mind: none of our historians could make such a comparison of Lithuania and Languedoc or Transilvania. But it looks pretty good in the whole European context – Lithuania can be compared with other nations which achieved statehood

in the Middle Ages only to lose their independence in the early modern era. Unlike most of these nations, Lithuania almost lost its ruling class, the nobility, as well. It has been justly noted that the long period of time between the era when the Grand Duchy of Lithuania flourished and national rebirth in the 19th century has led to idealization and mystification of the distant past. Meanwhile, the more recent period of union with Poland has been passed over in silence, ignored or evaluated very harshly. Lithuanian historical writings have traditionally stressed their didactic nature and their service to the nation. At times, this emphasis interfered with objectivity, although leading Lithuanian historians have always registered their disapproval of tendentious presentations. Not public opinion, however.

Otherwise, another trait of our historical mind is its reticence. I mean the relative self-isolation of Lithuanian historiography, which in general is orientated to historical curiosity itself, namely, a heritage of a medieval state stretching once from the Baltic to the Black sea and the important political role played by Lithuanian dukes in East-Central Europe during the 14–16th centuries. Because of the long period of Russian and Soviet repression, historiography of Lithuania until now was very *pragmatic.* Lithuania's national anthem, created in the last decade of the 19th century and strictly forbidden by Soviet authorities in the period of occupation, urges Lithuania's *sons to draw strength from the past.* It would be said there is too much history in the current life of our society from one side and too much didactic *pragmatism* in our historiography from another. Lithuanian historians (I suppose not only them) until now are trying to teach people to be proud of the past but not to understand it. It makes sort of threshold for Lithuanians to understand the real history of the nation and the real place it took in the European history. Lithuanian historical consciences are still basically isolated and hardly understand what Lithuanian history looks like from outside the Baltic region. That's why the words of Miłosz are so significant for me. They sound very unusual to the mainpart of

our public. At the same time, not only because it. The difficulties of understanding Lithuanian history exist much more in European and American historiography, with little exception of that Russian, Polish or German. That is quite obvious that *Lithuania* for the most of the world sounds like a disease or a kind of drug. It is much worse with its history. I should like to show one very symptomatic example, the book *Samogitia* by Charles Pichel (Maltese Cross Press, 1975, 320 p.). It's difficult to explain why he used the term *Samogitia* since he is writing in general a survey of Lithuanian history. Maybe, the expert of *unknown history* Ch. Pichel (at the same time he was the chancellor of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and author of the History of this order) tried to reach more spectacular show or intrigue the reader. In the eyes of the author, *Samogitia*or *Lithuania* looks like a mysterious African Katanga or a forgotten state of ancient American Indians. The editor wrote in the foreword of the Pichel's book:

> *This book is remarkable achievement in the work of history. Rather is the historian who is even acquainted with the word Samogitia, and yet, upon reading this fascinating revelation, he undoubtedly will be pleased to accept it as a real treasure vital to the fundamental points that helped shape and preserve Europe ethnically, spiritually, culturally and linguistically. ... These last pagans of Europe merit recognition for saving Europe from the conquering "Golden Hordes" of Gengis Khan. No nation can account for a greater number of Mongol Khans killed in battle than Samogitia. No nation, including the Mongols who were considered experts, had greater warrior horsemen than Samogitia. No nation had won more battles and captured more war booty from the Mongols than did Samogitia ... No nation has more successfully warded off invading alien armies from every conceivable direction for six centuries than Samogitia did. The invaders were the Teutonic Knights from the west, the Mongols of Gengis Khan from the south, the Poles from the south, the Russians from the east, and the Swedes from the north.*

Because of the constancy in their pagan beliefs and their indomitable to fight to the death for these most cherished beliefs, the adversaries of the Samogitians, namely the Teutonic Knights, the Tsarist Russia and the old Jesuit Order, independently resorted to what was called intellectual warfare utilizing "the power of the Pen" and "the power of the money." In addition to committing acts of rape, pillage, murder and kidnapping, these enemies were desirous of eradicating the Samogitian nation historically. By design, they obliterated every shred of evidence available to prove that Samogitia ever existed. They fabricated a substitute history that they believed would destroy the sovereignty of these people in hopes that they could conquer their lands according to what they called legality.

After centuries of fighting, which culminated in a vast attrition of her [Samogitia] manpower, the war-weary Samogitians succumbed to the massive power of the Russian Slav. ... They steadfastly clung to the Roman Catholic religion as tenaciously as they did to their former pagan religion. For this, they were persecuted and brutally punished by their new landlords, the Russians. And help came to them from no quarter whatsoever. Finally, the mutilated and prostrate Samogitia was practically obscured from history, although she was newer reconciled to submission from any quarter – friend or foe.

That if the point of Pichel work. He imagined that he would rescue, amend and restore the destroyed history. That becomes clear reading the book:

In retaliation for Samogitia's obstinacy in not yielding her sovereignty or paganism, contrary to the wishes of her Christian neighbours, a new type of war against her was devised by the Jesuits. It was their intention to destroy Samogitia on paper, rather than in combat, by obliterating any mention of Samogitia in written history or literature. (p. 304)

Ch. Pichel finds in his story a lot of fantastic events and interpretations unknown even to the most romantic Lithuanian

author Theodor Narbutt, who published 9 volumes *History of the Lithuanian Nation* in the fourth decade of the 19th century. *Samogitia* shows the reader that almost everything in Lithuanian historiography is falsification:

> *The Crusaders established many myths about the Samogitian people with false propaganda, in which they claimed the latter to be horrible barbaric pagans, infidels and Saracens of the worst type. It is for this reason that historians falsely attributed the invention of artillery to the Saracens or Mongols, when actually they failed to distinguish between the so called Saracens or infidels, as the Crusaders called the Samogitians...*

Instead of this so called falsification, Ch. Pichel claims to have found the *truth*. He tells the real story of Samogitian and Lithuanian people, mixing everything with insane fantasy. The last example of this story:

> *Gengis Kahn's eldest son, Jochi, lost his life in an arranged jousting duel with Samogitia's greatest warrior king Ryngold. As victor in this historical duel on the steppes of Russia, Ryngold acquired the famous "Golden Sword" which was presented to Jochi by Gengis Kahn as symbol of his authority over the Mongol armies and as heir presumptive. This tradition was passed on with the "Golden Sword" by Ryngold's descendants trough their royal House of the Sun until the disappearance of the sword in 1894 under strange circumstances.*

I am not really curious about this story of insane fantasy. Ignorance and fantastic imaginations are closely linked between themselves. We have another example of that kind of imagination made by famous Lithuanian numismatist Aleksandras Račkus in his book *Guthones (Goths) Kinsmen of the Lithuanian People,* published in English in 1929 at Chicago. Or either more recent Lithuanian book of Česlovas Gedgaudas *Mūsų praeities beieškant* (Looking for our Past), published in Mexico in 1978. Both the separa-historical publications deal with the very distant past

of Lithuanian or Baltic tribes, linking them with goths, hittite, etc. But not one of Lithuanian authors of this kind of romantic dreamers made so many fantasies in history of 14–19th century as Ch. Pichel did. A lot of people accepted Pichel's claims seriously, looking at him as at example of Western historical mind, mixing their ignorance and another one from the West.

It must be said the post-soviet Lithuanian society, thirsty of self-satisfaction, immediately translated the book of Pichel and published it without any reserves or comments. It was not the point of a scholar circles, but at the same time shows us the type of Lithuanian historical conscience. Everybody in our country knows that Lithuanian is the eldest (not archaic, but eldest) Indo-European language, or the story of Grand duke of Lithuania Vytautas the Great. The only persons I met who have spoken more about uniqueness of their language and people were a few Albanian scholars. Maybe I am wrong, but as a joke I used to tell my Lithuanian students that only Albanian speaks about history more than Lithuanian does.

Speaking seriously about Lithuanian historiography, it must be mentioned that first history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was published in Koenisberg in 1582 by Maciej Stryjkowski. The title *Kronika polska, litewska, zmudska I wszystkiej Rusi* (The Chronicle of Poland, Lithuania, Samogitia and all Russia) includes *Poland,* but there was no place for Kingdom of Poland in this book, in the same way, though, written in Polish. That is another question of the role of language in the history of GDL we will discuss later. The *Chronicle* was very popular in Lithuania until the 19th century. Another matter, this book was available only for Polish reading public but not elsewhere in Europe. This function until the middle of the 17th century has belonged to another author Alexander Guagnini's *Sannatiae Europeae descriptio quae Regnum Poloniae, Lithuaniam, Samogitiam, Russiam, Masoviam, Pomeraniamet Moschoviae*. This volume published in Krakow in 1578 consists of a few separate parts collected in one book. Fourth part is dedicated to historical-geographical review

of Lithuania. This part is nothing else than the translation of fragments of Stryjkowski's *Chronicle* plus same geographical remarks. The fact is that the GDL was not *terra incognita* for scholars of Europe at that time. Especially, in the second part of the 17th century, when the two volume *Historia Lituaniae* by Jesuit Albert Kojalowicz-Wiiuk was published. First volume in Dancig in 1650, the second – in Antverpen, 1668. In fact, this opus was an adaptation of Stryjkowski's *Chronicle* too. Because the excellent *Latin Historia Lituaniae* has been not only a manual of history at *Academia et Universitatis Vilnensis* and the other Jesuit schools but also a textbook of Latin. It is quite interesting that the Lithuanian translation of Vijūkas-Kojalavičius was forbidden to be published even in the last decade of the Soviet occupation.

I should like to show that at the time of 16–17th centuries, the possibilities of historical self-knowledge of the Lithuanian society and the possibilities of understanding the history of the country in scholarly Europe have been almost equal. At least in the end of the 18th century, the famous German philologist and historian-compiler August Schlözer used the work of Vijūkas-Kojalavičius when making his *Geschiche von Littauen, Kurlan und Liefland*, Halle, 1785.

Otherwise, since the end of the 17th century, nobody wrote a separate Lithuanian history in the country. Lithuanian historians of the last pre-partitioning decades did not consider Grand Duchy of Lithuania without the Kingdom of Poland. The more integration there was in the real political and social life of these two nations, the more integrated historiography became. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth has common historians. First of all, the descendant of East-Lithuanian gentry Adam Naruszewicz – the author of the first attempted synthesis of Poland's history, written in the spirit of the Enlightenment. He – an eyewitness of failing Commonwealth – blamed the citizens of the country themselves for the partitions. No country fell to foreign oppression, he opined, without having first weakened itself.

The monarchist Naruszewicz criticized the elective monarchy system, the privileges of the nobility, and the Polish-Lithuanian union, which had overextended the Polish-Lithuanian state and sapped its strength. Naruszewicz realized that history was more than a chronicle of wars and dynasties, and he mentioned the importance of constitutional, cultural, even socioeconomic factors. He also spoke of the historian's method in almost modern terms, but his was still largely the traditional presentation.

Since the end of the eighteenth an throughout the nineteenth century – that is, at the time of the growth and flowering of history as a scholarly discipline – Lithuania did not exist on the political map of Europe. This circumstance had an obvious impact on Lithuanian culture and learning, including the study of history. The Russian authorities and official Russian historians deliberately cultivated an image of Lithuanian history as indicative of Russian origin of the Lithuanian political civilization and Lithuania's inability to exist as an independent (or even united with Poland) state. In Russian textbooks, the country was presented as a historical failure. No wonder that the defence of the national and cultural heritage became an almost obsessive Lithuanian concern. It is quite paradoxical that after failure of the united Polish-Lithuanian state, the independent past of the Lithuanian nation was re-discovered. Lithuanian historians made strong efforts to improve the natural and historical rights of their nation to be individual, separate and unique. At the same time, they realized the inequality of Lithuania in the *Republic of the Two Nations* (*Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów*), the oppression of the cultural rights of the Lithuanian people and etc. Lithuanian historiography became the only way of compensating the nation without the independent state.

During the brief period of a semi-autonomous Vilnius educational district in the early nineteenth century, at the time Vilnius University had become the largest university in the Russian empire, historical sciences flourished. At other times, enormous efforts were required to finance archival collections and

publications. But even then, there were no professional journals or associations, all that accompanied the contemporaneous development of historical scholarship throughout Europe.

The Vilnius school of romantic historiography – basically important for Polishand Lithuanian scholarship – flourished during the first quarter of the 19th century. The historiography of the Enlightenment was challenged in the first half of the nineteenth century by Joachim Lelevel, the true father both of Polish and Lithuanian history as a discipline. Lelewel's history, like that of Michelet, was "a hymn to a freedom." Lelewel was a pioneer in such fields as bibliography, numismatics, diplomatic, and historical geography. He moved from ancient history into medieval and modern, from general intonational. His erudition amazed his contemporaries. Like every early romanticist, Lelewel preferred the people (lud, liaudis) over rules as the object of historical study, but unlike his many colleges, he was kind of criticist. Like many others, Lelewel believed in the didactic function of history but did not believe in idealization and mystification of the past. He realized the role of primary sources in the historian workshop.

Another pioneer of historical romanticism and an opponent of Lelewel was Ignacy Onacewich. His romanticism was beyond limits. His university lectures have been excellent. He taught not only knowledge of history but also love of history. There were both, followers of Lelevel and Onacewicz, among the students. But the latter became more popular. His student and friend Simonas Daukantas wrote the first Lithuanian history inthe native Lithuanian. Some kind of following the Onacewicz's tradition was a huge 9volume *History of Lithuanian Nation* by Theodor Narbutt published in Vilnius in theperiod between 1835 and 1841. That is the largest synthesis of Lithuanian history until now. At the same time, a lot of smaller books even in Lithuanian were published. It satisfied the needs of Lithuanian society. History became the form of passive resistance against the Russian plans of discrediting all Lithuanian history but otherwise,

however, these needs of history as a kind of self-determination made Lithuanian historiography more and more isolated.

From one hand, in this the way, Lithuania as a state and nation became dead to the rest of Europe, its history went to darkness. From another hand, the history, the past was the only thing left for the Lithuanian national consciences. The more dead became the old majesty of Lithuania, the more mythic and fantastic became the history compared to the reality.

After Russian invasion, when independent statehood had been lost, Lithuanian history became the important object of Russian literature. Russian historians dealt with the past of Grand Duchy of Lithuania the same way Russian military forces and politicians dealt with the present. Almost everything in the history of the 13–14th century Lithuania was shown like real Russian period of Lithuania. Orthodox Church, Russian as official language of the Grand Duchy, Russian warriors as a basis of Lithuanian military strength – that was the point of Russian historiography. In this way, the Lithuanian past has been covered by the pages of the massive historiography of the conqueror. During the 19th century, even the publication of old archive documents, selected according to interest of Russian officials, took place in Lithuania.

At the last two decades of the century, Polish historiography, in general, showed the effort to defend Lithuanian past from the Russian attempt. Polish historiography of the 19th century made no doubt about the existence of independent and powerful Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Famous Grand Dukes Gediminas, Algirdas or Vytautas stood in the first row of Polish historical heroes. A huge part of descendants of Lithuanian nobles, whose ancestors they imagined to be the dynasty of Gediminas, at the threshold of the 20th century identified themselves with the Polish nation. They felt *Gente Lithuanus natione Polonus*. That's why in the eyes of Polish society, Lithuanian origin, everything in the distant past was so heroic and majestic. We shall discuss this problem later. Now, firstof all, we mentioned these

circumstances to understand the character of Lithuanian historiography and the causes of self-isolation. The huge efforts of self-determination directed historical issues to inner life only. It was emphasized to resist the image Russians or Germans had created. This permanent resistance made not only reticence of Lithuanian historical consciousness but connected negatively to foreign researches on Lithuanian history. One could find many enemies of Lithuanian history but a fewfriends. That is why our scholars have looked so strongly for new themes on Lithuanian history. They above all needed to make an answer to Russian, Polish or German historians.

At the end of the 19th century, our scholar workshop was still in its childhood. There were no higher education institutions, even Lithuanian language was still illegal and the national cultural movement still under repression by the Russian administration. A few Lithuanian papers were published abroad. Obviously, in such kind of situation, real scholarship was impossible Academic historiography of Lithuania was too feeble to measure swords with Russian or Polish historiography. It could be said the weakness sometimes would be the cause of isolation or self-magnifying, sometimes it created images of ostensibly messianistic destination of the nation.

But otherwise, the best Lithuanian historians of each time have utilized the issues of Russian-Polish historiographical conflict. Russian and Polish scholars have tried their academic strength on each other, discussing which of them had more rights to Lithuania. Sometimes, Lithuanians took advantage of what was useful for them. They adopted Polish historiographical tradition of interpretation of uniqueness of independent Grand Duchy, proclaiming this state as a real victory of Lithuanian political civilization, but not period after Union of Lublin in 1569 when Lithuania's sovereign rights were restricted. Lithuaniana uthors were familiar with these Russian, much more Ukrainian publications, which were concerned with the rest of the independent statehood after the Union of Lublin with Poland. That

was the way of looking for the independent history. It took its costs.

The new era of history began after the Russian revolution of 1905–1907 when Lithuanian cultural and intellectual life was legalized. New scholarly societies were established and professional Lithuanian journals started. However, real academic history was created after restoration of the Lithuanian university in 1918. First in Vilnius, then after Poland occupied Vilnius district, in Kaunas (1922).

Rebirth of Lithuania, in the wake of World War I, changed drastically the perspective from which historians viewed the national past. The Union of Lublin (1569) or the partitions of the Commonwealth ceased to be the end of Lithuanian history. Some Lithuanian historians recognized the continuity of national statehood and, at the same time, the originality of the new independent Lithuanian Republic. In a short time, many studies contributed to the Christianization of the Lithuania, the rule of Grand Duke Vytautas Magnus, and the Jagiellonian dynasty of Polish Kings and Grand Dukes of Lithuania. Historiography of the Interwar could claim many achievements in numerous areas: medieval and modern history (Jonas Totoraitis, Antanas Alekna, especially, former professor of Moscow University and a long time professor of Kaunas university Lev Karsavin, who published 5 volume *History of Western Civilization*in Lithuanian language)*;* East-European, diplomatic and military (Adolfas Šapoka, Paulius Šležas, Juozas Stakauskas, Zenonas Ivinskis, Konstantinas Jablonskis); constitutional (Michal Römer, Augustinas Janulaitis), economic (Albinas Rimka, Petras Leonas) and cultural (Mykolas Biržiška, Vaclovas Biržiška, Vincas Maciūnas, Jurgis Baltrušaitis junior). The list is obviously far from complete. Yet, for all the individual excellence and collective achievements, there were no startlingly new departures in methodology. Only one academic one-volume synthesis of Lithuanian history (edited by Adolfas Šapoka) appeared in 1936, but no such synthesis was done in foreign languages or for the reader from

outside the country. Lithuania received international publicity from the conflict with Poland and because of the Vilnius question. A few publications in French, English and German were published on these topics. Nothing more.

World War II started and the Soviet occupation began in 1940. Once again, the issue of the inability to preserve independence and the responsibility for the fall arose. Did these events comparable to the Union of Lublin, to the partitions of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the uprisings of the 19th century, at least the re-emergence of the Lithuanian state in 1918 justify the new look at Lithuania's past? Was Marxist dialectical determinism to become the basis of a new revisionist methodology?

Meanwhile, the Sovietization of scholarship was introduced. I mean, *Sovietization* and not compulsory introduction of *Marxism.* It was not Marxist methodology to place emphasis on the history of Lithuanian-German relation on the Lithuanian *advantage* in fighting against the invasion of the crusaders – Teutonic order. In wartime, Soviet authorities needed Lithuanian society to collaborate against Nazi German.

The plurality of views during the Independence was clearly not going to be tolerated for long by the Soviet regime. The new soviet forerunners went on the offensive and denounced national history as full of lies. *Recasting and rewriting Lithuanian history* was central to the process of imposing and legitimizing the Soviet rule. With the Soviet Stalinist model declared as binding, Lithuanian historiography became the object of crude manipulations and dictates. The Soviet ideologists taught the so called proper approach to the nation's past. They presented the thesis claiming there had been no historical science in Lithuania and therefore it had to be created. A novel periodization of Lithuanian history determined by socioeconomic stages of evolution postulated a division into pre-feudal, feudal, capitalist, and socialist periods. Interwar Lithuania did not deserve to be called independent state because of its land awning, bourgeois character and dependence on foreign capital. The only one worthy

research question was the class struggle of Lithuanian peasants and workers which has been supported by people of sister Russia and victorious Red Army. In other words, history was presented in terms of class struggle, oppression to the rules, magnates, and bourgeoisie, and social resistance lost much of its color and became depersonalized.

The task of historians was to discover "*progressive*" trends and tendencies in the past that anticipated or spontaneously paved the way for Marxism. The purpose was to find legitimating antecedents of Soviet communist Lithuaniain the past. Those who *"deviated"* were denounced as guilty for personalism, psychologism, moralism, nationalism or *bourgeois objectivism.* Controversies – this indispensable condition of historical scholarship – were resolved by invoking the authority of the Marxist-Leninistclassics.

The Sovietization of Lithuanian history proceeded on a broad front. Professional journals and books carried ideological admonitions and pointed out politically correct views. University and high school textbooks were based on somewhat crudely conceived dialectical determinism of the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist type. Lithuanian history, above all, became the history of Lithuanian Communist party.

Following the Soviet model, a Lithuanian Academy of Sciences was established together with the specialized Institute of History. The separate *Institute of History of the Lithuanian Communist Party* was founded too. It was to be the most powerful and wealthy institution for guiding Lithuanian scholarship for almost four years. Under the auspices of Academy of Sciences, a four-volume history of the Soviet Lithuania based on Marxist precepts was initiated. This work lasted almost two decades, and it was begun to be called the *black history.* This was not only because of its black cover but even because of its content. The Lithuanian intellectual milieu – or what remained of it in the post-war country – felt very critically about everything that was legally published in the country. Sometimes it was not

reasonable. I mean, the response and behaviour of historians during this soviet period. It has varied. There were the ardent sovietizers who were guilty for falsifications of history as well as demoralization, even corruption, of academic life. As a rule, they were members of Academy and directors of the Institute of History. Then, there were those, probably the minority, who paid lip service to thenew dogmas and concentrated on research and writing in "safer" areas, such as archaeology, economic, medieval and sometimes cultural history. However, even in politically more sensitive fields, a minimal freedom of manoeuvre often existed. An example maybe the interpretation of the work of Lelevel, whom the Communists sought to "marxify" and present as a precursor of their "progressive" trends without too much success. The same has happened with the two Lithuanian uprisings of the 19th century.

Research and educational scholarship were divorced from each other. The only one university of Lithuania in Vilnius was a rather good example of the inability to make research in the field of Lithuanian history.

For the national intelligentsia, history – not official historiography – was still the source of resistance. The general atmosphere of the big lie, however, was stifling, and the gap between the "official" history of Lithuania and "historical consciousness" remained large. Open public contemplation of national history became impossible. The works and publications of emigrant historians hardly reached the country. That was the best condition for the para-historical models of the uniqueness of Lithuanians to flourish. Once again, like in the period of the first Russian annexation in the 19th century, Lithuania urged its sons to draw strength from the past.

A few famous Lithuanian historians emigrated and continued their scholar activity. They became familiar with new historical sources in Germany and the Vatican which helped them to do some fundamental research on the history of the old Grand Duchy, Christianization of the country, relations with Teutonic

order and Germany. However, they lost the ability to get archives and other basic sources of modern history. Russian, Lithuanian and Polish archives were inaccessible. Otherwise, through the four Decades, Zenonas Ivinskis, Adolfas Šapoka, Povilas Puzinas, Vincas Trumpa. Mykolas Biržiška and Vaclovas Biržiška worked to continue the tradition of independent Lithuania's scholarship.

At least, the different trends of domestic and foreign historical views made the same paradoxical impact on the historical consciousness of the Lithuanian society. During the last two centuries, Lithuania oscillated between the freedom and lack of freedom. Almost the same way our social self-identification oscillated between the imagination of the mystical or messiahuistic calling of the Lithuanian nation and the pessimistic disappointment of the condemned nation. The long-lasting Soviet efforts to paint in black much of the twentieth century up to 1945 have provoked a reaction characterized by almost uncritical glorification of interwar Lithuania and its leading figures. This quality has showed itself in some parts of Lithuanian historiography of the last five-six years. Voices have already been heard warning against moving from one extreme to the other. Similarly, there is tendency towards martyrology that could degenerate into national masochism. The best example of that is a kind of *joint-venture* of Lithuanian scholars working in the country and in USA current working on publishing more than 10 volumes of *Kančių istorija* (History of Suffering). I should try to take a notice of the subject. It is far away from that modern subject of a suffering or pain *a la Michael Foucault,* but mostly the collection of documents from the archives of KGB and Communist Party of Lithuania. Maybe we shall be back to this publication at the end of our lectures, now, I just like to show this tendency of masochism of Lithuanian historical consciences.

History should abandon its role as a substitute for politics and strengthen the intellect rather than fortify the heart. History has to show that Lithuania, like other nations of the East-

Central Europe, was neither the chosen one nor the outcast of Europe. The urging of the national anthem of Lithuania to its sons so derive strength from the past shoud not make them blind. If the Russian or Soviet repression had created such kind of blindness, maybe the independence of the nation would have freed the minds of individuals from this blindness. Duty of historical scholarships is to help with this transition.

The new topics of Lithuanian history need to be introduced. A safer prediction would concern the growth of psychohistory, microhistory, women history, or studies of mentalities as well as the exploration of other topics characteristic of many recent Western historical writings. The most important are multi-ethnic and regional histories. The first would explore more fully the coexistence of heterogeneous nationalities of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the process of Polonization of the Lithuanian gentry. Demands for studies that would examine the inter relationship of Lithuanians and other ethnic groups have never been made. Only this way would certain Lithuanian historiography, like Lithuania itself, return to Europe.

Jews in Lithuanian Historiography

The present day press media leads us to believe that in our historical consciousness the problem of Jews has been completely covered by an opaque shadow of the Holocaust. The interest of historians in the investigation of the problem is precluded by moral, political and international motifs. Historians by any means cannot ignore these motifs. However, history is not a calm and indifferent scholarly field, as Phillipe Arie would put it, but is open to contemporary problems and worries. It is the task of history to voice them. The tragic fate of Lithuanian Jews, or Litvaks, and the fatal circumstances of World War II should definitely be among the most important tasks of contemporary Lithuanian historiography. On the other hand, from a scholarly perspective, the death of the greatest diaspora of the

Jewish nation cannot turn history into a study of fatalism, i.e. the 700-year-long history of Lithuanian Jews cannot be viewed as an inevitable (or purposive) development towards death. The death of the Litvaks shouldn't mean the death of their meaningful history. It is very important that Lithuanian historians undertake an investigation into the past of Lithuanian Jews. Such a study would save history from the tragic fate of the Litvaks.

Historian has to allow himself a plunge into the contemplation on different possible outcomes of the fate of Lithuanian Jews and to ask how Lithuanian Jews could have been saved, or imagine what Lithuania would have been like without the Holocaust. In a similar manner, sometimes we speculate on

what would have Lithuania been like without the Soviet invasion in 1940.

In the light of the above stated, it should not be surprising that the present study chooses to exclude the existing investigations of Lithuanian historians into the problem of the Jewish genocide. Why? Such a solution is not determined by any precautions of getting involved into unnecessary polemics, rather it is an attempt to demonstrate gaps in the historiography of Lithuanian Jews. So far, Lithuanian historians have been reluctant to study the history of the Litvaks. Therefore, the present paper will emphasize new beginnings in the field. Besides, a serious contribution is expected from the international conference on the Holocaust which is coming on September in the University of Klaipėda, Lithuania. We assume that not only Lithuanian scholars but also scholarly society abroad looks forward to new investigations – of the Holocaust based on archival facts and quantitative methods. This paper aims to survey briefly the Lithuanian historiography of Lithuanian Jews, to demonstrate the most important thematic and polemic intersections, to speculate on the reasons for insufficient attention to the investigation of the problem of Lithuanian Jews, and to explore the relationship between traditional Lithuanian historical consciousness and a diminishing interest in the works of history. In other words, the approaching 200th anniversary of the death of the Vilnius Gaon inspires us to talk not about the death of the diaspora but about the meaningful history before it.

The Beginnings

The first Lithuanian historians, from the authors of the early annals to Motiejus Strikovskis and Albertas Vijukas-Kojalavičius, did not give special prominence to Jews. One of the reasons for such a lack of attention may have been little population of

Jews and undistinguished role of them in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania until the end of the 16th century. According to various sources, the community of Jews increased from 10 000 (divided into 15 kahals) to 50,000 in 1611. Until the end of the 16th century, Jews did not reside in the district of Žemaitija (Samogitia), while Vilnius – which later became the Jewish Jerusalem – opened up for Jews only in the middle of the 17th century. In 1633, the King of Poland and Great Duke of Lithuania Žygimantas Vaza granted Jews the privilege of trading rights in Vilnius.

The 19th century marks the beginning of a certain interest by Lithuanian historians in the community of Lithuanian Jews, which coincided with the beginning of Lithuanian historiography. At that time, Lithuanian historians published their first studies on Jews. In 1807, Tadeusz Czacki, the author of the famous book on the Lithuanian Statutes, published his book *Traktatas apie žydus ir karaimus*; (*Treatise on Jews and Karaimes*), which had a great impact on later historians. Some of his arguments are still urgent and call for further consideration. Czacki holds that the first Jews settled in Lithuania as early as the 12th century. Such a belief is grounded in the existence of a document which certified that there had been a tomb in the Jewish cemetery in Eišiškės dating 1170. The historian believed that Jews arrived in Lithuania from the South, presumably from the Chazar kaganat. Some decades later, Jozef Jaroszewicz, another scholar from the Vilnius University, supported this statement. He considered that Jews settled in Lithuania before the reign of Grand Duke Gediminas.

The later-day historian Augustinas Janulaitis tried to challenge such assumptions. The inconsistency in views demonstrates the urgency of the problem. The views of Tadeusz Czacki and Jozef Jaroszewicz are most likely based on the study of the history of the Black Sea region where chazars played a prominent role. In the middle of the 8th century, kagan Bulan, who reigned the chazar state which was situated between the Black

and the Kaspian seas, converted to the religion of Moses under the influence of Jews who had fled Byzantium. Until the collapse of kaganat, the king had to be exclusively a representative of Judaism. After attacks by the troops of Kiev Russia in the 11th century, the chazars were defeated in their last fortress in the Crimea. As a consequence, Jews scattered throughout the South of Russia. These facts may have led some historians to believe that most of the ancestors of Lithuanian Jews arrived from this region.

In his book *Žydai Lietuvoje* (Kaunas, 1923) (*Jews in Lithuania*), Janulaitis is sceptical about the early origins of Lithuanian Jews reported by Czacki; however, the arguments of Janulaitis's book also lack sufficient support. Janulaitis states that the Eišiškės source is not reliable enough because the history of the 12th century Lithuania is enveloped in mist and any other sources do not support the inscription on the tomb in Eišiškės[1]. The situation of Lithuanian historiography has not changed prominently. New investigations of the early history of Lithuania are slow and limp. Contemporary historians avoid topics favoured by the Romantics such as the origins of nations which actually exist at the intersection between prehistory and history.

In the 19th century, the history of Jews was investigated not only by scholars who were interested in the synthetic approach to the problem of the past of Lithuania. A great contribution was also made by the Vilnius University, which was flourishing in the third decade of the 19th century. The scholarly community of the University inspired an interest in Hebrew studies. The Bible Society undertook a research of the Old Testament while the priest and lecturer Jonas Ch. Gintila studied Talmud and translated parts of it into the Polish language. Intellectuals cherished big hopes with the Department of Oriental Studies, which among other goals was expected to systematize Hebrew studies. However, the fate of these plans was similar to that of the Department of the Lithuanian Language, which was planned to be

founded on the initiative of the adjunct Kazimieras Kontrimas. The plans remained just plans because the University of Vilnius was closed by Russian authorities.

In spite of changes in the political and academic situation, interest in Lithuanian Jews increased. Several publications on the historical-statistical description of different regions of Lithuania included a study on Lithuanian Jews. ln 1846, the book of Michal Gadon *Description or Telšiai county of Kaunas province in the old Duchy of Samogitia (Opisanie powiatu Telszewskiego w gubernii Kowienskiej w dawnem Xięstwie Zmujdzkiem polozonego)** briefly discusses the citizens of Lithuania and Jews among them. A more detailed description of Jewish everyday realities within a historical context is provided by historian lgnas Buszynskis in book *Historical-statistical description of Raseiniai county* (*Opisanie historyczno-statystyczne powiatu Rossienskiego.* Wilno, 1874)**. Gadonas's book emphasizes the poverty of the Jew community residing in the West of Lithuania and Samogitia (Žemaitija). Typical of the ideologists of the movement for abstinence, he accuses Jews, owners of inns, for drowning the nation in alcohol. It should be pointed out that these accusations voice socio-economic, not ethnic or ethno–confessional conflicts. In the 19th century, similar trends could be traced in the press, which emphasized a concern for abstinence. A detailed description of the relationship of Jews and Lithuanians during the years at the abstinence movement (1858–1864) is provided by Antanas Alekna in his book *Motiejus Valančius*, *the Bishop of Samogitia* (1922) and Kazimieras Gečys in the dissertation which was defended at the University of Steponas Batoras "*Societies of Abstinence in the diocese of Samogitia in the period of 1858–1864*."

When the national revival movement reached its climax, signs of the developing conflict between Jews and Lithuanians became more prominent. In spite of these anti-Semitic tendencies, the need for historical studies of the problem did not increase.

Augustinas Janulaitis: History of Litvaks, an Outward View

In 1923, historian and lawyer, scholar of archives Augustinas Janulaitis published his book *Žydai Lietuvoje. Bruožai iš Lietuvos visuomenės istorijos XIV–XIX amžiuose* (*Jews in Lithuania: Features of Lithuanian National History over the Period of the 14–19th Centuries*). The book was the first attempt at academic research. The sources used in the book include the deputation of the gentry of Vilnius, the archives of the Vilnius governor-general, the collections of the governor Michail Muravjov, and others. The study provides a description in vivid detail of the period covering the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth up to the eighth decade of the 19th century. Janulaitis introduced several sources concerning Litvak history which had not been known before. The scholar had also studied materials on the past of Jews published by historians of the neighbouring countries, i.e. Russians and Poles. Such a comparative approach was an indirect way of seeking an answer to an important question: *Were Lithuanian Jews in a better situation under Russians, or before the seizure of power by Russians, i.e. under Lithuanian nobility and gentry?* Since the author was an expert in history and law, he analyzed thoroughly the legal situation of the Jews. He did not surrender to the romanticized interpretation of *Lithuanian tolerance* which was rather popular in Lithuanian historiography of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. From a positivist perspective, he viewed both the vague speculations on the sources of Jewish history (e.g., the case of the tomb in Eišiškės), and the circumstances of Lithuanian tolerance during the period of the so-called *golden age*, i.e. at the beginning of the 15th century. ln his analysis of the privileges that Grand Duke Vytautas granted Jews, Janulaitis, in accordance with Beršadskij[2], held that in granting the privileges, the Duke of Lithuania followed the example of the King of the Czech Republic Ottokar in 1254, and the King of Poland Boleslaw the Pious in 1264.

The author also holds that the specific situation of the Jews was determined not by the capability of Vytautas to evaluate the legal situation but by the circumstances which distinguished Lithuania from Europe of the 15th century. In the 15th century, Janulaitis says:

> *"Lithuania differed from the neighbouring states in Western Europe and from Poland. Lithuania was an absolute monarchy; the class division was not rigid, and differences among classes were negligible A class-to-class transition was easy. ... Lithuania had deep rooted traditions of pagan religion and tolerance for different nationalities and confessions. Lithuania welcomed orthodox, Tatar, Armenian ethno-confessional groups on its land. Lithuanians did not look down on the Jewish religion."*[3]

Janulaitis's account for the reasons of tolerance is rather simplex. They are not of a spiritual or racial origin but are determined by socio-economic development, the backwardness of the process of feudalization, and late conversion to Christianity, which affected the situation of the Jews. In the later day, Jews managed to preserve most of their rights. They were free subordinates to the Grand Duke, like all members of the noble class. In most cases, confession was the only fine resolution line that prevented Jews from nobilization. Until the 18th century, a convert Jew was accepted into the gentry class. Even though Jews were in a much better situation than the majority of the citizens of Lithuania, i.e. the peasantry, we cannot ignore the burden of taxes and poverty that stifled most members of kahals. On the other hand, the author does not seem to regard the social conflicts (which were numerous at that time) as ethnic conflicts.

Janulaitis's book was influential among Lithuanian intellectuals; however, consistent studies of the history of the Litvaks still were in the budding stage. The organization of the hook is not flexible and the style is heavy. Janulaitis, who was a professor at the Vytautas Magnus University, inspired a versatile

interest in the problem. The diploma paper by his student Abram Girsovic on the policies of the Russian government in the system of education of the Jews in the 19th century was kept in the archives. This year, it was published in the journal of the Faculty of Humanities of Vytautas Magnus University, *Darbai ir Dienos*.

Even though the limited scope of this paper does not allow a thorough analysis of the Janulaitis book, we would like to emphasize that in the introduction, the author admitted that *his main interest was not the life of Jews per se but their relationships with different classes of the citizens of Lithuania*. The author aimed at *highlighting the economic basis of these relationships*. In other words, his goal was to depict the life of Jews from outside, not inside.

The publications that appeared after the book by Janulaitis did not change the situation in the field. Solomonas Atamukas's survey of the history of Lithuanian Jews is the only publication from the post-war period Žydai Lietuvoje, (Vilnius, 1990) (*Jews in Lithuania*), which actually expanded the chronological framework of Jewish history up to the present times; however, it remained within the paradigm of the outward history. The main drawback of Atamukas's book is insufficient research into the past. On the other hand, as a former Soviet official he had a thorough knowledge of the life of Jews in Soviet Lithuania. I had the privilege of reading a more recent and more extensive manuscript of another book which he was preparing for publication. This book too lacks an inward perspective into the life of the Jews. Such an angle of vision is very important today as most Lithuanians of the new generation are not familiar with the realities of the past.

A consideration of these scarce publications by Lithuanian authors within the context of the historiography of the world (only on the problem of Litvaks there are numerous publications in English, Hebrew, and Yiddish) reveals a paradoxical situation. Lithuanian studies depict only how Jewish people presented themselves to the outside world. The studies in the

West and Israel focus on the inner realities of Jewish life; however, they tend to erase outer realities. The Jewish version of the Litvak history is told in such a way that it suggests that their LITA was inhabited exclusively by Lithuanian royalty and nobility. It seems that contemporary historians are unable to step over the barriers of the archaic isolation which in the old-day Lithuania surrounded individual classes and ethno-confessional groups.

There are several reasons which inhibit the attempts of the most recent Lithuanian historiography to overcome these barriers. First of all, under the circumstances, there is a great pressure to analyze the relationship between Lithuanians and Jews; to be more exact, relationships related to the Holocaust. There are attempts to analyze historical reasons for the position of Lithuanian society during World War II. The article in *Akiračiai "Power, Society, and Anti-Semitism"* by Saulius Sužiedelis[4] which is based on a presentation at the conference of *The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies"* (1994) analyses the situation between the wars. The author holds that in spite of competition and instances of socio-economic conflict, there were no major collisions or pogroms even during the years of the Smetona regime.

Major Historiographic Controversies

We should like to look more closely at two problems distant in time. First, the motivations that underline goodwill towards Jews in the old Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Second, the problem of the so assumed collective betrayal by Jews during the years of the Soviet invasion.

A book of essays on the study of Lithuanian history by Mykolas Biržiška *Lietuvių tautos kelias į naująjį gyvenimą* (vol. 1,2, Los Angeles, 1952, 1953) (*Lithuanians on the Road to a New Life*) sheds some light on the first problem. In pre-war

Lithuania, the author of the book was a professor at Vytautas Magnus University and a prominent cultural historian. Upon Soviet invasion, he left for the United States and spent the rest of his life there. As a matter of fact, Biržiška's case is unique: Department of Justice of the United States suspected him of collaboration with the Nazi administration during the years of the German occupation, and Biržiška has also become an object of investigation by those interested in the circumstances of rescuing Jews during the years of World War II. There is evidence that Biržiška was an active participant in the movement for rescuing Jews.

What distinguishes Biržiška's book from other books in the field? Almost all authors who wrote on the history of Lithuanian Jews point to a relatively peaceful relationship between Jews and Lithuanians. In the first place, this was determined by the legislature of Lithuania. Biržiška does not attempt to embellish the existing reality. He writes about Lithuanian Jews: "*They felt themselves part of the country but not part of the society which regarded Jews as an alien ghetto-minded body. Furthermore, in the 17–18th centuries, in Lithuania which was a primitive Catholic society, there was a tendency to treat Jews with contempt because they were regarded as representatives of the nation which had tortured Jesus Christ.*" Biržiška further writes:

> *"Only due to Lithuanian character and traditions*, Lithuanians did not do major cruelties to Jews even though there were instances of cruelty outside Lithuania, e.g. acts of assassinations by the kazaks as well as in Western Europe. The Lithuanian wrong was within the limits of tricks and escapades by Jesuit and other schoolboys."*[5]

Biržiška's book also provides some insight into the inner life of the Jews. He states: "*Jews hated being treated with contempt by Lithuanian "goys". Nevertheless, they did not show their hatred. Jews had to abase themselves and to show indulgence toward the gentry while simultaneously Jews made use of their*

weaknesses. Although Jews had nothing in common with the military, they usually were the first to suffer from wars. Jews did not stick to one country. For profit, they tended to serve the officials of the invaded, or the invading country, or sometimes both, and in this way they lost trust, uncured suspicion or even accusation for betrayal, spying, etc."

There is no denying that work by Biržiška is problematic. Nevertheless, it rather triggers historiographic polemics than provides a complete description of the problem. A similar effect is achieved by his attempts to change a belief that has been deep-rooted in the Lithuanian conscience – the blame put on Jews for the betrayal of Lithuania in 1940. Biržiška did not believe in collective responsibility of collective fault. On the contrary, he pointed out that Jewish organizations were against the Soviet invasion. No other source mentions that in 1941, when Germany declared war against the Soviet Union, some Jews organizations sought contact with the provisional government of Lithuania. However, the couse of events prevented from development of these contacts.

The analysis of the problem initiated by Biržiška is taken up by Liudas Truska. His recent article *"Have Jews Committed Crime against Lithuania in 1940?"* is based on archival and statistical data. It convincingly proves that "*the image of the Jew, the gravedigger of Lithuanian independence, the Jew, the Communist, and the KGB agent is ungrounded in the same manner as is the image of the Lithuanian, the Jew-killer."*[6]

The maturity of Lithuanian civilization and the growing potential of Lithuanian historiography gives hope that an ethnocentric approach to history will be replaced by multicultural studies. After desperate attempts at finding full-blooded Lithuanians in the distant past there should come an era of interest in interesting, exotic, undiscovered oases of our past. These issues should be among the most urgent targets for future investigations.

1 Janulaitis, A. *Žydai Lietuvoje*. Kaunas. 1923, p. 7.
2 Beradskij, S. A. *Litovskije jevreji. lstorija ich juridičeskogo i obščestvenogo položenija v Litve ot Vitovta do Liublinskoj uniji. 1388–1569 g.* S. Peterburg, 1883. (Rus.)
3 Janulaitis, A. *Žydai...*, p. 9–10.
4 *Akiračiai*, 1995, nr. 4. (Lit.)
5 Biržiška, M. *Lietuvių tautos kelias į naująjį gyvenimą*, t. I. Los Angeles, 1952, p. 34. (Lit.)
6 *Akiračiai*, 1997. nr. 7, p. 5.

Lost in Freedom: Competing historical grand narratives in post-soviet Lithuania

Introduction

The fall of the Berlin Wall caused drastic changes which were quite a bit described both in the current historiography of Central and Eastern Europe and in works investigating collective memory from the viewpoint of social science.[1] However, these changes on the political map of Europe have not immediately and uniformly altered either the politics of history or collective historical memory. The consciousness of European nations is still littered with the ruins of former separation. Perhaps the most progress has been made in research on the politics of memory. Recently, Lithuanian readers got a chance to put their hands on a collective monograph[2] edited by Alvydas Nikžentaitis and devoted to elucidating the Lithuanian case. This book is a good example of this type of research on a problem in the interdisciplinary field of political science, history, and philosophy. The *use of history for political purposes is something that has always existed*; it just wasn't identified in these terms. As Christoph Klessmann writes, although manipulating historical facts was primarily a dictators' hobby, *democratic politicians too sought to make sure that their successful (or not so successful) deeds show up in the best light.*[3] Keeping this perspective in mind, researchers concentrate on how new or reborn nations endeavour to reconstruct historical narratives and to fulfil orders made for the purpose of turning young people passing through compulsory education into the sort of conscientious citizens that the ruling elite would like to see for the country's future. The politics of memory and history

cannot dispense with historiography in the strict sense – it participates in it but does not identify with it.

The issue of general national narratives is similarly tied to projects of state power. This first of all concerns official versions of history and history textbooks that are required by a specific political regime. On the other hand, this opens up the way for narratology, a separate branch of the humanities mixing traditions and methods of history together with those of literary thought. Today, Lithuanian historians strongly tend towards the view that all historiographic texts are narratives; and there are good theoretical reasons for this view. On the other hand, it is recognized there are differences between narrative historiography (usually pre-scientific, i.e., created before the beginning of the 19th century) and analytic historiography, which is held to be an achievement of modernity. The just-mentioned view contains a contradiction: on the one hand, all historical texts are narratives; on the other, only some works of historians are to be regarded as narratives *par excellence*.

This essay is not about external projects of politics and power but about forms of national narratology (forms not necessarily dependent on ministerial authority to declare what is historical truth) that have changed and developed ever since Lithuania regained independence in 1990. Here, the biggest obstacles lie in the formal recognition of something as the national narrative itself and in the doubtful ability of the discipline of history to separate academic historiography as a whole from specifically literary historical tales which in fact do constitute the complex essence of the national narrative. Problems also arise in distinguishing the meta-narrative attitude towards the national memory on the one hand, and the viewpoint of consciously constructed and responsibly authorized general courses or syntheses of Lithuanian history on the other. Thus, to put it briefly, our concern will be not with relations of power but with theoretical interdisciplinary intersections between historiography and literature.

The Problem

In a fateful happenstance, the processes of post-modernization in the humanities and the fall of the Soviet Union together with the liberation of Central East European nations coincided. After World War II, due to the influence of vulgar Marxism and Soviet domination, this area saw the creation and authorization of national historical narratives aimed at telling the national stories in such a way that the utopian Communist future became the only vision it was possible to entertain. But liberation from the Communist rule or the red-flag-waving occupier (in the case of the Baltics) opened the gates of freedom not only for political life but for the entire humanities, which turned away from the dictates of a *unitary truth* toward an open investigation of sundry uncertainties.

The rhetoric of postmodernity, whose din also included shouting out the *end of history*, caught the nations of Central East Europe and their historians quite unprepared. Lithuania, with its tales of a millenial history so significant in the trenches of defending its national identity and ideas of liberty, became a vivid specimen of these changes. First, because the version of the *grand narrative* imposed for nearly a half-century by Soviet occupiers and their doctrinaires was conceived by broader circles of educated Lithuanians as a means of taking over and colonizing the memory so that political liberation and resuscitation of an independent state meant regaining the right to tell one's own stories unencumbered by foreign or domestic despots. It was hoped that in place of the deformed, unreal, and obligatory forms of historical memory, it would now be permitted to create a new narrative constrained only by the sagacity of home-grown historians of a free Lithuania.

The euphoria of freedom of the early 1990s fit in well with images of a *return to Europe*. A quick access to rapidly gushing currents of Western historiography clashed head-on with the following paradoxical sensation: on the one hand, a liberated

nation sought to fill in the *blank spots* of history and once again undertake the (re)creation of a grand narrative while, on the other, the sheer variety of Western historiography, its scepticism, criticism, and doubts about the possibility of a uniquely true narrative, its dismissal of *national narratives* approved by political power centers as well as many other intellectually unusual phenomena caused real mental confusion. The sceptical valuation, prevalent in Western, especially Anglo-Saxon historiography, of the nationalism of Central Eastern European nations *reconceiving themselves ever anew* also contributed to an inner intellectual conflict. After directly experiencing the perils of the colonization and Sovietization of historical memory, we returned to the individualism of Europe, a post-modern chaos, and the free world buffetted by winds of globalization. In the heat of the *singing revolution,* the more perspicuous Lithuanian theorists soon grasped the sharp contradiction inherent in that *return* since the post-modern Western world *has allegedly overcome history and is trying to justify itself by consciously structuring the vast field of freedom opening up "beyond" history.*[4]

During the early years of regained Lithuanian independence, the intellectual press reflected sentiments of historical chaos and even absurdity when the need for a new grand national narrative was felt together with the realization that it was impossible to construct it while being on the road towards internalizing something like Western mentality. But it wasn't hard to deconstruct the historical narrative formed during Soviet times as one began recognizing the topics and interpretations imposed by the regime at the same time as one started to tell what, in anticipation of later Latvian documentary creators, could have been called the *Soviet story*.

The strength of the hope in a uniquely true history and in true justice constantly depended on society's moods shifting against a background of dramatic changes in Lithuania's system of governance. Each reaction to an upheaval was accompanied by distinct narratives and apologias. It was hardest to accept

things already learned in late modernity – namely, that national grand narratives and analytical historiographical objectivity can become mutually opposed forms of consciousness. The long-for freedom of untrammelled investigation into the past did not mean any quick breakthrough toward a convincing narrative about one's own nation. Historians who even in the trenches of positivism had more or less honorably survived the attacks of Soviet ideology were hard pressed to find their bearings amidst returning doubts that scientific research and analysis do not directly guarantee successful narration. That which one finds out about the past in the course of scholarly procedures can be shaped into history only thanks to a qualified narration. To be sure, during the first years of independence, it was believed that introducing history texts representing Western mentality could rapidly affect ongoing processes. But even the noblest theoretical radiances[5] could not quickly change the thinking of historians.

The more forms of consciousness and professional habits have been accustomed to fictitious, forcibly imposed, and intuitively implausible Marxist-Leninist theories, the harder it is to change them fundamentally. Hence, the treacherousness of the situation as it dragged down the mental transformations of post-Communist society. "Objectivity" was such an overworked shell in Lithuanian history that it was exceedingly hard to fill it once more with meaningful content. But the "narrativity" of history itself was left un-reflected upon, perhaps in part even demeaned and forgotten thanks to a remaining trace of Positivist enthusiasm. Perhaps that's why Rusen's point, directed to broader segments of Lithuania's historians, that *the category of narrativity brings historical thinking, and with it historical scholarship, closer to literature*, was not picked up. As long as one firmly believes that the literature of history has disappeared into the past along with the texts of Simonas Daukantas, Teodoras Narbutas, and other 19th century romanticists, one will fail to understand messages *about the literary nature of historiography and about the linguistic*

processes and principles that constitute "history" as a meaningful and significant representation of the past in the cultural practice of historical memory. This failure on the part of the Lithuanian academic community was reflected in an abnormally large gap between two disciplines: that of history and that of literature, a gap that has not diminished throughout the 20-plus years of current independence.

Much stronger were the hopes for an objectivity that would indicate the *proper* way of knowing history by applying scientifically confirmed and collegially recognized research methods leading to generally *recognized results and blocking the way to arbitrary opinion.*[6] However, a postmodernist historiographic discourse began to suspect that this outlook, which in the 20th century became traditional, had fallen too much under the spell of the natural sciences and was nurturing a misleading consciousness because emphasizing the rationality and objectivity of historical knowledge meant forgetting the linguistic process of storytelling, which process determines the uniqueness of history as a mental construction.

The challenges of Lithuanian freedom and the clashes of post-Communism and postmodernism made life difficult for both society and the community of historians. On the one hand, postmodern impulses just had to nurture the seeds of narrative historiography after decades of compulsory indoctrination into universal Marxist laws. On the other hand, by readmitting the value of historical narration, postmodernism knocked out the theoretical foundations of those who had hoped for an orderly return to the road of the sole true national narrative. Instead, postmodern freedom offered several distinct narratives of equal value: stories reflecting the experiences and aspirations of different segments of Lithuanian society. It was not easy for the contemporary Western historiographic attitude to sink into the Lithuanian consciousness; the attitude, namely, that a text of history emerges from the needs of its audience and therefore it is – it has to be – intended for that audience. Only the living

who create their present and future can understand *what sort of past the future requires.*[7]

Now the dispute could move on to the question of the state's authority to decide what is right and what is not. Furthermore, in opposition to the grand narrative, there gradually came to the fore phenomena of collective memory, sometimes also called petite narratives. Slowly the realization dawned that yes, there could be written a universally state-enforced version of the national narrative simplified in textbook- fashion, but at the same time, collective memory could testify to other, if not totally opposed, then at least significantly different remembrances of the past.

The narratology of the post-Communist period still lacks deeper traditions of research. There are sporadic discussions and preachy monologues, but these do not suffice, for they often betray categories that have not yet firmly settled, obscure starting positions, and nearly inevitable misunderstandings. Investigations of memory politics are already well on their way; however, the theoretical fields of academic historiography and collective memory are still shrouded in fog, and explications of the politics of history and the processes of collective memory do not readily yield to procedures of strict thought. In this area, the boundaries and border areas of their respective disciplines often turn scholars of politics and scholars of history into adversaries who find it difficult to talk to each other.

There is even more confusion surrounding the intersection of historiography and narratology. If the theories of historiography no longer provoke fierce disputes, if it's already accepted that under conditions of freedom one can avoid the domination of *one true theory*, then the conflict between analytical, positivist historiography and literary or narrative history has in fact been barely reflected upon. There is even less mutual understanding between historians on the one side, and literary scholars looking at historical texts as literary creations on the other. The idea that any historian's text can be regarded as a narrative of a certain kind is hardly disputable. Yet the modernist tendency to criticize narrative history, to

oppose it to an analytic and rationalist approach, is still dominant. Thus, in one case, the entire creative output of historians may be held to consist of national narratives (even if most historians would not call themselves writers or narrators). In the other, the point is to emphasize the difference between scholarly historical research as a whole and the corpus of national narratives that is subject to very specific literary rules. General national history courses or syntheses, including schoolbooks of history as well as popular biographies of heroes whose deeds shaped national identity, would constitute the space of historical narratology. In it, as historians of literature urge, tales of *how everything was in fact* should go hand-in-hand with myths of the past and literary fancies that influenced the national community's identity.

Those who investigate changes in national narratives constantly emphasize the importance of the differences between ways of narration and methods of researching scholarly history. A scholarly investigation is held to be so different from the literary qualities of a historical narrative that nothing ties them together. No wonder then that today it is more often literary scholars rather than historians who call for enriching and supplementing the national narrative and its heroes. This is a gauntlet thrown down to historians, and a stimulus for this paper. We will try to review the recent process by which tasks set many decades ago were reborn,[8] what roads were taken by the new history-tellers, and what problems were raised by the competition between ideas, values, subject matters, ways of thinking, and the historians themselves. Some of these problems were associated not so much with the evolution of *pure* historical scholarship as with the condition of Lithuanian nationalism both immediately prior to the Soviet occupation in 1940 and after the liberation from Soviet rule in 1990. The grand Lithuanian narrative is a sign of a self-reflective nation without which no community of common memory can collect itself. At the same time, a description of the transformations that national narratives underwent raises problems of its own. The narrative itself, the narrative sources, and the stimuli

of narratology compelled historians not only to analyze but also to recite the narratives competing under conditions of liberty in order to become grand narratives. It is possible to analyze rationally the grand narratives but in trying to understand them a researcher must dare to recite them himself.

This is too big a task for one article, so let us try to unravel just a few subject threads that in our opinion best reveal the nature of the transformations that have started but not ended.

How long will we go on Recounting the Story of Lithuania as it was Told in the Russian Imperial Court?

This paradoxically sounding question was rhetorically raised several years after the 1990s, when Lithuania was already standing strongly on its own independent feet and was a member of NATO and the EU to boot. The question was asked by Darius Kuolys, the historian of literature and historical rhetoric, at the beginning of his book *Res Lituana. Kunigaikštystės bendrija*. Alert listeners are still waiting for a more detailed explanation of what might be the most important marks of the Lithuanian narrative which appeared in the Russian court at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, but their general features are already obvious. Asking *why Lithuanians are still telling their children the story concocted in St. Petersburg*, the author by way of an answer cites a book from which Lithuanian history is taught to schoolchildren today. Here is an essential quotation founded on an attitude promoted by late 18th century Russian conquerors and inculcated to Lithuanians and the rest of the world: the grand Duchy of Lithuania was a *real republic of the nobles. They boasted of their freedoms which they themselves called "golden liberties." They could pass laws and oppose their ruler by force of arms. This abuse of their liberties weakened the state immensely. Thus, it was overwhelmed by its neighbors: in 1975, Lithuania became incorporated into the Russian empire*.[9]

The critic reads this statement as a direct continuation of what the new administrator of Lithuania, Nikolai Repnin, declared on behalf of the conquerors: the army of Catherine II conquered *your unhappy country* only *to save from horror and anarchy a land in which a spirit of rebellion drove out any sense of respect* and in which *a universal dissoluteness has taken over all estates and the order of political action has been totally destroyed.*[10] Yet a tolerant reader could find a sophisticated way of defending this statement. For Lithuanian children are not being told directly that the Russians were not conquerors but instead saviors of Lithuanians from the boyars' arbitrary decisions and chaos. Rather this was a transfer, very convenient to early advocates of Russian memory politics, of statements from Polish and Lithuanian monarchist historiography. A Republican spirit and the civic freedoms of boyars were an evil, thus the Lithuanian political elite were their state's gravediggers, and the conquerors nothing other than saviors.

At the time the Lithuanian Grand Duchy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were partitioned, their new governors first of all had to justify the act of conquest itself. But eventually, this map of Lithuania's road in history came to be covered by broader and deeper interpretive accretions. In the Lithuanian narrative fabricated in 18th-century St. Petersburg, the most important aim was to discredit (as a political handicap) the Lithuanian political tradition of gentry democracy and Republicanism; while the contemporary assertion in the Lithuanian history textbook just continues it without attempting to present the positive Republican idea which once was very ambitiously expounded on by the historian of Lithuania and Poland, Joachim Lelewel. The essential drift of this idea came to the fore in the view that the Commonwealth was weakened not by an excess of the Republican spirit but by its shortage. Hence it was not monarchist aspirations but the return, to the whole nation, of rights up to now exercised exclusively by the nobles that, according to Lelewel, embodied the hope of future strength and renewal. Turning the Republic of Noblemen into a universal

Republic in a period when winds from the French Revolution were shaking the kingdoms of the ancient continent was an idea that then appeared as the brightest guiding star.

Be that as it may, in disputes about the nuances of the textbook interpretation of the general narrative, the diagnosis offered by Darius Kuolys is essentially right. However, it is not enough to explain that Russian imperial expansion to the West was always accompanied by a self-serving version of history with Russians as *saviors*. Nor is it enough to add that the Soviets used the same rhetoric (some still use it today) to justify the occupation of the Republic of Lithuania in 1940. It is more important to stress that often Lithuanians themselves adopted the attitudes imposed on them by the occupiers in lieu of elements of the Republican narrative such as the charming and positive qualities of a civic nation, traits of the self-government of the nobility, and the rule of law created by the Lithuanian Statute. None of the latter became worthy of Lithuanian attention during the National Rebirth, thereby, either consigning to oblivion the most important objectives of a historically fortified, self-sufficient political existence, the strongest arguments for Lithuania's civilizational capacities, or else leaving them to be credited largely to the civilizational heritage of Poland. In this way, Lithuania's past came to be neglected and *was allowed to be* conquered, while the captives themselves began to look at themselves through their conquerors' eyes. There was nothing especially unique in this; rather, it illustrated the general logic of the way the strong gain ascendancy and take over. Toward the end of the 19th century, Russian Imperial doctrinaires could already allow themselves to tell the history of the *North-Western Krai* (and put into textbooks) in such a way that nothing remained of Lithuania as a separate fact of political civilization. It's even more remarkable that the story of Lithuania, in the historical texts of the late 19th century National Rebirth, likewise avoided mentioning the values of noblemen democracy while willingly recounting its negative features; moreover, the

heroes of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's political community had difficulty finding their way even into the textbooks of the First Republic.

It's important to emphasize that it was not in the environment of historians and theorists of history but in that of Lithuanian literature and literary history that the fate of the national narrative after 1990 as well as the changes and signs of confusion therein were first loudly discussed and commented upon. Thus in the fall of 2013, Darius Kuolys published the following observations in *Bernardinai.lt*, an intellectual portal:

> …if we wish to survive as a national community in an open contemporary space, we need a "grand narrative" which would join different texts, different personalities, and different images, ideas, and ensembles of significance into a meaningful whole. This narrative would help to grow roots, to resist the venality of postcolonial consumerist reality, and to supply the culture of Lithuania with a dimension of depth. We need a narrative that would tie together free Lithuanians into one independent community and that would give our community a trustworthy foundation for communicating and creating a common future.[11]

In this way, the author recalls the similar reflections that Meilė Lukšienė, a historian of education and culture, voiced in the early 1990s. These reflections were meant to suggest the strategic aims that a national community embarking on the road of freedom might adopt. In the course of arguing for a new conception of education, she observed that

> …it is unclear where the current fragmentation in all areas, the *rejection of a grand narrative* (my emphasis – E. A.) might lead. What is rejected is a certain consistency, originality, and coherence of culture, a grand narrative which is inherent in every culture and which constitutes its uniqueness… Proceeding this way results in life being impoverished. Forms do change and

> must change, but do we have to discard their deeper meanings, their connections and the search for meaning embodied in the grand narratives?[12]

What is important for us here is not so much the testimony showing that in the two decades after the early 1990s the situation hasn't changed much as the fact that it wasn't the historians themselves but rather the theoreticians of literature and education who brought up the subject of the grand narratives. Of course, both Lukšienė and Kuolys pretty much stopped at this important doorstep and did not develop the understanding of this narratology problem much further. Obviously, both talked about a phenomenon that some theoreticians would assign to the area of meta-narrative problems; an area dominated by non-systematically conceived but poetically mobilizing images of the national path together with expository texts belonging not just to scholars of history but to students of literature, culture, philosophy, and art as well. Specific investigations of scientific historiography (and history of literature) connect only through various associations with that meta-narrative level, which up to now has been researched only sporadically.

In deconstructing that Russian-Soviet version of the Lithuanian national narrative, it was and is not difficult to recognize the elements that were imposed by distorting well-established facts of history. An example is the martial valor, fetishized by the Soviets, of the Smolensk regiments in the Battle of Tannenberg. The army of multinational Lithuania was multinational as well. In the Soviet narrative, the fulfilling of a vassal's duty to the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas was turned into an icon of friendship between the Great Russian nation and the Lithuanians. During the Soviet occupation, such adjustments of the historical narrative were recognized and rendered harmless in society's consciousness behind the scenes. It was not difficult also to recognize comments about the allegedly useful consequences of the Russian take-over at the very end of the

18th century: the merging into a larger market, the end of chaos, etc. The didactic sub-text of this theme was widely understood: to show the alleged economic benefits of the Soviet occupation of the Republic of Lithuania. Since these features of the official Lithuanian narrative were already evident during the years of Soviet rule, their removal from the textbooks after 1990 came quickly and without any intellectual exertion.

The major themes of a colonized and Russified Lithuanian narrative had already been removed or reconstituted prior to World War II. In the late 1930s, during the twilight of the First Lithuanian Republic, a group of young historians under the direction of Adolfas Šapoka wrote a textbook for Lithuanian pupils in which there was no trace of what the history created in the Russian Imperial Court had laid into the very foundations: everything in the old Lithuanian Grand Duchy was Russian – the elite, the culture, the writings, the political order; while after the treaties with the Kingdom of Poland and the adoption of the Catholic faith, the Lithuanians for some strange reason receded from the Russians and became victims of Polonization; and finally, after centuries of boyar anarchy and multiple losses in the spheres of economy, politics, and war, great Russia re-takes the territories of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy and turns the local peasants into Lithuanian-speaking Russians (not *ruskij*, but *rosijanin*) loyal to the Empire. In the then new Šapoka's account, the narrative of the early Lithuanian Grand Duchy was restored and reconquered, and the Lithuanian narrative regained the themes which the Lithuanian Chronicles and the histories of Maciej Stryjkowski and Albert Vijuk-Koialowicz had made famous.

After 1990, the early Lithuanian narrative was drawn into a real maelstrom of interpretations thanks to the national *Lithuanian Millennium* program, which, with a zeal characteristic of a newly freed nation, sought to highlight the importance of the first mention of Lithuania and Lithuanians in historical sources. Even though the year 1009 when St. Bruno was killed on the outskirts of Lithuania does not testify to the beginnings of the

Lithuanian state but rather can be seen as a significant symbol of the approach of Western Christianity to pagan Lithuania, this does not hinder the discernment of the start of history and the earliest signs of a millennial nation. The inducements of a national program and the coalescing of an official politics of memory with the interests of the community of historians significantly expanded research of early Lithuanian Grand Duchy history. A multivolume Lithuanian history (or rather, a series of academic monographs rather than a tightly conceptualized grand narrative) began to be published, and old historiographic obstacles were pushed aside – obstacles that had made it difficult to look at the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a continuing project of Lithuanian political civilization that was destined, in one form or another, to be resurrected in the 20th century.

In the predawn mists of millennial history, two storylines competed. One of them developed in the historians' guild; the other belonged to the non-standard pen of the literary historian Algimantas Bučys.[13] The first, as mentioned, emphasized the earliest reference, by name, to Lithuania in the context of Western Christianity's mission. The second brought forth a broad version of an early Lithuanian narrative, directing attention to the Orthodox context of 13th-century Lithuania during the time of King Mindaugas. The author concerned himself with what he calls the oldest Lithuanian literature or what historians of the 19th-century Russian Empire called writings of western Rus', stretching from the Chronicles to the hagiographic literature on the Orthodox saints. Bučys attempted to insert into the general Lithuanian narrative items *that had never been included in it nor investigated before: canonical works of medieval literature and sacred texts that in the 13th century could have been created and presented… by none other than Lithuanians.*[14]

In contrast to the imperial Russian historians, Bučys makes all of this inheritance from the past part of the Lithuanian narrative rather than leaving it in Russian history. He is also unstinting in his criticism of Lithuanian historiography which

systematically ignored the phenomena he investigated, although most of them had long been well-known to historical scholarship. His assertions are both logical and worldview-motivated as may be seen from the following quotation:

> Only the presence of a cult of political history in Lithuanian historiography can explain the paradox that such a fundamental cultural event as the founding, by Mindaugas's son Vaišvilkas (d. 1268), of the first monastery in Lithuanian history was only marginally attended to by Lithuanian historians. As if that weren't enough, the figure of the first Lithuanian monk, Vaišvilkas, was minimalized and denigrated for centuries by historians committed to Catholicism and Eurocentrism simply because he, the oldest son of Lithuania's king, took the sacrament of baptism in the Greek rite and transferred the throne of Lithuania to his sister's husband Švarnas, a Ruthenian who also was a Greekrite Christian.[15]

What themes and groups of medieval heroes offered themselves to Lithuanian history? Bučys elevates the tribal-dynastic element above that of religion, and he sees the aristocracy of pagan Lithuania actively expanding its powers and conquering the Eastern Slavic space. This goal is served by the Orthodox religion. The science of history more or less knows about this, but here the question turns on the place of Orthodoxy in the general Lithuanian narrative. The author has no doubts either about the Lithuanianness of these topics, or about their importance and right to receive greater attention in historical syntheses.

It is remarkable that Bučys's work has received no academic reaction whatsoever except silence on the part of reviewers. *Catholic-oriented Eurocentrists*, who, according to him, make up the bulk of Lithuania's historians, have stayed totally voiceless and have not labelled the views of Bučys as expressing a *position committed to Orthodoxy and the Eurasian idea*. In the post-Soviet academic realm, conscious silence is also a certain form

of deadly reaction. When there no longer (or almost no longer) is any doubt about academic freedom and the right of every researcher to expound his own viewpoint and when somebody advances interpretations that a majority of academics find shocking, then instead of polemics total silence sets in. This, so it seems, is what happened to Bučys's book. At the same time, in 2009, generously supported by state funds, a number of *narratives of millennial history* saw the light of day without provoking any significant scholarly disputes. Thus a large group of historians produced the 701-page book *Lietuva 1009–2009,*[16] the readers of which *were meant*, according to its creators, *to have it as a family or, even more broadly, a Motherland's album*. But in this book, there are marked dissonances with the medieval image projected by Bučys. The historian Artūras Dubonis, for example, views Lithuania through a Western European prism concerned with the fate of Christianity and finds that after the assassination of Mindaugas, *the Lithuania kingdom has been captured by pagans and scismatics*[17] as if illustrating the position unflinchingly attacked by Bučys. Thus we have two opposed narratives of Lithuania depending on their (contemporary) authors' differences in religious outlook and on their evaluations of Eastern and Western European civilizations. At the same time, Dubonis's text itself is filled with passages in which Lithuanian pagans, Orthodox, and Catholics work together in various configurations and proportions depending on the political goals. And in the same book pretending to be a Motherland's album, Darius Baronas describes the evolution of Lithuania's Orthodox in a way that rationally explains phenomena of attraction, separation, and marginalization[18] and thereby should reveal both the limits of Bučys's understanding of Lithuanian historiography and the multi-layered nature of the influence of historical science on the general narrative.

Even the grand Lithuanian narrative of the epoch of nationalism, that of the First Lithuanian Republic, had not fully emancipated itself from the spell of the St. Petersburg version. Both,

the Russian-inculcated principles of self-appraisal and of cultural memory and the Lithuanian textbook narrative of the 1930s heavily dependent on anti-Polish attitudes, could not resolutely go much beyond a basically negative evaluation of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's political system, identified as it was with the chaos produced by the nobility's liberties. Then there also were the perceived positive aspects of the Russian imperial order imposed together with the Commonwealth's partitioning at the end of the 18th century. Russification was undoubtedly seen as an evil brought by the conquerors, but the anti-Polish policies of the Russian administration, the *de-Polonization of Lithuania*, was essentially depicted in colors favorable to the Lithuanian National Rebirth project. These oppositions co-existed in a single narrative, including its most popular version, that of the Šapoka group.

In that narrative, however, the evolution of Lithuanian statehood, after the Union of Lublin and the *rule of law* created by the Lithuanian Statute, were shrouded in a mist of doubts; and the values and virtues of gentry democracy were also insufficiently brought out: they remained obscure, even bereft of value, or else suspect and alien because allegedly Polish. Such a self-contradictory attitude towards the Lithuanian Grand Duchy's development after Lublin prepared the ground for an even more conflict-ridden interpretation of 19th-century history. An especially important episode of the national grand narrative, namely, the 19th century with its Russian domination, allowed the textbook of Šapoka to depict even the Vilnius Governor-General Count Mikhail Muravyov, denounced as *Hangman* by Lithuanians and Poles after the 1863 Insurrection, as a man who somehow guarded Lithuanian peasants from the ravages inflicted by Polish landlords. This conception, along with the whole chapter of what was then the most popular textbook of Lithuanian history, caused great dissatisfaction among many older Lithuanian academics and veterans of the Lithuanian national movement who, along with Professors Augustinas Janulaitis and Vaclovas Biržiška, almost publicly protested and wondered out-loud

whether such textbooks were needed by Lithuanians at all. A few decades later, in Soviet syntheses of Lithuanian history, this motif disappeared, but not because the Polish speaking political traditions and the nobility of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy began to be valued more but because now the Russian imperial government and its local representatives no longer enjoyed any rights to positive depiction.

Kuolys's question, *How long will we keep on telling our children the stories wrought in the Russian imperial court?* first of all concerns the textbook syntheses of Lithuanian history. The rise of academic Lithuanian historiography after 1990 and its availability to a contemporary scholarly audience does open the gates ever more widely to a multiform, multiply competing story line rehabilitating the political tradition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The big problem is just that the new meta-narrative context of contemporary Lithuanian historiography is not directly influencing the simplified common accounts and school textbooks. And that means that the stories created by historians are not directly producing radical changes in mass memory.

The Dysfunctionality of the Didactic Lithuanian narrative

Let's recall the thought that history, which every generation rewrites anew, arises out of the needs of its audience and optimally – in case of success – serves to meet those needs. This is an elementary principle of theoretical knowledge. Now let's check the transformations of the common Lithuanian narrative, putting together both what disappeared from it and what new things were added to and stayed in it after 1990, and, most importantly, what hadn't been there even before 1990 and also wasn't added to it after 1990 even though the images of the new Lithuanian national consciousness and state would seem to require this. The story lines and heroes of a newly created narrative are often

called up from the past: following these examples, the nation can set out in a desired, imaginary direction. However, competing historical story lines and interpretations often conflict with oft-repeated visions of the future. Here we bounce up against the problem of a narrative's functionality (or dysfunctionality).

The functionality of the national narrative (especially in its textbook version) is understood very straightforwardly here. If a nation arising to an independent political life holds up the worthy ideals of freedom and democracy; if it seeks to strengthen and recreate the principles and cultural forms of Western civilization; if these principles and forms become virtually unassailable icons; if not only nationalist manifestations of a unique Lithuanian separateness from the rest of the world but also an Eurasion vision propagated by contemporary Russia get pushed to the margins, then the historical Lithuanian narrative has to correlate with these values. Then simple examples of this functionality have to turn up new topics and heroes of the historical narrative to replace or supplement those already established but perhaps losing their inspiring qualities. Usually this does not mean introducing historical fictions. We are talking about historical personages, the list of which is always too long for all of them to be used by one common narrative. Since the past is unboundedly deep and wide, filled with facts and names, while a common narrative should fit into a single book or in the memory of one generation, one must select from the more or less scholarly certifiable past whatever would be attractive enough to be included in a literary historical narrative. Sometimes historical heroes, like some basketball players who've long been sitting on the bench, are thrown into the game as replacements. Those whom they replace are not necessarily thrown out of the narrative – they're just being sent to the reserve bench.

Tentatively we can discern at least three cases of dysfunctionality in Lithuania's aspirations after 1990 and in the Lithuanian historical narrative. They show how a nation, setting out on the road of freedom, more or less imagines its future, but

the narrative of Lithuanian history it is rewriting does not really respond to it or responds only after a great delay. In other words, there are some common questions that show what fateful challenges the present throws at Lithuanians and how there is almost no reaction from the historical narrative working for the benefit of collective memory. Life is lived one way and certain values are being declared in the course of living it, while on the textbook stage, entirely different storylines and even counter-exemplary heroes are being trotted out.

The first case reveals itself when we compare episodes of the common narrative with the value demands of liberal democracy and the *rule of law*. We should expect that if we agree to return to the cradle of Western democracy, we ought to newly "rediscover" and to recognize, for the sake of the younger generation, the values of Lithuanian noble democracy. The level of self-government and the direct election of judicial officials would have impressed Alexis de Tocqueville in the 19th century as well as democrats in the United States today. The story of how free and democratic the noblemen of 16th–17th century Lithuania actually were should be received with open arms by contemporary Lithuanians, and they should realize how important this tradition was as shown by the fact that Lithuanian boyars had their sons baptized on the book of the Third Lithuanian Statute. Historians after 1990 have done much to throw light on these questions, but this was not picked up by the common narrative and mass opinion has not changed. What's dominant like a historical stigma is still the picture of chaos in gentry Lithuania waiting for somebody like the Russians to come in and bring order and justice.

The second case lies in the topics reflecting the reality of the diaspora nation (or, if you will, the EU nation with the highest emigration rate); and the third in episodes of the development of civil society and of social capital. Lithuanians lost in the post-Soviet transition stage have moved to the West in hitherto unseen numbers. Even if the statistics are inaccurate, few observers doubt that the recent emigration wave has

considerably surpassed half a million. Nevertheless, the textbook story pressed into the youngest generation's collective memory almost invariably paints pictures of an exceptionally sedentary ethnolinguistic community that has lived on the shores of the Nemunas River for ages. Several dozen thousand Lithuanian children raised by their grandparents cannot find in their history textbook any explanation for the painful reality they are experiencing. They're living one kind of life while hearing stories not having much to do with it; as a result, these stories come to be regarded as fictions of little educational value. In this respect, another kind of narrative has recently been attempted,[19] one according to which Lithuanians have throughout the centuries been much more mobile than we were led to imagine throughout the Soviet period and several years thereafter. It bears repeating that historical scholarship has for a long time been unfurling a giant panorama of a diaspora nation's past, a panorama filled with facts, dates, and names. The question here is just one of deliberate choice: which things from that well-known past are to be given meaning and awarded heroic status in the textbooks of Lithuanian history written for today. In this way, there is a disconnection between what is known to scholarship and what is passed over in silence in the common national narrative.

We might try interpreting the resultant situation as follows. Facts corroborated by historical science become significant storylines in a common narrative only because of the audience, its needs, its emotional orders, and functionality. But then it's difficult to explain why in those cases in which an audience agonizing over the dilemmas of migration and identity should "place an order" for a narrative responding to its existential aspirations, such a narrative either doesn't come into being at all or arrives fatally too late, or if it does take shape in the scholarly literature, it doesn't make it into the required history textbooks or the programs of general education. After all, neither the past itself nor the powers of analytical historiography have directly influenced the difference between the 1930s *Lietuvos istorija*

(History of Lithuania) of Šapoka and the complex of contemporary histories. The First Republic's high school student saw the whole wide world of the Lithuanian diaspora, even though only a relatively small number of people had emigrated from that Republic. By contrast, the historical horizon of a high school student nowadays doesn't contain the diaspora at all. Here the gaps in the common narrative are filled only by works of the Lithuanian literary canon. Nowadays, a course in Lithuanian literature without the *Baltoji drobulė* (White Shroud) of Antanas Škėma would be unimaginable.

The third episode touches on the theme of an independent, free, and open Lithuanian society. At least according to their Constitution, the Lithuanian people do seek to advance this society and its essential values. But if the common historical narrative must reflect the consciously enunciated values, principles, and objectives, then again, just as in the case of the Lithuanian political tradition as a whole, there should emerge from the background of the past into the front stage the proven and marvellous abilities of the Lithuanians of old to come together and to voluntarily act without remuneration in establishing clubs, societies, and social networks as well as to generate the capital that allowed people to build halls and churches and to create museums and other institutions for the common good without thinking about or depending on government clerks, taxpayer money, grants, and payoffs. It's not just the late 19th century Lithuanian intelligentsia hardened by Russian Imperial persecution and not only the Lithuanian diaspora in North America that worked such miracles of self-organization and independence. Historians will not deny even the First Republic's societal potential during the time the Smetona's regime had frozen the processes of institutional democracy. Prior to World War II, Lithuanians, like all citizens of the Western world, joined to form voluntary organizations, freely argued over ideas, and founded charitable, cultural, and artistic institutions by collecting one litas after another in freely given donations. Even representatives of the lowest socio-economic strata

contributed to building up the social capital that allowed the construction of homes, halls, and dining rooms for the truly destitute. The best example of this, now renovated to serve as a reminder for contemporary society, is the Building of St. Zita Society in Kaunas for Catholic servant women, currently housing the Theology Faculty and *Aula Magna* of Vytautas Magnus University.

On this level, it behooves us to acknowledge certain narratological differences from the two earlier episodes. Phenomena, sporadically emerging in Lithuania's past of the so-called *third sector* central to a free civil society, not only failed to become important and meaningful elements of the common national narrative but also have not become objects of systematic research in the academic sphere. Theoretically, Lithuanian historiographic investigations of the social fabric have brought to light many new facts; and a number of studies have been written about the history of clubs, societies, and organizations formed and existing on a voluntary basis. Yet in the general picture of society, all this has not been duly recognized as manifestations of a civic sector arising in the process of modernization.

This is probably because despite the openly declared values, the culture of voluntary associations or, in other words, the *third* sector of a democratic nation, really does lack not only conscious democrats but also selfless workers prepared to be volunteers, activists, and civic leaders in a truly free society. But this is an assumption that deserves to be researched by historical anthropologists and social psychologists.

In any case, the transformations of national narratology and its ever more loudly voiced demands show the lack of both theoretical historiographic discussions and intellectual attempts to reflect current social consciousness. But without these things, it is difficult to understand and explain the psychosocial mechanisms of changes in mentality as well as to create and maintain a harmonious community of shared memory so severely traumatized by repeated acts of force, violence, and indoctrination throughout the 20th century.

In Lieu of Conclusions

The flow of the historical Lithuanian narrative for more than 20 years of regained independence has largely avoided the twin repressions of state order and control of historical truth that have been observed in a Russia constrained by the regime of Vladimir Putin. The academic freedom of historians; their right to argue about and disagree with any and all interpretations; and even their right to remain sceptical, together with the tendency of postmodernist historiography to refuse belief in a single historical truth, was and is a key change achieved after 1990. This does not mean that the views and needs of different ideological groups had no influence. They did; they split the community of historians into diverse groups, but up to now, this was all to the benefit of a more comprehensive appraisal of the past.

Only in the last few years, the situation began to change radically: journalists and social radicals, political scientists and educologists positively began demanding some sort of national historical narrative. Even the secret services started to encroach upon academic historiography and its disputes, as if national security agents could presume to know what the Lithuanian nation needs today. All of these developments testify to an unduly prolonged state of feeling thoroughly lost in liberty.

1 The article is written according to the research project "Central and Eastern European Region: Research of the Construction of National Narratives and Politics of Memory (1989–2011)" – VP1-3.1- MM-07-K-02-024 – sponsored by the Programme for Human Resources Development for 2007–2013 "Support to Research Activities of Scientists and Other Researchers (Global Grant)."

2 *Nuo Basanavičiaus, Vytauto Didžiojo iki Molotovo ir Ribbentropo. Atmintis ir atminties kultūrų transformacijos XX–XXI a.,* ed. A. Nikžentaitis. Vilnius, 2011.

3 Klessmann, Ch. „Istorijos politika ir kolektyvinis atminimas: sąvokos, problemos ir istoriniai pavyzdžiai". In Nikžentaitis, A. *Nuo Basanavičiaus ir Vytauto Didžiojo iki Molotovo ir Ribbentropo*, p. 25.

4 Rubavičius, V. „Postmodernizmas ir postkomunizmas: nubūtintas pasaulis". In *Miestelėnai,* ed. E. Ališanka. Vilnius: Taura, 1995, p. 49.

5 We might mention the works of Jorn Rusen and Hayden White which were presented to the community of Lithuanian historians with the best intentions and hopes. But these works, especially the latter's *Metahistory*,

were in large part poorly understood or not accepted. Perhaps the reason for this was the attitude of irony mixed with a Romantic sensibility: *It may not go unnoticed that this book is itself cast in an Ironic mode. But the Irony which informs it is a conscious one, and it therefore represents a turning of the Ironic consciousness against Irony itself. If it succeeds in establishing that the skepticism and pessimism of so much of contemporary historical thinking have their origins in an Ironic frame of mind, and that this frame of mind in turn is merely one of a number of possible postures that one may assume before the historical record, it will have provided some of the grounds for the rejections of the Irony itself. And the way will have been partially cleared for the reconstitution of history as a form of intellectual activity which is at once poetic, scientific, and philosophical in its concerns- as it was during history's golden age in the nineteenth century.* White, H. *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe.* Baltimore&London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990 (seventh printing), p. xii.

6 Rusenas, J. „Istorijos mokslo naratyvumas ir objektyvumas". In *Istoriografija ir atvira visuomenė.* Vilnius, 1998, p. 36.

7 This is how the Polish historian Tomasz Stryjek titled his excellent book devoted to contemporary Ukrainian historical consciousness: *Jakiej przeszlosci potrzebuje przyszlosc? Interpretacja dziejow narodowych w istoriografini i debacie publicznej na Ukrainie 1991–2004.* Warszawa: Instytut studiow politycznych PAN, 2007, 852 p.

8 Zenonas Ivinskis, the famous mid-20th century Lithuanian historian, in a paper much commented upon in the late 1930s and titled *Lietuvių istoriografija romantizmo metu ir dabar (Lithuanian Historiography During the Age of Romanticism and Now)* had urged fellow historians to fashion *a common course or synthesis of Lithuanian history* in order to counteract the dependence on narratives imposed by larger neighbors.

9 Quoted from: Kuolys, D. *Res Lituana. Kunigaikštystės bendrija.* Book One: *Respublikos steigimas*, p. 8.

10 *Ibid*.

11 Kuolys, D. *Apie junges, įsišaknijimą ir mokyklinę lituanistiką:* www.Bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/-/109318/-2013 10 29

12 *Ibid*.

13 Bučys, A. *Seniausioji lietuvių literatūra. Mindaugo epocha. Poliparadigminė viduramžių kultūrinių konfliktų studija.* Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 2009. An earlier book of his was devoted to the place of Orthodox heroes in the Lithuanian narrative: Bučys, A. *Barbarai* vice versa *klasikai.* Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 2008.

14 Bučys, A. *Seniausioji lietuvių literatūra. Mindaugo epocha*, p. 11.

15 *Ibid*., p. 12.

16 *Lietuva 1009–2009*, ed. A. Butrimas et al. Vilnius: Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 2009.

17 *Ibid*., p. 58.

18 *Ibid*., p. 327–333.

19 See Aleksandravičius, E. *Karklo diegas. Lietuvių pasaulio istorija.* Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2013.

Part III:
The Fall, Sovietization and After

Lithuanian collaboration with the Nazis and the Soviets

Introduction

The attempt to compare the features of collaboration in the Nazi period with those in the Soviet period is doubtless an intriguing intellectual endeavour. Not only is it relevant to understand the Lithuanian historical context but also opens up a comparative perspective. After all, the destiny of 20th century Central Europe played itself out against the tension between collaboration and resistance. The shame of collaboration was often included in the price of freedom.

On the other hand, the attempt to gain clarity about such matters allows us to envision the possibility of a collective memory therapy that might deliver us from bewitchment by an unduly simplified picture of the recent past. It must be stressed that in the public discourse of Lithuania (and that of the entire region), the very term "collaborator" has a negative connotation. The comparativistic effect is enhanced when the experiences of Lithuanian collaboration are compared with those of other similarly fated nations. It is the purpose of this paper to highlight the most important similarities and differences between collaboration with the Nazis and that with the Soviets as these are reflected in the documents of Lithuanian intellectual history. The latter include the writings of those mid-20th-century social activists and critics who consciously sought to understand the significance of collaboration (accommodation, collusion, conformity) and sometimes not only personally tried out various recipes of political behaviour but also experienced their effectiveness

firsthand. In proceeding toward this goal, it would, of course, be wise to look for the differences first because the similarities are intrinsically more evident anyway.

The historiographic perspective

The historiography of Lithuanian collaboration is sparse, methodologically limited, and ideologically as well as emotionally tendentious, a condition for which the peculiarities of the Soviet period are responsible. After all, the bulk of what was written about Lithuania's Nazi collaborators was produced during the Soviet period when almost the entire official Soviet historiographical corps was itself collaborationist. That is, Soviet collaborators in Lithuania (the official historians, the purveyors of the Soviet line) wrote about those who collaborated with the Nazis (the bourgeois nationalists, the Nazi lackeys) without the slightest hint of or effort at self-reflexion. Such articles, studies, and books were produced by the dozens; however, they contain very little in the way of a more comprehensive description of the collaborationist consciousness.

A contrary perspective opened up in the work of émigré Lithuanian historians and memoirists, who depicted collaboration with the Nazis (generally, of course, circumventing the Holocaust) in brighter colors than they did obeisance to the Soviets. But even here we must remark that the texts about collaboration with the Soviets, and those about the cruelty and repressiveness of the Soviet occupation, were often written by authors who themselves had in one way or another collaborated with the Nazis. The abundance of such texts and their painfully contradictory descriptions of collaboration with the occupiers is a good source for explaining the difference in attitudes toward collaboration in Nazi and in Soviet times.

However, contrary to the Soviet authors, the émigrés did not achieve any sort of unified attitude or evaluation. What stands

out is a nonconformist liberal view exhibiting a nonconformist attitude. The texts of Vincas Rastenis, Karolis Drunga, Vincas Trumpa, Vytautas Kavolis, and Alexander Shtromas (Aleksandras Štromas) reveal the discordant circumstances of collaboration in Lithuanian history. The latter's "Politinė sąmonė Lietuvoje"[1] ("Political consciousness in Lithuania") may be regarded as an exceptional study. For several decades, this remained the sole work delving seriously into the mentality of collaborating with the Soviets. In a certain sense, Shtromas's book may be compared with Czesław Miłosz's "The Captive Mind",[2] written by another post-war émigré who had experienced the effects of a communist regime in practice. Both of these authors managed to convey to readers in the free world the way the collaborationist mentality developed under communism or Nazism. This was especially important for enabling the Lithuanian and Polish émigré communities to understand what had really happened in their occupied homelands.

Emigration also provided the opportunity for a broader analysis of the significance of resistance and collusion in Lithuanian history. Vincas Trumpa in his paper "Kovotojai ir kolaborantai"[3] ("Fighters and collaborators") tried to call attention to the fact that at the crossroads of national survival, no choices were easy. He consciously sought out parallels between the first lessons from Lithuanian collaboration at the beginning of the 19th century and later reactions to the occupations of the mid-20th century. He noted that it "often isn't easy for the historian to say who in fact is a freedom fighter and who is a collaborator."[4] Only after freedom of speech had returned and independence was restored in 1990, were Lithuanian historians able to build on Trumpa's insights. Several years ago, in her book "Lojalumo krizė" ("The Crisis of Loyalty"), Halina Beresnevičūtė did just that: she described aspects of early 19th century political culture and delved into the "political ethics surrounding and motivating the behaviour of the political classes."[5] The investigations of Trumpa and Beresnevičiūtė help

us to understand the imprint of collaborationist tendencies in the collective memories of the Lithuanian people. Thereby, the Nazi and Soviet periods lose some of their uniqueness in the context of Lithuanian history.

The most recent work of the historians, especially that inspired by the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes, is slowly changing the situation. In this Commission's purview, both segments of the history of Lithuanian collaboration are finding their due weight. However, more extensive publications in this respect are a matter for the immediate future, and they will doubtless answer many dramatic questions, increase our fund of known facts, and inevitably lead to more accounts of some of the phenomena associated with collaboration. On the other hand, precisely because the Commission's investigations are focused on crimes against humanity, the anthropology or symbolic structures of collaboration might once again receive insufficient attention. Moreover, because of the traditional tendency to prefer investigating events that are further removed in time, Lithuanian historiography has more seriously, more analytically, and more critically looked at collaboration with the Nazis. Massacres or armed conflicts more clearly draw the line between fighters and collaborators. However, problems arise when, the gunfire having ceased, various conformist processes begin. That is why the most recent episode of collaborating with the Soviets has received the weakest portrayal in the scholarly literature. Despite some rare exceptions, the depiction of Soviet collaborators (cf. the commemorations of Antanas Sniečkus at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences) still belongs more to the sphere of sentiment than to that of scholarship.

Our heroes, *their* toadies

It is almost inevitable that for the Lithuanian nation, which in the last two centuries enjoyed independence for but 35 years, not just armed or unarmed direct resistance but collaboration (conformism, opportunism) as well became a way of national survival. It would be logical to assume that during centuries of alternating foreign domination, skills of accommodation rather than force of arms largely ensured that survival. However, in the cultural collective memory, the norms of conformist accommodating behaviour have been pushed back into a dark corner of the subconscious. What always predominated in the histories written by Lithuanians were romantic and heroic images together with depictions of the deprivations continuously inflicted on Lithuania by foreigners. That, of course, reflects the complex and dramatic fate of a small Baltic nation, although it is quite one-sided.

In general accounts or surveys of the Lithuanian character, we rarely find it affirmed that the Lithuanian people – living as they did through two centuries of conflict, defeat, violence, and accommodation – acquired many of the traits characteristic of the worst toadies: spinelessness, treacherousness, the ability to hide one's thoughts, mendacity, the skill to sense shifting winds and to seek the best for oneself. But weren't just these traits absolutely necessary for survival? And hasn't the cultural sensibility of collaboration become part and parcel of Lithuanian identity? These issues should be no less interesting to contemporary historical scholarship than those that involve the number of collaborators, the organization of the killings, and the Nazis' political technologies.

On the other hand, it isn't uniformly obvious how much harm is done by self-conceptions not corresponding to historical reality – harm, that is, to a society's cultural communication and to the formation and transmission of its tradition. But that is no longer a question for historical scholarship. The historian's

task is to discern how the collective cultural memory itself is formed.

In the Lithuanian collective memory, the Lithuanians themselves appear as contrarians, whereas the country's minorities – especially the Jews – are invariably depicted as having the traits of conformism and opportunism. In this landscape of the Lithuanian memory and identity, group toadyism is reserved for a relatively foreign element. Is not this same mental attitude responsible for nurturing a typical and recalcitrant stereotype about how the concept *Lithuanians* is related to that of *Jew-killers*? In simplified form, this stereotype goes as follows: *They, the Lithuanian killers of Jews, are Nazi collaborators, criminals, degenerates – such as can be found anywhere. They have no nationality. They no longer belong to our nation... Therefore, they are not Lithuanians.* ***They*** *aren't* ***us****.* In this way, the most extreme collaborators are naturally purged from the collective memory.

This attitude of separation from strangers sometimes even found its way into texts exhibiting higher academic standards. Thus one can find symptomatic statements to the effect that among the worst Holocaust perpetrators wearing Lithuanian army uniforms, there were numerous men of uncertain nationality. For example, in his book "Lietuvių tautos kelias į naująjį gyvenimą"[6] ("The way of Lithuanian nation to a new life"), the liberal professor Mykolas Biržiška wrote: "*Vilnius University professor Viktoras Biržiška happened to drop in on a corps of 'cleansers.' Attempting to save the life of an arrested Jew, he went to the headquarters of a unit commanded by a Žeromskis. But he couldn't communicate with anyone there in the Lithuanian language, because all of the armed youths in that unit spoke only Polish, even though that unit itself was referred to in Polish society as 'Lithuanian'; that is also how it was called by the Germans.*"[7]

What is important to us here is not whether facts by Mykolas Biržiška are right but how the personal characteristics of collaborationists are evaluated and what place they find in the texture of historical memory. The Lithuanian collaborationist

and Jew-killer simply are not admitted into the popular historical memory.

This claim, which should be verified by research in both cultural anthropology and the history of mentalities, has been provoked by a circumstance surrounding the publication of book by Liūtas Mockūnas's "Pavargęs herojus. Jonas Deksnys trijų žvalgybų tarnyboje"[8] ("Tired hero: Jonas Deksnys in the service of three secret agencies"). In it, he describes the activities of the liberal anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet resistance activist Jonas Deksnys, whose career led him through all the important centers of the Lithuanian partisan movement, resistance conspiracy, and political emigration before he started, after being captured by Soviet intelligence, to collaborate with his former enemy, the Soviet regime in 1949. Mockūnas drew a very forthright portrait of an exceptionally controversial human being. This was an attempt neither to lionize nor to defend him but just to tell the story of an ambitious man whose life degenerated into shameful collaboration. In academic circles, this book was evaluated positively even though some of its assertions were disputed. But with regard to our topic, I wish to emphasize something else. The book's appearance provoked not so much a discussion of its qualitative aspects or of the facts alleged as a general wave of discontent: how dare one write books about a traitor, a collaborator with the enemy, and so forth. Marginal newspapers started publishing angry articles directed against Mockūnas and his associates who had helped him prepare this book. The important point was that the hero off the book was a Soviet collaborator, and that writing a book about him threatened to elevate him, as a phenomenon, into the collective historical memory.

In general, the overarching pattern was to characterize the behaviour of the Lithuanians in the whirlwinds of the 20th century in such a way as not to impute to them any collaborationist tendencies. But these tendencies were easily recognized in the case of *other* nations. For example, the Latvian neighbours were endowed *a priori* with qualities of opportunism. A well-known

Lithuanian cultural figure, Prime Minister of the 1941 Provisional Lithuanian Government Juozas Ambrazevičius-Brazaitis, who personally experienced the tensions of collaborating with the Nazis, wrote as follows in the émigré press in 1948: "... the Lithuanian has a stronger internal culture and stronger traditions, whereas the Latvian, for example, has a stronger technical culture and is more prone to opportunism (accommodation). That is why in emigration, the Lithuanian will for a longer time preserve his difference from the surrounding environment, while the Latvian will more quickly integrate. The Lithuanian will for a longer time feel estranged from his new life, while the Latvian will more readily immerse himself in it and be satisfied."[9] This example again reveals how the collective memory mechanism begins to function in producing the general feeling that the heroes are *one's own*, while the sycophants, the collaborators belong with the *strangers*.

There are various explanations that can be given of these just-discussed features of Lithuanian mentality; they should be of interest not only to historians and should provide material for more than one paper. At any rate, it is clear that as of today, there has been no systematic research either from the viewpoint of Lithuanian intellectual history or from that of socio-cultural anthropology. In this paper, we must content ourselves with one far-reaching assumption: it happened this way because of the specific valuational orientation of the Lithuanian historical consciousness, which was influenced by the long duration of Russian rule in Lithuania. The latter in turn was influenced by its Imperial politics. During the times of the Russian Czars, the Lithuanians in Lithuania itself had no opportunities for conscious collaboration – from the middle of the 19th century onwards, Catholics in general were not allowed to obtain any official positions.[10] And those who pursued a career in the depths of the empire, in fact, often ceased to be Lithuanians. Dozens or hundreds of those who attained positions in Russia proper lost their former identity through assimilation. All of this makes

delving into the historical development of collaboration quite difficult.

The lessons of Wallenrod

The history of relations with whatever regime ruled Lithuania during the last two centuries shows that besides rebels and insurrectionists there always were people who understood the significance of inevitable compromise. After Lithuania's incorporation into the Russian Empire at the end of the 18th century, the ruling social classes experienced a challenge that historians have termed "a crisis of loyalties." That meant that for a whole generation its representatives had to endure multiple trials, both making oaths and breaking them. Besides pledging to fight for one's country's freedom, Lithuanians had to solve pragmatic problems of how best to serve one's own and the nation's utilitarian interests. To fight for your country's liberty, like dying for it, was considered a noble and beautiful act. On the other hand, colluding with the occupier or enemy seemed dishonourable and craven. At the beginning of the 19th century, it often happened that the same exceptional people took upon themselves both the risk of fighting and that of collaborating. Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Tomasz Wawrzecki, the most prominent leaders of the anti-Russian insurrection of 1793–1795, later pledged fealty to Czar Alexander I and opposed those Lithuanian activists who envisioned re-establishing Lithuanian statehood in concert with Napoleonic France and, therefore, joined the military campaign against Russia.

However, the best example in this regard is Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski (1770–1861). Joining the St. Petersburg court as a young adult, he became one of Czar Alexander's closest friends. In 1803, he was appointed curator of the Imperial University of Vilnius: this meant that he became responsible for educational policy in the whole of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

In addition, he filled the post of Russia's foreign minister from 1804 to 1806. Nevertheless, subsequent political developments as well as the fruits of his collaboration with Imperial Russia led to disappointment: the result of the 1815 Congress of Vienna as well as the final collapse of hopes of resurrecting the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth forced him to acknowledge the end of his service to Russia and to resign.[11] In 1830, Czartoryski became head of the insurrectionist Polish national government; after the insurrection was crushed, that same government condemned him to death (by beheading) *in absentia*. Finding himself in exile, he was feted by one group of émigrés as a national hero; others condemned him as a traitor for having collaborated with the Czar; later he eventually became the uncrowned king of Poland-Lithuania in exile.

Today historians are disinclined to use the terms "treason" and "traitor" when describing the political behaviours of early 19th-century Lithuanian figures. The meanings of honour, oath, and loyalty in the political culture of that period took on various guises and appeared in various combinations. In the contemporary historiography of political culture and mentality, considerable significance is attached to "Konrad Wallenrod", a poem by the Polish-Lithuanian Adam Mickiewicz, as a document of early 19th-century political behaviour. The poem is set in the age of the 14th-century crusades against Lithuania. Its main hero, the knight Konrad Wallenrod, had Lithuanian blood in his veins and was fated (by the poet's grace) to become the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. The story of the poem leads the reader across several thresholds of painful choice with Wallenrod having to choose between his knightly oath on the one hand, and the voice of his people and his homeland on the other. He chooses his people.

Mickiewicz's hero became a symbolic figure; those who entered upon the path of collaboration with the nation's enemy yet did not entirely lose their patriotic sense had the term "wallenrodism" applied to them. Wallenrodism became a significant but

controversial feature of literary fiction as well as reality – the cultural reality of the political elites of all the three nations (Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians)[12] that comprised the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In any case, Konrad Wallenrod attracted considerable scholarly attention. It was often discussed how closely this literary work reflected the real problematics of society's political consciousness during Mickewicz's time. Polish and more recently Lithuanian historians[13] looked for manifestations of wallenrodism among the conspirators of Vilnius and Warsaw, and the Decabrists of St. Petersburg. As revealed by the choices of loyalty within the 19th century Lithuanian elite at least until the Insurrection of 1863, wallenrodism developed from a literary fiction into a category of political behaviour.

But until now, this opposition between fighter and collaborator is rather more characteristic of Polish historical thought; in the Lithuanian tradition, its traces are less marked. What is more commonly believed in the Lithuanian historical memory and popular opinion is that throughout the 19th century, the Lithuanian people carried on a most difficult and merciless struggle against the Russian occupiers. However, according to Vincas Trumpa, with such attitudes "we often carry back into the past only an empty phrase that politicians, and occasionally historians, coined much later, long after the events."[14]

In his opinion, the political biographies of the most important figures of the 19th century Lithuanian Awakening, Motiejus Valančius and Simonas Daukantas, belong to the history of collaboration rather than to that of an overt struggle for the country's freedom.[15]

The symbolic figure of the mid-19th-century Lithuanian movement, Motiejus Valančius, Bishop of Samogitia (1850–1875), can indeed be held to exemplify a certain type of collaboration with the Russian government. Both among his contemporaries and among later historians there is no uniform evaluation of this man who developed from a humble helper of the Russian authorities (especially during the 1863 insurrection) to an obstinate

political contrarian constantly skirting the boundary of legal possibilities. Valančius's uniqueness lay in his ability to hold on to his episcopal seat at such a time when no other bishop in the territory of the former Lithuanian Grand Duchy withstood the repressions of the government.

It is also remarkable that the storms of the 1830–1831 insurrection found Simonas Daukantas, the author of the first history of Lithuania written in the Lithuanian language, in the service of the Russian governor-general in Riga. And indeed, Daukantas had participated in neither the famous students' conspiracies of the second decade nor would he participate in later anti-Russian patriotic activities; nevertheless, the appearance of his books mightily aroused the government's suspicion. In the second half-century of Romanov rule over Lithuania, only members of the weakening nobility directly accepted the challenge of Adam Mickiewicz's Konrad Wallenrod – it was in this social class that the *wallenrodist* consciousness bloomed. In the less sophisticated classes, it was unpopular. Finally, after the suppression of the 1863 insurrection and the aggressive introduction of compulsory Russification, it became impossible for Lithuanians to obtain any sort of public employment. Catholics were forbidden to be employed both in the administrative apparatus and in public schools. Thus in this period, the more massive, conscious collaboration was offset by attempts to disseminate illegal publications and to ignore the Russian educational system.

The new generation of the National Awakening left but few traces of collaborationist adventures at the margins of Lithuania's historical memory. Jonas Šliupas, one of the publishers of the first illegal Lithuanian periodical "Aušra", tried to convince Russian officials that he was prepared to collaborate with the government in pursuing an anti-Polish policy if the latter would ease restrictions on Lithuanian cultural activities. However, this attempt was rejected by other Lithuanians and did not persuade the Russians. Instead of bringing to fruition an

insincere attempt at playing Wallenrod, Šliupas had to emigrate to the United States.

Generalizing the first lessons of wallenrodism in Lithuanian political culture, we can say that real wallenrodism, as a heroic type of collaboration, came into its own only after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. But contemporary investigators find it hard to identify because, in the general context of collaboration experiences with the Soviets and with the Nazis, it became so entangled with other elements.

Lithuanian collaboration during World War II: the first Soviet occupation

The features of Lithuanian collaboration during the occupations of World War II were formed during three separate periods of unequal length. The shortest (the first Soviet period) was the period of the Soviet occupation and initial Sovietization; it lasted from June 1940 to June 1941. The second, the Nazi period, was somewhat longer, lasting from June 1941 until the fall of 1944. The third, called the second Soviet period, embraced a whole epoch lasting several generations during which the character of the Soviet regime changed substantially. Throughout these three periods, we can observe phenomena of accommodation to, and collaboration with, the occupation regime.

On the dramatic road from 1940 to 1990, the collaboration of the Lithuanians with their oppressors altered its parameters. Representatives of different generations varied in the way they solved the dilemmas posed by Wallenrod and other heroes of historical mythology. The fundamental circumstances of collaboration changed because the expected duration of the occupation changed. The Lithuanian people went from collaboration diluted by a direct hope of preserving some remnants of Lithuanian sovereignty to a natural accommodation with the regime – getting along with it that entailed forgetting any quest for political

independence. Nevertheless, however much the character of the collaboration might have changed, there is little doubt that both in 1940 and in 1980 we are dealing with the same sociopolitical phenomenon. Collaboration is collaboration, and the Lithuanians are a typical nation of collaborators having a developed sense of collective accommodation that helped them to survive and perhaps even to mitigate the evil brought on by occupying and totalitarian regimes.

Even so, all collaborations are not equal. These differences and similarities were mainly due to the fact that the first Soviet occupation and the Nazi occupation were conceived in the context of a world war. Neither in the summer of 1940 nor in the fall of 1941 nor even as late as 1943 could anyone in Lithuania be certain about when and how the war would end. It was only the post-war situation that gradually shattered those mirages of the occupation's short-livedness and forced the painful recognition that the Soviets were here to stay, that the new cold-war order was a long-term proposition. Eventually, such an attitude became dominant in the minds of Lithuanian activists on both sides of the Iron Curtain. And while indeed the thrust and cost of collaboration had to be borne directly by the inhabitants of the occupied country, these same issues were on the minds of many Lithuanians living abroad as well.

During the first Soviet period, Lithuanian political activists found themselves particularly torn in view of the crisis that had gripped the Smetona's regime and that made itself evident just before the World War II. The year 1940 and the onset of the Soviet occupation did not appear to everyone as an unmitigated disaster. Opposition to Smetona's regime was sufficiently strong to enable many of his enemies – both on the left and on the Catholic right – to experience at least a pinch of satisfaction at the dictator's fall. However, the gradual intensification of Soviet repression quickly diluted any hopes of compromise.

In any case, despite the flight of Antanas Smetona and his closest associates to Germany, the bulk of Lithuania's political

elite remained in the country. For a while, even the Nationalist Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius believed that collaborating with the Soviet puppet regime would help preserve the formal independence of the Lithuanian state in the shape of a Mongol people's democracy defended by Soviet tanks. That was a tempting though hopeless fancy as shortly became clear. But for a while, even the old leader of the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party, Father Mykolas Krupavičius, generally an insightful politician, engaged in rather serious talks with Soviet secret service representatives about possible terms of collaboration. He even attempted to write a treatise envisioning the perspective of the Catholic Church's cohabitation with communism. However, he did not get a chance to test his theories – one year of Soviet occupation was just not too short a time in which to accomplish this. Finally, Hitler's attack of June 22, 1941 changed the uniform of the occupying army and posed new puzzles of collaboration.

There's no need to talk about the left-wing politicians – they were intrinsically inclined toward the mirage of socialist prometheanism. On the eve of the Soviet occupation, a large part was played not so much by the small Lithuanian Communist Party as by the left-wing intelligentsia which had considerable influence on public opinion. According to Alexander Shtromas, "the fact that a part of the Lithuanian left-wing intelligentsia became active supporters of the Soviet occupation and the regime it introduced was quite natural. And it would be wrong to think that people like Liudas Gira, Petras Cvirka, Salomėja Neris and Antanas Venclova were motivated to become such strong champions of Soviet power by purely sycophantic or career-oriented considerations. Their motives at the beginning were probably sincere and idea-oriented."[16] Shtromas judges the behaviour of these Soviet collaborators rather leniently; he particularly emphasizes the internal drama, the contradictions that they experienced between their convictions and the reality that had suddenly overwhelmed them. "Having been irreparable romanticists during the independence period, these persons learned, under

the incomparably worse conditions of Soviet reality, to become even more irreparable realists,"[17] – this is the way Shtromas describes the metamorphosis of these "ideal" Soviet collaborators. However, the situation rapidly changed and the energy of sincere collaboration dissipated: deportations of Lithuania's social elite in June 1941 separated illusion from outright mistake.

The first Soviet period dictated its own terms for collaboration. The strategists of the Soviet occupation succeeded in partially preserving the impression that Lithuania's state institutions were being continued, while a majority of state employees had to keep on working, though they were tormented by feelings of confusion, fear, and suspicion as they were witnessing the gradual disappearance from the scene of all the active players in the politics and society of independent Lithuania. The same feelings were experienced by the Lithuanian Army, which initially was not disbanded but gradually integrated into the structures of the Red Army. Formally, we can regard the Lithuanians who were employed by all of these institutions as Soviet collaborators although most of them certainly did not regard themselves as such. The gradual steps of Sovietization during those months did not create an opportunity of decisive choice for most of them. Only certain specific social groups felt the pressure to decide whether to go underground or to obey, accommodate, and cooperate. The real and direct forms of collaboration developed against the background of an alternative to fight the occupier.

It is important to keep in mind that in this dramatic but short period, the intellectual potential of Lithuanian society was still largely intact, and that the idea of a national independent state could survive in surreptitious form. On the other hand, this situation allowed not only for resistance but also for the appearance of more complex varieties of collaboration, demanding sophisticated political behaviour and wily methods of formal conformism. This indeed was the time for a resuscitation of Lithuanian wallenrodism.

Helpful in understanding the character of the collaborationist political mentality formed during the first Soviet period are some remarks of Karolis Drunga, a member of the anti-Soviet and anti-Nazi resistance who had participated in the June 1941 revolt. A subtle political thinker, he saw that World War II provided the opportunity for the emergence of a sort of cooperation with occupying regimes that might be termed patriotic collaboration. Finding himself in the West after the war and actively joining in the many debates about cooperating with people in the occupied homeland, he wrote in the 1960s:

"All older émigrés have known two totalitarian occupations: the first Soviet (1940–1941) and the Nazi (1941–1944). And while, because of the war and other historical circumstances, the latter had not yet had the time to fully permeate society from top to bottom, it is true that in both occupations, human life and freedom were exclusively and arbitrarily in the hands of the occupying power. And whatever the occupation, we would certainly not wish that while it was going on, Lithuania was left without functioning hospitals, power plants, schools, water supply systems, food distribution systems, and so on. Even during the most brutal of occupations, an oppressed country needs people capable of maintaining and running the services without which life would come to a halt."[18] These political observations from a veteran of the Lithuanian resistance most accurately reflect the complex situation of collaboration during the World War II.

Lithuanian collaboration in World War II: the Nazi occupation

The Nazi occupation presented a very specific test on Lithuania's collaborationist creativity. First of all, the beginnings of that collaboration lie in the time of the first Soviet occupation: Nazis tried to turn the "Lithuanian Activist Front" (LAF), which organized itself in the Third Reich, into a Nazi 5th column despite the

fact that not all of its members – let alone all of the participants in the June 1941 revolt – consciously saw themselves as such. In the face of the Soviet occupation, it was entirely natural to look for bases from which to organize resistance actions. Therefore, those who were dissatisfied with the Soviet regime and with the destruction of the Lithuanian state found an obvious place in Nazi Germany's plans for the East. In this way, Lithuanian patriotic ideas as well as the remnants of national values and democratic hopes found themselves "between a rock and a hard place" – between the grindstones of both the Soviet and the Nazi occupations.

Lithuanian activists, champions of a lost independence, and people resolved to fight for it, had to choose from among a few options involving vague risk factors supported only by uncertain conjecture and a more or less developed political intuition. Unfortunately, the history of the mid-20th century shows how limited the real possibilities for choice were and what tragic consequences could ensue from even the most glorious ideas.

The following questions are very important: How many sincere supporters of National Socialist ideas were there in Lithuania prior to World War II? What sorts of motives, feelings, and prejudices determined a greater or lesser sympathy for Nazism or communism? Finally, was there any difference between the orientation of the political classes and that of the masses on these questions? Unfortunately, the current condition of historiography on collaboration with the Soviets and the Nazis does not permit any unambiguous answers. This is so despite the fact that more or less open political discussions during the First Republic (1918–1940) frequently led to questions concerning possible threats from Germany and Russia. One of these questions was the following: Which of these two political predators would be faster in digesting Lithuania with all its national and cultural characteristics? And even though the Lithuanians had no knowledge of the fate which Nazi strategists envisioned for the Baltic nations, it seems fair to say that throughout the decades

of the establishment of Lithuanian independence and of the First Republic, both the Nationalistic-Christian Democratic and the Peasant Populist-Social Democratic circles were inclined to view the German threat as the greater evil. One should not forget that the older generation of Lithuanian politicians had already experienced the practical effects of these dangerous alternatives and fully understood the "*German threat deriving from their 'Drang nach Osten' and their policy of systematic extermination.*"[19]

After the Soviet intervention, to be sure, public sentiment shifted toward Germany. But even then, the more experienced statesmen of an older generation looked rather sceptically on the possible role of Nazi Germany with respect to the cause of Lithuanian independence. Even Mykolas Krupavičius initially regarded Soviet Russia as a lesser evil than Nazi Germany.

For the Catholic politicians of a younger generation, it was the other way around. Long after the war ended, Juozas Ambrazevičius (who shortened his name to Brazaitis) wrote in his book "Vienų vieni" ("All alone") that on the eve of the German-Russian war reflection, historical experience recommended drawing the following conclusion: "*Lithuania's number one enemy is the Soviet Union, and the number two enemy is Nazi Germany fighting with the number one enemy.*"[20] Certainly, in the Lithuanian mass consciousness the authority of German civilization and order trumped the Russian perspective as it had unfolded in 1940; thus the idea of collaboration with the Germans fell on a sufficiently fertile ground. Hopefully, in the near future, research in political anthropology and history will allow us to penetrate more deeply into these fateful circumstances of Lithuanian collaboration.

The Revolt of June, 1941, and the Nazi entry into Lithuania forced an accommodation between the declared hopes of national independence and the pledge to join in the creation of a Hitlerite *New Europe*. Despite the fact that the provisional Lithuanian government lasted barely a month and that it wasn't a sincere collaborator of the Nazis, its goal to earn their trust

plunged it into the bloodiest events marking the onset of the Nazi occupation and the Holocaust in Lithuania.

Within the Lithuanian Front, there probably were no more sincere Nazi collaborators than there were ideological supporters of the Soviet regime in left-wing circles. Nevertheless, when in the summer and fall of 1941 they were writing feigned panegyrics to Hitler and the ideas of a new Europe, the people surrounding Juozas Ambrazevičius and the Provisional Government he headed neglected to voice sharper criticism of even those aspects of Nazi policy in Lithuania that provoked sincere disgust in their own environment. Ambrazevičius himself later quite accurately described the difference between the Soviet and the Nazi occupation regimes as well as the difference between the forms of collaboration these regimes had given rise to. According to him, "*the Bolsheviks allowed the Lithuanians to maintain certain fictions of formal political freedom – to call their polity a 'republic' and to style their officials 'ministers' or 'commissars' – without allowing them to preserve the content of political freedom – the rights of state independence and civil liberties of thought, ideology, and personal life. The Nazi occupiers did not speak much about the political forms but allowed more of the content of personal freedom, not forcing people to change their convictions.*"[21]

Book by Ambrazevičius contains additional comparisons of the behaviours of the Soviet and Nazi occupiers, which so far have not been confirmed by more recent work of historians based on primary sources. According to him, there were differences in moral attitude that implied a greater or lesser zealousness in enforcing the goals of the regime. The Bolsheviks were obsessed with destroying everything: the existing social relationships, the order, the institutions, and the people heading them. The Germans, by contrast, wanted above all to exploit everything that could be useful for the purposes of war. *"For the Lithuanians, the moral attitudes of the Germans were more useful because German officials were more easily persuaded not to*

destroy the life of the Lithuanian locals. On the other hand, nothing could staunch the destructive sadism of the Bolshevik official because that was part of his regime's essence,"[22] – explained Ambrazevičius. The tactics, in his view, were similarly different: Bolsheviks used treachery and deceit, whereas the Germans were cynically frank; the Bolsheviks were demonically sophisticated, while the Nazis were brutally primitive; but just because of this, they were more useful to the Lithuanians because they revealed their plans at once and allowed the Lithuanians to react and adjust accordingly.[23]

Among Lithuanians, there were few Nazis out of conviction; however, as may be judged from the diaries (not yet published) of their leader, Laimutis Feliksas Blynas, sometimes they could allow themselves to criticize the bloody repressions even more forthrightly than did the insincere collaborators. This phenomenon is highlighted by facts about those directly collaborating with the Nazi occupation regime, the counsellors. Pranas Germantas-Meškauskas and other direct collaborators expressed their critical attitudes toward the Nazi regime more strongly than did persons in the former provisional government. At length they too got a taste of concentration camp. Perhaps it was the times, but the sociopsychological aspects of this phenomenon deserve attention. During both Nazi and Soviet times, the ideologically convinced collaborators allowed themselves to criticize the regime more sharply than did those who faked collaboration. This is a very important characteristic determining the collaborative skills of Lithuanian society.

Although at least initially the Nazis didn't pay much attention to local peoples' attitudes in the Baltic States they had occupied, the German administrative structures in them differed somewhat. While in Estonia and Latvia the local administration and the commissariats of the occupying government were joined, in Lithuania the institution of the German general commissar and that of the Lithuanian counsellors worked in parallel. This circumstance strengthened the appearance that some of the

administrative offices were 'Lithuanian' or 'independent', which in turn influenced the collaborative consciousness. The German occupation government did not seek to change the administrative personnel from top to bottom, as the Soviets did, but contented itself with a closer supervision of the leading cadres.

Thus, in Lithuania, the local administration consisted of at least three distinct groups of civil servants. The first, the smallest, was made up of those newly appointed by the Germans. The second consisted of Germans who had formerly lived in Lithuania and now were returned to it. The third group, which, according to Ambrazevičius, was the largest, consisted of district chiefs, mayors, police chiefs, school principals, university rectors, and other officials appointed by the former provisional government. It is this layer of people who for the most part, it seems, engaged in insincere, inconsistent and internally conflicting forms of collaboration. In the eyes of that government's leader himself, the institution he headed was in no sense a Nazi collaborator – it only sought the reestablishment of Lithuanian independence and tried by means of conformist diplomacy to win more rights on Lithuania's behalf. Unfortunately, the tragic circumstances of war as well as the lumping together of anti-Semitism and anti-Communism brought these attempts to the brink of the Holocaust, thereby creating favorable conditions for implementing the *final solution* regarding Jews that the Nazis had planned.

Because the Nazi regime had not yet had the time to fully permeate society from top to bottom, i.e., because in spite of all the horrors and repressions of the war, the occupation regime did not yet completely control social life, there was room left – and conditions created – for a certain interlacing of resistance and collaboration activities. During the Nazi occupation, there were people in the Lithuanian administration and police, even in the secret services, who upheld the goal of independence and had contacts with the underground. Anti-Nazi resistance groups, sensing the crucial significance of events on the Eastern front,

strove to direct their activities in such a way that they wouldn't become direct helpers of the Soviet offensive.

This two-fold situation was appreciated not only by the more perspicuous members of the resistance but also by Soviet security officials who after the war assessed the Lithuanian anti-Nazi underground as having been but a training ground for anti-Soviet activities. Thus Karolis Drunga, one of the leaders of the anti-Nazi Lithuanian Freedom Fighters' Association, was interrogated right after the war by a Soviet security officer; when Drunga asked him whether fighting the Nazis was considered to be a crime against the Soviet government, the officer bluntly replied that resisting the Nazis "*was just a Lithuanian 'training exercise' in preparation for resisting the Soviets.*"[24]

In both of those periods, there evolved a certain tendency of collaboration (to be sure, of unequal breadth and depth) that Drunga called *patriotic collaboration*, which indeed has similarities with the Lithuanian wallenrodism already discussed. Even superficial historical investigations show that Lithuanian administrative officials often tried to save their countrymen from harm and often themselves suffered harm: dozens of civil servants and police officers ended up in the occupier's jails. Unfortunately, such civic solidarity was exceptionally rarely shown toward Lithuanian Jews who were being murdered. Because of the Nazi occupation regime's short-livedness and its special administrative character, both resistance and collaboration came in several varieties and had some political space to manoeuvre. All of that quickly came to an end when the Soviets occupied Lithuania anew and their second period of occupation began.

From collaboration to cohabitation?

That period was very heterogeneous. The time of the armed anti-Soviet resistance (1945–1953) represented by the Soviets as a civil war brought to the fore tens of thousands of anti-Soviet

activists. The regime tried to cover the cruellest repressions and mass deportations with methodically ideological indoctrination. In the depth and demagogical effectiveness of their totalitarianism, the Soviets indeed surpassed the Nazis. Those veterans of the anti-Nazi resistance who tried to continue their underground activities soon realized that conditions for it differed immensely. Even though several opponents of open partisan warfare attempted to channel the fighting energy of anti-Soviet resistance into more passive underground venues, the Soviet repressive machine constantly forced people to come to radical decisions: either choose a conformist, collaborationist position, or take up arms!

The organizers of partisan warfare themselves often grasped the extremity of this form of resistance. That during the German occupation the anti-Nazi underground did not erupt in a broader guerilla war can in part be explained by the fact that under those circumstances activities of passive unarmed resistance were still possible. After all, even the Polish Armia Krajowa turned to open warfare only upon the approach of the Red Army. In Lithuania, during several years of World War II, forces were accumulated, fighters were prepared, and the right moment was awaited. Even one of the most professional of Lithuanian partisan leaders, Lieutenant Colonel of the former Lithuanian General Staff Juozas Vitkus-Kazimieraitis, did not rule out the possibility of a certain kind of accommodation with the Soviet regime. According to the testimony of Karolis Drunga, Vitkus-Kazimieraitis had expressed the following position: "*In my ranks, I don't want to see gurrillas who are motivated solely by patriotism. I accept only those who have no other way out, who have been condemned, who are being sought for deportation, and so on. Those who can somehow manage a 'legal' existence – I urge them to return to a normal life under normal circumstances, if possible. I know that nothing here will be solved quickly even though my men think that next spring we'll be liberated.*"[25]

The third way, connected with rationalization of resistance, conservation of forces, penetration into civil service, gradually became impossible under the Soviets. The whole network of public servants was replaced by new cadres; the nationalization and collectivisation of agriculture, accompanied by mass deportations, fundamentally uprooted that social order which could have served as a base for unarmed resistance. The dimensions of Soviet totalitarianism were such that after the end of the guerilla war, only small groups of people and isolated individuals dared to test the possibility of an anti-Soviet underground.

Post-war collaboration was shaped by other factors as well. We might begin by noting the diminution of the intellectual capacity of a Lithuanian society that had to face the returning Soviet government. Along with the German army, about 60,000 war refugees, the greater part of the country's clerks and office workers, intellectual leaders, scholars, writers, and artists fled the country in fear of the onset of Soviet horrors. Thus the Soviets had to create the entire administrative network practically from scratch. Because there were so few ideological Communists and because even the direct collaborators of the Russian army – officially called "people's defenders" and popularly nicknamed "stribai" – numbered only several thousand and were insufficient to fill out an entire government structure, there arose a need to quickly form a new layer of collaborators. Recruiting for, it proceeded by effectively exploiting the revanchist instincts of the lowest classes and the immense capacities of Soviet indoctrination. This process was very well characterized by Alexander Shtromas in his "*Politinė sąmonė Lietuvoje*" (*Political Conscience in Lithuania).* In his view, the Soviets succeeded in forming out of the children of Lithuanian industrial and farm workers, who from whatever motives (ideological or self-interested) had resolved to become participants in the new Soviet life, the most important links in the Soviet apparatus. That process proceeded so quickly that it truly could intoxicate those penurious individuals who had never before felt the possibility of

a happier personal life. Accelerated secondary school courses (for example, eight grades in three years) and evening schools for those working in factories or the administrative apparatus allowed half-educated upstarts to obtain graduation diplomas and to satisfy their career desires with ideological fictions.

A whole system of Soviet academies was created; its purpose was to hasten the preparation of regime-friendly specialists who could be relied upon. In the words of Alexander Shtromas: "*For instance, a barely literate person from the countryside was sent for six months to a so-called 'Bacharovite academy' (Bacharov was then procurator of the Lithuanian SSR) and emerged from it as a procurator or judge. When I worked as a lawyer (1952–1955), a judge or procurator with higher education was a rarity in Lithuania. Former blacksmiths, soldiers, carpenters, agricultural workers, and persons of similar profession, without exception semi-literate, were absolutely dominant in the court and procurator system of the Lithuanian SSR.*"[26]

The same principles guided the formation of other links in the Soviet power apparatus and, to some extent, the literary and artistic spheres as well. Caught up by Young Communist League romanticism and by the passion of creating a new world, or just by the opportunity to rise to the very top of society, Lithuania's newly formed Bolsheviks became the most trustworthy of collaborators, no matter what the field of public activity – security, jurisprudence or poetry – in which they had to fulfil their mission as loyal party soldiers.

But again, there still were not very many intellectually high-level champions of communism or even sincere toadies. A portion of those who already in the independence period had harboured a belief in a bright future under communism but had in some sense not lost their patriotic feeling were painfully disappointed by the actual realities of Sovietization. The Lithuanian Communist Party, small at first, later grew quite rapidly, incorporating the new nomenclature we have just described.

Thus, it was difficult though not impossible for patriotic collaboration or wallenrodism to develop under such conditions. It seems plausible to suppose that one of the main reasons (other than Stalinism itself) for the absence of sophisticated forms of collaboration lay in the fact that this sort of wallenrodism presupposed the availability of real personalities or at least a higher level of general education. But this second requirement began to be met in Lithuania only from the nineteen seventies onward, when a new generation of intelligentsia not having directly experienced the post-war traumas began to arrive on the scene.

Furthermore, after Stalin's death and the suppression of the armed resistance, it gradually became clear to Lithuanian Communist Party Secretary Antanas Sniečkus and other party leaders that they wouldn't be able to reach the most important Soviet goals without the help of *bourgeois specialists*. To be sure, that was a small group of people that in general represented the economic interests of the Soviet regime. Working in close association with Sniečkus, economists such as Romualdas Sikorskis and Aleksandras Drobnys (head of the State Planning Committee) undoubtedly sought to ensure the best industrial policy terms for Lithuania. Having acquired great influence in this area, they acted in a deliberate way to obtain the best deal for Lithuania. In this context, one may perhaps speak of patriotic collaboration, although it is difficult today to evaluate which element – the patriotic, the servilistic, the selfish or the dastardly – predominated. One thing is clear: more historical studies of this complex question are needed.

Who are and were the collaborators? In the merciless ideological struggle on both sides of the Iron Curtain, reckless diagnoses abounded. Soviet authors unhesitatingly put all *bourgeois nationalists* on the list of those who helped the Nazis; while émigré authors, perhaps compensating for the psychic pain of their own flight from Lithuania, tended to regard those who had remained in their homeland and who were forced to accommodate as Soviet collaborators. However, there were remarkable

exceptions even among those who had personally experienced the ravages of Communist totalitarianism, witnessed the human dramas of others affected by them, and then escaped to the West. Here I would single out two exiles from Lithuania: the Polish poet and Lithuania patriot Czesław Miłosz, and the already-mentioned Karolis Drunga.

At one point, in "*The Captive Mind*," Miłosz called attention to a very special group of people acting under the constrains of a communist regime: "*I admit that I have too much admiration for those who fight evil, whether their choice of ends and means be right or wrong. I draw the line, however, at those intellectuals who adapt themselves, although the fact that they are adapted and not genuine revolutionaries in no way diminishes their newly acquired zeal and enthusiasm.*"[27]

Of course, Miłosz first of all had the Poles in mind, but he never forgot the Balts as well. His insight in evaluating collaborationist phenomena might be compared with Drunga's position. Ten years after Miłosz Drunga argued, in several articles and private discussions, that one should not identify all Lithuanian Communists with those who committed treason against their country. It isn't always easy to distinguish real and supposed Soviet collaborators. According to him, "*an intellectually honest answer to this complicated problem can be reached only conditionally, with many 'ifs' and 'becauses'. And even then that answer would indicate only a principle. In a specific case, that principle might at one time dictate a positive answer and at another a negative answer.*"[28]

It was evident to Drunga, as it was to Miłosz, that not every collaborator with the Soviets could be deemed to be an irredeemable traitor to his nation. In his opinion, "*there were very many of the latter in the underground party prior to the first occupation. During that occupation, when the Communist Party increased by 3,500 per year, there were very many of them too. During the second occupation, when the party increased by more than 30,000, there were still many but their percentage was surely lower than*

before. ... we can in all probability surmise that even among the true collaborators, there are some whose eyes are turned in envy towards Yugoslavia and Poland."[29]

Drunga's insights are both an intellectual history source for today's investigators and a challenge to undertake further research guided by strict methods and based on concrete factual material. In this paper, it is not possible to answer all questions that arise.

Over several decades, the attitude of many Lithuanians to the Communist Party changed. The Party became Lithuanianized, and so did the institutions of government. The rising level of education, though infected by Soviet quasi-theories as well as the symbols of the regime did not allow the energy of Lithuanian patriotism to become completely depleted. This tendency lasted until the close of the Soviet era. It revealed that mass Russification had not succeeded and that the Sovietization of society, although it had deformed the traditional nationalist mentality, had not penetrated down into the roots.

In lieu of conclusions

Collaboration is inherently infested with contradictions. The half-century after World War II was a test of Lithuania's abilities – to resist as well as to conform. The opportunities for collaboration, and the covert nationalist self-interest and inventiveness not only facilitated but also inoculated against Sovietization. The fact that out of misfortune and tragedy Lithuania emerged strange but modernized is, in part, an achievement of those who collaborated (not necessarily the Communists of Sniečkus's type). However, the cultivation of such a cunning type of wallenrodism exacted a heavy price. The visage of today's post-Soviet society indeed reveals the features that the American sociologist Vytautas Kavolis had predicted in the 1950s, when he sought answers to the question, what will the

Lithuanian character formed by the Soviet occupation be like and with what difficulties will those who would re-establish Lithuania's independence be faced? He believed that if the occupation lasted longer, a new indoctrinated generation would be formed, and that "*the social fabric would not only be destroyed and replaced by the Soviets but that, upon liberation, the new (now Soviet) fabric would again be unravelled. ... The psychological world built up in the Communist system could fall to pieces, and this breakdown will manifest itself in (1) aggressiveness and (2) indifference to societal matters...*"[30]

Kavolis, studying the behaviours of former Hitler Youth members in post-war denazified Germany, in essence correctly foresaw the perspectives of Lithuanian society undergoing several decades of accommodation to the Soviet regime. Fifty years later, the remnants of Lithuanian wallenrodism have not disappeared entirely. Under the Soviets, the Lithuanians have acquired traits that can reveal themselves in free and united Europe as well, especially in the corridors of the Brussels bureaucracy. What is an advantage in some situations can be a reproachable flaw in others.

1 Štromas, A. *Politinė sąmonė Lietuvoje* (Political consciousness in Lithuania). London, 1980.

2 Miłosz, Cz. *Pavergtas protas* (The Captive Mind). Vilnius, 1993. Miłosz's book was based on his direct observations of the way Polish intellectuals accommodated, and started collaborating, with the Communist regime. Though the author never joined the Communist party, he was doubt less a man of the left. The same may be said of Shtromas, who traversed the road of political self-determination leading from faith in communism to active dissidence and ending in political emigration. In a way this painful awakening of leftwing intellectuals may be compared with the ideological development of Arthur Koestler.

3 Trumpa, V. „Kovotojai ir kolaborantai" (Fighters and Collaborators). In Trumpa, V. *Lietuva XIX amžiuje* (Lithuania in the 19th Century). Chicago 1989, p. 62–77.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

5 Beresnevičiūtė, H. *Lojalumų krizė: Lietuvos bajorų politinės sąmonės transformacija 1795–1831* (Crisis of Loyalty: Transformation of the Political Consciousness of Lithuanian Gentry 1795–1831). Vilnius, 2001, p. 30.

6 Biržiška, M. *Lietuvių tautos kelias į naująjį gyvenimą* (The Way of Lithuanian Nation to a New Life), vol. 1. Los Angeles, 1952.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 48.

8 Mockūnas, L. *Pavargęs herojus. Jonas Deksnys trijų žvalgybų tarnyboje* (Tired hero: Jonas Deksnys in the Service of Three Secret Agencies). Vilnius, 1997.

9 Brazaitis, J. „Apie kultūros reikalą tremtyje" (About the Cultural Issue in Exile). In Brazaitis, J. *Raštai* (Works), t. 5. Chicago, 1984, p. 77.

10 See the article of Darius Staliūnas in this volume, pp. 88–100.

11 Kukiel, M. *Czartoryski and European Unity*. London, 1955, p. 135.

12 Grabowicz, G. G. „Franko et Mickiewicz: le wallenrodisme et la crainte de l'influence". In *Le Verbe et l'Histoire: Mickiewicz, la France et l'Europe*, ed. F.-X. Coquin and M. Maslowski. Paris, 2002, pp. 96–103.

13 Janion, M. *Życie pośmiertne Konrada Wallenroda* (The Life after the Death of Konrad Wallenrod). Warszawa, 1990; Chwin, S. *Literatura a zdrada. Od Konrada Wallenroda do Małej Apokalipsy* (Literature and Betrayal. From Konrad Wallenrod to the Small Apocalypse). Kraków, 1993; Beresnevičiūtė, H. *Lojalumų krizė...* (see note 5).

14 Trumpa, V. *Kovotojai ir kolaborantai...* (see note 3), p. 65.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Štromas, A. *Politinė sąmonė Lietuvoje* (see note 1). pp. 13 f.

17 *Ibid.*

18 Drunga's manuscript containing these remarks was published posthumously by Liūtas Mockūnas in the Chicago-based monthly *Akiračiai*: „Išeivijos ryšių su Lietuva prieigose" (The Beginnings of Emigree Relations with Lithuania). In *Akiračiai,* 2003, nr. 2, p. 4.

19 Romer, M. *Lietuva karo akivaizdoje* (Lithuania Facing the War). In *Baltos lankos,* 3, 1993, p. 221. Perhaps the best characterization of typical Lithuanian attitudes during World War I has been provided by the liberal political and civic leader Mykolas Romeris, a big fan of the idea of resurrecting the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. For a time, he supported Józef Piłsudski but turned away from him after the Żeligowski coup in the Vilnius area. The entire text of this confidential memo to the leadership of the Polish movement was published in: Romer, M. „Litwa wobec wojny. Poufny memoriał z sierpnia 1915 r." (Lithuania and the War. Secret Memorial of August 1915). In *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 1970, no. 17, pp. 56–127.

20 Brazaitis, J. *Vienų vieni* (All alone). Vilnius, 1990, pp. 75 f.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 101.
23 *Ibid.*, p. 102.
24 Quoted in: Mockūnas, L. *Pavargęs herojus...* (see note 8), p. 126.
25 „Apie sėklą, krauju laistomą“ (Pasikalbėjimas apie rezistenciją Lietuvoje su Karoliu Drunga), „About the Seed, Sprinkled with Blood“ (Interview about Resistance in Lithuania with Karolis Drunga). In *Dirva,* 1965, May 19; Mockūnas, L. *Pavargęs herojus...* (see note 8), p. 128 f.
26 Štromas, A. *Politinė sąmonė Lietuvoje* (see note 1), p. 17.
27 Miłosz, Cz. *Pavergtas protas* (see note 2), p. 19.
28 Drunga, K. „Trečioji jėga? Santykiavimas su okupuota Lietuva“ (The Third Power? Relations with Occupied Lithuania). In *Metmenys,* 6, 1963, p. 170.
29 *Ibid.*, p. 170 f.
30 *Ibid.*

Conspiracy theories in traumatized societies: The Lithuanian case

Sometimes universal schemes of the mental environment for theories of conspiracy correspond to a paternalist model: A has secrets, B has secrets, and nobody trusts anybody. We can recognize some features of that model in different countries, but my interest here is to stress the specific character of the repressed and traumatized society in understanding historical and political mysteries. The post-Soviet post-colonialism experience of the Lithuanian society provides many examples for a virtually unlimited exploration of conspiracy theories.

Lithuania in the last two hundred years was mostly repressed, occupied, and so forth. It enjoyed less than four decades of independence during these two centuries: that is the background of our sad and controversial story. That happy time of independence was again divided into two roughly equal periods: from 1918 to 1940 and from 1990 until today. It is a very important fact that fourteen years of the First Lithuanian Republic were marked by the authoritarian regime of President Antanas Smetona. That's why the liberal democratic tradition in Lithuania is so very short. In my understanding there is a very important interdependency between the *captive mind* (occupied mind) and an obsession with theories of conspiracy. And conversely, national freedom, social liberty, and individual rights coexist well with more rational explanations of the main trends in history. When an individual loses hope in his efforts to resist the absurdities of the ruling regime, he gets closer to mystification.

Why have the years of occupation and repression created such a deep feeling that the world is uncertain and such a disbelief in everything that lies on the surface of public life? First of all, long years of resistance and the practice of conspiracy have created an all-pervasive mutual suspiciousness. Conspiratorial movements foster highly conspiratorial ways of thinking. Even people who never participated in an active underground group developed an Aesopian language with its corresponding behavior. This was especially strongly cultivated in Soviet times because the Soviet regime more than any other enforced control of speech and consciousness.

Lithuanian society, starting from the anti-Russian conspiracy and uprisings of the 19th century, developed not only its skills to resist, but even more its power to discover or recognize acts and schemes of Russian (Soviet) secret services. This habit survived after the *Singing Revolution* of 1989 because the transition period was extremely painful and obscure to most of the people. Society also got quite paranoid: the opinion is still dominant that a public person is always only a tool of some secretive power (business clans, political groups, ex-Soviet *nomenclature*, the KGB, etc.).

Russian and later Soviet authorities also experimented a lot with Lithuanian society. It is a fact that the most mystified theories of conspiracy circulated among the nonconformist intelligentsia in the late seventies. It seems a bit of a paradox that well-published pamphlets and books in good polygraphic shape circulated among decent-minded groups in Lithuania explaining the Judeo-Masonic global conspiracy, into which the Bolshevik revolution could be easily integrated.

The post-Soviet postcolonial mentality proved to be good soil for the seeds of unlimited conspiracies. That's why the explosion in Moscow with its 300-odd victims was simply identified as a deed of the Russian secret services to prepare popular opinion before the second Chechnya war. More than the West it is post-Soviet society that becomes a good market for the idea of September 11 as an act of the CIA. Some Lithuanian readers of

Umberto Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum* felt remarkably at home in this piece of fiction.

The typical post-Soviet disbelief in facts, mistrust, and suspicion are also supported by an extremely low level of political education combined with some knowledge of the technologies of public management (including the elementary principles of the secret services). In that respect even a course for Vilnius University political science students on "Hermetic Societies in World Politics" should raise eyebrows. Sometimes I like joking about the frequently observed habit of explaining every hard-to-understand event or action with the tools of mystification: it is probably connected with the KGB, or the Mafia, or the Conspiracy Guy... In those situations nobody needs any rational proofs and arguments.

The Lithuanian media, including the main daily newspapers (e.g., *Respublika*), sometimes publish articles on the Jewish conspiracy just as in Nazi times. Some years ago the Open Society Fund, the Lithuanian branch of the foundation network created by George Soros, became a target for publications of that type. The fact that anti-Soros publications from Vilnius and Riga to Moscow and Tbilisi were virtually *copy-paste* productions did justify understanding this campaign as orchestrated by the Russian secret services; but still it achieved the demonization of the Soros Foundation in Lithuania.

Traumatized memory may easily include some elements of conspiracy theory dealing with the past of one's own country. This is especially recognizable in the case of crimes against humanity. Even the feeling of guilt is included in the virtual list of the tools of conspiracy and colonization. In some respects it is precisely a feeling of *guilt* that appears at the borderline of the post-Soviet mentality. The contemporary debate on the crimes of the Nazi and Soviet regimes seems a battle of interpretations of the past. This is where the politics of memory and the mystified theory of conspiracy come together. Again, in very open forms this can be seen in Putin's Russia.

The attitudes towards the ideas of Communism and the crimes of Communist dictators against humanity remain a major problem in today's world, a problem that is especially acute in a Europe that is now building its common home. Some of those especially vociferously calling for giving primacy to the principles of social solidarity tend to turn a blind eye towards the tragic consequences of some attempts to realize Communist utopias on earth in the course of which it turned out that killing millions of human beings was unavoidable.

With the passage of time since the demise of the Soviet Union, which bears the greatest responsibility for crimes against humanity, the latter are increasingly forgotten in European consciousness. The attempts by Central European societies to call attention to the transgressions of Communism remain an important factor in keeping alive the memory not only of the bloody events of the 20th century history but also of the sincere efforts of those who have taken on the mission of not letting us forget about them. That is why the victims of Communist regimes, scholars and witnesses, researchers and civic activists talk about what must be recorded in the book of the new European identity – not only so as to avoid another immersion in the same river of treacherous ideas but also so that the nations of the European Union could understand one another. Different forms of moral sensitivity exhibited by people who've experienced different traumas in the past today constitute a hurdle on the path toward harmony.

Contemporary European identity may be understood in terms of the conception of a common space, geopolitical history, collective memory, religion, traditions, and signs that arrange themselves differently depending on the location and angle of the viewpoint. Cultural and historical memory, the knowledge of common things in the past and the ways of recognizing them in the domain of values – all of this works either for Europe or against it. Often we observe large differences of self-consciousness between the old and the new members of the European

Union. These relate not only to the way the crimes of Communist regimes against humanity are regarded.

Examples of the way the British, the French, and the Germans manage to communicate with each other in the older portion of the EU suggest that we delve into the identity differences among the new EU members that joined the Community, also bringing with them the bloody traumas of Nazi and Communist experimentation. The West directly experienced only Nazi crimes, which cannot be erased from the memory of millions of Europeans. Central Europe (from Bulgaria to Estonia) underwent more complex traumas in the 20th century. Their inhabitants were ravaged by both Nazi and Soviet occupations.

The members of the family of new European states cannot judge with an accountant's eye wherein the crimes of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union differed. The memory of Central East Europeans, and their peace with their own history, is burdened by two external circumstances.

First, West Europeans hesitate to accept images of Communist terror and mass murder – images that are part of the new EU members' identity. To them (especially the left-leaning West Europeans) hammer and sickle on a red background is a symbol not of bloody crimes, but of workers' solidarity. Their own memory, in which Communist ideals have not been severely discredited, is in this respect alien to that of Central East Europeans.

The other relevant circumstance is that the contemporary Russian politics of memory bars the way to the kind of mutual understanding already achieved by Western nations that were once involved in internecine conflicts. This is an understanding that begins by admitting one's own transgressions against one's neighbors, especially the weaker ones. To be sure, certain signs of a European consciousness could be detected in Russia in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union; however, the doctrine of Putinist Russia swept all of them away. The best example of this change is the new textbook of Russian history,

the publication of which was watched over by Vladimir Putin himself.

Unlike any other that went before it, the 20th century was tied to the crimes of two differently colored totalitarianisms, Nazism and Bolshevik Communism. More people died in the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany from acts of repression, not just during the world wars but during the periods of relative peace, than were killed during all previous military conflicts. The Second World War and the subsequent resuscitation of Western Europe, the latter's march towards liberal democracy together with the emergence of welfare states gives much food for imaginative thought and makes it important to get a handle on the experiences of Central East European nations. What then are the most important differences and which causes of these differences draw the boundaries within the European self-consciousness?

Let us concentrate on only a few episodes. First of all, let's take memory and what today is often called the *politics of memory*. Scholars and researchers of the collective memory count dozens of books that within the last half-century described changes in the historical consciousness of Western Europeans. Germans could make peace with the French only when they shook up and searched through their memories and first of all hit upon their own sins, mistakes, and guilt over the past. All this allowed nations standing on Christian foundations to extend to each other their hands and to open up the gates of remorse and forgiveness. It is not a naive belief that the acknowledgment and confession of one's own guilt is the most important stone in this Christian European tradition. Even if following Anthony Giddens we say that in the evolution of the contemporary social structure *the most important mechanisms are those of shame, not of guilt*, still the conviction will not falter that it is precisely the resolve, the intellectual capacity, and the moral imperative to speak about the guilt and transgressions of one's nation that is a necessary condition for communicating in that space that endeavors to become a common home for all of us.

Isn't it the case that in their official history Russians are being urged to look only for positive things in their Soviet heritage to identify with? There, where because of the crimes committed feelings of guilt or shame might penetrate into the memory, the way is blocked. Films such as the Latvian documentary *Soviet Story* or Andrzej Waida's *Katyn* simply do not fit into this memory. This factor divides the European mental space into East and West. Or more accurately, Europe's mental borders end where the Christian sense of guilt disappears.

Analysts have already observed that the current Russian politics of memory is best reflected in the newly published history textbook. It weaves together a version of the grand patriotic narrative which unfolds the whole long road taken by the Soviet Union from "the great triumph to the tragic collapse" up to the first ten-odd years of sovereign Russia: that is what young students in Russian schools are taught. Its authors advise against comparing the Soviet and Nazi regimes; instead they compare the Baltic and Ukrainian partisans fighting for their homelands' freedom to terrorists, explain what provoked the collapse of the USSR, and complain that NATO has repeatedly ignored Russia's opinion.

More importantly, the strategists of Russian memory politics continue old imperial habits: they paste the Soviet regime's positive accomplishments into the memory of the Russian society while systematically cutting out any traces of manifest crimes not only against neighbors but also against the Russians themselves. The positive achievements, the conquests of imperial space turn into objects worthy of being remembered, whereas guilt feelings are transferred unto an abstract *other*. The victories are claimed; the crimes are consigned to oblivion. All this is done in full consciousness. The feeling of guilt is turned into something alien to the contemporary Russian identity.

It is said that the new document of collective memory – the history textbook – might not have seen the light of day if it had not been for the personal intervention Vladimir Putin, then the

president, now the premier. Last year, toward the end of his second term, President Putin called together a group of history teachers to discuss his vision of the past. He is alleged to have said that "**we cannot allow anybody to impose on us a feeling of guilt**". This thought recalls the opinion fostered in Soviet times that the western world does nothing else except spin conspiracies against Russia and the Russians. In the mind of someone in the grip of this paradigm, acknowledging one's guilt for the crimes one has committed is tantamount to surrendering to the world's conspiracy and conspirators. That is why the effect of conspiracy theories puts a brake on Russian efforts to make peace with their past.

This is where the essential mental differences between East and West become manifest. If the Germans now realize that recognizing their guilt and engaging in open-minded discussion are necessary conditions for looking their neighbors in the eye, if British authors can count among their compatriots' crimes the massive bombing of militarily insignificant German cities during the Second World War, then the Russians seem as yet incapable of self-criticism.

The evaluation and condemnation of Communist crimes is today becoming more and more a matter of moral sensitivity. Denazification in postwar Europe took place swiftly and resolutely, with the wounds of war by no means fully healed and the traumas of memory still hurting badly. Then no one was defending or justifying the crimes of the Nazis.

Even today, in the legal codes of many nations, the denial of those crimes is itself understood as a crime. Forgetting or denying can mean both sinning and trespassing.

The sufferings caused by Communism are long in the past. A straightforward legal procedure is hardly possible in these kinds of cases even though they aren't subject to a statute of limitations. Most of the perpetrators are no longer alive or will not be alive for long. To a lesser extent this is true for most of the victims (as a rule they are younger: in the postwar years many of

them were small children), because the killings and repressions were usually perpetrated by mature adults. That's why I claim that judging and condemning them becomes a matter for morality and history. Moral history is the level at which justice must be sought. This does not in the least diminish the weight of the task that falls on the living. Finally we must add that a frank telling of history and the freedom to interpret it is the best means to overcome both the traumas of collective memory as well as the wild and wanton conspiracy theories festering in their wake.

Lithuanian routes, stories, and memories

Lithuanians belong to a group of nations that blossomed forth in antiquity and created their own version of political civilization before disappearing a few centuries later from the world's political maps so thoroughly that to many people that nation became virtually unknown. From the middle of the 14th century onward the Grand Duchy of Lithuania edged toward becoming Europe's territorially largest state extending from the Baltic to the Black Seas while simultaneously remaining the last pagan island on this continent. In the words of Czesław Miłosz, a son of Lithuania and a Nobel Prize winner in literature, Lithuanians were then the last barbarians of Europe and Europe's last redskins as well.

In taking over their neighboring Eastern Slavic principalities, the Lithuanian military and political commanders themselves dissolved in these vast expanses to the south and east. That was the destiny of medieval empires. Empire-building peoples often turned into merely titular minorities, or ruling tribes, or elected upper crusts of nobility that over time assimilated themselves to the nationalities of their conquered lands. Up to this day Lithuanians revel in romantic tales of by-gone medieval glory, give their children the names of former grand warriors and dukes, and look upon the Palace of the Grand Dukes in Vilnius with pride in their hearts about the distant past.

It's quite possible (this happens with other nationalities, too) that Lithuanians see themselves somewhat differently than does

the world around them. The historical well-springs sustaining Lithuanian self-esteem and the signs of lost greatness that marked a once-existent political civilization quickly lose their value in today's fast-changing global world. Nevertheless, in this same world that spans several continents we may find anew tokens of Lithuanian destiny that to those living in Lithuania itself seem today to possess a merely third-rate importance. We have in mind the features and reality of the Lithuanian diaspora, as revealed by the footprints Lithuanians left behind during several centuries of modernity in North and South America, South Africa, and Australia, not to mention the Russian East including the limitless expanses of Siberia. The latter witnessed hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians who arrived there either because they had been deported by Russian authorities intent on making the Gulag a space for Lithuanian martyrs, or because they came since at least the end of the 19th century of their own free will in search of land and employment.

The tale of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania finds it hard going when dealing with its diaspora. The heirs of the old European state powers and even those of the early modern colonial empires rarely develop an appreciative sense of their own diasporas. Thus contemporary Dutchmen will readily admit that their native land has 18 million people and that the same number of Dutchmen live elsewhere in the world but they have no concept of a diaspora. The English, too, rarely speak of a diaspora. Formerly magnificent colonial empires fractured into many separate nations, but the former colonial masters became just the more important members of new political nations rather than fellow Englishmen of the same old nation extending far beyond its native isles. They became something other than just parts of a diaspora.

There is an additional aspect which makes the whole migrant nation narrative a difficult one. From the time of King Mindaugas in the 13th century to its catastrophe at the end of the 18th the Lithuania was a multinational, tolerant, and immigrant-

friendly country. Tens of thousands of Scots, Armenians, Tartars, and Karaim settled in the land of the Nemunas River. Hundreds of thousands of Jews created their Lita here, calling its capital city of Vilnius the *Jerusalem of the North*. During times of the decline of the Lithuanian state and the great economic migration, Jews and Lithuanians competed in statistical charts: which group was the more numerous in moving to *new worlds*? In these new countries, the children of those born in Lithuania joined separate diasporas, each telling their own Odyssean tales. Threads of a common Lithuanian ancestry may still be more or less clearly clearly discerned in South Africa, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Brazil, but in the main current of Lithuanian memory nowadays these ethnic ties are reflected very inadequately.

Diasporas arose and came to be recognized only after nations became dispersed not by way of having been conquered or economically colonized but as a result of political misfortune and out of fear of their new conquerors and oppressors. Usually this happened after the collapse of one's own state or the onset of economic difficulties. Although the ancient Greeks coined the term *diaspora* to designate their fellow countrymen outside their country's borders and began to establish their own colonies prior to the collapse of their states, later they roamed the globe like the Jews, Armenians, and much later the Irish did. They not only searched for new opportunities in new worlds, but also and perhaps more importantly were driven from their homeland by ethnic and religious oppression, misery, and hunger.

For these classic nations of emigrants, migrants, and refugees, belonging to the diaspora became an essential feature of their national identity. In today's world many of these diaspora nations, creating and continuing their great narrative, cannot do without their Odysseys, their émigré adventures, their nostalgia for the *Promised Land*. No matter how loyal they are to the country in which they live and no matter what languages they speak, these diaspora people feel themselves to belong to

a nation whose nest is the land of the forefathers. They are all united by memory, respect for their roots, and a resolve to share in concerns about that land's fate.

The Irish find it natural to assert that four million of their kinsmen live on the island while ten times more of them can be found throughout the world, but especially in North America. Even if human nature and demographical logic call these numbers into question, no one can dispute the right of the Irish to see themselves, and to tell their ethnic story, this way. The Lithuanian historical consciousness, however, is more complicated in that a majority of contemporary Lithuanians do not take themselves to be a diaspora nation in anything like the Irish manner. The Lithuanian narrative is grounded very firmly in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's golden period, and the Lithuanians' remembrance of empire doesn't have a diaspora dimension for precisely the reasons that the Dutch, English, French, and other former master nations of post-colonial states also lack such a dimension.

Perhaps it's natural that for nations undergoing the turbulent trials visited on Lithuania and East Central Europe during the last two centuries the role of grand images of a glorious past is much more important than are scenes of mass emigration, recalling as they do nothing but troubles and misfortunes, i.e., real traumatic defeats. To the creators of national narratives, it does make a difference how the diaspora came to be formed. Although the Lithuanian people started their diaspora history in mid-17th century with the escapades of religious emigrants and recently brought that history to record levels of European emigration just after the re-establishment of national independence in 1990, it is still difficult for the Lithuanians to integrate their historical narrative with the actual challenges of reality and to see the diaspora plateau as a crucial and indelible part of Lithuanian historical consciousness.

Here the books of first beginnings are all-important, symbolically marking the elements of self-understanding and of the

value of one's kinship perceived as equal to that of all other peoples mastering their fate. The sense of diaspora is fostered by three traits of our history showing that (1) we were among the first; that (2) we fought for our new country's freedom; and that (3) we contributed to its well-being. World Lithuanians in three of their presently inhabited countries display these features in varying degrees: sometimes very strongly (United States), sometimes barely noticeably (South Africa, Brazil).

More than two decades ago the historian and diplomat Adolfas Eidintas published a popular book on diaspora history entitled *Lietuvių kolumbai* (Vilnius, 1993). He could not then imagine that less than a decade later someone would publish his own fantastic version of the possibly Jagiellonian (hence partly Lithuanian) ancestry of Christopher Columbus. In his 2010 book *Colon. La Historia Nunca Contada*, the Luso-American author Manuel da Silva Rosa traces this great explorer and navigator to the Polish-Lithuanian royal House of Jogaila: allegedly Columbus was the son of Polish King and Lithuanian Grand-Duke Vladislovas Varnietis (Władysław of Varna). In this way the author extends the long list of those who've already claimed Columbus as their own, adding Polish-Lithuanian roots to the earlier and better-known Spanish, Portuguese, Jewish, Scottish, Greek, and Italian avowals (with this last-mentioned claim now for some time seeming to be the most successful).

One may look at this latest historiographic novelty with scepticism. Yet the symbolic sound of that new legend is tempting: the Lithuanians, like many other nations – large or small, famous or nearly forgotten, historically old or newly formed – are actors in the perennial history of the migration of peoples. Regardless of the scholarly value of Manuel Rosa's work, but just taking his narrative as a logically possible description of the past, a coherent story not entirely without foundation though not certainly proven either, we may accept the image arising from it as that of a new or newly illuminated historical hero, another many-valued icon of the Lithuanian world.

To Lithuanians, nowadays getting into the part of the most intensively migratory nation of the European Union, this partly or wholly (un)true revelation might serve as an appealing and functional metaphor, inviting them to orient their identity compass to the appropriate geographical and historical spaces. The Lithuanians could do worse than adopt for themselves the following jingle: "*We're all Christopher Columbus's kids, Not just grandkids of Adam and Eve*."

An honorable place in the New World's Pantheon will be reserved by the Lithuanians for Alexander Carolus Curtius, the founder in 1659 of the first Latin school in New Amsterdam (later New York). This hero is sometimes placed in a context also occupied by several thousand Lithuanian colonists in the world of the Caribbean pirates (Trinidad and Tobago) of that time. This historical picture is augmented by Christopher Arciszewski, who built a fortress for the Dutch at Itamarika in the delta of the Amazon. More importantly, no narrative of the Lithuanian diaspora will omit General George Washington's fellow commander, General Tadeusz Kosciuszko, regarding whose identity and symbolic significance the Lithuanians will always dispute with the Poles, as if the 21st century still had a dearth of great historical heroes.

Of even weightier import here should be the tales of Lithuanians who fought in the U. S. Armed Forces during both World Wars (not to mention those of Korea and Vietnam). For example, toward the end of World War II a handful of sailors led by Zenon Lukošius valiantly captured a Nazi submarine in the Atlantic and secured a valuable secret code book, as an exhibition at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry vividly testifies.

A bit earlier hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians had made their way to a new life in America through the coal mines of Pennsylvania, the steel works of Indiana, and the stockyards of Chicago, as memorably described by Upton Sinclair. Of course, this life course was not unique to Lithuanian worker immigrants alone. Waves upon waves of new arrivals

from Central and Eastern Europe started their careers in industrial America by getting and taking the dirtiest and lowest-paying jobs. They were all called *greenhorns*, from which late 19th c. and early 20th c. Lithuanian-Americans derived their own word *grinoriai*.

Some scenes from Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* may today be looked upon as metaphors for the situation in which the Lithuanians, along with the whole stream of new immigrants, initially found themselves. An aggressive raw capitalism made equals of all immigrant workingmen in this melting pot of different ethnicities. However, conditions in their original homelands before World War I were somewhat unequal. Though the poverty was everywhere the same, pushing people to submit to the illusion of a *promised land* across the Atlantic, the Lithuanians, in addition to their economic hardship, had to endure tribulations that were spared the Hungarians, Slovaks, Poles, and even Ukrainians. A nation conquered by Imperial Russia and held in bondage from 1795 to 1915 sufferred oppression and rose up together with the Poles in the Insuurections of 1830–31 and 1863–64, which they lost. But the bleakest and blackest period came in the second half of the 19th c., when an assimilationist policy with respect to Lithuania began to be implemented in the most brutal way. The Lithuanian press was banned, the Roman Catholic Church was persecuted, and all kinds of civic activity and manifestations of national identity were thwarted. To this end the Czarist government introduced compulsory military service, forcing young men to spill their blood in wars a hated empire had started in order to conquer the Balkans and Central Asia. Lithuanians were impelled not only to look for a way to survive materially but also to flee from national and political persecutions. Emigration became so massive that the idea arose to transfer Lithuania elsewhere by creating a monolithic Lithuanian colony somewhere abroad. This utopia, recalling a Biblical precedent, embodied both desperation and the diaspora mission.

Thrifty, hard-working Lithuanians who settled in the United States prior to World War I constituted the largest, most capable, best-organized, and most nationally aware portion of the diaspora in the world at that time. Historians are unable to determine accurate parameters for that diaspora, but the size of its social capital was larger than that of the country itself at the time. By dint of the number of their organizations, their cultural activism, and their patriotic energy, Lithuanian-Americans became a major force to be reckoned with on the eve of February 16, 1918. At that time it had become a habit for Lithuanian activists and political leaders to travel to the United States to raise funds for Lithuanian causes and in support of national aspirations in Lithuania itself. And the Lithuanian-American communities proved to be extensive and generous sources of just such funds. The efforts of the Lithuanian diaspora in promoting grass-roots diplomacy went a long way toward assuring that in 1922 the United States government recognized the Republic of Lithuania and helped it to gain a firm foothold among the free nations of the world.

This marked a break in the relations between Lithuania and the diaspora. After a long period of national oppression it became possible for Lithuanians throughout the world to contribute to the reconstruction of the country's economy devastated by war and the Russian and German occupations. The influx of capital from Lithuanian-Americans and their patriotic re-emigration were noticeable developments that too often ended in failure and disappointment. It wasn't easy for people in the diaspora and in the home country to come to terms, especially after the coup d'etat of December 17, 1926 carried out by the Nationalists and bringing to power the authoritarian President Antanas Smetona. Since Lithuanians in the Western world had mostly organized themselves by ideology and were largely split into a Socialist left and a Catholic right, it was entirely understandable that a purely Nationalist political orientation raised hackles on both sides.

Despite disappointment with political tendencies in the Lithuanian homeland, U.S. Lithuanian efforts to build bridges among different viewpoints in the diaspora and to strengthen trust in Lithuanian abilities overall continued full force: the most outstanding expression of these efforts was the flight of Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas across the Atlantic in a serially manufactured airplane dubbed *Lituanica* and tasked beyond the limits of its capabilities. In 1933 these two pilots broke the world record of a flight without landing but perished tragically in the East Prussian forest short of reaching their destination in Kaunas, where a thousandfold crowd had been waiting for them.

At that time the World Lithuanian Movement (not yet called or organized as such) coincided with the Great Depression and with a new wave of emigration comprising more than 30,000 Lithuanians setting out for, and reaching, new lands: Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. The aspirations and needs of both this newer and the older diaspora became very important to all of Lithuania. 1935 saw the successful organization in Kaunas of a gigantic World Lithuanian Congress (Pasaulio lietuvių kongresas), the first and then largest visible consolidation of the Lithuanian diaspora nation. In the nation's high schools young people were being taught to see their nation as living all over the world, but also as having its own native land and a national state charged with the responsibility of looking after Lithuanians throughout the globe.

We don't know how the diaspora would have turned out from then on, if Lithuania itself hadn't been squashed by the Soviet Union, which occupied the Baltic States and Eastern Poland from September 1939 to June 1940 in accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. With the destruction of the Republic of February 16, the Lithuanians again came face to face with a bloody fate and lethal dangers. The fronts of World War II; the Nazi and Soviet occupations; the splits among Lithuanians themselves; the participation of Lithuanian collaborators with

the Nazis in the mass murder of Jewish fellow-citizens of Lithuania; the Soviet-organized mass repressions and deportations; the anti-Soviet partisan movement lasting all of ten post-war years – all these developments resounded strongly throughout the Lithuanian world.

The Lithuanians of the United States and Great Britain themselves contributed to the victories of the Anti-Fascist coalition in the war. They fought in American and British military units; those that stayed home in their workplaces collected donations and supported the fighting men with all their might, feeling strongly that an Allied Western victory might return freedom to their ancestors' land of Lithuania. Unfortunately, for several long decades this remained just a dream. In the summer and fall of 1944 about 60,000 Lithuanian refugees fled westward from the Soviet terror. They found shelter in the so-called Displaced Persons' camps, in which they attempted to preserve national self-respect, to recreate social and cultural networks, and to organize an educational system. Schools were set up, periodicals were published, a political life with organizations and meetings sprang up, individuals and groups carrying on artistic activities arose, and sports organizations became active. These organizational abilities of the Lithuanian diaspora reached a culmination in the founding of the World Lithuanian Community (PLB), which following the best global examples managed to build and preserve ties between older and newer countries of Lithuanian emigration and between older and newer diaspora groups and organizations. Symbols of the presence and continuity of the February 16th Republic of Lithuania were the Western-recognized Lithuanian diplomatic missions, which even under exile circumstances succeeded in harmonizing their function of representing the idea of a sovereign Lithuania in international forums with active civic work inside the Lithuanian diaspora community.

For the second time in a century a special task fell to the Lithuanian-American Community in the United States, the

organizational activities and patriotic sentiments of which were remarkably strengthened by the arrival of the DPs. As a result, cultural life, fostered by a large number of entirely new or newly directed periodicals, societies, and clubs, gained a hitherto unseen quality and vitality. A thick network of associations not only kept alive the hope of Lithuania's resurrection as a free country, but also laid the foundations for the longevity of the Lithuanian diaspora.

A distinctive feature of the community's vigor was its ability to combine philanthropic endeavors with the promotion of cultural values. The most striking example of this symbiosis were the lists of voluntary sponsors that appeared in connection with each major Lithuanian-American community event or initiative: these lists were published in newspapers and/or program booklets and contained the names – from the largest down to the smallest in dollar amounts – of those hundreds and thousands of benefactors who had contributed a share in the financing.

Virtually all of these people donated individually – mostly money, but also labor, materials, or infrastructure. Occasionally their philanthropy found expression in the establishment, on an individual or collective basis, of private foundations. Today in Lithuania itself most of these philanthropists are rarely mentioned. Outstanding exceptions are perhaps the Lithuanian Foundation registered in Illinois and today numbering over 7,700 members world-wide; the Kazickas Family Foundation established by Joseph P. Kazickas, formerly of New York; and the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, established in 1966 by Stanley Balzekas in Chicago.

The mission of the latter was especially important during the first several decades of its existence when news about Soviet-occupied Lithuania was extremely limited and twisted due to the presence of the Iron Curtain, the difficulty of traveling from the West to Lithuania to visit the land of one's ancestors, and the impediments to sight-seeing and to free movement once one got there. It was the job of the Balzekas Museum then to make as

vivid as possible the past history and present condition of Lithuania to visitors, whether of Lithuanian descent or not, who no longer spoke, or never had spoken, Lithuanian and were barred from visiting Lithuania itself.

Then, in 1990, Lithuania reestablished its independent state, freed itself from the Soviet Union, and again opened up to the Western world. But the challenges of this transition to democracy and something resembling a free-market economy caused nearly half a million Lithuanians to again depart from Lithuania in a new wave of migration. To a country of three-and-a-half million this was a huge loss.

Although this time the main destination of the migrants' movement was Western Europe, close to a hundred thousand of them made it to Anerica, that old stronghold of the diaspora. In this way such institutions as the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture again prove their importance and value as symbols and realities of patriotic and cultural action: they remain clearly visible beacons in the dramatic high seas of a global world's changing tides.

Post-Communist Transition: The Case of Two Lithuanian Capital Cities

Even though officially Lithuania has but one capital, Vilnius, it is often thought and spoken as if there were two important capitals for the Lithuanian consciousness. Vilnius is the official capital, but in modern Lithuanian history Kaunas, the country's secondlargest city, from 1920 to 1990 played a symbolic role as the temporary capital. This resulted from the fact that for a part of this period Lithuania had lost Vilnius due to a conflict with Poland.

The 15 years after the fall of communism brought to Lithuania not only the fruits of independence but also a host of identity problems. Intense discussions were aroused by the fortunes of sites in Vilnius and Kaunas that had symbolic importance for the national consciousness. The current urbanistic-architectural development of Vilnius first of all reflects the desire to implement the projects that the Lithuanians could not realize during the long decades of war and occupation. An extreme expression of these sentiments is embodied in the much-disputed endeavor to reconstruct the Renaissance Ducal Palace.

Though contemporary Lithuania and its national identity are more or less products of the twentieth century, the current state policy has given priority to the romantic symbols of the old Lithuanian Grand Duchy. The memorial sites in the temporary capital, especially the Resurrection Church, once a symbol of the nation's vital tenacity, were accorded a merely local significance. On the other hand, after 1990 Kaunas lost the real significance it once

had in the Lithuanian consciousness as the temporary capital. Slowly but inevitably it is becoming a normal and free university city in a maturing civil society.

Introduction

It is obvious that the role played by capital cities in the social, political, and cultural life of a nation depends on the different historical conditions that obtain with respect to power structure, socio-economic development, and sometimes also religion. Capitals of highly centralized states with a significant rural population developed differently from those of predominantly urban and polycentric states. Again, many modern capitals experienced a struggle between democratic tendencies and autocracy, a struggle which achieved a culmination in the middle of the twentieth century.

A student of the development of the post-soviet capital in Lithuania faces some specific difficulties in recognizing the most important signs, if he does not look back at events that are at least 80 years old. Current life in Lithuania gives answers to questions that have been asked at the beginning of the twentieth century. Lithuanian history of the last century provides a special case of the development of the capital city, or should we say, the two capital cities. The process here was definitely complicated by the historical heritage, and was defined by social, ethnic, and even military conflicts with the neighbors. The crucial turning point of this process was the Soviet occupation and subsequent imposition of communist totalitarianism that lasted almost half a century.

This essay aims to survey briefly the post-soviet changes in the symbolic forms of the two Lithuanian capital cities* Vilnius and Kaunas. It is important to describe some of the efforts of Lithuanian architects, politicians, and civic leaders to design the new urban landscape so as to reflect a new identity. This is

not an easy task. The contemporary development of the capital city is a phenomenon still marked by *post-soviet dimness* (Tereškinas, 2005, p. 105). Lithuanian academic and intellectual debate still provides very little enlightenment on that topic (among many others). In the context of a flourishing Lithuanian historiography, the academic awareness of the last decades of the Soviet regime and the 15 years of transition really seems rather indistinct and vague.

Why the Two Lithuanian Capital Cities?

Officially, of course, Lithuania has had, and still has, only one capital city, Vilnius. It is only in some respect of the Lithuanian historical memory that we can speak of two capitals.

Lithuania's biggest and most prominent city is Vilnius.[1] At the beginning of fourteenth century it became the capital of the then huge pagan state called the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The year 1323 is considered to be the date that this city was founded as the national capital. That is the history, but more important is the myth, which is still very important for the symbolic structure of the urban landscape. It tells the story of Grand Duke Gediminas, regarded as the founder of Vilnius, who decided to build the city after hearing an interpretation of his dream in which he saw an iron wolf sitting on one of the hills of the future city and howling with the voice of a hundred wolves. The pagan high priest explained to him that the fame of the city which he was to found as his capital would spread as far as the voice of the miraculous wolf could reach. Gediminas had a castle built there and set the limits of the city. Now the tower of this Gediminas Castle is not only the symbolic center of the metropolis but also a symbol of the nation's unity and of the glory promised by the gods.

One century later the power of Vilnius was recognized by numerous Baltic and Slavonic peoples from the Baltic to the

Black Seas. Vilnius became not only the administrative center but also the biggest city in an economic and a cultural sense. This situation continued until 1569, when the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland both signed the Treaty of Lublin and created the Union of the Two States. This date was a fateful, for it determined the gradual decline of Lihuanian independence, even though attempts were made to maintain a semblance of two parallel states, two armies, and two administrations. This federal State of the Two Nations, as it was also called, slowly but irrevocably declined, and it came to a close by being partitioned by Russia, Prussia, and Austria at the end of eighteenth century, with Russia taking the lion's share. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania thereby became history, and the country for more than century was turned into a province of the Romanovs' empire. From that time onwards Vilnius ceased to be the official capital and political center of Lithuania and became a provincial Russian administrative center, the seat of the governor general. The title of the Capital City proudly displayed by the Municipal Magistracy under the centuries-old Grand-Ducal charter of Home Rule was officially prohibited by the Russian governor (Šapoka, 1962, p. 77).

During many centuries Vilnius was the capital city of a multi-cultural state. The Lithuanian, Byelorussian, Ukrainian people still perceive Vilnius as a symbolic city that plays very important role in their national consciousness. Until now Jews also preserved an image of Vilnius as the Jerusalem of Lita (Lithuania) in their collective memory. But when the people of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth began to awaken nationally in the middle of nineteenth century this heritage of the capital city became an issue of multinational debate. The Lithuanians and the Poles started disagreeing about what Vilnius meant for both nations. For the former it was the historical capital, for the latter it was a city of Polish culture lying in a province of an envisaged newly reconstituted Polish state.

However, before the beginning of the twentieth century a few leading Lithuanian intellectuals had already established themselves in Vilnius. In the period from 1905 to 1915 the city again started to return to the role of leadership within Lithuanian national cultural and political life. The activities of national organization leading toward the recreation of an independent Lithuanian state were directed from Vilnius. In 1905, Lithuania took advantage of the socio-political revolution throughout Russia and demanded national freedom for herself. The symbolic event for the restoration of the symbolic capital was the Lithuanian National Diet, known as the Grand Assembly (Seimas) of Vilnius, convoked December 4–6, 1905.

Unfortunately, in terms of the symbolic forms of urban development the Lithuanians of that time did not achieve any material effect. Traditionally, the concentration of generally perceived architectural symbols was around Vilnius Castle and the Catholic Cathedral Square. The restoration of this area was the main and popular idea for more than a century. It was really a battlefield of national symbols against Russian domination; at the beginning of the nineteenth century the Russian authorities had demonstratively cleaned out from the city landscape the Post-Communist Transition Renaissance palace of the former Lithuanian rulers. For many decades until our own time it was the lost sign of the nation's statehood.

Only the idea of a National Palace on Taurakalnis Hill was entertained. Moneys were collected for the construction of it, but the idea was not implemented. The First World War destroyed these plans to build the first sign of the capital city of the modern Lithuanian nation.

After the Declaration of Independence of February 16, 1918, the Lithuanian people faced not only the troubles of a new identification of the nation's historical heritage, but also the extremely painful fact that Polish troops pushed the Lithuanian government out of the city for at least the next 19 years. The implementation of the national dream of Vilnius as the capital

of Lithuania had to be postponed for the future. Today we still can have the feeling that after the century of world wars and occupations Lithuanians tend to preserve the same urban vision of their capital city. The same idea today is reflected on the banknote of Lithuanian currency.

The geopolitical situation after World War I determined that Kaunas was to become the provisional capital of Lithuania between the two world wars. Until the end of the eighteenth century Kaunas was the second city of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but as such it lagged very much behind Vilnius. A trade center at the confluence of the Nemunas and Neris Rivers, it underwent immeasurable changes during its Russian period, i.e., the nineteenth century. When it became a provincial (gubernatorial) center and the most important fortress-city on the western border, Kaunas was encircled by an impressive series of forts and other military constructions which still remain, although they met diverse historical destinies; the Ninth Fort, for example, was the site of mass exterminations of Jews during the years of Nazi occupation.

Despite unpleasant political conditions, at the beginning of the twentieth century it became a symbolic heart of Lithuanian nationalist activities and Christian democracy. As previously stated, conflict with Poland resulted in the loss of the historical capital city Vilnius and the transfer of the principal state institutions to Kaunas. The bedraggled citadel city soon began to change: by the end of 1920s it acquired the contours of modern Bauhaus architecture, a comfortable and modern urban infrastructure, and the development of national centers of culture and learning, the most important being Vytautas Magnus University, the State Theater, the War Museum, and the Čiurlionis Art Museum. Though only a provisional capital, the city of Kaunas grew rapidly, absorbing its suburbs and dotting with industrial chimneys. At the same time Vilnius development was slowed down by its position as a provincial city on the eastern border of Poland.

The Kaunas urban landscape was changed under the conditions of some public debate. The essence of it was the question: Why should Lithuania develop national symbols in a provisional capital if the priority of state policy was to return to Vilnius? It was deemed better to wait for the solution of the so-called Vilnius question and only then to accelerate the construction of the national halls and museums. But even under these conditions symbolic places like the Museum of History and Culture also the Monument of Freedom were constructed. In some respects the new contours of Kaunas Square repeated the symbolic picture of Vilnius Cathedral Square. Perhaps, in the sense of a strict architectural analysis, this is too distant a shot, but the structure of symbols–classical or modernist frontons and the towers–somehow insinuates a parallel which was implemented in the urban landscape of the provisional capital to memorialize the lost images of Vilnius. This could be evaluated as a sort of semi-conscious compensation.

In the years 1932–1940 the Church of the Resurrection, a symbol of the Lithuanian national revival, was built in Kaunas but left unfinished because of the Soviet occupation. Soviet authorities converted this largest modernist basilica in the Baltic states to an electronics factory, but the tower of the church was a real symbol for the Lithuanians during all the decades of Soviet occupation.

The story of two Lithuanian capital cities legally ended in 1939, when the Soviets returned Vilnius to Lithuania and soon thereafter occupied the country. I say 'legally' because both cities shared a symbolic role of capital in the collective memory of the people. In terms of Lithuanian mentality it was only a new page of the same dramatic story. The decades of war, occupation and totalitarianism started in June 1940 and lasted until 1990.

Symbolic Places of the Lithuanian Capital Cities in Soviet Times

Lithuania returned to the historical capital in the dramatic moment of the beginning of World War II in September 1939. There were more reasons than the shortage of Post-Communist Transition time why the government of the then still independent state did not transfer the central administration to Vilnius. The main symbolic act of the Lithuanian government was the restoration of the Lithuanian University in Vilnius and the establishment of the Academy of Sciences.

In reality it was only after the end of the war that Vilnius became the capital of the Soviet Republic, and the principal administrative institutions, as well as the most important centers of culture and learning, gradually moved back there. When Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas was closed, two large schools of higher education–the Polytechnic Institute and the Medical Institute–were established. It showed the attitude of the Soviets towards the role of the two capital cities and the Soviet political line in Lithuania.

Vilnius was designed to combine the Lithuanian national sentiment with the role of the capital city of a Soviet Republic. The symbols of the distant past of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were not in much of a conflict with the Soviet ideology. Nevertheless, it was not possible to build any monuments for Lithuanian dukes and military leaders, and at the same time to expose the historical heritage of the old architecture. That heritage was just depersonalized.

The city was badly destroyed during the Soviet army offensive in the summer of 1944. It lost more than a half of its buildings in the old downtown. Social changes were even more severe: the Vilnius Jewish community was exterminated during the Nazi occupation; a crucial portion of the Polish population was deported to the east or was forced to 'repatriate' to Poland after 1945. What was left of the population of the old Vilnius

after these bombings, repatriations, and the Holocaust? Basically only a small handful of the old townspeople who had no real influence on the socialist way of life in a rapidly changing city. The new community of the Soviet capital city consisted of Russian-speaking war veterans and a growing wave of Lithuanians streaming in from the countryside. People from Kaunas sometimes say dismissively of Vilnius that it is only 'Kaunas plus villages' – because that is where most of its Lithuanian population originated. Perhaps that is why in contrast to the Estonians in Tallinn and the Latvians in Riga the Lithuanians in Vilnius are usually ignorant of the history and legends attached to the streets in which they live (Lieven, 1993, p. 12).

At the same time, the city of Kaunas was not damaged very much by the war. German troops did not defend the city and retreated without battle. The population itself suffered much more. The Jewish community was lost; the Lithuanian social and political elite took refuge in the West at the end of war or was deported to Siberia by the Soviets after the war. But in some crucial respects Kaunas retained a sizeable part of its citizenry; in spite of deportations, persecutions, and nationalization, it managed to preserve elements of an urban culture, and thereby always distinguished itself from the other cities of Lithuania during the time of Soviet totalitarianism (Aleksandravičius, 1999, p. 275).

The Soviet plan for Kaunas was to make it the main industrial city of Lithuania. It was successively implemented. On the other hand, the industrial development did not provide for a bigger number of migrants from the Soviet Union. Kaunas still was the mainly Lithuanian-speaking city with a barely hidden nationalistic background. As the former cultural life died out, the city shifted to become the most important forge of the technocratic intelligentsia in Lithuania. But even without any humanitiesoriented institutions of higher education the community was able to preserve the memory of the *provisional capital*. In Soviet times this title meant the independent Lithuanian state and was not in official use.

During the decades of Soviet occupation there were really two capital cities in the collective memory of the Lithuanians. The historical capital was again a Lithuanian city, but Lithuania itself was not an independent state at all. The construction of national monuments or the development of an urban plan according to the national imagination was impossible. At the same time the architects of Vilnius as well as Kaunas behaved extremely cautiously and defensively. City planning managed to avoid intervention in the historical parts of both cities. New industrial developments were pushed away from the historical centers. On the other hand, new suburban living spaces were constructed very fast. The jewels of Soviet life – cheap multistory apartment buildings – were built both in Vilnius and in Kaunas. Even under conditions of Soviet standardization local architects always tried to create something distinctive. The Lazdynai neighborhood in Vilnius was given the highest award in the Soviet Union – the Lenin Prize – for successful architectural planning. It may be that the symbolic capital and professionalism of the Lithuanian architects, recognized by the Soviet authorities, helped them to resist a deeper imposition of the totalitarian style.

The symbolic place for Lithuanians in Vilnius continued to be Cathedral Square and Castle. They became like a battlefield for the preservation of historical heritage and national symbols. It was a big achievement in defense of the Lithuanian symbolic site that the Soviets did not put any statue or monument here. The only thing they did was to blow up the Three Crosses Monument in 1951 and to remove the sculptures from the roof of the facade of the Cathedral.

After Soviet authorities nationalized the Vilnius Cathedral, it was turned into a gallery of national art and a concert hall. This helped the Lithuanians to preserve the symbolic content of the site and to dream about national monuments like the national leaders had done a half-century before. Though Soviet official identity was also reflected in the Vilnius urban landscape, it was mostly confined to the moderatesize sculptural monuments to

Lenin, General Cherniachovski, and the Lithuanian Bolshevik leader Kapsukas. It is now clear that those who worked on the city plans for Vilnius and Kaunas in Soviet times consciously eschewed totalitarian-style squares and huge buildings on the sites of symbolic significance for Lithuanians.

This was even more expressed in Kaunas. The main effort of the local community was to defend the buildings of the central administration of prewar independent Lithuania. The Presidential Palace, the Seimas (Parliament) Building, and the Prime Minister's Office Building were preserved. Only the Monument of Freedom was removed. It is very symptomatic that, in contradistinction to Vilnius, the historical heritage of medieval Kaunas, the Old Town, and the Castle ruins were never comparably important places in the Lithuanian collective memory. A much more important role was played by the buildings and sites of the pre-war provisional capital; in Soviet times these became the object of silent national pilgrimages.

The provisional capital city at that time became the symbol of an independent Lithuanian state, and the city least affected by Russification (every side street recalled the country's lost freedom). The spirit of resistance also manifested itself more strongly in Kaunas than elsewhere. Anti-Soviet disturbances in 1956 and especially in 1972 distinguished the city. For Lithuanians (and not for them alone), Kaunas will always remain the city where in spring 1972, in the name of freedom, 19-year-old Romas Kalanta burned himself to death. During the hippie and rock-music era, the main street of Kaunas *Laisvės alėja* (Freedom Avenue) was a kind of Mecca for free spirits, individualists, and nonconformists: even though this city of the Soviet industrial giant was 'closed' and officially inaccessible to foreigners, this fact in no way interfered with the influx of Western fashions.

The Catholic Church always has a strong position in the provisional capital. Its seminary, which was the only one in Lithuania at that time, and the other nationalistic forces which had not had much influence on Vilnius, also fostered the vitality

of traditions. The cathedral in Kaunas was attended more frequently, and *Vėlinės* (All Souls' Day, November 1) brought candlelight to the gravesites of historic Lithuanian activists (Aleksandravičius, 1999, p. 178). In this way Kaunas played a symbolic role in Lithuanian historical consciousness. This was generally accepted by the Vilnius Lithuanian community, too.

The nation lived through Soviet times as if it were in the waiting hall of liberty.

Passive resistance against official urban strategy was clear. Some national symbols were preserved hidden in the provisional capital. A strange form of Lithuanian identity was created under the Soviets in Vilnius. It became a real capital of the country, which really was not a state at all. The Lithuanian people lived and acted in the hope that they will live to see the dawn of a new era when Vilnius again will be the capital of a free Lithuania. It is not sensational news that the Sovietization of the urban landscape was not very deep. More unexpected was the fact that the main urban ideas of Vilnius development – the reconstruction of the Royal Palace and the creation of a so-called architectural hill on the right bank of the Neris River (today a new center of the capital city with a symbolic square of Europe) were in fact designed in the late seventies by Soviet Lithuanian authors. At the time when the first sketches of a vision of a new Vilnius center were published in the Lithuanian press by the architect Algimantas Nasvytis nobody imputed to that any symbolic load. That came 20 years later when the idea started to turn in reality.

Some alternative plans for Kaunas urban development were also created in the last decade of the Soviet period. In both cases they were not then implemented.

The day of freedom came in March 1990. But it took more than a couple of years to achieve some clarification of the tendencies of the post-soviet Lithuanian capital.

The Challenges of Freedom

National symbols in the urban landscapes of the two cities became even more important in the prelude to the revolutionary events. The issue of the historical heritage of Vilnius architecture was among those that revolutionized the Lithuanian society during the years from 1987 to 1990. First it took a sort of defensive form: national activists in Vilnius tried to stop some plans of the Soviet authorities to tear down one small building in the old part of downtown.

Anticommunist euphoria and the outbreak of nationalistic feelings was exposed in the case of the Soviet monuments. It started even before the declaration of Lithuania's independence, taking a radical form when Lithuanian extremists detonated a monument of the Victorious Soviet Army in Kryžkalnis (central Lithuania). The statues of Lenin, Marx, and Lithuanian communist activists disappeared from the streets and squares of the cities after the declaration of independence on March 11, 1990. The picture of the removal of Lenin's statue from Vilnius Lukiškių Square already became a trademark of the Baltic revolution. It was probably the most popular picture in papers all around the world highlighting the fall of the Soviet Empire.

The changes in the architecture and urban fabric of Vilnius became evident not all at once. The capital city, like the country in general, for some years suffered lot of difficulties in economic development. During the previous decades Vilnius, like Riga and Tallinn, was turned into an industrial capital. These cities were built up as part of an integrated Soviet economy, and its collapse had left them economically stranded. As Anatol Lieven observed, all three Baltic capitals were disproportionately large for the Baltic states. In his evaluation only Vilnius, with 592,000 people, *fit well enough into Lithuania, which has a population of some 3.7 million* (1993, p. 16). At the same time Tallinn made up almost a third of Estonia's population; in the Latvian case the

disproportion was even stronger: out of a population of 2.7 million almost one million lived in Riga.

During the first years of freedom the economical obstacles slowed down not only the implementation of old national plans but also introduced a chaos of legal regulations. In the same way it is clear that Vilnius as the capital city demonstrated the first signs of overcoming the crisis. Lithuania restored a highly centralized administration structure; therefore the capital city could profit from independence and a free market economy. During the last 10–12 years the biggest part (more than 50%) of national and foreign investment flowed to Vilnius. And this in a country where the population of the capital city comprises less than 20% of the country's total. This is possible not only for bureaucratic reasons, but also because the historical capital is so important for the national idea of the Lithuanians.

Undoubtedly the center of national symbols was the historical space around Vilnius Castle and the Cathedral. As the Lithuanian–American poet Tomas Venclova wrote in the pages of a newly popular Vilnius guide, 'the heart of the city is at the confluence of Neris and Vilnia rivers. It is also the heart of Lithuania, the place where the early Lithuanian state was built and grand dukes lived' (2004, p. 74). The revolutionary changes and the challenges of freedom first effected the return of statues, which were removed by the Soviet authorities from the roof of the Cathedral almost four decades ago. In 1989, before the proclamation of Lithuania's independence, the Three Crosses Monument was re-erected. Interestingly, today the crosses are taller by 1.8 meters than the originals designed by the architect Antanas Vivulskis (Antony Wiwulski) in 1916.

The next phase of the development of this space was the erection of the monument to the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas, the founder of Vilnius, in 1996. It was again the implementation of an old idea for that place. It was designed by the Lithuanian-American sculptor Vytautas Kašuba long before 1990. The public and professional debate about the placement of

this sculpture in this actual place continued for more than two years. Dozens of urban architects and sculptors participated in the process.

Some years later the other side of the Cathedral saw the erection of another monument, that to King Mindaugas, the founder of the Lithuanian state. In some respects these two monuments finished the implementation of the old visions of the Lithuanians.

Post-soviet conditions of city planning and the practice of legal restitution of private ownership have had a decisive role in the planning new symbolic spaces for Lithuania's capital city. After the collapse of the totalitarian regime, when the authorities had dictated to society where and what was to be constructed, nobody from the city planning department liked to behave in the same way. Freedom and privatization determined the opportunities to dream about the ambitious ideas of the new symbolic places, squares, and streets. Some years after the revolution a competition for the best artistic and architectural ideas for Lukiškių square (the one that had once held the torn-down statue of Lenin) was organized. It ended with no serious result. The important fact is that the square is in the neighborhood of Taurakalnis – the hill with the classical Soviet Trade Unions Building. This place was intended as the exact place for the National House in the dreams of the pioneers of Lithuania's national revival at the beginning of the twentieth century. Today there is some debate about the future of this urban complex.

Instead of implementing the old idea of National House on Taurakalnis as a symbol of the modern Lithuanian nation in Vilnius, it was decided to re-erect the Renaissance Grand Ducal Palace near the Cathedral. This idea also came from the last decade of the Soviet regime. It played a very important role in the period of the *Singing Revolution*. This decision has split Lithuanian society. The debate continues until now even as the reconstruction has taken on speed.

Vilnius as the most of the post-communist capital city of East Central Europe has been very much concerned about its modernity. The free market economy and the interests of new businesses provoked the rapid grow of hi-tech steel and glass buildings. The height and artistic value of them is now the topic of hot public debate. The new skyscrapers are mostly constructed on the right bank of the Neris River, in the space which was designed for a new center of Vilnius almost three decades ago. The only difference between the previous project and the current implementation is in the ideological and symbolic content that is to be put into it. Soviet architects saw a neutral urban development opportunity according to the fashion of the late sixties. Today a new steel and glass center symbolizes the European dimension of modern Lithuania. The central part of that development is the Square of Europe and the Prospect of Constitution. This is a demonstration of the potential of progress of a new member of European Union.

Lost in Transition

The different picture one could face in Lithuania's second city. *Lost in transition* – that would be the code name of Kaunas of the last 15 years. Post-communist transition had a dramatic impact on the provisional capital city. It is clear that in reality Kaunas as the capital of national sentiments and memorials of independence stepped down in 1990, at the moment Lithuania achieved its sovereignty with the capital in Vilnius. Kaunas is now losing its role as a memorial to independence, for real independence has been achieved. There is little need to talk about historic state rituals – they are all happening in the capital city of Vilnius.

A city has lost a little bit of population, which dropped down to less than 400,000. In case of mentality there are clear signs of a painful change of identity. For the people of Kaunas it is

hard to take in the lost importance. A centralized state budget privileged Vilnius during the last decade. The official attention for national symbols was concentrated in Vilnius. Even the most important monument of national revival – The Church of Resurrection lost the status of a national object. The whole financial burden of the reconstruction of the church, which is again open for its original function, has been left to the local taxpayers. Only the last few years showed some change in government policy.

With respect to preserving and renovating the government buildings of the prewar period a lot of work has been done. The Presidential Palace and the Offices of the Lithuanian Government were nicely restored with the financial support of the central authorities. The new memorial space is now open for the visitors. City planners for now have reached a decision about developing the empty space of the Nemunas River Island at the very center of the city. The vision is to construct a modern city hall, civic center, and a 12,000-seat Basketball Arena. Together with the final reconstruction of the Church of Resurrection this will perhaps create a new symbolic aisle connecting a view of the tower and the new civic center. In some respects this will symbolize a turn away from the identity of the provisional capital.

Kaunas is turning into a normal city with less officialdom and less bureaucratic pomposity. It is still the biggest university city with the largest number of students in Lithuania. It is still the capital of Lithuanian basketball, often dubbed the country's second religion. The search for a new identity will certainly take at least a few more years. Today one can view the losses sustained by Kaunas as being compensated for by popular plans to create a so-called Vilnius-Kaunas Dipolis, but the future of that will depend not only on the citizens of both cities, but much more on the will of the central government.

In lieu of a conclusion it is inspiringly interesting to quote a few words from the fresh issue of the internationally known *Kaunas in your pocket. Essential city guide 2005/2006*:

> Kaunas was once the temporary capital of Lithuania. Never know, might be again one day. Actually, there are plans to form Kaunas and Vilnius into one big city – a true Euro City. Then Kaunas will be the capital again, sort of... but it will probably be called Vilkaunius, or something. (Hey, that sounds cool. Remember where you saw it first.)[2]

Notes

1 During the centuries the capital of the multiethnic Grand Duchy of Lithuania was named in different languages *Wilno, Wilna, Vilnius*.

2 *Kaunas in your pocket. 2005/2006*.

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Emigration and the goals of Lithuania's foreign policy

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to convey a few messages. First of all, it aims to present a short overview of the historical role of Lithuanian emigrants in the period of the re-establishment of Lithuania as an independent state in the international arena. The principal issue, which so far has been insufficiently addressed by both historians and political scientists, and which should be the constant focus of Lithuanian foreign policy-makers, is the current situation of Lithuanian diaspora in Western countries, the emigrants' position in respect to their homeland and their eventual behaviour in the performance of the diplomacy mission at the community level. Taking into account the traditional examples identified by historians of the political behaviour of Lithuanians world-wide, and by analysing political trends in the USA, Great Britain and other countries – the destinations of Lithuanian immigrants, it is possible to paint a clearer picture of the expectations resulting from the relationship between diaspora and the interests of Lithuania's foreign policy.

Past experiences

Migration has become a characteristic feature of modern history. There are researchers tackling the problems of social history and comparative civilisation who consider the 20th century the century of emigrations and exile.[1] Although emigration has been

predetermined by a complex of economic, social and political factors, the effects of emigration and the formation of different national Diasporas in major Western states have always been key factors impacting international relations and diplomacy processes.

In the 19th–20th centuries, the processes of emigration, the resurrection of nations and the birth of national states in Central and Eastern Europe were closely interconnected and impacted one another. The French bourgeoisie revolution, the Napoleonic war campaign, uprisings in Poland and Lithuania, the Hungarian revolution, the Balkan wars, the establishment of Bulgarian and Romanian states – all these events were linked to the movement of political emigrants.

In the middle of the 19th century, the Big Emigration Wave from Poland and Lithuania, where anti-Russian uprisings were suppressed, moved to France. Throughout nearly the entire 19th century, Polish and Lithuanian immigrants were actively involved in French foreign policy, and vice versa in the fights for freedom in Poland and Lithuania, emigrants provided decisive support and contributed to self-awareness in the international setting, acting as an important political tool in negotiations with eventual partners.

From the beginning of the 20th century, the number of immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe in the USA began to rise dramatically. During the First World War, diaspora participants put a lot of effort into the welfare of their nations' resurrection to a new political life. It can be maintained that at that time, movements of Lithuanians in the U.S. as well as the active involvement of their leaders were among the key factors leading towards Lithuania's liberation. Although the U.S. was slow in recognising independent Lithuania of the 16th of February, the diplomatic support of Lithuanian nationals in immigration was of great importance.

These developments from the past have a rather vast historical record. Studies by Alfred Erich Senn, Eberhard Demm,

Alfonsas Eidintas, Raimundas Lopata and others have outlined key links between the birth of the modern Lithuanian State and the actions of emigrants. The scope and the tasks of this article do not allow a detailed study into the whole complex of historical records, therefore, it would be good to mention just a few of the most recent works which provide generalised picture of international policy and diplomacy at the beginning of the 20th century, and the key role of Lithuanian immigrants in these processes. The book *The Immigrant as Diplomat*[2] by an American historian Gary Hartman is of primary importance. It uses a coherent approach in disclosing the importance of emigration in the history of Lithuania as well as in the period of Lithuania's recognition as a young independent state. The author makes the point in revealing characteristics relevant to the actions of the Lithuanian diaspora as a result of the assumed national mission.

Attention should be drawn to yet another book,[3] whose author – a historian Juozas Skirius, takes a different approach to the problem in focus. Instead of analysing the identity of the emigrants and tracing their input in shaping the destiny of their homeland, he goes deep into the issues of U.S. policy towards the Baltic region.

The emigration factor involved in Lithuania's liberation processes includes scarce but politically active groups of Lithuanian emigrants in Western Europe. During the turbulence of the First World War, Switzerland was the best shelter and diplomatic base for the activists from Lithuania and other states. With respect to historical studies of the Lithuanian political movement in Switzerland, it is worth mentioning a book published a few years ago by diplomat Alfonsas Eidintas about Juozas Gabrys-Paršaitis – the most active figure in that political environment.[4] With these publications in mind, there can be no doubt that the foreign policy of the Republic of Lithuania was not only closely linked to emigration abroad but in most cases was a continuation of work that had commenced prior to the re-establishment of the state.

It must be also noted that during the First World War, participants in the Lithuanian national movement in Switzerland and France did not link their work to the expectations of the diaspora; nor did they take care of the future survival of the exiled community. Instead, they considered themselves to be the direct re-establishers of the Lithuanian state, who because of the international circumstances, had to carry out their mission in places where the destiny of post-war Europe was being shaped. E. Denim provides a clear illustration of such work in the biography of the mentioned J. Gabrys-Paršaitis. The author calls this active leader of the Lithuanian national movement a pioneer of proto-diplomacy, who was a frequent visitor in the chambers of Western states where serious decisions of international policy were made.[5]

Really, the 20th century challenged Lithuania with numerous trials through occupations, wars, repression and resistance movements. This dramatic historical period was entirely marked by the active presence of emigration and Lithuanian diaspora world-wide. Without them, we would not be able to comprehend the processes leading to the current situation.

Emigration: With and Without the State

While trying to identify the mission of Lithuanian diaspora in the arena of International relation of the mid International relation of the mid-20th century we are confronted with a very important factor. In the period of battles for independence and defence against foreign dangers, a country's approach towards emigrants was of one kind. When an independent state started targeting its own foreign policy goals, different challenges and expectations were associated with the emigrants abroad.

In the 20th century, the political leaders of the 1920's and 30's were very well aware of the importance of the role of the emigrant, and not only in the fulfilment of political goals or fighting

Poland in the conflict over the Vilnius region. The national political agenda of that time consciously emphasised the issue of regulating (if not supporting) emigration from Lithuania. The conception by Prof. Kazys Pakštas, advocating the significant role of Lithuanian colonies, was earning increasing popularity. Sometimes the emigration of impoverished Lithuanians to South America was clearly seen as a strategic hint at reducing social pressures.

Lithuanian authorities encouraged their countrymen in the USA to give their Assets back to the homeland, but this odyssey either resulted in numerous bankruptcies in independent Lithuania or nationalisation of the assets after the Soviet invasion. Another very important factor affected the relationship of Lithuanian foreign policy and American Lithuanians – the majority of Lithuanians in America were manual workers. Principles of socialism and communism gradually superseded national sentiments. The nationalistic ideas fostered by the autocratic Smetona regime formed a negative attitude among the leftist Lithuanians in the U.S., and communistic Lithuanians could hardly have been advocated of Lithuanian foreign policy in their relations with the U.S. Administration. On the other hand, historical records have not clearly formulated uniform opinion on this issue.

After independence was lost in 1940, the political importance emigrants once again increased. President Antanas Smetona while abroad, and later during his short stay in the U.S., attempted to formulate goals for the future which inevitably involved international relations. The outcome of the Second World War, however, did not provide Lithuania with the opportunity to exploit the benefits of victory over the fascist coalition. It would be better said that Lithuania was left hostage to the Soviets by the winners of this global conflict.

Long decades under Soviet occupation in particular distinguished the importance of Lithuanian diplomacy in the West. First of all, it had a symbolic mission of continuing the existence

of the occupied state. Stasys Lozoraitis, a standing chief of the diplomatic corps, maintained that Soviet occupation was the only factor evidencing the situation of the Lithuanian state to the world. Such an opinion meant that in the case certain motivations made the Soviets withdraw from Lithuania, the majority of the Western states would automatically recognise our sovereignty. Historians have prepared substantial works tackling the period of Lithuanian diplomacy after the Second World War. The recent study by Laurynas Jonušauskas, focusing on the Lithuanian diplomatic corps in exile, reveals the factors that predetermined not only the symbolic diplomatic representativeness of occupied Lithuania but also the context in which foreign policy guidelines of the re-established Lithuania were brought forward. Although the diplomatic corps of that day wasted a lot of time in tackling everyday material shortages and vying for competencies with the Chief Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK), at the same time, it made a considerable contribution to the common future visions fostered by political emigrants from the Central and Eastern European States under occupation or communist regime.

The conflict over Vilnius and the future relationship with Poland were certainly among the most serious problems of the inter-war Lithuania. It can be maintained that over several decades, the prospect of Polish and Lithuanian political dialogue was being fostered among emigrants.[7] A significant input to the elaboration and harmonisation of the conceptual future foreign policy between the two nations was made by Stasys Lozoraitis Sr, as well as his son and successor Stasys Lozoraitis Jr. They succeeded in finding appropriate dialogue partners on the Polish side. A breakthrough in the vision of Poland's future Eastern policy was achieved thanks to the immense efforts of Polish political emigrants united through the magazine *Kultura* – published in Paris – and its editor Jerzy Giedrojc. It can be said that the ability of the political structures in re-established independent Lithuania and those of post-communist Poland to

deal away with historical barriers, originally stemmed from emigration and came as a surprise to political observers and experts on international relations.

Liberation from Soviet oppression and the first steps of the independent state on the international scene were reinforced not only though symbols preserved by the diplomatic corps of the first Republic of Lithuania but also through the wide support of Lithuanians around the world. Up to this day, neither historians nor political scientists have properly estimated the contribution of the Lithuanian community abroad to the country's fight for freedom. On the other hand, the restored future vision of the Lithuanian state, foreign policy guidelines and membership in NATO, perceived as natural processes by most Lithuanians, is the merit of Lithuanian emigrants, in particular the Lithuanian community in the U.S., through their actions and relationship with their native land. The emigration factor promoted pro-American sentiments, and the U.S. was seen as a close neighbour by Lithuanian nationals.

Challenges of Lithuanian foreign policy: the old and new emigrants

The current lifestyle, disparities of globalisation and emigration from Lithuania, which has been on a rapid increase over the several years of economic developments are of vital importance, and as such influence, the targets of Lithuanian foreign policy. On the other hand, certain phenomena of the migration processes and characteristics of the newly established Lithuanian emigrants distinguish subtle parallels between domestic and foreign policy goals.

Today's concerns about the changing relationship between the new Lithuanian emigrant and their homeland are quiet reasonable. These concerns, however, are associated mainly with domestic policy and the prospects of economic and social

processes. We can, of course, support the opinion that all of this has no effect on foreign policy and that Lithuania's key strategic interests in the international arena should not depend upon such secondary circumstances as the great number of Lithuanian colonies in the USA, Great Britain or Spain. However, is it possible that when the economic integration of Lithuania is Western-oriented, the priorities of Lithuania's foreign policy are directed to the East? Apparently, such a situation is hardly plausible. The role of Lithuanian emigrants in the development of the country's foreign policy has been predetermined by several factors. First of all, the most efficiently organised and operating Lithuanian diaspora is situated in the U.S., a state with a strong influence in the arena of current international relations. In the period of liberation from the Soviet regime, the same as during the strengthening of Lithuania's positions on the political scene, Lithuanians in the U.S. have been and continue to be representatives of popular diplomacy or simply lobby groups. Lithuanian sentiments promoted throughout America make Lithuania more noticeable, natural, close and attractive. This time-tested mission, like the very community of American Lithuanians, should follow the same path. Lithuania's inability to exploit this situation would be a great failure and a fatal foreign policy mistake.

Today, certain expectations should be associated with Lithuanians in Great Britain, the number of which in recent years has become quite impressive contrary to their poorly-expressed sentiments for the motherland, perhaps with the exception of basketball. The core of British Lithuanians comprises new economic immigrants, the majority of which will remain illegal workers likely to escape open cultural and organisational contacts until Lithuania becomes a member of the European Union. The economic potential of this diaspora segment is very low, therefore, a more significant effect in the policy of their new place of residence has little credibility.

Old Lithuanian emigrants with rich experience in public works, well-organised and maintaining regular institutionalised

relations with the Lithuanian Seimas and national administration are rationally predictable. In the meantime, new Lithuanian emigrants, although much more numerous than post-war political emigrants, are still in the process of developing the principles of community coexistence and national relations with the homeland. These processes entail an important factor which should impose an obligation on Lithuania's foreign policymakers, relating to the changing legal situation in the immigration countries. The harmonisation of dual citizenship, information on newly-established emigrants, their involvement in discussions about Lithuania-related affairs and improvement of voting availability cannot progress without the approval of the Foreign Affairs Office.

Attention must be drawn to the current programme by U.S. President G. Bush for giving amnesty for illegal employees. Once implemented, this U.S. Administration policy will open new legalisation opportunities in the country where the majority of new Lithuanian emigrants established themselves a decade ago. It allows the assumption that once the newly-established post-Soviet emigrants are out in the open, they may partly restore the lost national self-esteem, drop the habit of concealing their cultural identity and establish more open and frequent contacts with Lithuania. Similar processes could be expected in Western Europe where the majority of Lithuanian nationals, far from their homeland, will gradually have to undergo legalisation procedures.

The destiny of diaspora is a concern of lithuania's policy

Besides the obvious fact that emigration issues are linked to foreign policy priorities, and foreign policy consequently affects the socio-economic prospects of the State, a few more issues should be mentioned. Anxiety over the future of Lithuanian diaspora

expressed by the political structures of our state also stems from economic and political interests. Lithuania's economic interests with respect to emigrants can be illustrated case in point by the Irish. Experts who have analysed Ireland's economic breakthrough have noticed that the success of the Irish in attracting global capital of Irish origin has been the key reason behind this phenomenon. Records reveal 35,000 Irish nationals who have moved or transferred their businesses to the Promised Land. The Lithuanian Government has made a few steps in this direction but these political attempts were far from becoming strategic priorities. In most cases, the emigrants are underestimated and promotion of the investment environment by means of national sentiments to this point has been very inefficient. Involvement of the emigrants in the social and economic progress of the state has potential for increase, first clue to membership in NATO. However, the leaders of Lithuania's foreign policy have to exploit the available resources to encourage their return to the motherland, at least through a virtual relationship.

Today, it is still too early to compare the economic capacities of the new emigrants from the post-Soviet period with those of the old layers of diaspora. But due to irregular and frequently seasonal migration, very close relations with relatives and a certain habit of moving funds earned abroad back to Lithuania, considerable financial injections into the current Lithuanian economy are already noticeable. It is a well-known fact that in the inter-war Lithuania, the amount of money sent by emigrants to their homeland accounted for almost one-tenth of the national budget of that time.[8] Contrary to the situation in the 1920's, today even the most general economic forecasts of the approximate amounts incoming from emigrants are not available, although these sources are certainly contributing to the economic phenomenon of the "Baltic tiger".

What changes is the Lithuanian administration likely to confront in this field? What aspects should be monitored? Policy experts claim that the decision by U.S. President Bush regarding

the amnesty of illegal workforce is by no means an expression of affection for immigrants. On one hand, terrorism fears lead to the increased control of migration flows. On the other hand, there are many legitimate voters among the twenty million Mexicans residing in the U.S. Support from immigrants is a top task of the Bush team.

Tens of millions of people work unlawfully in the U.S. of which at least 100,000 are Lithuanians. The prospect for legalisation seems very tempting for tens of thousands of Lithuanians employed in the care of the elderly, in repair work or in restaurants. At last, they will no longer be afraid of repression or deportation, and of course will have to pay taxes to the American treasury authorities. The remaining dollars will be allowed to be taken back to the homeland without any restrictions, and national authorities will have to adhere to the double-taxation treaty. What comes next? One assumption: migration back and forth will increase as there will be no apprehension that upon coming home, having violated visa regimen requirements, a migrant will be prevented from a subsequent departure overseas in search for work. Another assumption: a more balanced relationship between the newly established American Lithuanians and their homeland will be secured.

This consequently leads to consideration of the very important political circumstances that affect emigrant concerns about the destiny of their native land, as well as the prospects of Lithuania's foreign policy and the Lithuanian state as such. Lithuanians nationals who are living and working abroad certainly cannot be excluded from the discussions on furthering liberal democracy and promoting Wester orientation in our state. If radical anti-Western forces fail to destroy Lithuania's European integration, and if the prospects for legitimate work in Western Europe increase, it is quite conceivable that as early as this summer, many Lithuanians formerly illegally employed in Great Britain will visit Lithuania. Earlier they frequently dismissed the idea of coming home because of fears of being refused to

enter by British immigration services upon return. Unrestricted movement in Europe will also allow our citizens to escape the overly scrupulous formalities of our border officials. The question of how much money a pizza cook from London takes with him across the Western border of Lithuania will gradually become irrelevant. The traffic over this border will certainly become heavier, whereas displeasing procedures and large or small bribes will disappear over time.

There is, of course, a strong probability of Lithuanians streaming to the West in search of the easy money of their dreams, nevertheless, it can also be expected that such money making will entail its own weaknesses. However, citizens of Lithuania working worldwide, either virtually or factually, will increasingly become a common practise.

Let's consider the common points of migration and Lithuania's political life and whether foreign policy strategic leaders can completely ignore them. In my mind, there is a direct link. The decreasing number of voters and the changing social and intellectual patterns of the electorate have primarily originated from the outflow of several hundred thousand voters from Lithuania. More mobile earnest, braver, and sometimes cleverer Lithuanian nationals distance themselves from voting booths and leave a contrasting situation in the native land, with society splitting into two opposing groups, one of which embodies educated, well-off persons of upper social levels who have earned a better life through their intellectual abilities and hard work. The other group comprises individuals of lower social standing, tired of changes and failures, angered, disappointed and keen on social revenge rather than further progress.

I assume that emigration mostly undermines the formation of a Western oriented middle social class. In the years ahead, if ever, emigrants are not likely to leave for Russia in search of work. Therefore, the electorate in emigration can be expected to be a very important social support promoting liberal democracy in the homeland. Thus, Lithuania's governmental authorities

face the very important task of ensuring voting booths for Lithuanians in Western states, starting with the USA and Great Britain. Lithuania can enjoy the immense benefits of emigration; it does not focus on the numerous growing demands of customs officials.

* * *

If Lithuanian politics is able to properly balance international and domestic affairs, we can be sure of the increasing importance of the emigrant factor in foreign policy. Globalisation is spreading so fast that we can have no doubt about the mobility of the workforce (and the electorate as well). Lithuania's foreign policy and modern international relations in general face serious challenges stemming from this mobility as the essential feature of the new life style. Timely reaction and proper preparations for the future play the key role in this process.

1 Kavolis, V. A Vague Man and Historical Ambiguity. *Metmenys*, 1966, no. 12, p. 85.

2 Hartman, G. *The Immigrant as Diplomat: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Shaping of Lithuanian-American Community, 1870–1922*. Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Centre, 2002.

Guilt as Europe's Borderline

The attitude towards communist ideas and the crimes committed by communist dictators continues to be a great problem in the world, which is particularly relevant in the Europe which is in the process of creating a common home. There are some in society who adhere to the principles of social solidarity, and are loathe seeing the tragic consequences of attempts to bring the utopia of communism to life on earth. It turned out that it was impossible to do without the massacre millions of people.

The time that has passed since the downfall of the Soviet Union, which is responsible for the greatest crimes against humanity, only increases forgetfulness in the European consciousness. Communist crimes and the attempts of the public tribunal to expose those crimes is an important factor in forming that memory and reminding one not only of the bloody historical events of the 20th century but also of the brave attempts of those who have undertaken the mission of not allowing us to forget them. That is why victims at the various communist regimes, scientists and witnesses, investigators and public figures, speak about what must be entered into the book on the identity of the new Europe. It is not done in order that we can wade into this treacherous river of ideas once again but done so that the nations of the European Union can better understand one another. Today, different forms of moral sensitivity for those who have gone through different past traumas prove to be a major obstacle on the road to reconciliation and harmony.

The present identity of Europe can be understood according to a general understanding of space, the geopolitical history, collective memory, religion, traditions and signs, which are arranged together differently depending on the place and angle of the viewpoint. Cultural and historical memory, the knowledge of things of the past and the ways of recognising them on a plane of values – all of this undoubtedly work either for Europe or against it. Quite often great differences can be observed in the self-image of the old and the new members of the European Union. This does not relate only to the attitude towards crimes against humanity committed by the communist regimes.

Examples of understanding between the British, the French and the Germans in the older part of the European Union is encouragement for us to go deeper into identity differences of the new EU members which have joined the community and brought the traumas of the bloody experiments of Nazism and communism with them. The West has encountered only the crimes committed by the Nazis, which cannot be erased from the memory of millions of Europeans. In the 20th century, the countries of Eastern Europe (from Bulgaria to Estonia) suffered more complex traumas. They were subject to invasions carried out by both the Nazis and the Soviets.

The new members of the family of European states cannot judge perfectly how the crimes committed by Nazi Germany and those of the Soviet Union differed. The memory of Central Eastern Europe, as well as its coming to terms with its own history, is burdened by two circumstances. First, Westerners reluctantly accept the images of communist terror and mass killings which are a part of the identity of the new members of the European Union. The hammer and sickle against a red background is a symbol of the solidarity of the working masses rather than that of bloody crimes for them, at least for those on the left. One's own memory and communist ideals, which were not discredited at all, are closer to those of Westerners.

The second circumstance, which puts a burden on the memory and general condition of the nations of Central Eastern Europe that found themselves in the clutches of terror of the Nazis and the Soviets in the 20th century, is that the policy of memory of present-day Russia blocks' the path to such an understanding which has already been achieved by Western countries that were once in conflict during bloody wars. This is an understanding which starts with admitting one's guilt in front of one's neighbours, especially those who are weaker. Certain changes in the European consciousness were observed immediately after the downfall of the Soviet Union under the influence of a democratisation wave that followed. However, the doctrine of Putin's Russia has simply swept everything off the path through its strategic aspirations. The most illustrative example of this change is a new textbook on the history of Russia. Ex-President and the present Prime Minister Vladimir Putin himself took pains to make sure that the textbook was published.

For Europeans, the 20th century could have been associated with the various crimes of totalitarianism, which were Nazism and Bolshevik communism. It was not only during the world wars but also during the time of relative peace that more people were killed due to repressions in the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany than during all military conflicts that had occurred up to that time. The Second World War and the re-establishment of Western Europe that followed, and its trek towards prosperity and liberal democracy today gives food for thought, and also sets about a task to make sense of the experiences of Eastern European nations. What are the essential differences and the most important causes of these differences that draw the borders in Europe's understanding of itself?

Let us focus our attention on a few aspects. First of all, memory is what today is often referred to as the *policy of memory*. The books by scientists and collective memory researchers describing the change in the historical consciousness of Western Europeans during the course of half a century number in the

dozens. The Germans could become reconciled with the French only after they had jogged their memory and first of all discovered their own past sins, mistakes and faults. All this enabled the nations that adhered to Christian principles to reach out one's hand to another, and open the door for repentance and forgiveness. It is not a naive belief that feeling one's own guilt, as well as admitting it, is the cornerstone of the Christian tradition of Europeans. Even if one would observe the example of Anthony Giddens, we will say that *mechanisms of shame rather than those of guilt become most important* in the development of the modern social structure, there is still a feeling or hunch that remains that it is resoluteness, the intellectual strength and the moral imperative to speak about the guilt of one's own nation that create the condition for developing understanding in a space that is set to be our common home.

Is it not true that in official Russian history, suggestions are made to Russians to look only for the positive things of their Soviet heritage worth identifying with? The path where feelings of guilt and shame for the crimes committed could encroach upon their memory has been blocked. The films *Soviet Story* or *Katyn* by Andrzej Wajda do not suit this kind of memory. Neither does the European admission of guilt. This factor divides the space of reasoning of Europe into East and West. Or to be more exact – the boundaries of reasoning of Europe end where a Christian feeling of guilt disappears.

Analysts have already observed that the current Russian policy of memory is best reflected in a newly published history textbook. In it, a patriotic version of the great story is created, which covers the entire road of the Soviet Union from "the great historic triumph to the tragic downfall" and the first several years of sovereign Russia – this is what the pupils of this country are told. Its authors make a proposal not to compare the Soviet and Nazi regimes but rather compare the partisans of the Baltic countries and Ukraine who fought for their freedom with terrorists, explain what brought about the downfall of the USSR,

and complain that NATO has often ignored Russia's opinion "The Re-Writing of Russia's History Textbooks", www.delfi.lt, 12 August 2008).

However, the most important thing is that strategists of the Russian policy of memory continue imperial habits by putting positive achievements of the Soviet regime into the memory of Russian society and systematically cutting out hints of obvious crimes against their neighbours and against Russians themselves. Merits and imperial conquests naturally turn into objects of heritage and an honourable memory; however, the feeling of guilt is transferred to an abstract other. Attempts are made to elevate achievements, whereas crimes are left to be forgotten. What is most significant here is that this is done quite deliberately. The feeling of guilt is made to be a feeling that is foreign to today's Russian identity.

People say that this history textbook, which is a new document of collective memory, would have never been published had it not been for the personal effort of the former President and current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. Last year, the leader of Russia, with the end of his second term of office approaching, called together a group of teachers of history to discuss his vision of the past. He is said to have stated the following: "*We cannot allow anybody to impose a feeling of guilt on us*." It is here that the main features of mentality are revealed, which divide the East from the West. If reminding the world of their guilt and the significance of the free word are an indispensable factor for the Germans to look their neighbours in the eye, if the British authors can record mass air attacks and bombing of the German cities that had no any military importance during the Second World War as their own sins, then this attitude does not suit the Russians.

The words of the communist tribunal, as well as reminding the world of the communist crimes, is today more and more often transferred to the plane of moral sensitivity. Denazification in post-war Europe was carried out resolutely before the

wounds inflicted by the war had been healed and while the traumas of memory were still being suffered. At the time, there were no people who defended or justified Nazi crimes. Today, the denial of those crimes is understood as a crime in the law of many countries. To forget or deny can mean both a sin and a crime.

However, the suffering inflicted by communism is already far in the past. It is doubtful if there is a simple legal road that can be taken in these mines with statutes of limitation. There are hardly any criminals left that are alive, and soon there will not be any at all. If the victims are still alive, it means that they were small post-war children, and that most communist criminals have already died. The massacres and repressions were the work of adults. Therefore, I say that their trial and condemnation is transferred to a plane of morals and history. However, this does not reduce the importance of the task for the living.

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