REVIEW ESSAYS

ABOUT SOME DISSERTATIONS DEVOTED TO THE LITHUANIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT DEFENDED AT FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS¹

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Over the recent decades in Western Europe and the United States, more than one doctoral dissertation connected in one way or another with the subject of Lithuanian nationalism (the National Movement) has been defended². Some of these studies are important not only to foreign researchers who do not know the Lithuanian language, but also to Lithuanian scholars.

Some of these theses are serious academic studies, it is true, on fairly narrow topics.³ Perhaps the strongest work was produced and defended at Brandeis University⁴, by Nerijus Udrėnas, who analysed how the modern Lithuanian identity is emerging and changing⁵. It is based on the premise

¹ This article was printed in the Lithuanian language in: *Archivum Lituanicum* 14 (2012), pp. 373–392.

² N. Udrėnas, *Book, Bread, Cross, and Whip: the Construction of Lithuanian Identity in Imperial Russia*, Unpubl. Doctoral Dissertation (Brandeis University, 2000); V. Krapauskas, *Nationalism and Historiography: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Lithuanian Historicism* (Boulder, co.: 2000); L. Eriksonas, *National Heroes and National Identities: Scotland, Norway and Lithuania* (Brussels, 2004); A. Janužytė, *Historians as Nation State-Builders: the Formation of Lithuanian University 1904–1922*, academic dissertation, series: *Studies in European Societies and Politics: Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence* (Tampere, 2005) <<http://acta.uta.fi/pdf/951-44-6313-7.pdf>> [viewed on 19 June 2012]; C.J. Nikolajew, *Zum Zusammenhang zwischen nationaler Identitätsbildung und Katholischer Kirche in Litauen in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen, 2005 <http://tobias-lib.uni-tuebingen.de/volltexte/2005/2154/pdf/Dissertation_Christina-Nikolajew.pdf> [viewed on 19 June 2012]; V. Petronis, *Constructing Lithuania: Ethnic Mapping in Tsarist Russia, ca. 1800–1914*, *Södertöm Doctoral Dissertations*, 21 (Stockholm, 2007); T. Balkelis, *The Making of Modern Lithuania* (London and New York, 2009). Most of the authors spent part of their academic studies in Lithuania.

³ V. Petronis, *Constructing Lithuania*.

⁴ Incidentally at this university Šarūnas Liekis also defended his doctoral dissertation, which later received attention in the academic world, and was published in the English language: Š. Liekis, *A State within a State? Jewish autonomy in Lithuania 1918–1925* (Vilnius, 2003).

⁵ N. Udrėnas, *Book, Bread, Cross, and Whip*.

that moments of crisis (such as the 1863–1864 uprising, the events in 1893 in Kražiai when Catholics opposed the closure of a Catholic church, the 1905 revolution, and so on) best reflect the change in identity. The author shows that at the beginning of the 20th century the most important Lithuanian opponent ‘clarifying’ the national identity and fighting for national rights were the Poles. Recently, not only Lithuanian researchers, but also other scholars interested in Central and East European history, ever more frequently ‘discover’ the dissertation by Udrėnas and base their work on it. Unfortunately, it was not published, and researchers are forced to use the manuscript. Of course, it is unlikely it would be meaningful to publish it now, because in the last decade, many new works on the subject have appeared.

Nevertheless, some of these dissertations deserve not only words of praise. I will discuss two of them by Tomas Balkelis and Audronė Janužytė in greater detail. The first is important due to its broad themes; moreover, it has been published in Lithuanian. The second stands out for its extraordinary inconsistency and the lack of clarity of its object.

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The dissertation by Balkelis was published initially in English, and in 2011 a translation appeared in the Lithuanian language. One has to say that both versions of the book are written in fluent language. The Lithuanian translation is essentially identical to the English version. The author only omitted the discussion of Lithuanian historiography.

The book consists of seven chapters. The first presents the economic, social, political and cultural contexts of the Lithuanian National Movement. The second is devoted to the initial phase of the activities of the Lithuanian patriots. The third chapter deals with the relationship between intellectuals and peasants, the mobilisation of patriots in Vilnius. At the centre of the fourth is the 1905 revolution, with particular attention paid to the Great Seim of Vilnius. The fifth focuses on the debate about gender relations. The sixth chapter is about the post-revolutionary period, when intellectuals were mostly concerned with cultural activities. In the seventh, the author tries to determine what influence exile in Russia during the First World War had on the formation of the Lithuanian political elite.

CONCEPTUAL PROPOSITIONS In the context of Lithuanian historiography, Balkelis’ book is new. Unlike the frequently occurring factual or very narrow works in Lithuania, the book *The Making of Modern Lithuania* tries to provide a broader view of the Lithuanian National Movement (nationalism). Such an ambitious task should be welcomed. In the book, one can see several main subjects: the appearance of the Lithuanian secular patriotic intelligentsia and its views, the ‘delay’ of the idea of independ-

ence, and the spread of the national idea among the masses. Next I will take a closer look at the author's reasoning.

Balkelis believes that the emergence of patriotic intellectuals in an institutional sense is associated with Imperial Russian educational institutions in which Lithuanians became acquainted with different ideologies:

Thus for the members of the nascent Lithuanian intelligentsia, it was their direct exposure to the modern intellectual culture of Moscow, St Petersburg and Warsaw that imbued their restive student enthusiasm with modern ideas of nationalism, liberalism and socialism. Their subsequent disillusionment with the limited professional prospects that the Tsarist state had to offer to them gradually turned them into political activists. Having discovered their inferior position in the ethnic, social and political structure of Russia, some of them turned to the search of their ethnic identity, national homeland and its people (p. 12).

This, in principle, constructivistic interpretation is not entirely new, it has already been applied in Lithuanian historiography⁶. Of course, one might wonder whether or not these individuals had adopted these ideas prior to their studies in higher education schools. Moreover, one can find in historical literature testimonies stating that the future leaders of the national movement had decided to work for the benefit of the modern Lithuanian nation while still at grammar school⁷.

The book gives a lot of space to the views, activities, identification and similar questions of the secular intelligentsia. In Lithuanian historiography, dominated by primordialism, a different view, in principle, is to be welcomed; and such or a similar constructivistic interpretation, of course, can exist. Maybe it can to some extent explain the views of the secular intelligentsia; however, any observations about *part* of the patriotic intellectuals will always give only limited information about the national elite and its influence. In this case, one cannot understand why one of the most important groups in the Lithuanian National Movement, the Catholic clergy, is ignored. At the beginning of the book Balkelis notes:

This book is largely concerned with the secular intelligentsia, while the clerical elites are only occasionally discussed as contributors or opponents to the national movement (p. xviii).

However, he does not provide any arguments for this choice. One can surmise some of the author's reasoning: the interpretation of the birth of the patriotic intelligentsia, along with Lithuanian nationalism, provided in the book cannot possibly explain the active integration into the National Movement by some Catholic intellectuals. At times, Balkelis tries to

⁶ V. Sirutavičius, 'Vincas Kudirka's programme for modernizing society and the problems of forming a national intelligentsia', *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 5 (2000), pp. 99–112.

⁷ D. Mačiulis, 'Jonas Šliūpas ir lietuvių–latvių vienybės idėja', *Acta Humanitaria Universitatis Saulensis, Mokslo darbai*, 12 (2011), p. 83.

downplay the influence of the nationally conscious Lithuanian priests: he notes in several places that at the end of the 19th century the secular intelligentsia become national movement leaders, while the influence of priests decreased. In one place this change is dated 'from the 1890s' (p. 14), in another 'from the mid-1880s' (p. 28). Furthermore, the book states that the Catholic-oriented illegal Lithuanian press was primarily concerned with Catholic values rather than Lithuanisation. However, the numerous studies by Vilma Žaltauskaitė have shown that among the most important goals of these newspapers, especially *Tėvynės sargas*, were not only defending the Catholic Church against russification, but the spread of the ideas of modern Lithuanian nationalism in the Catholic rural community⁸. The elimination of clerical intellectuals from this study is difficult to understand, especially as the author himself acknowledges the dominant role of the group in the Lithuanian National Movement in 1906–1914 (pp. 85–103)⁹; but speaking of the practices of social disciplining, he relies on the press of other political currents, and not clerical. Likewise, writing about the debate on the role of women in the Lithuanian National Movement, he shows no interest in the publications of this ideological-political wing (pp. 69–84).

Balkelis considers the declarations by Lithuanian activists, or even of political parties, in which there is mention of the creation of an independent Lithuania as a 'utopian vision', and believes that for them it was most attractive to replace the autocratic regime with a federation together with other nations: 'The idea of full independence (as opposed to concepts of autonomy or federation) remained an utopian vision among the Lithuanian intelligentsia before World War I' (p. 31).

At another point it is emphasised that the Lithuanian Congress (Great Vilnius Seim), which marked the culmination of the National Movement in the 1905 revolution period, formulated a very moderate political programme, which provided for the political autonomy of Lithuania in the composition of the Russian Empire (p. 59). The author points out only a few cases when Lithuanian politicians raised the idea of an independent

⁸ V. Žaltauskaitė, 'Apie lietuvybės idėją kunigo Juozo Tumo-Vaižganto pažiūrose. Iki 1904 m.', *Lietuvių Atgimimo istorijos studijos* (hereafter – LAIS), t. 8: *Asmuo: tarp tautos ir valstybės* (Vilnius, 1996), pp. 248–260; eadem, 'Žinyčia – laikraštis apšviestiesiems Lietuviams', *Lituanistica*, 1998, nr. 1, pp. 19–29; eadem, *Lietuvos krikščioniškosios demokratijos genezė. XIX a. pab. – XX a. pr. Sociopolitinis aspektas*, doctoral dissertation summary (Vilnius, 2000), p. 24, eadem, 'Catholicism and Nationalism in the Views of the Younger Generation of Lithuanian Clergy in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 5 (2000), pp. 113–130; eadem, 'Dvasininkijos kartų konfliktas (Retorika ir turinys)', *Darbai ir dienos*, 28 (2001), pp. 243–253.

⁹ The press of that time wrote about the dominance of the Catholic-leaning periodicals over the secular: 'Apžvalga 1912–1913 m.', *Vilniaus kalendorius 1914 metams* (Vilnius, 1913), p. 112.

Lithuania, and relies on the memoirs of Kazys Grinius: 'in our committee of *varpininkai* the problem of independence was rarely discussed, nor was this question of importance in our annual meetings' (p. 31).

In this sense, the Lithuanians did not differ from the other non-dominant national groups:

In this respect, the Lithuanian elite did not differ from other oppositional groups in the Russian Empire for whom the idea of a federation of peoples replacing the autocratic institutions of empire was particularly attractive (p. 31).

Here, as in many other instances discussed in the book, the concepts of Western (and some current Russian) scholars stating that the Romanov Empire was not a 'prison of nations' as was often stated earlier are carried over; many people of other nationalities did not have any ideas of political separatism; and the idea of liberation from Russia actually appears only during the First World War. I will not discuss here whether such concepts do not have political implications. A decidedly more important question is to what extent such claims comply with the level of information in contemporary historiography?

One can start from a comparative perspective, on which Balkelis relied. Let us just look at the nearest neighbours of the Lithuanians. In fact, as far as can be judged from contemporary historiography, for the Latvian and Estonian national movements, even though due to the different political regime in the Baltic provinces they obtained their mass character much earlier than the Lithuanian movement, the idea of political independence there took root only during the First World War. 'Late' Belarusian nationalism did not raise the idea of an independent Belarus until the Great War.¹⁰ However, the Polish national movement had never 'forgotten' the idea of an independent state. Thus, really not all the national movements opposed to the empire formulated moderate political programmes.

When discussing the Lithuanian National Movement, it should be noted that some form of idea of an independent state was formulated as a political goal not only in the writings of politicians individual, but also in the party programs (in the programmes of the Lithuanian Democratic Party, as well as of the Social Democrats). The first to formulate such an idea was Jonas Šliupas in 1887 in the USA; in the first decade of its activities (up to the 1905 revolution), the idea of an independent Lithuania as an aspiration was continuously recorded by the Lithuanian Social Democrats in their various documents (the goal recorded in 1896 to link a liberated Lithuania and neighbouring states with federation ties weakened, and the desire for an independent democratic Republic of Lithuania kept growing

¹⁰ See E. Gimžauskas, *Baltarusių veiksnys formuojantis Lietuvos valstybei 1915–1923 m.* (Vilnius, 2003).

stronger¹¹). Later, this idea appeared in the pages of *Varpas*, and in the LDP programme it was written: 'A free Lithuania independent of other nations is the distant goal of our Lithuanian Democratic Party.'

Balkelis cannot completely deny the existence of an independent state as an objective of the National Movement in the Lithuanian political programmes, but he tries to downplay the phenomenon, invoking dubious arguments:

Its first political programme, drawn up by Višinskis, reflected the ideological confusion that prevailed in the party over its goals and major constituents. Although as its key aim the programme called for 'Lithuania, free and independent from other nations and states', its short-term goal was to secure 'Lithuanian autonomy within ethnographic borders' (p. 32).

It is difficult to understand why such a phrase means 'ideological confusion'. This political programme bears witness to the maturity of the party: both a long-term (independent country) and a short-term goal (autonomy in the composition of an empire) are formulated. The author tries to create the impression that the aspirations for autonomy and an independent state are like mutually exclusive political goals, although for 19th-century Lithuanian politicians they were component parts of one and the same coherent political programme. Simply put, autonomy was perceived as an 'intermediate end' or a step, which can be achieved under the existing political realities, and the creation of an independent state will come later, when a favourable situation develops. Which, by the way, would also be testified to by the resolution on autonomy adopted by the Lithuanian convention (Great Vilnius Seimas), which relied on historical (statehood) arguments¹² and numerous publications in the Lithuanian press:

In a word, our political ideal, an independent Lithuania, in roughly its ethnographic borders ruled by the residents themselves with a Seimas in Vilnius [...] If now from that aspect of this important moment we proclaim a demand for political autonomy for Lithuania, we are not saying that this is our ultimate goal, but think that the most convenient time has come for spreading this idea among the people, to fight for it, and that *today* we are not yet prepared to separate from the Russian state, but we can trust that now many can support the demand for autonomy, that this requirement is already ripe¹³.

Moreover, as Rimantas Miknys has aptly noted, the goal of an independent state and federation ties with other countries for Lithuanian politicians

¹¹ G. Mitrulevičius, 'Socialdemokratai Lietuvos valstybingumo (at)kūrimo idėjos atgimimo procese (XIX a. pabaiga – 1918 m.)', *Gairės*, 2008, no. 2, pp. 35–44.

¹² See E. Motieka, *Didysis Vilniaus Seimas* (Vilnius, 1996), p. 187.

¹³ Demokratas [Povilas Višinskis], 'Demokrato balsas', *Varpas*, 1905, no. 9–10, pp. 90–91.

at that time (and also from today's perspective) were not necessarily treated as incompatible. According to Miknys, at times, such as in the 1914 editions of *Varpas*, that vision of a federation with other states, according to its conception, is very similar to today's United Nations¹⁴.

The fact that Lithuanian politicians did not often consider this question or raise it publicly can be explained quite simply. Until the First World War there were no realistic possibilities for achieving independence, i.e. Russia's political regime was strong enough to handle both political separatism and the revolutionary movements. Being pragmatic people, the leaders of the Lithuanian National Movement discussed the issues that they hoped at the time to resolve. Again, the same perception of reality did not create preconditions to proclaim, say at a Lithuanian convention, that the goal of the national movement was the creation of an independent state. It is easy to understand that the public announcement of such a programme would have triggered off a strong reaction by the Imperial government, and many of those behind the initiative would have been placed behind bars. In other words, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Lithuanian politicians rarely discussed the question of creating an independent Lithuania, not because the goal was foreign to them, but because they took into account the real situation. The Lithuanian political movement which in fact promoted a moderate political programme, the Christian Democrats, as has already been mentioned, did not receive the author's attention.

One also has to discuss in detail the propositions of Balkelis that the Lithuanian National Movement became a mass movement only during the First World War, only when

according to Hroch, a national movement enters its final stage (Phase C of mass participation) when it attracts mass support and develops 'a firm organisational structure extending over the whole territory'. We may encounter the first manifestations of this during the war, none of them actually on Lithuanian soil (p. 105).

Balkelis, in fact, raises an important question: what influence did the intelligentsia have on the National Movement in Lithuania villages? But instead of analysing the abundant material on these events easily found in the archives, the author is content with a discussion on the different tactics of Lithuanian parties, some of their very limited ranks, or the inability to control the peasant movement during the time of the 1905 revolution.

The problem of the mobilisation of the masses, I think, is in fact relevant and deserves investigation. However, one can find an answer to the question raised about the influence of the intelligentsia on the revolutionary movement in Lithuania's countryside only after analysing how the actual incidents of unrest occurred, who led them, what actions the participants in this unrest took and what goals they sought. In addition, it is essential

¹⁴ R. Miknys, *Lietuvos demokratų partija 1902–1915 metais* (Vilnius, 1995), p. 139.

to analyse other forms of public activities of the populace, and see what influence the intelligentsia had: writing petitions, establishing Lithuanian schools, and the like.

Balkelis also emphasises that the intelligentsia raised national-cultural goals, but the peasants were most concerned with social and economic matters. It would be difficult to agree with both the first and the second statement. In the political programmes of the Social Democrats and the Democrats, in the newspaper publications, great attention was paid to the social and economic reorganisation of Lithuania. The goals of the peasants in 1905 could, in fact, be the subject of a separate detailed study, but one should begin with the fact that an almost universal feature of this movement was the expulsion of Russian civil servants and teachers, which is clear proof that the peasants had cultural and political goals.

Balkelis puts a lot of effort into downplaying the value of the Lithuanian convention (the Great Vilnius Seimas). This is understandable, because it still has to serve the same purpose, to prove that the proponents of the 'mass mobilisation argument' are wrong. What new ideas, compared to Egidijus Motieka's study¹⁵, will we learn from this monograph about the Lithuanian convention that took place at the end of 1905 in Vilnius? Balkelis discusses the statement by Motieka that 'the Lithuanian nation expressed its will already in the diet of 1905', it 'crowned the emergence of the modern Lithuanian nation' (p. 59). The author of the reviewed monograph draws readers' attention to these aspects: the name of the convention quickly began to change, in other words, the participants had to give the event more political importance; practically only ethnic Lithuanians assembled; a majority of the intellectuals came on their own initiative, while the peasants were usually elected; 'some of the major social groups of Lithuania, for instance, the Polish-Lithuanian landowners' were not represented, 'there were no formal democratic elections of its delegates in the Lithuanian provinces' (p. 59–60). In my opinion, here it was 'breaking into open doors'. I do not know if anyone in modern historiography has stated that this event should be regarded as a legitimate convention for all of Lithuania (no matter how that is to be understood). As far as I understand, Motieka, in the above quotation, is talking about the ethnic (ethnolinguistic) Lithuanian nation and the expression of its will. That is, Balkelis is trying to deny the arguments about the mobilisation of the masses by invoking formalistic legal arguments.

Meanwhile, in the years of the First World War, according to the author, the political project of modern Lithuania undoubtedly attracted massive support (p. 104), and the creation of the nation-state became possible because many nationally minded Lithuanians returned from exile in Russia (pp. 117, 124).

¹⁵ E. Motieka, *Didysis Vilniaus Seimas*.

In fact, even after carefully studying the material presented in the book by Balkelis, one can question the author's generalisations. In other words, the material presented in the monograph does not support the conclusions. Let us look at what data the author presents about the Lithuanian national movement during the First World War. In the chapter 'War, exile and Nation-building' there are many impressive-sounding theses about the great changes in the self-identification of the masses that occurred during the war:

Indeed, displacement forced the Lithuanian refugees to re-examine their relationships both with the empire and homeland. Their war experience bestowed on these concepts new meanings that otherwise could have been unthinkable [...] Both the collective nostalgia and the lukewarm reception that they received in Russia were key factors in shaping their responses to their new condition. However, political agitation by various political groups also played a crucial role in this process of self-identification (p. 109).

In order to draw conclusions about the mass support for the national project, as is known, one would have to analyse the mass sources, show how exile changed the relationship of ordinary people with Lithuanian nationalism, and so on. Meanwhile, the author used only a few primary sources, of which the most important are the memoirs of Martynas Yčas, who headed the Lithuanian society to assist victims of the war (in this section, Yčas is cited in about one third of the references!). It is not surprising that Yčas placed great significance on this society and its activities, and the author of the reviewed book has done the same. In this context, a very interesting idea of the author is stated in the concluding part of the monograph:

Yet this volume hardly offers any broad conclusions except perhaps a well-known critical suggestion that traditional linear narratives of nation-making as offered by nationalists themselves, which emphasize historical continuities, the role of nationalism as ideology and the political will of the people and their leaders, are hardly sustainable (p. 121).

Although the author declares war on a certain national narrative that formed a myth about the national movement, by frequently following Yčas he essentially does the same intellectual act, he tries to establish in the academic discourse one of the pictures created by the leaders of the Lithuanian National Movement. The nationalisation processes of Lithuanian refugees during the First World War are an important and so far hardly investigated subject. However, any study of this topic should not rely on a meagre basis of sources, as in this book, but on an as far as possible greater variety of materials. The information found in the book allows us to judge the actions of the Lithuanian political elite in trying to mobilise compatriots, but no study has been carried out to show *how the self-identification of these ordinary refugees changed*.

If we compare the information in the book about the mobilisation of the masses in the 1905 revolution and the First World War, I would say that we would not find any particular qualitative leap. In the chapter on the 1905 revolution, Balkelis mentions that the majority of the peasants coming to the convention were elected or appointed by rural communities: a total of about 2,000 representatives assembled; the rulings of both the convention and the Lithuanian Peasant Union created uncertainty in the countryside. Eventually, the author himself admits that this was 'the birth of an era of mass politics in Lithuania' (p. 68). Meanwhile, only 336 people, and most of them were intellectuals, attended the Seimas of Russia's Lithuanians in 1917. The author places great importance on the print run of the newspaper *Lietuvių balsas* (17,000), but in the book one can find information saying that it was not a special phenomenon in Lithuanian history at the beginning of the 20th century. Referring to K. Grinius, the monograph says that before the war the print runs of non-religious publications reached 13,000 to 15,000, which would account for only 21 per cent of all Lithuanian publications (p. 87). So it would follow that the total print runs of Lithuanian periodicals could have been about 70,000. In other words, prior to the war the elite had much better opportunities to communicate with the people.

Speaking about the First World War, it is unlikely that we could ignore the processes taking place in Lithuania. Many former refugees-intellectuals, in fact, returned from exile after 1918, and contributed to the creation of a nation-state, but many of the mentioned people (p. 117) prior to the war also participated actively in the Lithuanian national movement, so any particular influence of the war on their national self-awareness is doubtful.

In writing about refugees, there was also a certain manipulation of numbers. When writing about Lithuania during the war, the figure mentioned for the number of people voluntarily or forcibly leaving the country is more than half a million and is based on only one source, a book by Rapolas Skipitis, published in 1961 in Chicago (p. 104). A historian, it would seem, should make greater efforts in looking for sources or studies on such important phenomena affecting such masses of people. But there is another greater problem. The author himself admits that only about half of these deportees were Lithuanians. A large part of the people deported from Lithuania were Jews evicted from border regions on the orders of the Russian army¹⁶. Meanwhile, some of the statements by Balkelis may

¹⁶ S. Goldin, 'Deportatsia russkoi armiei evreev iz Kovenskoi i Kurlandskoi gubernii (aprel'–mai 1915 g.)', *Evrei v meniaiushchimsia mire. Materialy 5 mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii, Riga, 16–17 sentiabria 2003 g.*, ed. G. Branover, R. Ferber (Riga, 2005), pp. 260–265; idem, 'Russkoe komandovanie i evrei vo vremia Pervoi Mirovoi voyny: prichiny formirovaniia negativnogo stereotipa', *Mirovoi krizis 1917–1920 godov i sud'ba vostochnoevropetskogo evreistva*, ed. O.V. Budnitskii (Moscow, 2005), pp. 29–46. E. Lor, 'Novye dokumenty o rossiiskoi armii i evre-

create the impression that all of the half a million residents were ethnic Lithuanians, who became the object of the influence of the Lithuanian elite:

Yet the displacement of more than half a million Lithuanian refugees during the Great War provided a unique opportunity for the patriotic elite to mobilize them for the nationalist cause (p. 123–124).

The Lithuanian political elite did not have any possibilities directly, or even indirectly, to influence the attitudes of the absolute majority of the Jews.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BALKELIS' MONOGRAPH WITH EARLIER STUDIES At the beginning of the book Balkelis writes that he will not try to present all aspects of the Lithuanian National Movement, but will attempt to 'bring into the spotlight those features of the movement that earlier writers [...] had not sufficiently explored' (p. xvii). Probably, it is most difficult to believe this statement when reading Chapter V 'The Search for National Brides: The Intelligentsia and Women'. Not only the generalisations or observations, which we read in this chapter, but also the sources relied on, are not new: almost all of this information can already be found in two dissertations written a decade earlier by Dalia Marcinkevičienė and Nerijus Udrėnas¹⁷. However, such or a similar relationship with earlier studies by historians is noticed very frequently. We will discuss only some of them in greater detail.

Writing about russification, Balkelis mentions several Western authors (Edward C. Thaden, Hans Rogger, Raymond Pearson, Theodore R. Weeks, Andreas Kappeler), who have written on this subject in recent decades. In fact, the new interpretation of the Romanov empire's national policy, saying that the empire only at certain times and in regard to only certain non-dominant ethnic groups carried out an assimilation policy, are associated with most of these names. However, over the last decade, none of these historians (with the possible exception of T.R. Weeks) has published important works on the subject. Meanwhile, authors who in the last decade have published significant research relating to the imperial policy of the western edges of the empire (Leonid Gorizontov, Anna Komzolova, Alexei Miller, Mikhail Dolbilov, Henryk Głębocki)¹⁸, are not mentioned

iakh vo vremia Pervoi Mirovoi Voyny', *Vestnik Evreiskogo Universiteta*, 2003, № 8(26), pp. 245–68.

¹⁷ D. Marcinkevičienė, *Vedusiųjų visuomenė: Santuoka ir skyrybos Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje – XX amžiaus pradžioje* (Vilnius, 1999), pp. 100–118; N. Udrėnas, *Book, Bread, Cross, and Whip*, pp. 449–461.

¹⁸ L. Gorizontov, *Paradoksy imperskoj politiki: Poliaki v Rossii i Russkie v Pol'she* (Moscow, 1999); A. Miller, «Ukrainskii vopros» v politike vlastei i ruskom obshchestvennom mnenii (vtoraia polovina XIX veka) (St Petersburg, 2000); M. Dolbilov, 'Konstruirovanie obrazov miatezhha: Politika M.N. Murav'eva v Litovsko-Beloruskom krae v 1863–1865 gg. kak ob'ekt istoriko-antropologicheskogo

in the book by Balkelis. In this context, one is not surprised either by the circumstance that works by Lithuanian researchers in the last decade are also ignored¹⁹. Writing about the ban on traditional lettering in Lithuanian publications, Balkelis refers to works by Vytautas Merkys, Antanas Tyla and Witold Rodkiewicz. All of these authors have left a deep mark in the historical literature devoted to Russian national policies; referring to the results of their research, when writing about Russia's policies in respect to Lithuanians, is not only possible but also necessary. However, in this case, the references to the research by Merkys or Tyla, in my understanding, are incorrect. Here the author writes that 'the idea of the ban was introduced by Murav'ev, and the curator of the Vilna school district, I.P. Kornilov. They based their decision on the need to defend the Lithuanian-speaking peasants against a negative cultural influence of the Poles and to strengthen Russian civilization in the region' (p. 5). Here one can understand that the Lithuanian mentioned historians hold this view. In fact, imperial bureaucrats often argued that way for the changing of letters in Lithuanian script, but the Lithuanian historians mentioned consider such reasoning to be 'a smokescreen'. In their opinion, it is not important what the government of the empire said about its actions, it is important what it was doing, and in their opinion the goal of this policy was to russify the Lithuanians.

We will mention several more well-known studies that are well known in historiography which the author of the reviewed book 'forgets': writing about the temperance movement, the book by Egidijus Aleksandravičius 'is not seen'²⁰; in discussing the Catholic (clerical) current in the Lithuanian

analiza', *Actio nova 2000* (Moscow, 2000), pp. 338–408; idem, 'Kul'turnaia idioma vozrozhdeniia Rossii kak faktor imperskoi politiki v Severo-Zapadnom krae v 1863–1865 gg.', *Ab Imperio* (2001), No 1–2, pp. 227–68; A. Miller, *Zapadnye okrainy Rossiiskoi imperii* (Moscow, 2006); idem, 'Russification and the Bureaucratic Mind in the Russian Empire's Northwestern Region in the 1860s', *Kritika; Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 5/2, (2004), pp. 245–71; idem, 'The Russifying Bureaucrats' Vision of Catholicism: The Case of Northwestern krai after 1863', *Russia and Eastern Europe: applied 'imperiology'*, ed. A. Nowak (Warsaw, 2006), pp. 197–221; A. Komzolova, *Politika samodержavii v Severo-Zapadnom krae v epokhu Velikikh reform (1856–1866)* (Moscow, 2005); H. Głębocki, *Fatalna sprawa. Kwestia polska w rosyjskiej myśli politycznej (1856–1866)* (Kraków, 2000); idem, *Kresy Imperium. Szkice i materiały do dziejów polityki Rosji wobec peryferii (XVIII–XXI wiek)* (Kraków, 2006). We have mentioned here only a few of the most important works by these historians; moreover, we have included only those which were published before the appearance of the book in English by T. Balkelis.

¹⁹ A. Kulakauskas, *Kova už valstiečių sielas. Caro valdžia, Lietuvos visuomenė ir pradinis švietimas XIX a. viduryje* (Kaunas, 2000); *Raidžių draudimo metai*, comp. D. Staliūnas (Vilnius, 2004); D. Staliūnas, *Making Russians. Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863* (Amsterdam/New York, 2007).

²⁰ E. Aleksandravičius, *Blaivybė Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje* (Vilnius, 1990).

National Movement, the already mentioned studies by Vilma Žaltauskaitė are not noticed; in analysing the peripety of the activities of the Lithuanian National Democratic Party, the study by E. Motieka and Rimantas Miknys²¹ is not mentioned; in writing about the Social Democrats, the research by Arūnas Vyšniauskas and Gintaras Mitrulevičius²². This list could be expanded significantly further.

ARCHIVAL SOURCES At the beginning of the book, it is stated that the author will base his work on ‘primary material’ as well as ‘archival documents’. In fact, in some references, archival sources are mentioned (two times it is even based on material from the Russian State Historical Archive), but the archival sources used by Balkelis have long been known and are often cited by historians. Moreover, there is no uniform system of archival references, sometimes only the archive signature is given without the title of the document (p. 132), a tradition often followed by Western and Russian scholars; in other cases, next to the signature is the title of the document (e.g. p. 138), as archive documents are usually described by Lithuanian historians. Several of the archival references are surprising. How, for example, would it be possible to find a document from references by Balkelis ‘LVIA, f. 378’ or ‘LVIA, f. 389, l. 59’ (p. 138, 142)? It is unlikely that in this place one may suspect that there was a typographical error, because we find the same references in the English and the Lithuanian versions.

At first I could not understand how it happened that two archives in Lithuania, the Lithuanian State Historical Archives and the Lithuanian Central State Archives, were ‘hiding’ under the same acronym (LVIA). The reader’s search was exacerbated by the fact that in the translation of the Lithuanian book there is no list of sources used or historiography. Only after taking in one’s hands the English text by the author was the secret revealed: in it, the funds of these two archives are put together, i.e. as if they were one and the same archive²³. How could it happen that archives in different places in Vilnius, keeping documents from different periods, were placed ‘under one roof’? It is also interesting that in the list of sources in the English version many archival and manuscript library funds are listed

²¹ R. Miknys, E. Motieka, ‘Tautiškoji lietuvių demokratų partija: idėjinės-politinės kūrimosi aplinkybės’, *LAIS*, 1 (Vilnius, 1990), pp. 80–126.

²² A. Vyšniauskas, ‘Lietuvos socialdemokratijos politinė transformacija 1898 metais’, *LAIS*, 3: *Lietuvos valstybės idėja (XIX a. – XX a. pradžia)* (Vilnius, 1991), pp. 67–131; G. Mitrulevičius, ‘Socialdemokratai’.

²³ T. Balkelis, *The Making of Modern Lithuania* (London and New York, 2009), p. 153. One has to note that in the fund there are numbering errors. The Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Fund is shown as no. 38, but the correct no. is 383: <http://www.archyvai.lt/lt/fondai/pilnas_fondu_sarasas.html> [address visited on 14 March 2012].

which were never used in the book. Two different funds of the Russian State Historical Archives 821 (the Department for Spiritual Affairs of Other Religions) and 1405 (the Ministry of Justice) are written in a single line, and described as 'Materials relating to the ban on Lithuanian publications'. In fact, in one and the other archival fund there are documents relating to the prohibition of Lithuanian publications in the traditional lettering, but such naming confuses the reader, especially one who has not worked in the archive mentioned. I follow closely 19th-century research and the books by colleagues who have worked in these archives, but have never encountered the phenomena described here.

Some of the terms I would call terms-riddles: on p. 6 'Polish parish schools' are mentioned (it is unclear why they are called Polish); on p. 36 there is a mention that in the state schools after the 1863 uprising 'Orthodox curricula' were installed (one cannot understand what 'Orthodox curricula' are; the book often mentions the 'Polish-Lithuanian gentry' (p. 74, 79, 83), such a term might be suitable for a publicist text, but in academic literature one would like more accurate descriptions, especially in the light of both Polish and Lithuanian historiography in the last few decades; more than twice there is talk about the 'Church', and sometimes even the 'Polish Catholic church' or the 'Polish church in Lithuania' (pp. 87, 88, 123), although this is a reference to the Catholic clergy.

TERMINOLOGY. THE EMPIRICAL RELIABILITY OF THE MATERIALS PROVIDED IN THE BOOK In the work of a historian, the collection of empirical evidence, its verification, inspection and correct presentation, play a very important role. And in this regard, the reviewed book does not deserve praise.

On p. 8 it is stated that 'in Lithuania after 1863 there remained only three grammar schools – in Kaunas, Šiauliai and Vilnius' when, in fact, after 1863 up to 1905 in the three Lithuanian provinces there were many more such training institutions. In the Kaunas province there were two boys' state grammar schools (in Kaunas and Šiauliai), and two girls' state grammar schools (in Kaunas and Šiauliai). In the province of Vilnius there were two state boys' grammar schools (Vilnius I boys high school, Vilnius II boys' grammar school), and two state girls' grammar schools (Vilnius girls' grammar school, and Vilnius girls' St. Mary's Grammar school). In the Suwalki province, there was Suwalki state grammar school for boys, Suwalki state grammar school for girls, and the Marijampolė grammar school for boys.

On pp. 83–84, Balkelis writes:

The nation-building strategy to include all possible social groups as their potential supporters clashed with the need to find a specific group as its constituents. Thus,

despite the LDP's pledge to promote the interests of 'workers, farmers, small merchants, and craftsmen', it also tried to work among peasants. For this purpose they established the weekly *Lietuvos ūkininkas* [The Lithuanian Farmer] in 1905.

It would thus follow that Balkelis had not heard about *Ūkininkas*, the other newspaper besides *Varpas* that the *varpininkai* published in 1890–1905 that was directed at the peasants. On p. 46 it is affirmed that *Vilniaus žinios* 'gave a start to advertisement in the Lithuanian language', although we can find that advertisement already in *Aušra*. On p. 47, presenting the situation at *Vilniaus žinios*, it is affirmed that 'in 1904 Vileišis decided to replace the liberal editors fighting among themselves with others' although the newspaper began to be published only in December 1904. On p. 126 it is written:

The seventh LSDP congress (1907) called the party to 'expand its work among the Jewish workers', to 'publish party documents in the Jewish language' and to seek unification of Christian and Jewish workers' organisations. There is little evidence that these statements became anything more than revolutionary dreams of Lithuanian socialists.

From historical literature, we know that in 1906–1907 the LSDP had two publications in the Yiddish language: *Di arbiter shtime fun lite* and *Sotsialistishes flugblat*, and also distributed proclamations in the language during the elections to the Second Duma²⁴. On the very same page it is written that 'the Bund wanted the historical borders of 1792 and leaned to closer ties with Russia'. After reading this phrase, one can see that the Bund sought territorial autonomy of Lithuania with its 1792 (?) borders when it is well known that this party of Jews, like all other political groups 'on Jewish Street' gave priority to various exterritorial forms of national autonomy.

At times the book provides different information about one and the same phenomenon. On p. 45 it states that in 1905 the circulation of *Vilniaus žinios* was more than 5,000 copies, but on p. 55 that 'in 1905 its circulation grew to nearly 6,000.'

DOUBTFUL CLAIMS In addition to the empirical errors or inaccuracies in the reviewed book, we encounter questionable or unsubstantiated statements. We will mention only a few examples. On p. 51 it is written that after the 1905 revolution there was 'a deep socio-cultural schism' between the intelligentsia and the peasantry. On p. 68 it is asserted that the government noticed the increased influence of the LSDP and LPS in the years of the revolution that 'turned the fury of repression toward the left', when 'one could say that the Liberals and clerics did not suffer'. In my understanding, the main repressions of the government were directed

²⁴ E. Vidmantas, *Lietuvos darbininkų periodinė spauda 1895–1917* (Vilnius, 1979), pp. 63–64.

against the left before the revolution, during it and even later not due to their influence over the masses, but because of their programmatic goals and the radicalism of the methods used. Who should the autocratic government persecute more: the revolutionaries, using terrorist or other similar methods, or the conservative wing players advocating quiet cultural work? On p. 106 we read: 'From the first days of war, the American Lithuanians were split between catholics, nationalists and social democrats'. It follows then that until the war there was no political differentiation in the Lithuanian American community. On pp. 58–59 we read:

For many of the regionalists this also meant a personal tragedy: in the course of time, they would be forced to choose between Lithuanian (for example, Römer) or Polish nationalisms (Wróblewski, Rymkiewicz).

There is no doubt that the public figures mentioned here had to choose after the First World War, but they had to choose between two nation-states, Lithuania and Poland. It is difficult to guess on what basis the author argues that Wróblewski and Römer had to choose one of the nationalisms. Abundant studies of the *krajojcy* movement²⁵, as well as those on the activities and self-identification of these two personalities, have not revealed any essential changes in their identity in that period. One can call Römer a Lithuanian nationalist only if nationalism is understood in the civic sense, i.e. as a patriot of the Lithuanian state, but it does not appear that Balkelis understands the term nationalism with this meaning. From the numerous publications on Römer, let us cite only one generalisation by R. Miknys suitable to describe both the situation in those days and in part today's topical issues:

...considered himself a Pole of Lithuania in a linguistic cultural sense and a Lithuanian in the civic sense, he was and remains misunderstood by both sides.²⁶

Thus, this thesis is a not very successful attempt to adapt certain schemes to the history of Lithuania. The problem is that Balkelis, in creating historical works in this way, is not alone.

XXX

Audronė Janužytė prepared the work *Historians as nation-state builders: the Formation of Lithuanian University 1904–1922*. First of all, problems arise about the subject of the study. This book essentially has three parts (excluding the introductory section, which is essentially of a compilation nature): the first deals with the views of Petras Klimas and some other

²⁵ The work of R. Miknys, Jan Jurkiewiczzi, Juliusz Bardach, Jan Sawicki and others.

²⁶ Editor's introduction to Mykolas Römeris, *Lietuva. Studija apie lietuvų tautos atgimimą*, ed. R. Miknys (Vilnius, 2006), p. ix.

Lithuanian public figures at the beginning of the 20th century, the second describes the peripetia of the establishment of the university during the First World War and up to 1922, and the third presents aspects of the 'international' activities of the historians of the Lithuanian (from 1930 Vytautas Magnus) University in the interwar period. There is no clear logical sequence between these three chapters, it is not clear why the author chose these topics and placed them in one book.

The author's use of the term 'historians' raises doubts. It is given not only to those who study history at institutes of higher education or who work as professional historians, but basically to everyone who writes on historical topics (p. 39). Such a definition would perhaps be appropriate if this was an analysis of historiography, the politics of history, or the historical consciousness, but not this work, which is oriented towards a description of the concept of the state and an analysis of the activities of individual people.

Another criticism of the book from a conceptual point of view is related to the selected chronological frames of the research. The title of the book indicates that the author is interested in the period 1904 to 1922, but basically the period 1904 to 1914 is not analysed in the book at all. In addition, the last chapter is actually devoted to 1922–1940, which, by the way, can be clearly seen from the attachments at the end of the work (pp. 355–367). Such an imbalance between the title of the study (dissertation) and its content cannot be called a random or typographical error. Such discrepancies cannot simply be overlooked, so serious doubts arise not only about the author, but also about the competence of the work's supervisor or opponents, or perhaps it is just a lack of attentiveness.

The theoretical basis of the work raises doubts as well. The author, defining the theoretical framework for the study, discusses some concepts of well-known theorists of nationalism, among others, Anthony Smith and Ernest Gellner. The first is assigned to the ethnosymbolist group. The second is one of the most prominent modernists (i.e. researchers who emphasise that modern nations are 'invented/created', in other words, an effect of nationalism). Meanwhile, the definition of the nation provided by the author is nothing more than an obvious reflection of the primordialistic approach²⁷.

It is not clear why the author frequently compares the attitudes of historians, primarily Klimas, with the current insights of West European nationalism theorists. After all, in this case we are looking at writings with different purposes. The writings by Klimas and other figures in the Lithuanian National Movement, especially before 1918, had not so much

²⁷ 'By the term "nation" I refer to a group of people bound together by a common origin, language and culture, living in the ethnic territory, having a common past and consciousness and a common vision for the future and claiming the right to rule itself' (p. 51). The principle of a common origin is probably the best indicator of the primordialistic approach.

a scholarly research, but a political nature. In other words, Klimas and the others first of all sought to substantiate the rights of Lithuanians as a fully fledged nation, while Smith, or another researcher of nationalism, engaged in what can be called the analysis or deconstruction of what could be called the ideology (or ideologies) of nationalism, and therefore also the views of Klimas.

In the part of the book devoted to projects for the restoration of a university (chapters 2, 3, 4), one had to state clearly how the author's study differs from earlier works by historians, since there have already been many studies published on this topic²⁸.

I would also evaluate critically the last section (Between Nationalism and Internationalism: The Influence of the Universities of Eastern and Western Europe on the New University of Lithuania). There is an alternative formulated in the title of this chapter: between nationalism and 'internationalism'. It would appear that the author considers 'internationalism' as the cooperation of Lithuania scholars of history in particular with researchers from other countries. However, after reading this chapter, it remains unclear why studies at a foreign university, traineeships in Western universities, giving or attending lectures, and participation in the activities of international organisations should affect the thinking of historians in the direction of 'internationalism'. In general, this chapter is factual in nature, it describes who, when, where, and so on, attended schools, studied, worked, and so on, but there is no effort even to look for ideological influences, for example, what methodological innovations, perhaps even ideology, influenced these historians, how this encounter with scholars from other countries affected their world-view, the understanding of the object of the science of history, the scientific subject, the approach to various research methods, and so on.

There are also many minor problems in the work. The thesis begins with a historical introduction (pp. 11–37), which, as has already been mentioned, is of a compilation nature (for example, the period until the end of the 18th century is related from the book by Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė and Albinas Kuncevičius²⁹), whose meaning is difficult to understand, it is not clear what the need is for such information, of an encyclopedic nature, in a research work, in addition, vexatious mistakes occur.³⁰ In describing the situation in the 19th century, the author is also

²⁸ Č. Mančinskas, *Aukštasis mokslas Lietuvoje 1918–1940 metais* (Vilnius, 1996); I. Šenavičienė, A. Šenavičius, 'Universiteto organizavimo pradžia: Aukštieji (vakariniai) kursai', *Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas. Mokslas ir visuomenė 1922–2002* (Kaunas, 2002), pp. 74–84 and others.

²⁹ Z. Kiaupa, J. Kiaupienė, A. Kuncevičius, *Lietuvos istorija iki 1795* (Vilnius, 1998).

³⁰ On p. 12 it is written that the state of Lithuania was most likely created about 1340. This, apparently, is only a typographical error, because next to it it

often inaccurate, which, apparently, is related to the inadvertent reading of historical works. On p. 18, it is written that in 1840 the Russian government banned the use of the term 'Lithuania', but, in fact, the ban on this term was only in the titles of provinces, which, moreover, is clearly stated in the book by Egidijus Aleksandravičius and Antanas Kulakauskas *Carų valdžioje. XIX amžiaus Lietuva*³¹, which the author in this case mainly used. The author begins to correct the already mentioned periodisation for national movements scheme of Miroslav Hroch for the Lithuanians (pp. 20, 29); but, however, she does not know that for a long time Lithuanian historians have discussed the matter with Hroch. Here we have mentioned only a few problems of a similar nature, although there are many more in the work.

is stated that the creation of the state is associated with the name of Mindaugas, and the years of his reign are indicated.

³¹ A. Kulakauskas, 'Apie tautinio atgimimo sąvoką, tautinių sąjūdžių epochą ir lietuvių tautinį atgimimą', *LAIS*, t. 1: *Tautinės savimonės žadintojai: nuo asmens iki partijos* (Vilnius, 1990), pp. 132–142.