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Zigmas Zinkevičius, *Lietuvių kalba XVIII-XIX a.*

Vol. 4 of *Lietuvių kalbos istorija*. Mokslas, Vilnius, 1990. Hard Cover, Dust Jacket. 5: 335 pages.

Lithuanian is examined in three contexts, 1. during the end of the Republic (joint Polish-Lithuanian), pp. 7-50, 2. under Czarist Russian, pp. 51-224, 3. in Little Lithuania (East Prussia), pp. 225-327. Its main literary dialects, Žemaitian, Eastern Lithuanian, and Western Aukštaitian with special attention for its dialects in Little Lithuania (East Prussia), the people writing in them, and the works produced in them are gone into extensively. Short biographical sketches are provided for main writers like S. Daukantas, K.K. and E.J. Daukša, the brothers Juška, and K. Donelaitis. A small section at the book's end, pp. 249-300, is dedicated to the works of linguists, especially those honoring Lithuanian for its conservative character making it exceptionally useful for the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European, like A. Schleicher. Schleicher (197-198) is cited for favoring the more analytical and, therefore, more conservative-seeming Aukštaitian dialect for science, especially since it does not cut off endings like Žemaitian.

But after carefully examining the book's examples of Žemaitian forms and discussions of Žemaitian features, I conclude that Žemaitian has much to offer science. I believe that the Žemaitian dialect is a fascinating blend of East Baltic, South(west) Baltic, and general West Baltic features. The latter two groups include Prussian, Curonian, and Latvian items. Among these, we find o-stem nom. -s rather than -as (as in *Dievs* 'God'), a tendency to keep vowel plus *n* tautosyllabic diphthongs longer, a feature of Curonian and Prussian, the keeping of *tj*, *dj* plus back vowel unchanged, that is, unchanged even to *č*, *dž* (*skaitiau*, *suédiau* for Aukšt. *skaičiau*, *suédžiau*), a feature of Prussian, the South Baltic change of long *é* to *ie*, the South(west) Baltic blending of long *ō* and long *ā* reflexes to *uo* (*kuoja* for Aukšt. *koja*, and traces of the, in my opinion, general West Baltic gen. pi. in -an (from short -on rather than -uj from long -ōn as in Aukšt.) in scattered examples of *musa* (from *\*mūsa* from *\*mūsan*) 'our' instead of *mūsy*. (So NW Bait. *\*mūsan* to *\*mūsa* to Žem. *\*mūsa* to *mūsā* / Laiv. *\*musuo* to *mūsy*.) Other than all this, the book's author from the start (p. 24) lets us know about the historical importance of Žemaitian - the "Central Variant" of Traditional Literary Lithuanian, the variant even more prominent than the Eastern one.

The book ends with the sad fact that Lithuanian in East Prussia, the Lithuanian of Donelaitis, died out - lost out to Germanization. This comparatively low-level, subtle anti-Lithuanian chauvinism in Germany ended up more effective than the far more direct and blatant one typical of the Poles and Russians. Their persecutions' of even children speaking Lithuanian reminded me of "Spanish detention" practiced in El Paso schools of the fifties and sixties when Chicago children were caught speaking Spanish in school corridors.

Harvey E. Mayer