

HISTORIANS' DISCUSSION ON NATIONALISM IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

This paper, extensively employs articles and studies by Lithuanian historians of the period that are regarded as a heritage of Lithuanian historiography, examines the national ideas and concepts of Lithuanian historians and concentrates on Lithuanian-Polish discussion on questions such as: How they understood nationalism? How they analysed and evaluated political programs for the re-establishment of statehood of Lithuania, i.e. for political autonomy of Lithuania and for Polish-Lithuanian federal state? What kind of arguments they used against the Polish territorial claims toward Vilnius and its district? What are the main features of Klimas' concept of nationalism?

KEY WORDS: nationalism, history of Lithuania and Poland, early years of the 20th C., Lithuanian historiography, national ideas, Vilnius district problem, Polish territorial claims.

ANOTACIJA

XX a. pradžioje nacionalizmas buvo pagrindinė atgimusios tautos ideologija siekiant sukurti nepriklausomą tautinę valstybę. Intelektualai, tarp jų istorikai, buvo tautinio judėjimo priešakyje ir aktyviai dalyvavo kuriant tautinę valstybę. Remiantis to meto lietuvių istorikų straipsniais bei istorinėmis studijomis, kurios vertinamos kaip lietuviškos istoriografijos paveldas, šiame straipsnyje: 1) aptariamos jų pažiūros nacionalizmo klausimais; 2) diskutuojama, kodėl jie nelaikė autonomijos vienintele lietuvių tautine programa XX a. pradžioje; 3) analizuojama, kodėl istorikai pasisakė už nepriklausomos tautinės valstybės sukūrimą ir kaip jie vertino federacijos su Lenkijos valstybe atkūrimo galimybę; 4) pateikiama argumentų dėl neteisėtų lenkų teritorinių pretenzijų į Suvalkiją ir Vilniaus kraštą; 5) atskleidžiama P. Klimo nacionalizmo koncepcija.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: nacionalizmas, Lietuvos ir Lenkijos istorija, XX a. pradžia, Lietuvos istoriografija, tautinės idėjos, Vilniaus krašto problema, Lenkijos teritorinės pretenzijos.

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Introduction

The liberation movement among nations became especially strong at the time of the outbreak of the First World War in the Russian Empire. Such scholars as Miroslav Hroch, Ea Jansen, Aira Kemiläinen and Anthony Smith have noted, that aggravated national relations at the beginning of the 20th century in the Russian Empire and the imperialistic policy of major European states, which brought about the First World War, gave rise to new hopes of independence in the small dependent nations of the Russian Empire (Hroch 1996:135; Jansen 1994:148; Kemiläinen 1984a:53; Smith 1979:169). Therefore, at that time, according to Jansen, the new intellectual elite, better educated and more nationally and politically orientated than the older generation, was able to express the national interests and national programme of an independent nation state based on the consensus of different social strata and political trends (Jansen 1994:148).

In the early years of the 20th century apparent changes can be observed in the national movements of Lithuanians. First, Lithuanians apart from their cultural demands began initiating political demands. The new idea that the Lithuanian nation, as an individual nation, had the right to make decisions began to gain ground. Therefore, there appeared in politics the idea of national self-

determination, which led to claims for political and cultural autonomy and the right to a separate state. Second, intellectuals formed a new group, which managed to unite very different strata of society in the common struggle for independence and the formation of a modern nation state in Lithuania.

The intellectuals and historians among them such as Jonas Basanavičius, Mykolas Biržiška, Jonas Yčas, Augustinas Janulaitis, Ignas Jonynas, Petras Klimas, Juozas Purickis, Jonas Šliūpas and Augustinas Voldemaras began to think and write about a future modern society of Lithuania. Historians not only incorporated their ideas on cultural, national, and political issues, but also expressed them self in political activity aimed at the re-establishment of Lithuanian statehood (see: Janužytė 2005). In the opinion of Smith, it was typical that nationalism should attract many of the intelligentsia, i.e. the intellectual and professional strata of society (Smith 1973:158).

At that time Lithuanian historians were both intellectuals and politicians. First, as politicians they took an active part in the restoration of the statehood of Lithuania, i.e. they declared Lithuania an independent state, built the nation state, and managed to achieve international recognition for that state. For example, from 1917 to 1920 Basanavičius, Biržiška, Klimas (from 1917 Secretary of the Council), Purickis and Voldemaras (both co-opted in 1918) were members of the Council of Lithuania (later the State Council of Lithuania). On February 16, 1918 Basanavičius, Klimas, and Biržiška were among the members of the State Council of Lithuania who signed the Act of Independence by which the statehood of Lithuania was restored. Biržiška, Klimas, Voldemaras and other historians worked in the first and later Cabinet of Ministers¹.

Second, as intellectuals they designed projects for independence and a nation state. For instance, Basanavičius, Biržiška, and Klimas participated in drawing up the Independence Act of 16 February. In addition, many of the above mentioned historians were at the time editors of newspapers, which published articles relating to the restoration of statehood in Lithuania and were affecting the Lithuanian society of the period².

Among the above mentioned historians, Klimas was particularly prolific at the time. He published several books and many articles on issues concerning national questions in Lithuanian, Polish, French and German. The fact that during the difficult time of the First World War and the post-war years Klimas undertook to work as an historian and produced a number of historical studies, the result of his view that the task of a historian was bring to light the history of the Lithuanian nation from the origin of the state to the loss of statehood and in this way to explain national awakening as an essential element in the nation's right to restore the statehood of Lithuania (Klimas 1919:5). As Smith noted, history plays a major role in nationalist thought (Smith 1973:27). In the light of Klimas' publications and his active political work at that time the Lithuanian historian Česlovas Laurinavičius called him "an architect of the Lithuanian state" (see: Laurinavičius 1997).

¹ For example, from November 7, 1918 to December 26 1918 Voldemaras held the post of first Prime Minister. From December 26, 1918 to April 19, 1920 he was also the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defence and later for a certain period served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defence. After the formation of the first Government of Lithuania (on November 11, 1918) Klimas started working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, first as a counsellor and then from December 15, 1919 as the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. From October 7, 1919 to April 19, 1920 he worked as the administrator of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from December 20, 1921 to January 1, 1922 acted as the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

² For instance, from 1917 to 1918 Klimas worked as the editor of the *Lietuvos Aidas*; in 1922 Voldemaras edited the *Tėvynės Balsas*.

This paper, extensively employs articles³ and studies by Lithuanian historians⁴ of the period that are regarded as a heritage of Lithuanian historiography, examines the national ideas and concepts of Lithuanian historians and concentrates on Lithuanian-Polish discussion on questions such as: How they understood nationalism? How they analysed and evaluated political programs for the re-establishment of statehood of Lithuania, i.e. for political autonomy of Lithuania and for Polish-Lithuanian federal state? What kind of arguments they used against the Polish territorial claims toward Vilnius and its district? What are the main features of Klimas' concept of nationalism?

The theoretical and methodological approach of this article is derived from the works of modern researchers of nationalism and political concepts, e.g. Gellner (1984), Hobsbawm (1990), Hroch (1985), Kemiläinen (1964; 1984; 1985), Jansen (1994) and Smith (1973). The article understands the term 'nationalism' as the national movement fighting for independence and establishment of an independent nation state. The article employs an analytical method of research combined with a comparative method, i.e. the views and concepts of Lithuanian historians were compared with the concepts and theories of European scholars in a similar context.

Understanding of Nationalism

Voldemaras regards national awakening primarily as the ideology of the revived nation. He maintains that each social movement had its own ideology. It appears alongside with the nation's resistance to oppression. Ideology cannot appear in itself, nor can it be created without relating to actual conditions (see: Voldemaras 1907:1). The ideology of the national revival, in part wanted to regain what was lost in the past, i.e. statehood, as well as to develop a new agenda for the nation's future, that of autonomy, federation, or independence. Voldemaras' ideas on national questions are close to those of Gellner who stresses that

... primarily nationalism is a political principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent (Gellner 1984:1).

Klimas was not against that concept of Voldemaras. With the onset of wars in the Balkans, he realised that the main source for discord among the nations were national conflicts. Thus, at the end of 1912 in his article on nationalism Klimas wrote, that the main tendency at the beginning of the 20th century was individualism, and one of its forms of expression was nation or nationality, and in international relations individualism was expressed by nationalism (Vabalėlis [Klimas...] 1912:242–247). Analysing the fight of the Slavic peoples against the Turks in the Ottoman Empire he claimed that nationalism was expressed in two forms in the Balkan Wars: as a fight for auton-

³ First of all were used articles concerning the ideas of national questions and the creation of a nation state in Lithuania by Klimas, Voldemaras, and others historians which were published in Lithuania in newspapers such as the *Aušrinė* (1911–1913), the *Lietuvos Aidas* (1917–1922), and others. The article also refers to the writings of Voldemaras which were published to commemorate the 90th anniversary and the centenary of his birth. See: Profesorius... 1973; Profesorius... 1983.

⁴ The article extensively employs studies by Klimas of Lithuanian history what were written under the German occupation and during the first years of independence in Vilnius. These are primarily historical essays on the Lithuanian nation such as: Klimas 1917c ('Lithuania: Its Inhabitants and Borders'); Klimas 1919 ('Features of the Ancient Times of Lithuanians', published also in Polish); Klimas 1919a ('The History of Ruling the Lithuanian Land (until the Polish period)'), commissioned by the Lithuanian Learned Society. The following studies of Klimas were used: Klimas 1922 ('Historical Overview of the Lithuanian State') and Klimas 1923 ('Our Fights for Vilnius. 1322 23–1922 23').

omy or a fight for independence (Vabalėlis [Klimas...] 1912:242). Klimas distinguished two types of nationalism: conquering nationalism (aggressive, chauvinist), which can be discerned as being displayed in the Balkan Wars by the Ottoman Empire, and liberating nationalism, which is exercised in two forms – a striving for national autonomy or independence being displayed by the nations of the Balkan peninsula (Vabalėlis [Klimas...] 1912:245). In analysing the national movements for independence of the Balkan nations, Klimas attempted to understand the Lithuanian national movement and to evaluate the political agendas of the Lithuanians seeking autonomy and independence. Klimas assigned the national movements of Lithuanians, Latvians, Byelorussians and Georgians to the second type, i.e. liberating nationalism.

Voldemaras like many historians of the period often used the term ‘national awakening or revival’. Speaking about the dependent nations of Central Europe they more often employed the term ‘national awakening or revival’ and discussing the policies of the Habsburg, Romanov, and Ottoman Empires with respect to their dependent nations they used the term ‘nationalism’⁵. While referring to the nationalism of the 19th century, Hroch uses the terms ‘revival’, ‘national revival’, and ‘national liberal fight’ (see: Hroch 1985).

Autonomy or federal state with Poland

Historians discussed: would a national issue be solved upon granting Lithuania autonomy? According to Klimas autonomy is a narrow form of “national individualism” and the national issue is not always solved after autonomy is achieved. As long as the nation does not have an independent state, it is still undergoing national awakening (Vabalėlis [Klimas...] 1912:244). Voldemaras also expressed doubts about whether Lithuanians should insist on an autonomous form of government within the Russian Empire or whether it would be better to strive for federation with Poland or to fight for complete independence? (see: Voldemaras 1908a). The future would show what path to statehood would be chosen by the nations of Tsarist Russia (Voldemaras 1908[?]). In Voldemaras’ opinion, Lithuanians faced three possibilities: 1. Lithuania could become independent. (This way was the choice of the majority of Lithuanians); 2. Lithuania could join a Federal Republic of Russia; or 3. Lithuania could form a union with Poland (Voldemaras 1918:59).

In 1918 in the newspaper *Das neue Litauen* Voldemaras wrote: “I doubt if there is another nation in Europe, whose right to be an independent state and to have a political life of its own would be so much discussed as in the case of Lithuania” (Voldemaras 1918:57). He thought that the reasons for there being such great interest in the matter and doubts about whether the Lithuanian nation had the right to establish its own independent state lay primarily in the past and, finally, the way it was construed and presented to politicians was also influential. He discussed the fact that many people did not see much difference between the Lithuanian and Polish nations, because after the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, when the greater part of Lithuanian as well

⁵ The term ‘national awakening or revival’ was especially popular in the Lithuanian Soviet historiography of the 20th century. It avoided references to the fight of the Lithuanians against the Tsarist regime in the 19th century as nationalism for fear of accusations of being ‘a proponent of the Lithuanian bourgeoisie ideology’. The term ‘national awakening or revival’ was neutral for Lithuanian historians. A few scholars of nationalism discussing nationalism employ the term ‘national revival’. The term ‘national revival’ in relation to Central and Eastern Europe is used to name the process, which was continuing in the second part of the 18th–19th centuries, i.e. the development of new economic relations, the emergence of a modern, legally free society in which everyone is equal, the consolidation of democratic tendencies in the culture and the awakening of national consciousness.

as the Polish nation came under Russian rule, both nations experienced the same political fate, which in particular brought closer the upper strata of the Lithuanians and the Poles. Therefore, Polish claims that they wished to restore the Polish-Lithuanian state seemed quite realistic and well-founded in the eyes of many European politicians. Yet Lithuanians, according to Voldemaras, actively protested against establishing a common state with Poland: "They would not want to hear about a union with the Poles". He affirmed that the historic Lithuania was gone forever and a new Lithuania was born (Voldemaras 1908a:41). In such a way Lithuanians refused any restoration of the historic Lithuania along with the idea of forming a union with Poland. According to Smith it is often complicated to secure freedom in a federation with a stronger state (Smith 1973:3-4). The new Lithuania was understood to be an independent state of Lithuania in its ethnic territory (Voldemaras 1918:58).

It should point out, that Voldemaras saw a few positive features in the idea of a federation with Poland. Lithuania, as a small state located between two powerful states, i.e. Germany and Russia, might well feel safer in a federation with Poland. Besides, it would be beneficial economically, because it would not have to allocate part of its budget to defence expenditure. The common market and a special system of customs duties would also allow expansion of the Lithuanian economy. However, personally he preferred the idea of an independent and neutral state of Lithuania (Voldemaras 1917:53-54). As Smith noticed, nationalists usually give priority to a total separation in order to build an independent state (Smith 1973:3).

Klimas and Voldemaras came to conclusion that national autonomy or a federation would not solve national disputes; therefore the ultimate goal of Lithuanians must be to fight for independence.

Polish territorial claims

The fact that in the first stages of restoration of its statehood Lithuania had to fight against the Poles proved that Poland in its turn, did not abandon the idea of restoring the common Polish-Lithuanian state. Polish territorial claims were not understandable to Klimas. They undertook the building of a common state by military means and propaganda, informing various international organisations, conferences and European states in the press about the restoration of the old Republic, which had perished in the 18th century. It aroused resistance and ill-feeling among Lithuanians towards Poles not as a nation but as individuals opposing independence for Lithuania (see: Klimas 1917d:1-2). In his opinion:

... in general nowadays politics cannot be productive if it is not democratic (Kl.[imas] 1917b:2).

On the other hand, he understood that Poland would not abandon so easily its designs to join Lithuania or at least part of its territory (for instance, Suvalkai) to Poland (see: Kl.[imas] 1917:1).

According to Klimas Polish claims to Suvalkai had no historical or legal justification. After the Third Partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1795 Suvalkai went to Prussia and in 1807 Napoleon annexed it to the Duchy of Warsaw. After the defeat of Napoleon, as part of an autonomous kingdom of Poland, it went to Russia. He admitted, however, that the introduction of the Napoleonic Code and the liberation of peasants from serfdom had an impact on the increasing consciousness of the Lithuanian nation and their efforts to dissociate themselves from the Poles. (Perhaps because of the better opportunities people had in the Suvalkai district, many national leaders were to come from this district, and many peasants from there were active in the national movements of the 19th cen-

tury. According to Hroch, the nucleus of the national movement originated in the northern part of the district of Suvalkai (Hroch 1985:94)). At the beginning of the 20th Century Lithuanians expressly stated their aim of joining Suvalkai to Lithuania as one of its administrative units. This aim was adopted by the Great Seimas of Vilnius in 1905 and approved by Lithuanians in the St Petersburg Seimas as well as at the Vilnius Conference in 1917. According to Purickis, representatives from the Suvalkai gubernia supported the decisions adopted by the Great Seimas of Vilnius (Von Dr. Wykintas... 1918:1). The German Press Bureau also showed its approval during the war by stating that the intention of Poland to join the Suvalkai gubernia to its territory was unjust (see: [Klimas Petras] 1917f:2-3).

The Lithuanian historians considered the Polish claims to Vilnius and its region historically unsubstantiated and unjust. As early as in the Lithuanian Conference in Bern in 1917 Purickis discussing the territory of the future Lithuanian State discarded the unreasonable territorial claims of the Polish politicians to the Vilnius gubernia. His arguments were: firstly, the Vilnius gubernia had never belonged to the Kingdom of Poland because they were a territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Secondly, the composition of the population indicated that the Poles in these territories formed a minority. Therefore, in his opinion

... the Poles even in ethnic terms had no grounds for their territorial claims (Lietuvių Berno... 1994:184).

Professor Voldemaras in debating with the Polish Dr. Ambrozy Grabowski and Professor Alfons Parczewski regarding Vilnius maintained that the Polish claims to Vilnius simply resulted from the fact that Lithuanians refused to form one state with Poland⁶. Polish politicians emphasised that they would never abandon Vilnius and if the city remained in Lithuania, they would consider that as yet another partition of Poland. Voldemaras was very much surprised by such logic. He affirmed that “it is not possible to abandon something you did not have previously” (Voldemaras 1918:58), and Vilnius had never belonged to Poland. In addition, according to Biržiška the Lithuanian nation had never in any legal document lost Vilnius (see: Biržiška 1921:75). Vilnius had always been the capital of Lithuania.

Following the official German statistics of 1916, the Poles argued that 56% of the residents were Poles and only 3% Lithuanians, therefore, Vilnius should belong to Poland. Besides, according to different statistical data of Tsarist Russia, residents speaking semi-Polish or semi-Russian were registered as Polish or Byelorussian⁷. In the opinion of Biržiška Catholics who lived in eastern and southern areas and spoke Byelorussian were none other than assimilated Lithuanians (see: Biržiška 1985:564). In this case we could add to Hobsbawm’s statement that in some cases not only the higher social class but also the middle-class identified with a different language (Hobsbawm 1990:114). In addition, Klimas warns that one should not rely entirely on the statistics. He was aware of the fact that, depending on the origin of the person providing statistical data, the same residents were registered as speaking or non-speaking Lithuanian. This was often the case, because

⁶ Articles of the above mentioned Polish politicians were published in the newspapers *Das neue Deutschland* (February 1, 1918) and *Godzina Polski* (16/2/1918, No. 16 A).

⁷ In his memoirs Klimas interestingly describes how at his baptism he was registered by the Polish surname of Klimaševskis in the Catholic Church records of newly born. He did not know the reason: whether it was the idea of his godfather Degutis or that of the priest Žaliauskas that he should be the only one among his brothers, who was ‘polonised’ or ‘catholicised’. See: Klimas 1990:6.

residents themselves avoided admitting that they could speak Lithuanian (Kl.[imas] 1917a:2). Voldemaras was not inclined either to pin his faith on the statistics of the population census. In his opinion at the population census of 1897 in the Russian Empire Lithuanians were registered as Byelorussian or Polish. But if in conducting the census it had been necessary to register bilingual residents then it would have been easier to clarify the dividing lines of languages in use. Hobsbawm noted that language was too big a political issue for census takers to overlook. Language implied a political choice. Each census became a battlefield between nationalities and according to him nobody was satisfied with the results of the census and the equation of language and nationality (Hobsbawm 1990:99-100). Moreover, Voldemaras had no intention of arguing about the statistical data but rejected them simply maintaining that it was the Polish language that was prevailing in Vilnius. The majority of town-dwellers of Jewish, Lithuanian, and other nationalities spoke Polish, but that did not make them Poles. He compared the town-dwellers' situation in Vilnius with that of residents in some cities of the United States where the majority of citizens communicated not in English but in German. Following such Polish logic he pointed out, it would mean that America should transfer such cities to Germany.

Voldemaras also indicated other cultural-historical factors that were relevant. Polish political leaders and the Polish government based their claim to Vilnius on the statements of the famous Slavic linguist Professor Alexander Brückner who saw the Lithuanians as a nation of peasant people, which had no culture, history, or literature. Voldemaras rejected the claims of Brückner as unsubstantiated. He rejected his notion that the Grand Dukes of Lithuania were Poles or Russians due to their use of the Polish or Russian languages and the idea that the codes of Lithuanian laws, written in the old Slavic language, were Byelorussian, that the literature of Lithuanians was Polish and its creators Polish. Following such logic the Lithuanians could be deprived not only of their territory but also of their history and culture (Voldemaras 1918:61-64). According to Klimas history and culture became the main grounds of disagreement between the Lithuanians and the Poles, a disagreement which developed into a struggle between the two nations over Vilnius.

Concept of Klimas

From works of Lithuanian historians, a coherent concept of nationalism can be discerned in the works of Klimas (See: Janužytė 2005a:57–66, 98–99). He refers to the ethnic-national law as a universal one, by which one can define the concept of a nation, determine the ethnic territory of a new state, and describe nationalism as the impulse of the nation to build a nation state⁸. He called the building of an independent state, i.e. the right of a nation to create a state in its ethnic territory, an ethnic-national law (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1). As a proponent of historical materialism, Klimas regarded an ethnic-national law as a material phenomenon that could be divided into certain elements. The subject matter of the ethnic-national law, in his opinion, consisted of: 1. Language; 2 National consciousness; 3. Culture; 4. A vision of the future – a national ideal (Kl.[imas] 1917a).

1. Language. Due to historical circumstances, at the beginning of the 19th century the Lithuanian nobility and intellectual elite used, almost solely, Polish or Russian, while most of the common people had preserved their mother tongue and did not understand Polish. Klimas refers to their decision to use foreign languages instead of the native one at the end of the 19th and the beginning

⁸ Speaking about the creation of an independent state of Lithuania he first used the term 'nation state' in about 1917. See: Klimas 1917e:1-2.

of the 20th centuries as a certain expression of the nation's exceptionality, which was affected by political changes and writing traditions established in Lithuania (Kl.[imas] 1917a:2). The naturalising of foreign languages among the nobility, according to Klimas, can not only be observed in Lithuania. Other countries, instead of the native language, adopted the French language. We can agree with Klimas that it was not unusual for the Lithuanian nobility to speak more than one language. In Estonia, Latvia, and Bohemia the nobility spoke German and in Finland Swedish. Klimas provide two models of nations in relation to the use of languages. In the first model individuals, using the same language, formed separate nations. For instance, Americans speak English but they are not English. In the case of the second model individuals using various languages formed a separate nation. Lithuanians, according to Klimas, belonged to the second model of nations.

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in the words of Klimas, was not a state of Polish or Russian nations, but the state of the Lithuanian nation and its interests were defended by the nobility, who several times fought for its rights and political status against the Poles. The Lithuanian nobility kept faithfully in mind that they were citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. According to Jansen, Lithuanians always remembered that they had had statehood:

The Lithuanians, of course, never forgot that they had once had a mighty state of their own, while Estonians and Latvians only had a myth, a dream of a golden era of freedom before the Danish-German conquest (Jansen 1994:147).

Klimas maintains that in the period of national revival and during the creation of the independent state there were people who could not speak Lithuanian, yet remained patriots. They joined the national movement consciously and became Lithuanian state-builders. He maintained that:

... *a Lithuanian* in present day Lithuania may be Lithuanian *without being able to speak Lithuanian* (italicised by Klimas) (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1).

This Lithuanian situation may not have been unique. According to Kemiläinen in Finland the Fennomans who very often were Swedish-speakers changed their language and most often began to use Finnish but if they did not have a good knowledge in Finnish they wrote their letters and official papers in Swedish like, for example, one of the leaders of the Fennomans, the politician Johan Wilhelm Snellman. He supported the idea that a nationality should have the right to decide its political status and drew the conclusion, that Finnish would in future be the only national language of the state of Finland. Another Fennomans historian and politician, Yrjö Sakari Yrjö-Koskinen (originally Forsman) wrote his history books in Finnish (see: Kemiläinen 1988:107–117, 119; 1984:105–120). For this reason, we can agree with Kemiläinen's affirmation that

... class and language were not always identical, even when a social class was claimed to be that of a special nationality (Kemiläinen 1984a:59).

Therefore we can agree with Klimas that an alien culture expressed and disseminated through the native language does not eliminate the nation, just as the nation using alien languages retains its separateness, uniqueness, and autonomy, because the identity of the native language with the nation is not a prerequisite for the existence of the nation and its national self-determination (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1-2).

Klimas did not agree with statements of Poles that it would be difficult to create an independent state of Lithuania due to the polonised education of part of society or due to the Polish-speaking

educated part of the society (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1). However, Klimas in assessing the situation of the period noted subjective reason, which yet had to be overcome so that the native language could prevail throughout the whole of society. He ascribed the negative view of the Lithuanian language to subjective reasons. He noted that a common peasant residing in the East of Lithuania, once addressed by a nobleman or a priest in Polish, avoided speaking or did not dare to admit he spoke Lithuanian. Some intellectuals with their origins among the peasantry were also no exception, because being among 'lords' they were embarrassed to speak in Lithuanian. The idea that the Lithuanian language was related to Paganism, whereas the Polish language to Catholicism was, according to Klimas, imposed on the deeply religious residents of the Vilnius region (Kl.[imas] 1917a:2). For this reason part of society accepted the stereotype that the Lithuanian language was inferior to the languages of other nations and could be only the language of a marginal group in society (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1). Following such logic, according to him, we could maintain that the languages of different nations are also the languages of marginal groups in society, because the lowest strata of their society also communicate in the native language. That is why, in his opinion, at first it was necessary to get rid of the negative stereotype regarding use of the Lithuanian language.

Klimas comparing the use of Lithuanian and its significance in different historical periods noted that if earlier the knowledge of Lithuanian was an expression of a good will and creditable aspiration, during the period of the creation of the independent state it became a necessity of life, without which a member of the society would remain outside the process and would not be able to integrate into the new modern state. Klimas distinguished three basic functions of the native language in the creation of the Lithuanian state. The first function was that the native language helped to unite all members of the nation. The second function was that it became the means of expressing the unique culture of the nation. And the third function was that it became the means of communication of society allowing its members to integrate into the Lithuanian state⁹.

2. National consciousness. In the process of nation state-building, in the opinion of Klimas, it was important for individuals to have national consciousness so that they could dissociate the use of an alien language from national identity (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1). He understood that to decide their national identity was especially complicated for a section of the polonised or russified Lithuanian intelligentsia. They needed sufficiently persuasive motives in order to identify themselves as Lithuanians. Klimas suggested that the principle of national self-determination should not be applied to the whole of Lithuanian society. He believed it should not be applied to the lowest strata of society, especially peasants in the Eastern part of Lithuania (the Švenčioniai, Vilnius, Lyda and Ašmena districts) where the majority of peasants there spoke Polish or Byelorussian and accordingly identified themselves as Polish or Byelorussian (Kl.[imas] 1917a:1-2). When asked about his/her nationality, a peasant could not answer. He/she realised that they were Catholic and local people (*tutejszy*) and not some stranger (Kl.[imas] 1917a:2). The term 'local inhabitant' was much clearer and more understandable for them.

We should point out that, Voldemaras also supported the application of the principle of national decision-making. Voldemaras was familiar with Ernest Renan's works. For Renan a nation was linked with both the past and present. The existence of a nation was determined by the desire of people to live together and to achieve a common goal in the future. Renan argued that the continual existence of a nation was a daily plebiscite (Kemiläinen 1964:29). Perhaps under his influence, Volde-

⁹ After the establishment of independence the Lithuanian language became the official language of a state for the first time in history.

maras also supported the application of the principle of national decision-making. Unlike Klimas he proposed to implement it for all individuals irrespective of their social or property status in society:

... each has to decide for himself to which nationality he belongs (Voldemaras 1918:59).

Voldemaras recognised a subjective right of an individual to define his/her nationality which is a part of the principle of democratic national self-determination.

3. Culture. In the opinion of Klimas, Russian and Polish speaking residents of the Vilnius gubernia in their character, religious faith, customs and traditions, appearance and culture were closer to the Lithuanian than to Slavic nations. Klimas states, that, in general, Lithuania was more a land of emigrants than immigrants. The majority of its residents, according to him, were Lithuanians born and bred in in the milieu of Lithuanian culture and traditions their country, though they were either already unable to speak Lithuanian or avoided speaking the native language (Kl.[imas] 1917a:2). Klimas (like Kemiläinen and Smith) stressed the importance of history in the process of the formation of national consciousness. According to Kemiläinen,

... the most important nation-making factor for both types of modern nation (nation state or nationality) is history (Kemiläinen 1985:5).

In Smith's opinion each nation is distinct and unique and has been formed in a certain cultural milieu where history played the key role. An historical culture, according to him, establishes a link between present and future generations; it is the factor, which formed and shaped the character and habits of the nation at all times (Smith 1973:2-3). According to Klimas, knowledge of history helps one to understand oneself and one's culture. Klimas allocated to history a special place in the cognition process. He understood the importance of history as one of the ways to learn about the past of the nation, understand its present, and see a vision of its future.

4. Vision of the future – the national ideal. Each nation seeks to become free: at first it demands equal rights with other nations, which later turns into fighting for its cultural and political autonomy and self-government and, finally, fighting for independence and the right to build a independent state. In his opinion, in each historical period nations formed their own national ideals. As a result of this, at the beginning of the 20th century two national ideals became distinct: autonomy and independence. According to Smith the national ideal

... was a belief that all those who shared a common history and culture should be autonomous, united and distinct in their recognised homelands (Smith 1973:2).

As a result of this,

... the nationalist therefore is drawn into politics, into the struggle for self-government and sovereignty in his homeland (Smith 1973:3).

To summarise, we should point out, that in his concept Klimas laid more emphasis on 'objective or ethnic factors' in the national consciousness such as the nation's language, religion, customs, traditions, folklore, history and the common national ideals. From the theories of modern researchers on nationalism, which stressed the importance of 'ethnic factors' and argued that a population ought to become independent on the basis of such factors, Smith's ethnic theory is closest to Klimas' concept of nationalism.

Conclusions

The First World War allowed the three Baltic peoples to seize a rare opportunity for creating their own nation-states. The most important factor at this period was a broad national movement. The intellectuals and historians among them not only were in the vanguard of nationalism but also played the most important role in the formation of national identity for the establishing of a nation-state.

In the early years of the 20th Century the Lithuanian historians began writing articles and historical studies on the issue of national questions and to publish them both in Lithuanian and foreign languages. Their aim was to acquaint European politicians with the past of Lithuania and provide both historical and theoretical grounds for believing that Lithuanians as much as other nations had an historical and legal right to establish an independent state at the beginning of the 20th century.

Analysing the publications written by the Lithuanian historians, we can say, that for them nationalism as the ideology of a revived nation for the establishment of an independent nation state was the key idea in the early 20th century. Klimas distinguished two types of nationalism: conquering nationalism (aggressive, chauvinist) as displayed in the Balkan Wars by the Ottoman Empire, and liberating nationalism, a striving for either national autonomy or independence, as in the case of the nations of the Balkan peninsula. Klimas assigned the national movements of Lithuanians to the second type, i.e. liberating nationalism.

Klimas and Voldemaras came to conclusion, that autonomy or a federation would not solve national disputes; therefore the ultimate goal of Lithuanians must be independence. They considered the Polish claims to Vilnius and Suvalkai to be historically unsubstantiated and unjust.

A coherent concept of nationalism can be discerned in the works of Klimas. He refers to the ethnic-national law as a universal one, by which one can describe nationalism as the impulse of the nation to build a nation state. As a proponent of historical materialism, Klimas regarded the ethnic-national law as a material phenomenon that could be divided into four elements: 1. Language; 2 National consciousness; 3. Culture; 4. The vision of the future – the national ideal.

Klimas paid particular attention to the language issue and discussed the role of the language in forming the national and political identity of Lithuanians. He provide two models of nations in relation to the use of languages. In the first model individuals using the same language formed separate nations (for example, the Americans and the English). In the second model individuals using various languages formed a single nation (for example the Lithuanians). According to him, at a certain historical period a nation which started using a foreign language instead of the native one, was not eliminated as a nation and it could still remain separate, unique, and autonomous.

Klimas distinguished three basic functions of the native language in the creation of that state. First the native language helped to unite all members of the nation. Its second function was as a means of expressing the unique culture of the nation. And its third function was that it became the means of communication of society allowing its members to integrate into the Lithuanian state.

According to both Klimas and Voldemaras, it was important for individuals to have a national consciousness so that they could dissociate the use of an alien language from national identity in the process of nation state-building. Voldemaras supported the application of the principle of national decision-making. Unlike Klimas who thought it should not be applied to the lowest strata of society, especially the peasants in the Vilnius gubernia, Voldemaras proposed to implement it for all individuals irrespective of their social or property status in society. Voldemaras recognised the subjective right of an individual to define his/her nationality as part of the principle of democratic national self-determination.

Klimas stressed the importance of culture, especially history, in the process of the formation of national consciousness. Klimas understood the importance of history as one of the ways to learn about the past of the nation, understand its present, and to see a vision of its future – the national ideal. In his opinion, in each historical period the nations form their own national ideal. As a result of this, at the beginning of the 20th century two national ideals became distinct: autonomy and independence.

Analysing the theories of nationalism, we should point out, that Smith's ethnicistic theory is closest to Klimas' concept of nationalism. Voldemaras' ideas on the national question are close to those of Gellner who stresses that primarily nationalism is a political principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent.

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ISTORIKŲ DISKUSIJA APIE NACIONALIZMĄ XX A. PRADŽIOJE

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S a n t r a u k a

XX a. pradžioje nacionalizmas buvo pagrindinė atgimusios tautos ideologija siekiant sukurti nepriklausomą tautinę valstybę. Intelektualai, tarp jų istorikai, buvo tautinio judėjimo priešakyje ir aktyviai dalyvavo kuriant tautinę valstybę. Istorikai skelbė straipsnius ir istorijos studijas Lietuvos atgimimo klausimais lietuvių, lenkų, prancūzų ir vokiečių kalbomis. Jie siekė supažindinti Europos valstybių politikus su Lietuvos praeitimi ir istoriškai bei teoriškai pagrįsti, kad lietuviai, kaip ir kitos tautos, turi istorinę ir juridinę teisę kurti nepriklausomą valstybę.

Remiantis to meto lietuvių istorikų straipsniais bei istorinėmis studijomis, kurios vertinamos kaip lietuviškos istoriografijos paveldas, šiame straipsnyje: 1) aptariamos jų pažiūros nacionalizmo klausimais; 2) diskutuojama, kodėl jie nelaikė autonomijos vienintele lietuvių tautine programa XX a. pradžioje; 3) analizuojama, kodėl istorikai pasisakė už nepriklausomos tautinės valstybės sukūrimą ir kaip jie vertino federacijos su Lenkijos valstybe atkūrimo galimybę; 4) pateikiama argumentų dėl neteisėtų lenkų teritorinių pretenzijų į Suvalkiją ir Vilniaus kraštą; 5) atskleidžiama P. Klimo nacionalizmo koncepcija. Straipsnyje taip pat ieškoma nacionalizmo koncepcijų sąsajų tarp lietuvių istorikų ir žymiausių XX a. nacionalizmo teoretikų Ernesto Gellnerio, Eriko Hobsbawmo, Mirosłavo Hrocho, Airos Kemiläinen ir Anthony Smitho.

Straipsnyje aptariamas A. Voldemaro požiūris į nacionalizmą. Pasak jo, tai visų pirma atgimusios tautos ideologija. Jo nuomone, nacionalizmas, kaip ideologija, yra atsiradusi su tautos atgimimu. Iš dalies jis norėjo sugrąžinti tai, kas buvo praeityje, t. y. atkurti valstybingumą, ir kurti naują tautos valstybingumo – autonomijos, federacijos, nepriklausomybės – programą. P. Klimas tam neprieštaraavo. Analizuodamas slavų kovą prieš turkus Osmanų imperijoje jis teigė, kad nacionalizmas prasidėjo Osmanų imperijoje, slavų tautos sukilo prieš turkus, todėl nacionalizmas kaip tautinis individualizmas pasireiškė Balkanų karuose. P. Klimas skiria du nacionalizmo tipus: grobiamąjį nacionalizmą, kuris

pasireiškia kaip Turkijos imperializmas, ir ginamąjį, arba išsivaduojamąjį, nacionalizmą, pasireiškiančią dviem formomis – Balkanų slavų tautų autonomijos ir nepriklausomybės siekiu. Lietuvių nacionalizmą P. Klimas priskiria antrajam tipui – ginamajam, arba išsivaduojamajam, nacionalizmui.

Straipsnyje teigiama, kad per nacionalizmą kaip tautos ideologiją ieškota geriausių būdų užtikrinti tautos egzistenciją ir įveikti prieštaravimus tarp tautų. Autonomija ar federacija su kita valstybe, anot P. Klimo ir A. Voldemaro, neišspręstų tautinių prieštaravimų, todėl galutinis lietuvių tikslas – kovoti dėl nepriklausomybės. Lenkų pretenzijas į Suvalkiją, Vilnių ir jo kraštą jie laikė istoriškai nepagrįstomis ir neteisingomis.

Iš lietuvių istorikų išsiskiria P. Klimo darbai. Juose galima išvelgti nuoseklią nacionalizmo teoriją. Tautinės valstybės kūrimą, t. y. tautos teisę savo etnografinėse žemėse sukurti valstybę, P. Klimas vadino etnografiniu-tautiniu dėsniu. P. Klimas, kaip istorinio materializmo šalininkas, etnografinį-tautinį dėsni suprantą kaip materialų fenomeną, kurį galima išskaidyti į keturis elementus: 1. Kalba; 2. Tautinė savimone; 3. Kultūra; 4. Ateities vizija – tautinis idealas.

Diskutuodamas apie tautinio ir politinio lietuvių identiteto formavimąsi P. Klimas ypatingą dėmesį skyrė gimtajai kalbai. Jis pagal kalbų vartojimą pateikė du tautų modelius. Pirmasis modelis – kai individai, vartodami tą pačią kalbą, sudarė atskiras tautas (pavyzdžiui, amerikiečiai kalba angliškai, bet jie nėra anglai). Antras modelis – kai individai, vartodami įvairias kalbas, sudarė vieną tautą. Šiam modeliui priklauso lietuvių tauta. Jo teigimu, svetima kultūra, reiškiamą ir platinamą gimtąja kalba, nepanaikina tautos, kaip ir tauta, vartodama svetimas kalbas, išlaiko savo atskirumą, savitumą ir savarankiškumą, nes gimtosios kalbos ir tautos tapatumas nėra būtinoji tautos gyvavimo ar tautinio apsisprendimo sąlyga.

Kuriantis tautinei valstybei, P. Klimas išskyrė 3 svarbiausias gimtosios kalbos funkcijas. Pirmoji funkcija – kalba padeda suvienyti visus tautos narius į tautinę valstybę; antroji funkcija – kalba tampa savitos tautos kultūros išraiškos priemone, ir trečioji funkcija – kalba tampa bendra visuomenės komunikavimo priemone, leidžiančia visiems jos nariams integruotis į tautinę valstybę.

P. Klimo ir A. Voldemaro nuomone, tautos individams svarbu puoselėti tautinę savimone, kad jie sugebėtų atskirti svetimos kalbos vartojimą nuo tautinės priklausomybės. A. Voldemaras pritarė demokratiniam tautos apsisprendimo principui. Ir ne taip kaip P. Klimas, siūlė jį taikyti visiems individams, nepaisant jų socialinės ir turtinės padėties visuomenėje. A. Voldemaras pripažino subjektyvią individo teisę pačiam apibrėžti savo tautinę priklausomybę.

Suvokti save ir savo kultūrą padeda istorijos pažinimas. Todėl ypatingą vietą pažinimo procese P. Klimas skyrė istorijai. Jis suvokė istorijos pažinimo svarbą kaip vieną iš būdų pažinti tautos praeitį, suprasti jos dabartį ir numatyti tautos ateities viziją – tautinį idealą. Jo nuomone, kiekvienu istorijos laikotarpiu tauta formuoja savo tautinius idealus. XX a. pradžioje lietuvių tauta suformavo du tautinius idealus – autonomijos ir nepriklausomybės.

Straipsnyje teigiama, kad P. Klimo koncepcijoje daugiausia dėmesio skiriama tautinės savimonės formavimosi „objektyviems ar etniniams“ veiksniams, t. y. tautos kalbai, religijai, papročiams, tradicijoms, folklorui, istorijai, bendriems tautiniams idealams. Iš dabartinių nacionalizmo teoretikų darbų, kuriuose akcentuojama „etninių veiksnių“ svarba ir teigiama, kad individai gali tapti nepriklausomi minėtų veiksnių pagrindu, A. Smitho etninė teorija yra artimiausia P. Klimo nacionalizmo koncepcijai. E. Gellnerio nacionalizmo teorija, kurioje akcentuojama, kad nacionalizmas pirmiausia yra politinis principas, pagal kurį politinis ir tautinis vienetas turi sutapti, yra artimiausia A. Voldemaro nacionalizmo idėjoms.

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