

## BOOK REVIEW

### A STUDY ON THE FORMATION OF THE LITHUANIAN STATE

V. T. Pashuto, *Obrazovanie Litovskogo Gosudarstva*, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, Moskva, 1959, 532 pp.

In a recently published study, the noted contemporary soviet historian V. T. Pashuto has undertaken to sum up and evaluate all the available historiographic material on the Baltic people, especially the Lithuanians and the Lithuanian State. Pashuto reviews not only the general historical sources and research in this area, but also the numerous monographs, studies, and textbooks. On the basis of this voluminous material Pashuto has prepared an extensive and inclusive study about the Lithuanian state and its beginnings, analyzing this question both from the socio-economic and the legal point of view and presenting the political and organizational history of the Lithuanian state until 1341, i.e. during the entire period of its development.

The study is divided into three parts: (1) sources, (2) historiography, (3) the formation of the Lithuanian state. In the first part Pashuto divides the available sources into four categories: (a) Lithuanian and Belorussian annals, (b) Prussian historical sources, (c) German chronicles, and (d) documentary sources. In the second part we find descriptions of Polish pre-war historiography and the works of German historians. Pashuto also summarizes the research activities of the pre-soviet Lithuanian historians and criticizes them for their nationalistic approach. In the final sections of the second part Pashuto summarizes the work of soviet historians, especially those of contemporary Poland and Belorussia. Characteristic of both parts is the author's tendency to evaluate all historical works from a Russian point of view.

The third part of the study is Pashuto's own contribution; in it he discusses the history of social and economic development of Lithuania, the early forms of class struggle in Lithuanian society, and the political history of Lithuania. In the final pages Pashuto describes the Lithuanian struggle for independence (until 1341).

At the end of the book the author has supplied an extremely valuable 38-page bibliography which even includes works by Lithuanian historians of the independence period and of exile (Prof. Z. Ivinskis, for example). Name and place indices are also included. Finally, the author has attached four valuable appendices: (1) a genealogical table of Lithuanian dukes, (2) the Christburg Treaty (text and Russian translation), (3) the Pomezanian Code (text and translation of an early edition), and (4) a letter of King Gediminas (1324).

\*

In the first part of the book Pashuto analyzes the available historical sources and their studies. As often as possible, he also supplies the texts of the sources *in extenso*, comparing the material with Russian sources. He neglects, however, to consider the terminology used in these sources, thus failing to clarify some aspects of ancient Lithuanian life. What in the present state or research appears to be equally important is a dictionary which would provide clear and consistent definitions of words found in the available sources; such a dictionary could clarify many uncertainties in the development of the Lithuanian state. Another possible improvement in the readability of the book would have been a summary of findings. As it is, one has to search for Pashuto's conclusions in the descriptions and evaluations of each source considered.

Writing about Russian annals and chronicles, Pashuto gives special attention to the exact chronological localization of various facts. He constantly attempts to determine how one or another chronological fact about Lithuania found its way into the surviving annals. He asserts that there existed a "Lithuanian Chronicle" which did not survive until our times as a separate entity, but which was used by Russian chroniclers who undoubtedly transferred entire sections from the "Lithuanian Chronicle" into their works. Furthermore, on the basis of unpublished historical research by Prof. Alekseev, Pashuto argues that references to Lithuania and Lithuanians found in the so-called Kiev Annals (which were allegedly being written until 1238), were taken mainly from the lost Polock Annals. According to Pashuto, it is most important to remember that annals of various localities referring to Lithuania do so only insofar as they are related to the interests of the feudal lord or (Russian) duke. Furthermore, he maintains that all presently known Russian chronicles and annals, and

especially their separate copies or variants, have not been sufficiently analyzed for their significance to Lithuanian history. Pashuto therefore attempts to analyze the studies of known Russian chronicles and annals as they relate to the Lithuanian past. In this we find the usefulness of Pashuto's work for Lithuanian historians.

The Annals of Ipatiev are analyzed on the basis of Pashuto's own extensive research. According to him, these annals are an artificial creation consisting of portions of the chronicles of Duke Vaidlo, Duke Mstislav of Dani-la, and of the Lithuanian Chronicle. Here Pashuto polemizes with the Russian historian Jeremin, arguing the existence of a Lithuanian Chronicle, basing himself primarily on the similarity of style found among the various texts. The chronicle of Lithuania, which failed to survive to this day, allegedly contained the biographies of the Lithuanian Grand Dukes Mindaugas, Treniotas, Vaiselkas, Svarnas, and Traidenis. Pashuto maintains that there certainly was a separate chronicle about the life of Vaiselkas, resulting from an attempt to create a "Vaišelkas cult"; this can be deduced from the chronicle of Novgorod. The Ukrainian historian M. S. Hrushevski also mentions the existence of Vaišelkas' biography, calling it "The tale of events in Lithuania after the death of Mindaugas". Hrushevski admits, however, that very little is known about this chronicle.

In Pashuto's estimation, it is very doubtful that written biographies of Svarnas and Traide-nis ever existed, because very little is mentioned about their lives in the Ipatiev Annals which provide the most extensive references about Lithuanians. The author of the Volyne Chronicle presumably did not know about Švarnas and Traidenis.

In the section entitled "Chronicle of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania" Pashuto presents the results of studies of this source, including the studies published after World War II. Here he attempts to criticize the chronicle's contentions that Lithuania alone had a right to Russian lands because she was the first to seize the devastated lands from the Tartars. Pashuto also utilizes the political writings of the 14th-century Dukes of Moscow, in which it was sought to prove that Lithuania was one of the ancient Russian lands. For some reason, however, he fails to analyze the second copy of the "Chronicle of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania," as well as the Chronicle of Dlugosz. He only mentions that the second copy of the Lithuanian Chronicle, written in the 16th Century, contains the text of the earlier Lithuanian Chronicle, allegedly written in Novgorod, in the 13th Century. Pashuto is not consistent in discussing the two "editions" of the Lithuanian Chronicle. He does not trust the second edition, but at the same time maintains that it was compiled from the missing thirteenth century edition.

In the section discussing the Lithuanian Chronicle Pashuto insistently attempts to show that "from unknown times there existed a centralized Russian state" whose "rulers" had conquered the Jatvingians and even the Gali-nians. He intentionally blends the Russian chroniclers' references to the so-called Eastern Galinians (Goliad) who lived near Moscow with references to Galinians who were related to the Prussians and who lived northwest of the Jatvingians. In addition to this, Pashuto refers to the invasions by the Dukes of Halič into Jatvingian lands and deduces that the Jatvingians were subjects of the allegedly centralized Russian "state".

Pashuto doubts the authenticity of the third copy of the Lithuanian Chronicle, i.e., the Bychovec Chronicle. In discussing this chronicle he considers mainly the histories of separate cities or duchies, such as Smolensk, and portrays their obedience to Lithuania as a selfish act of the local feudal lords and a result of the people's weakness.

In further sections of the book Pashuto discusses the historical sources of the Teutonic orders, which are divided into the following categories: (a) sources of Prussian history, (b) German chronicles, (c) documents, including the ancient Lithuanian documents. He considers Prussian historical sources as providing an insight into the life of Lithua-nians at the time when the unique state organization was in its formative stages. Here Pashuto repeats his own earlier studies of the Pomezania Code and the Christburg (Kispork) Treaty. According to him, the Pomezania Code was intended only for the free Prussians, because at the end of the 14th Century similar rules were applied by the Order to the nobility of Samogitia. The contents of the Treaty of Christburg, on the other hand, largely corresponds to the Samogitian complaint against the Teutonic order in 1416, although formally the treaty concerns itself only with the Prussians. Pashuto continues with a detailed analysis of German chronicles, including those of Vulfstan and Peter of Duis-burg, synchronizing the events described by the letter chronicler with those mentioned in Russian chronicles.

In analyzing documentary sources, for some reason Pashuto only touches upon the documents of the Lithuanian Metrika (Litovskaia Metrika).

\*

In the historiographic part of the book Pashuto limits himself to a critical description of the main tendencies of older Russian, Polish, German, and Lithuanian historiography. He completely distorts the central problem, i. e., the relation of Russian and Lithuanian elements in the Lithuanian state. He analyzes in detail the pre-revolutionary Russian historiography, which distorts the role of the Russian element in the formation of the Lithuanian state. Pashuto repeats Great-Russian contentions that allegedly there was no properly independent Lithuanian statehood and independent Lithuanian law. He emphasizes that ethnic Lithuania was smaller in area than were the Russian lands under Lithuanian rule, but does not mention that in terms of population density and economy ethnic Lithuania fully balanced the Lithuanian lands inhabited by Russian tribes. For example, in 1567 ethnic Lithuania actually had to supply more soldiers and horses in case of war than the entire Russian area. In the formative years of the Lithuanian state, this ratio was un-doubtedly even more favorable to the Lithuanians. The same can be said about the cultural level of those two areas of the Lithuanian

state; the expressed wonder at the riches of Vilnius and Kaunas and by plundering of Lithuanian cities and castles by Russian invaders in 1655 indicates this fact.

\*

In the third part of the book Pashuto presents his own views on the development of the Lithuanian state. He contends that during the formation of the state, Lithuania was economically quite progressive, employed a primary three-field agricultural system and utilized the iron plough. Pashuto connects the appearance of feudal relations with the appearance and separation of a new social stratum in Lithuania, i. e., the Lithuanian feudal class, the large land holders. Vestiges of this class are castle hills and feudal nuclei referred to in chronicles as "grad", "Sielo", "Hof", and "Dorf". According to old sources, the ancient Lithuanians living among bogs had neither a state organization nor rulers, but lived in communities. Pashuto concludes that even after the formation of the Lithuanian state, many counties, especially in Samogitia, had castles and forts which belonged not to some feudal lord or local nobleman but to the entire county, the local community; these castles served as refuge during enemy attacks. In Pashuto's estimation, state authority took over control of castles perhaps only as late as the 14th Century.

The development of serfdom is described very extensively. Pashuto's collected material, however, shows that loss of freedom was first found in feudal households and not among members of the ancient communities where all people were free, as evidenced by references in the Peter of Duis-burg Chronicle.

The formation of the Lithuanian state is presented in a convincing manner: from a confederation of duchies, to a development of several stronger duchies, and finally to the formation of one state. Allegedly, this process occurred as more and more Russian lands were incorporated into Lithuania. In the newly acquired lands Lithuanian rule was not a continuation of the Russian order, but developed independently and in its own manner.

Pashuto asserts that Russian and Teutonic state institutions had no influence in the development of a Lithuanian state; on the other hand, he also denies that the duke of the ruler played any decisive role in the development of the Lithuanian state. In his opinion, the most important role was played by the feudal lords, who already in the 13th Century comprised a Council upon which the ruler himself depended; many facts are presented to confirm this. Pashuto fails to analyze, however, the ruler's guard and the military system in the earlier period (the 13th Century and the beginning of the 14th Century). A military system based on noblemen who were charged with the duty to remain warriors throughout their lives was well known during the reign of Vytautas and clearly appeared only in the 14th Century.

In the section entitled "Early Forms of Class Struggle" Pashuto emphasizes, as can be expected of a Marxist historian, that there

was class struggle during the formative years of the Lithuanian state. He maintains that in the Lithuanian, Prussian, and Latvian lands the relations between the nobles and the occupants were not the same as the relations between the common freemen and the Knights of either the Teutonic or the Livonian Order. Allegedly, the nobles sought to maintain their privileges at any price and compromised with the occupants; these compromises, however, demanded great sacrifices such as abdication of part of their sovereignty and property. This applied to the Prussian and Jotvin-gian nobles as well as to the refugees from Lithuania, who were settled by the Teutonic Order in Sambia. Here, however, Pashuto does not mention a fact also cited in German chronicles, which indicates that only a few of the nobles were willing to enter into a compromise with the Order, while those retreating from Prussia into Lithuania included not only the free Prussian peasantry but also nobles and dukes, as they are called by Peter of Duisburg.

In the introduction the author states that he has worked on the study for ten years. The cited sources and works, as well as the author's analyses and conclusions, indicate that a really enormous effort was required to prepare such a study. Undoubtedly, "The Formation of the Lithuanian State" is a valuable contribution to the study of the Lithuanian state institutions. Worthy of special attention are the sections describing the form of Lithuanian expansion in the East, the establishment of friendly relations with local feudal lords, and their peaceful incorporation into the Lithuanian state. The review of research on historical sources and of historiographic formulations is presented with great precision and indicates a good knowledge of the subject. The study also points out gaps in the analysis of Lithuanian political institutions; i. e., it maps out the immediate program for researchers of Lithuanian history. Despite the discrepancies and weaknesses noted in this review, Pashuto's study is a valuable contribution to the study of Lithuanian history.

Jonas DAINAUSKAS