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THE POLISH NATIONAL PROJECT IN THE PROCESS OF THE REVIVAL OF THE LITHUANIAN NATION IN THE CONTEXT OF LITHUANIAN RESEARCH

ABSTRACT

The article shows that three phases can be identified in the process of the emergence of the modern Polish nation: 1) the post-partition phase, i.e., Romanticism, which was based on the tradition of noble identity (1795–1863); 2) the phase of redefinition of the Polish political nation towards a "triune" nature (1864–1869); 3) the phase of flourishing nationalism (1890–1918). Based on this thesis, the article uses analysis of Lithuanian historiography to show what influence the Polish national project had in each phase in the process of formation of a modern Lithuanian nation. The article concludes that the positive influence of the Polish national project, which also inspired other nations, is noticeable in the first two phases of the development of the modern nation. In the first phase, Polish Romanticism, a romantic version of the Polish nation, had the greatest impact on the crystallisation of the national-cultural interests of these societies, specifically on the production of distinguishing national-cultural features (books, publications on ethnographic themes, folklore, history etc.). The idea of the statehood of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, on which the Polish national project was based until the January Uprising, was very important for Lithuanians. After the January Uprising, when the dominant choice of the nation was based on the nationalist principle and political forces formed on this basis prevailed, the Polish national project rivalled the Lithuanian one. Tensions grew in the early twentieth century, when the Lithuanian national movement formed independent political objectives in relation to the Polish project. During the First World War, this led to open conflict between Lithuanians and Poles.

KEYWORDS:

modern Lithuanian nation, Lithuanian national movement, Polish national project, the statehood of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Lithuanian-Polish conflict

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The new project for reforming the Polish nation (especially the Constitution of 3 Mary 1791) that emerged during the Age of Enlightenment and in the late eighteenth century was instrumental in helping Poles to survive as a society. For Poland as a state, as a variant of an independent civilisation, this project was one of the fundamental factors that inspired its formation and revival. The same project also helped other modern nations in the territory of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, namely Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukrainian, to shape their own national consciousness.

Polish historiography[1] distinguishes three phases in the process of the formation of the modern Polish nation:

1. The post-partition phase: Romanticism – based on the tradition of noble identity (1795–1863)
2. The phase of redefinition of the Polish political nation towards a 'triune' nature (1864–1869)
3. The phase of flourishing nationalism (1890–1918)

What impact did the Polish national project have in each phase in the process of formation of the modern Lithuanian nation? This is the question that will be explored in this article.

1. THE POST-PARTITION PHASE: ROMANTICISM – BASED ON THE TRADITION OF NOBLE IDENTITY (1795–1863)

As both Polish and Lithuanian[2] historiographical research shows, in this period the Lithuanian national movement, like most other national

1 Tomasz Kizwalter, *O nowoczesności narodu. Przypadek Polski* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe: Semper, 1999), pp. 168–322; Andrzej Walicki, *Naród, nacjonalizm, patriotyzm. Prace wybrany*, vol. 1 (Kraków: Universitas, 2009), pp. 184–262, 263–339, 343–97; Timothy Snyder, *Rekonstrukcja narodów. Polska, Ukraina, Litwa i Białoruś 1569–1999* (Sejny: Pogranicza, 2006), pp. 13–75, 136–59 ff.

2 Egidijus Aleksandravičius, *Lietuvių atgimimo kultūra. Humanitarinių mokslų istorijos krypties habilituoto daktaro disertacijos tezės* (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 1994), pp. 3–18; Egidijus Aleksandravičius and Antanas Kulakauskas, *Pod władzą carów. Litwa w XIX wieku* (Kraków: Universitas, 2003), pp. 11–26, 163–217; Egidijus Aleksandravičius and Antanas Kulakauskas, 'Nuo amžių slenksčio: Naujausia Lietuvos XIX amžiaus istoriografija', *Darbai ir dienos*, 28 (2001), 3–27; Pranas Čepėnas, *Naujųjų laikų Lietuvos istorija*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Lituanus, 1992), pp. 263–27; *Historia Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, ed. Jerzy Kłoczowski, vol. 2 (Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, 2000), pp. 159–61; Mirosław Hroch, *Małe narody Europy. Perspektywa historyczna* (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich, 2003), pp. 35–36; Antanas Kulakauskas, 'Apie tautinio atgimimo sąvoką, tautinių sąjūdžių epochą ir lietuvių tautinį atgimimą', *Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos*, ed. by Egidijus Aleksandravičius and others, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Sietynas, 1990), pp. 132–42; Rimantas Miknys, 'Lietuvos Didžiosios kunigaikštystės valstybingumo tradicija lietuvių tautinio judėjimo politinėje programoje: teorinis ir praktinis aspektai', *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos tradicija ir tautiniai naratyvai* (Vilnius: Vilniaus universitetas, 2009), pp. 117–43; *Lietuvių nacionalinio išsivadavimo judėjimas: ligi 1904 metų*, ed. by Vytautas Merkys (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1987), pp. 71–82; Rimantas Miknys and Darius Staliūnas, 'The "Old" and "New" Lithuanians: Collective Identity Types in Lithuania at the Turn of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', in *Forgotten Pages in Baltic History. Diversity and Inclusion*, ed. by Martin Housden and David J. Smith (Amsterdam–New York: Rodopi, 2011), pp. 35–48; Jerzy Ochmański, *Litewski ruch narodowo-kulturalny w XIX wieku* (Białystok: Białostockie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1965), p. 202; Michał Römer, *Litwa. Studyum o odrodzeniu narodu litewskiego* (Lwów: Polskie Towarzystwo Nakładowe, 1908), pp. 1–75; Michał Römer, *Stosunki etnograficzno-kulturalne na Litwie* (Kraków: Krytyka, 1906), p. 20; Vincas Trumpa, *Lietuva XIX-tame amžiuje* (Chicago: AM & M Publications, 1989), pp. 7–61; Rimantas Vėbra, *Lietuvių tautinis atgimimas XIX amžiuje* (Kaunas: Šviesa, 1992), pp. 9–65, 17–45, 89–110, 143–62, 174–85.

movements in Central and Eastern Europe, was experiencing a cultural phase in which an active role was played by the former elites, i.e., representatives of the Lithuanian nobility. Meanwhile, before the abolition of serfdom in 1861, peasants – a fundamental part of society – essentially had no rights and privileges in the estate society and were the most culturally isolated and passive social group.

Despite not having access to elite culture, peasants managed – without conscious effort, through collective memory, customs, traditions and language – to preserve the treasures of their ethnic culture. Meanwhile, the majority of the local nobility, whose culture and political interests resulted in their voluntary Polonisation, ignored and even scorned the values of the Lithuanian people. By the second decade of the nineteenth century, however, influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment – spread thanks to Vilnius University – the educated elements of the nobility began to search for the roots of their national identity. These educated noble classes traced their origins to the medium and minor nobility, which had not cut ties with the countryside and were often bilingual (Polish and Lithuanian). It was this noble intelligentsia that became the main organiser of the first stage of the Lithuanian national revival. It is noted in historiography[3] that this class went from contempt for folk traditions and language to recognising, collecting, studying and exalting them. In 1822, university graduates from the Samogitian medium and minor nobility founded the Samogitian Students Society at Saint Petersburg University, fostering the organisation of cultural and educational activity, a contributing factor to the emergence of the so-called Samogitian nobility ethno-cultural movement (Simonas Daukantas (Szymon Dowkont), Dionizas Poška (Dionizy Poszka), Jurgis Pliateris (Jerzy Plater), Simonas Stanevičius (Szymon Staniewicz), Motiejus Valančius (Maciej Wołonczewski) et al.).[4] It was at this time that literature, religious writings, primers, service books, liturgical books and handbooks for daily use all began to be printed in Lithuanian and were read by the rural population as they became increasingly educated. It is worth noting that even in the late eighteenth century, Lithuanian language and folklore were of interest to European philologists. Specialists in Indo-European studies recognised Lithuanian as "one of the oldest Indo-European languages" (Antoine Meyer).[5] Yet this was not reflected in the self-image of most participants of the Samogitian noble ethnocultural movement, who still saw themselves as citizens of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In fact, most members of

3 Antanas Kulakauskas, 'Lietuvos bajorija ir lietuvių tautinis bei valstybinis atbudimas', *Literatūros teorijos ir ryšių problemos. Etnosocialinė ir kultūrinė situacija XIX a. Lietuvoje* (Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos instiuta,1989), pp. 9–24; Römer, *Litwa*, pp. 13–39; Römer, *Stosunki etnograficzno-kulturalne na Litwie*, p. 3; Aleksandravičius, *Lietuvių atgimimo kultūra*, pp. 10–37.

4 For more, see Egidijus Aleksandravičius, *Kultūrinis sąjūdis Lietuvoje 1831–1863 metais: organizaciniai kultūros ugdymo aspektai* (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1989), p. 135; Aleksandravičius, Kulakauskas, *Pod władzą carów*, pp. 45–48.

5 Antanas Salys, 'Prof. A. Meillet ir jo santykiai su Lietuva', *Naujoji Romuva*, 36 (1936).

the nobility called themselves "Lithuanians". Yet this was an ethnopolitical Lithuanianness rather than an ethnocultural one, or even more ethnolinguistic. It was based mainly on origin and history. The cultural assimilation (Polonisation) of the Lithuanian nobility took place not by coercion but voluntarily. Meanwhile, the objective of Lithuania's union with Poland – that was the aim of the Lithuanian nobility – was to retain statehood with Poland's participation. At least until the failure of the January Uprising, however, this did not mean abandoning the idea of the "old homeland" – the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). In this or another form, it was also expressed in the aspirations of the nineteenth-century uprisings against Russia.[6] Although most of the Lithuanian nobility were detached from the ethnic values and language, the cultural community of the GDL's nobility was clearly visible and distinct from that of the Polish nobility. For this reason, the Lithuanian nobility, although Polonised, was not a "foreign body" in the society of Lithuania, as prewar and Soviet historiography often claimed, but rather an organic part of it. As Michał Römer, one of the first scholars of the Lithuanian national movement, noted:

> The Lithuanian Polonised elements – the nobility and bourgeois Catholics – cannot be regarded as foreigners, newcomers, or still less colonists, like the German barons in Latvia or Estonia, because most of them 'historically grew out of' the same ethnic trunk as most of the country's inhabitants. Their 'Polishness' is the result of a historical process that affected the various social strata of the Lithuanian nation to unequal degrees, dividing the nation into various cultural groups.[7]

The proximity of the nobility to the people was demonstrated in the period of the November Uprising (1830–1831), when the peasants not only supported the nobility's efforts to rebuild the common state with the Polish Crown but also identified with it.

During the uprising, the rebels were familiar with the *Song of the Samogitians*, a folk song performed as a variant of *Dąbrowski's Mazurka*: "Poland is not yet lost as long as the Samogitians live! [...]".[8] It is worth emphasising that the Lithuanian version refers not to Poland but to Poles. Samogitian patriotism is not contradictory with a sense of unity with the Samogitians, Lithuanians and Poles. It is obvious that historical

6 For more, see Feliksas Sliesoriūnas, *1830 – 1831 m. Sukilimas Lietuvoje* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1974), pp. 394–416, 441; Egidijus Aleksandravičius, '1863 m. Sukilimas ir lietuvių nacionalinio judėjimo politinė programa', *XIX amžiaus profiliai* (Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 1993), pp. 95–100.

7 Römer, *Stosunki etnograficzno-kulturalne na Litwie*, p. 27.

8 For more, see Jan Jurkiewicz, '"Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła póki żmudzini żyją!" (Kilka uwag o Pieśni Żmudzinów z 1831 r.)', *Praeities baruose: skiriama akademikui Vytautui Merkiui 70-ies metų jubiliejaus proga*, ed. by Vytautas Merkys and Antanas Tyla (Vilnius: Žara, 1999), pp. 171–81; Dioniza Wawrzykowska-Wierciochowa, *Mazurek Dąbrowskiego. Dzieje polskiego hymnu narodowego*, 2nd edn (Warszawa: Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, 1982), pp. 160–61, 267–68.

tradition at the time, equally with religion and ethnicity, had major significance in the peasant-folk self-consciousness as well as that of the nobility. This phenomenon continued until the failure of the January Uprising.

After the uprising, the situation changed somewhat. In 1855, Eustachy and Konstanty Tyszkiewicz, Teodor Narbutt, Ludwik Jucewicz and others launched the Vilnius Archaeological Commission and Museum of Antiquity.[9] They did not know Lithuanian and were culturally closer to the folk ethnicity. They continued to publish Lithuanian and Belarusian books aimed at the people, although they used Polish when producing academic literature or books targeted at educated individuals. Even at this time, a certain connection was visible between the noble and democratic culture, Lithuanianness and Polishness, though their contents were different.

Daukantas and Narbutt thereby formed the basis for the concept of the "modern Lithuanian nation". Daukantas placed the nation – the Lithuanian-speaking peasantry – first, using the terms 'native' and 'foreign' to draw a contrast between 'Lithuanians' and 'Poles'. Both authors contributed to the disappearance of the idea of historical Lithuania as the notion of a completely new Lithuania began to form. Later ideologues, including Jonas Basanavičius, Jonas Šliūpas and Vincas Kudirkam, made use of these authors' texts, adopting and expanding their arguments.

The actions of Motiejus Valančius (Maciej Wołonczewski) brought about sociocultural activity among peasants. It is worth noting that the beginnings of his ministry fell in the period of the Church's revival, and his work was therefore a manifestation of this process. The Church's interest in the democratisation of society and the ensuing concern for internal pastoral work, education and the religious press, missions, jubilee actions, the 'neglected' peripheral non-noble classes of Catholics, met the needs of Lithuanian society at the time. As we know, it was then that the social and economic significance of the people, the Lithuanian peasantry, was growing. The idea of abolishing serfdom was becoming increasingly prevalent. To meet these needs, Valančius engaged in pastoral work and conducted reforms concerning administration of the diocese. Furthermore, he reformed the system of religious instruction of the people as well as the education system. He particularly emphasised so-called "Valančius schools" – parish schools that taught children to write and about religious truths. He also ensured that books were published that taught the people to understand the harmony between humans and nature.[10] The system of moral and religious education of the people also included Valančius's mass

9 For more, see *Kova dėl istorijos: Vilniaus senienų muziejus (1855-1915)*, ed. by Reda Griškaitė and Žygintas Būčys (Vilnius: Lietuvos nacionalinis muziejus, 2015).

10 Vytautas Merkys, *Motiejus Valančius: tarp katalikiškojo universalizmo ir tautiškumo* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1999), pp. 257–333.

sobriety movement, whose roots were in Western Europe.[11] The bishop and his subordinate priests managed to combine Catholic pastoral objectives with "the social and national expectations of the people".[12] Thanks to parish schools, illiteracy levels among the peasantry fell, thus peasants became more conscious members of society as well as a stronghold of Catholicism. On the other hand, the folk education organised with the participation of the Church and the spreading of universal moral norms among the faithful disrupted the social estate system, leading to the development of more democratic relations in society.

On the other hand, the anti-Catholic elements in this policy encouraged Valančius to focus the Church's attention not on the nobility and landowners as much as the lower social strata, on which hopes were pinned for Lithuania's societal development.

2. THE PHASE OF REDEFINITION OF THE POLISH POLITICAL NATION TOWARDS A "TRIUNE" NATURE (1864–1889)

The January Uprising, and especially its quelling, showed that attention to the lower social strata was the correct choice. Neither before the uprising nor after its failure did Bishop Valančius see himself as hostile to the historical Lithuanian nation and its political vision, namely Lithuania's union with Poland. In his view, Catholicism was a component of the culture of this "nation" – its spirituality.[13] Unable to operate legally after the failure of the uprising, Valančius embarked on clandestine pro-Lithuanian pastoral and cultural activity. He set up a secret Lithuanian press and wrote fictional works, religious-political pamphlets and religious books, which he published at his own cost within so-called Lithuania Minor (the territory belonging to Prussia, where in 1867–1869 alone around 19,000 Lithuanian books were published). He also founded the first book distribution organisation, which delivered press throughout so-called Lithuania Major and supported the formation of clandestine schools.[14]

The January Uprising is the last clear example of a situation in which the Lithuanian ethnic-cultural movement which emerged in the late 1820s and early 1830s as an essentially democratic movement adopted the form of noble culture and invoked the idea of rebuilding the former statehood of the "union"

11 Merkys, *Motiejus Valančius: tarp katalikiškojo universalizmo ir tautiškumo*, p. 336; Ieva Šenavičienė, 'Tautos budimas ir blaivybės sąjūdis', *Istorija*, 40 (1999), 3–11; Egidijus Aleksandravičius, *Blaivybė Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje* (Vilnius: Sietynas, 1990), pp. 7–125; Egidijus Aleksandravičius and Antanas Kulakauskas, *Carų valdžioje: Lietuva XIX amžiuje* (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1996), pp. 163–95, 308–18.

12 Merkys, *Motiejus Valančius: tarp katalikiškojo universalizmo ir tautiškumo*, pp. 777–78; Šenavičienė, 'Tautos budimas ir blaivybės sąjūdis', pp. 10–11.

13 Merkys, *Motiejus Valančius: tarp katalikiškojo universalizmo ir tautiškumo*, pp. 781–82.

14 Ibid., pp. 705–54, 783.

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It was an element of the common resistance of the former partners, signatories of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, against Russian rule.[15] Among the people, it was also known as "the Polish uprising" or "Polish war" because for the community at that time "Pole" was a synonym for a citizen of the union state.[16] The uprising contributed to awakening peasant civic awareness, since for the first time it was the result of the action of all social classes in Lithuania. As had been the case 30 years previously, however, it was headed by representatives of the nobility.

The union tradition of the former Commonwealth continued to dominate as its society was still seen as noble, albeit accepting of people from other classes. The slogans of political freedom were not alien to some of the peasants involved in the uprising, although the main factor leading them to participate was land, as was also the case with peasants from the Polish lands.

Following the abolition of serfdom in 1861 and the suppression of the January Uprising, the tsarist authorities took steps to isolate the nobility living in the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, nurturing ideas of rebuilding the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and detaching the nobility from the democratic movement (mainly Lithuanians and Belarusians), forcing them to feel subordinate to Russia. To this end, the Russian administration took ownership of all editions of the Lithuanian press printed in Russian script.[17]

In general terms, the post-Uprising period was characterised by efforts by the Lithuanian Polish-speaking elite to oppose the developing national movements – Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian. The intention was to prevent the people from being aware of civic traditions and understanding what the political nation of the former GDL was; it was also intended to 'push' them towards Russian statehood, giving them citizenship and pursuing Russification. Whereas a two-tier ethnic order had previously existed (peasants speaking Lithuanian or Belarusian and Polish-speaking elites), in the nineteenth century in the former lands of the GDL a three-tier system was formed (ethnic plebeian community – dominant nation or Polish-speaking elites – ruling nation or representatives of the Russian administrative apparatus). In these conditions, the ideologies of the dominant and ruling nation cancelled each other out. A new alternative emerged: a national, not civic, consciousness, and, with the passing years, reflection on ethnic distinctness.

15 Aleksandravičius, '1863 m. sukilimas ir lietuvių nacionalinio judėjimo programa', pp. 93–103.
16 For more, see Darius Staliūnas, *Savas ar svetimas paveldas? 1863–1864 m. sukilimas kaip lietuvių atminties vieta* (Vilnius: Mintis, 2008), pp. 14–15.
17 Darius Staliūnas, *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863* (Amsterdam–New York: Rodopi, 2007), pp. 299–301.

After the collapse of the January Uprising in Lithuania, the local clergy which headed the Lithuanian national revival movement held an analogous position to Bishop Valančius until 1883.[18] The reasons for this were both the movement's unique relationship with the government ("Power comes from God") and the discriminatory policy of the Russian authorities, particularly the ban it introduced on the use of Latin – and thus Lithuanian – script in printing. The clergy were opposed to forced Russification, especially the imposition of Orthodox Christianity, as were the nobility and the people. When the local nobility lost its previous role in society following the failure of the January Uprising, hopes increasingly began to be pinned on the peasantry for defending Lithuanianness. Such moods were characteristic of the generation of the "post-Valančius" clergy, which was actively engaged in the national movement. However, the Catholic Church, especially its authorities within the borders of Lithuania at the time, remained a Polish-speaking institution until 1890.[19]

Nevertheless, until the last decade of the nineteenth century, the position of the Polish language was very strong in the Church and in society in general. A reason for this was the status of Polish as the language of the upper classes. Furthermore, for a long time, for purely practical reasons, religious teaching of society took place in Polish, while most Catholic publications were also available in this language. It was seen as more pragmatic to teach in Polish than in Lithuanian, let alone Belarusian. This was also because of tradition and the incomparably higher social status of Polish. The campaign to spread Orthodox Christianity made it necessary to defend its position as the main language of the Catholic faith. The Church authorities, especially the leadership of seminaries, for some time also emphasised defending Polish as one of the ways of preserving Catholicism.[20]

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, the Lithuanian national movement began to be joined en masse by representatives of the first generation of lay Lithuanians of peasant origin who had completed or were completing their studies. The main representative of this new generation was Jonas Basanavičius (Jan Basanowicz), the founder of the newspaper *Aušra* (1883–1886). Basanavičius was also the main contributor to this publication, writing around 70 articles. These promoted ethnographic values (language, folklore, history) and supported the formation of a Lithuanian national consciousness. He presented the political-cultural perspectives of the modern Lithuanian nation that dominated in Lithuanians' everyday political life until the loss of

18 Merkys, *Motiejus Valančius. Tarp katalikiškojo universalizmo ir tautiškumo*, p. 781.
19 Vytautas Merkys, *Tautiniai santykiai Vilniaus vyskupijoje 1798–1918 m.* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2006), p. 450.
20 Merkys, *Tautiniai santykiai Vilniaus vyskupijoje 1798–1918* m., p. 451; *Krikščionybės Lietuvoje istorija*, ed. by Vytautas Ališauskas (Vilnius: Aidai, 2006), pp. 375–77; Algimantas Katilius, *Katalikų dvasininkų rengimas Seinų kunigų seminarijoje (XIX a.–XX a. pradžia)* (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 2009), pp. 35–39, 448–50.

statehood in 1940. Basanavičius's publications advanced the idea that not only the January Uprising but also Lithuania's historical union with Poland were errors and that all traditions of the union should be abandoned, especially the Polish language. At the same time, he expressed the hope that ending opposition to Russia would lead its authorities to end the ban on use of the Latin alphabet in the Lithuanian language. Basanavičius also expressed these views in the official Russian press, both before and after the launch of *Aušra*. His articles were published by periodicals including *Peterburgskie Vedomosti* and *Novoye Vremya* ("Po povodu polskich radostei", 1883; "Polyaki v Litve", 1883).[21] Basanavičius publicly accused Poles, the Polonised nobility, of the denationalisation and Polonisation of Lithuanian, while demonstrating to the Russian authorities the disadvantageous nature of the prohibition of the press. He proposed something of a compromise to Russia: Lithuania would abandon its traditional ties with Poland and become an obedient part of the Empire in exchange for the Russian authorities' consent to the development of Lithuanian ethnic culture stemming from the people. Basanavičius thus proved to be a proponent of a political orientation supporting the nascent Lithuanian nationalism, seeking to neutralise both Polish influences and efforts to stifle the traditions of any political separateness for Lithuania.

3. THE PHASE OF FLOURISHING NATIONALISM (1890–1918)

As the Lithuanian national movement developed, the Lithuanian and Polish languages, which had hitherto operated on different levels, began to compete and, therefore, to influence specific entities which faced the choice of which of the modern nations – Polish or Lithuanian – better suited them.

Antanas Baranauskas (Antoni Baranowski), born near Anykščiai (Onikszty) and of peasant origin, was inspired in his youth by the beauty of Lithuania's nature described in Adam Mickiewicz's epic poem *Pan Tadeusz* (*Sir Thaddeus*). This led him to produce a similar work, *Anykščių šilelis* (*The Forest of Anykščiai*), demonstrating the remarkable possibilities offered by the Lithuanian language. Yet the priestly career he had chosen (he became the bishop of Sejny) influenced his views – he began to distance himself from the Lithuanian national movement as it caused a split in the previously common Catholic front.[22]

21 For more, see Rimantas Miknys, 'Jonas Basanavičius', *VLE.LT*, [n.d.] <https://www.vle.lt/straipsnis/jonas-basanavicius/> [accessed onon 11 November 2023]; 'Basanavičius', *šaltiniai.info*, [n.d.] <http://www.xn--altiniai-4wb.info/index/details/1035> [accessed on 11 November 2023]; Algirdas Grigaravičius, *Atsiskyrėlis iš Suvalkijos. Jono Basanavičiaus gyvenimas ir darbai. II dalis*. Žodis *ir veiksmas* (Vilnius: Naujosios Romuvos fondas, 2019), pp. 12–96.

22 For more, see Paulius Subačius, *Antanas Baranauskas. Gyvenimo tekstai ir tekstas gyvenimui* (Vilnius: Aidai, 2010); Regina Mikšytė, *Antanas Baranauskas* (Vilnius: Šviesa, 1993).

Conversely, many of the Polonised leaders of the Lithuanian national movement chose Lithuanianness only during their studies. Examples include the Biržiškos brothers, who came from the Samogitian medium nobility, and Vincas Kudirka, who was of peasant origins and was influenced by Polish ideas almost until the end of his medical studies at the University of Warsaw. Yet he later became one of the most famous leaders and the ideologue of the Lithuanian national movement, and he later authored the music and words of the Lithuanian national anthem *Lietuva tėvynė mūsų*, a paraphrase of Mickiewicz's words.

In 1889–1905, the circles at the forefront of the national movement, grouped around the magazine *Varpas*, began to discern the negative effects of the Polish-Lithuanian Union for the statehood of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania even more plainly than *Aušra*, recognising the ties with Poland as the reason for the loss of the GDL's statehood. On this basis, they constructed a division in the national movement between "native" and "foreign". An issue of *Varpas* from 1902 stated bluntly: "This union pushed Lithuania onto new tracks, engendering new cultural and political conditions in which freedom and actions were disrupted and hindered. Before unification with the Poles, Lithuanians defended what was pleasant for them, and next they should have defended what was foreign and unpleasant for them. At this time, the political conditions have changed; Poles, leading Lithuanians on the path of progress, were themselves denied freedom, and such a fate fell to the Lithuanians".[23]

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Lithuanian national movement became politicised. An important moment in this process was the formation of the first political party, the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (LPS), and compilation of its programme in 1896. The first and most important point of this document defined the future statehood of Lithuania, clearly based on a version of the former 'union' statehood of the GDL. This point of the programme enshrined a reference to an "Independent Federative Republic consisting of a voluntarily united Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine".[24] The LSDP's 1896 programme shows distinct traces of the old state thinking, which reached the Lithuanian Social Democrats Party from the nobility throughout the times of the November and January uprisings. The main authors of the programme were two activists of noble origins, Andrius Domaševičius and Alfons Morawski.

Meanwhile, the Democratic Party of Lithuanians (from 1905 the Lithuanian Democratic Party, LPD), founded in 1902 among the *Varpas* community, made radical changes in its programme to the direction of the political aspirations of the Lithuanian national movement. The party's programme

23 Š-s, 'Šis-tas apie uniją su lenkais', *Varpas*, 2 (1902), p. 28.
24 *Programas Lietuviškos social-demokratiškos partijos* ([Tilžė] 1896), pp. 8–9.

from 1902 referred to a goal of independence within the borders of ethnic Lithuania. It stated: "[...] In saying 'Lithuania' to Lithuanians, we are striving to establish a practical system for our nation in which Lithuanians can govern themselves, without being subordinate to foreigners, and their cultural growth will not be restricted. This can happen only after Lithuania has regained complete autonomy, independent from foreign nations *within its ethnographic borders* [my emphasis]".[25]

As the core of the political movement's programme, this programme was cited in the Resolution on the autonomy of Lithuania within its ethnographic borders, issued by the Great Seimas of Vilnius in 1905.

It is worth noting that between 1906 and 1905, the official Russian policy leaders attempted, following the principle of "divide and rule", firstly to deepen the cultural divide between Lithuanians and Poles, and secondly to give more protection to the national and cultural activity of the weaker Lithuanians. They treated the former GDL as a long-held Russian territory (*iskonno ruskije ziemli*) and were therefore interested in supporting the conflict between Lithuanians and Poles to make it easier to pursue plans of Russification and colonisation. Essentially, the tsarist authorities were favourable to the national-cultural activity of the Lithuanian right (activists from the nationalist and Christian democrat community), wishing to support it as a counterbalance to the Poles. They regarded Poles as Russia's biggest enemies in Lithuania given their links with Poland, which might in future stake a claim to Lithuania. The Russian authorities' policy corresponded with ethnic Lithuania's plans for Russification, including Orthodox colonisation implemented through the "Peasant Bank". The links created between Russianness and Orthodox Christianity were to be targeted against Lithuanians as well as their favoured Christian and national democrats. A group of Lithuanian right-wing political forces, characterised by an openly anti-Polish approach and seeking to bolster the Lithuanian cultural position, pursued this policy in an attempt to show loyalty, not hostility, to the tsarist authorities. The left wing of the Lithuanian national movement (democrats, social democrats) was strongly opposed and critical of what it saw as damaging tactics from the right wing and did not abandon its objective of forming a civic and democratic society in the territory of ethnic Lithuania.[26] The change in the sociopolitical situation established an open confrontation between the Lithuanians and Poles. In the press and churches, a struggle for the Polishness or Lithuanianness of Vilnius began. The words of Ludwik Abramowicz, a participant in this conflict, reveal how bitter and uncompromising it was: "Without Jews and Russians, Vilna

25 "Programas Lietuvių demokratų partijos (projektas)", *Varpas*, 12 (1902), p. 258.
26 For more, see Rimantas Miknys, *Lietuvos demokratų partija 1902–1915 metais* Series 'Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos', vol. 10 (Vilnius: A. Varno personalinė įmonė, 1995), pp. 150–53.

is a purely Polish city [...]. Lithuanians want to see Vilna in the centre of their homeland and cannot reconcile themselves with the changes that time has brought [...] would it not be better, rather than platitudes, to collect statistical materials on Poles in Lithuania. After all, these numbers say a great deal [...]".[27] A characteristic response to such observations from the Lithuanian side was given by the thoughts of the famous Lithuanian activist Antanas Smetona:

> Vilnius is the centre of life of the Lithuanians, so much that it can be a centre of life for the Belarusians. We will not fight with the Belarusians for Vilnius; we can fit in there together as we do not have aggressive intentions, unlike some others. The Poles are a different matter: they were and are aggressors. They cast Lithuanian out of the churches, and when Lithuanians demand church services in their own language, they call them chauvinists and imperialists.[28]

Vilnius, Smetona argued, was above all heritage demonstrating the tradition of Lithuanian statehood. "Vilnius is a dear reminder of our fabled past and heritage. Each bygone monument, each hill sadly reminds us of whose it was [...]".[29] Until the First World War, in both official (the Russian Duma) and unofficial circles (freemasons – the Grand Orient of Russia's Peoples), Lithuanian politicians stuck to the statehood project of ethnic Lithuania.[30]

During the First World War, leading politicians of the Lithuanian national movement ultimately abandoned plans to recreate the statehood tradition of the GDL, and thus also of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in discussions with not Belarusians but Poles. The countries' leaders found the ties between Lithuania and Poland envisaged in the GDL statehood tradition to be particularly dangerous due to their cultural proximity, which was expressed in the GDL version of Polish civilisation and complicated the setting of boundaries between "native" and "foreign", as was so important for shaping a new national identity. The vehicle ("Trojan horse") for this proximity in the emerging modern society of Lithuania – or rather Lithuanian society – was the Polonised nobility, Polonised cities, and the Church, which retained very close connections with Polishness. This closeness endangered the foundations of the Lithuanianness of the nascent society, hence the attempts to thwart this tendency to avoid rebuilding the state ties between Poland and Lithuania.

These efforts are conveyed most succinctly by the "memorandum" battle waged in 1916–1917 between "Poles in Lithuania" and Lithuanians,

27 Ludwik Abramowicz, 'Wolne glosy w sprawie litewskiej', *Kwestya litewska w prasie polskiej* (Warszawa, 1905), pp. 47–48.
28 Antanas Smetona, *Rinktiniai raštai*, 2nd edn (Kaunas: Menta, 1990), p. 325.
29 Antanas Smetona, 'Vilnius – Lietuvos širdis', *Viltis*, programme issue (1907), 3–4.
30 Miknys, *Lietuvos demokratų partija 1902–1915 metais*, pp. 164–67.

who competed to send these documents to the German authorities. One example is "Memorandum 44" (from 25 May 1917), addressed to Georg von Hertling, Chancellor of the German Empire, which justified the domination of the Polish element, associated with the former elites of Lithuania, in the country's culture, economy and politics, and requested that Lithuania and Poland be combined into one state.[31] A small group of Lithuanian politicians headed by Smetona hit back with its own memorandum of 10 July 1917, also addressed to Hertling, refuting the claims made in the Polish one and arguing that the Lithuanian element was capable of creating a social organism without the participation of the former Polonised elites and exposing their aggressive intentions: "[...] Lithuanians do not mimic the predatory Polish policy; on the contrary, they have no aspiration to reclaim the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania; they do not wish for the entirety of this territory, which is currently occupied by the Germans. The Lithuanians do not encroach either on the area densely populated by Poles, or that inhabited by Belarusians".[32]

CONCLUSIONS

1. The positive influence of the Polish national project, which inspired other nations, can be discerned in the first two phases of development of the modern nation. In the first phase, it was Polish Romanticism, a romantic version of the Polish nation, that had the greatest impact on the crystallisation of the na tional-cultural interests of these societies, and specifically on the production of national-cultural distinguishing features (books, publications on ethnographic themes, folklore, history etc.). Very important for Lithuanians was the idea of the statehood of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, upon which the project of the Polish nation was based until the January Uprising.
2. After the January Uprising, when the nation based on the nationalist principle became the dominant choice and the political forces professing this principle prevailed, the Polish national project competed with the Lithuanian one.
3. Tensions grew in the early twentieth century, when the Lithuanian national movement formed independent political objectives in relation to the Polish project. Durin g the First World War, this led to open conflict between Lithuanians and Poles.

31 Petras Klimas, *Iš mano atsiminimų* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Biblijos draugija, 1990), pp. 93, 96.
32 Klimas, *Iš mano atsiminimų*, pp. 139–47.

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