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THE ACADEMY OF VILNIUS AS A LITHUANIAN INSTITUTION

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The very fact that a university was founded in Lithuania's capital four hundred years ago is an event of extraordinary significance. Aside from early Southern and Western Europe, very few other nations of the world can take pride in a university of such great age. And every university was and always is — more in the past than in the present — a cultural factor profoundly influencing its region and even its country. For a university formerly encompassed — at least in its core — all of the more meaningful cultural manifestations which today are fostered and disseminated by various specialized institutions. Only the XVII—XVIII centuries saw the beginning of the establishment of separate academies devoted to stimulating learning, the so-called academies of science, subsequently academies of art, public libraries, theaters, and other similar institutions. Each of them more or less has its origin in the older universities. This is also true for Lithuania: the primary roots of our country's libraries, theaters, music, even its engineering and architecture must be sought in the University of Vilnius. Even the strands of origin of the Lithuanian Catholic Academy of Sciences lead to the old University of Vilnius, whose jubilee we are commemorating within the framework of this scientific meeting. This academy was founded as a substitute for a Catholic university, which was planned after the re-establishment of independence in Lithuanian in 1918. That university's planners, and later the Catholic academy's initiators, were mostly professors or at least students of the Roman Catholic Theological Academy in St. Petersburg, which also was a direct offshoot of the University of Vilnius — in other words, the same theological faculty of the old university. When the czar closed the University of Vilnius in 1832, the theological faculty still survived and continued its activity in Vilnius in the Supreme Seminary, which, in 1842, after 10 years, was transferred to St. Petersburg and called the Roman Catholic Theological Academy. Similar strands from the same past, from the same Theological Academy in St. Petersburg, lead to the Catholic university in Lublin, which at present is functioning so successfully and fruitfully.

Much could be said in commemorating such an anniversary of the university. But for me, the time span is limited of itself by the extent of my academic research; for well-understood reasons, it mostly touches upon the first two centuries of the University of Vilnius, when the Jesuits directed it, when it often was called an "academy." Here I would like to stress once more that statements still appear in the press and ordinary conversation to the effect that the university was established in Vilnius by the Russian czar in 1803 but before that was merely a Jesuit academy or an ordinary college. In truth — without getting involved in any kind of comprehensive discussions — we can be certain that, from the founding charter granted in 1579, it is as clear as day that 400 years ago a genuine and legitimate university was established in Vilnius. It is true that the title "academy" was recorded in King Stephen Bathory's charter (it states: "*ius*, *privilegium et facultatem Academiae et Universitatis. . . damus"* — we confer the right, privilege and power of an academy and university), in the bull of Pope Gregory XIII the word academy is entirely absent, and, so that there would be no doubts, the pope employs a specific term adapted in the Middle Ages to designate universities, "studium generale" *("Universitatem studii generalis . . . erigimus et instituimus*,"[1] says the pope). If the word academy, as the name of the entire educational institution, is quite frequently encountered in historical sources, then it means the same as university. Those who were educated in the humanistic spirit preferred the Greek word "akademeia", an educational institution, to the Latin "universitas," which at that time still connoted artisan work; e.g., during the Middle Ages there were such terms as "universitas sutorum," that is, a totality of shoemakers, a shop of shoemakers, a guild. Thus I wish to emphasize at the onset, that if the word "academy" will be spoken of anywhere, I understand and use that word as a synonym for university.

Therefore, I will limit myself regarding the time span to the first two centuries of the university's activity. However, it is also necessary to limit oneself in regard to content. Consequently, I will discuss here only one aspect of the history of the university of that period — namely, manifestations of Lithuanian national spirit in that Academy of Vilnius.

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Here the question immediately arises: Is it at all possible to speak of a Lithuanian national spirit in those times? Do we not thereby fall into the danger of forcibly transposing the past into the present and measuring everything by a present day standard? And finally, what is Lithuanian national spirit? I recall a comment recently made by Prof. Tomas Venclova: when the past of the University of Vilnius is examined and evaluated, extreme tendencies are sometimes present — some only see in it an institution functioning under Poland's influence, from which Polonization of the country spread throughout Lithuania, others merely search for signs of Lithuanian national spirit and forget everything else which the University of Vilnius gave Lithuania as a university. Supposedly, the people of those times did not feel such differences, considering themselves citizens of a common Lithuanian-Polish state — the *Rzeczpospolita* — and seeking the welfare of the whole country. It must be confessed that there is quite a bit of truth in these assertions. Concentrating on extremes cannot reveal the full truth. Undoubtedly, Lithuania's responsible officials could not ignore, in the conditions of those years, the common concerns of the whole state. In such a situation the unifying elements of both basic parts of that political partnership came to the fore spontaneously and covered the distinctiveness of their separate components. However, one would be greatly mistaken in supposing that everything was smothered by the levelling process and no place was left for distinctive manifestations.

That this really was the case, in other words, that distinctive Lithuanian expressions existed, is testified to by a statement of a member of one of the leading noble families in Lithuania. In a letter written in Polish in 1577 (hence, two years before the founding of the university), Nicolaus Christophorus Radziwiłł firmly reminded his brother George, at the time the coadjutor to the Bishop of Vilnius: "Wasza Miłość Litwin, nie Polak" — "Your Worship, you are a Lithuanian, not a Pole. Hold to your nation without concealing it, Your Worship. The Poles think that they are of higher origen, so they are trying to harm us in all kinds of ways."[2] For what occasion that letter was written, and what prompted Nicolaus Christophorus Radziwiłł to admonish his brother is unknown. This letter remains unpublished somewhere in Poland's archives; it was only in a publication that I found the sentence referred to. Yet, such a statement clearly testifies that those nobles, who were perhaps more threatened by the dangers of assimilation than others, still felt they were Lithuanians then. What the concept "Litwin" meant to them and their contemporaries is not quite so easy to determine. Clearly, it was not entirely the same thing as in our times. Nevertheless, the cited passage truly does drastically emphasize one characteristic of Lithuanian consciousness: a Lithuanian is not the same as a Pole; it is even his duty to resist the Poles' dominating designs.

For this reason I do not consider it an empty and antihistorical matter to search for expressions of Lithuanian spirit in the old university, without of course overlooking that the very existence of the university in Lithuania and its intensive and fruitful activity thorughout the centuries was a factor of enormous value in the life of the Lithuanian nation.

The establishment of the university itself was supposed to serve Lithuania's, not Poland's, interests. By this, Lithuania was to become equal to Poland. The University of Cracow functioned there and a similar university was supposed to be in Vilnius. This idea is encountered more than once in the surviving sources from the period of the university's founding. Perhaps it is most clearly stated in a letter from the Bishop of Vilnius, Valerijonas Protasevičius (Valerianus Protasewicz), to Pope Gregory XIII, written in Vilnius on July 8, 1577.[3] For some reason, there was particular concern over the survival of Cracow University in that year. Since Bishop Protasevičius, as the founder of the Vilnius Jesuit College, had already appealed to the pope in the summer of 1576, requesting the rights and privileges of a university for that college, and, it must be assumed, this undertaking of his was known to the bishops of Poland, the thought naturally arises that the efforts from Vilnius stimulated those from Cracow. The synod of bishops from the Gniezno church province, which convened in Piotrkow in the spring of 1577, decided to guarantee Cracow University financial support. A certain yearly tax was assessed for every diocese.[4] In the above-mentioned letter Bishop Protasevičius asks the pope, "that he would order him to be freed from that contribution imposed on the Diocese of Vilnius" — "*ut me ab illa pensionis contributione liberum esse iubeat."* He could have written the pope in this vein for the additional reason that he personally could not participate in that synod on account of poor health; he had sent a canon from the Capitula of Vilnius in his place. Bishop Protasevičius based his request to be relieved of the obligation to pay taxes for the support of Cracow University on the fact that he himself had founded a college in Vilnius, for which he hoped to obtain a university's privilege; he had already appealed to the pope in regard to this matter. According to him, that college and university was no less necessary to Lithuania than the University of Cracow was to Poland, especially since other universities (no doubt he had the universities of Prague and Vienna in mind) were not so far away for the Poles, although they were considerably further away from Vilnius. "We no longer need the University of Cracow," the bishop writes further on, "and we will not need it in the future because we will here have professors who are no less educated and who will carry out their obligations no less diligently . . . not to mention scholastic discipline, for which somewhat more concern is shown here than over there in Cracow."

Furthermore, in the king's grant, by which the University of Vilnius was founded, it is indirectly stated that the new university is Lithuania's university, for it is repeatedly emphasized in the charter that all the rights and privileges, which Cracow University has, are conferred upon the University of Vilnius. In other words, what the Cracow academy was to Poland, the new Vilnius academy was to be to Lithuania.

Finally, one cannot conclude differently than what the senators and other dignitaries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the majority of whom were non-Catholics, could agree to (though with a heavy heart), that the Jesuit College of Vilnius should be elevated to a university. If the stimulus to the establishment of the University of Vilnius would have been merely the desire to combat the spreading Protestantism in Lithuania more successfully and to help Catholicism establish itself more firmly, then it would seem that this goal would have been achieved rather more effectively not in Vilnius, but in another

location, e.g., in East Prussian Braunsberg, where (a few years earlier than in Vilnius) a similar Jesuit college was founded, which functioned admirably and grew continually. Protestantism was far more active in Prussia, and it was there, in Königsberg, that their university was located; a Catholic university in Braunsberg would have been able to neutralize the latter's influence more effectively and authoritatively. Moreover, individuals who were competent and suitable for academic work were not lacking in Braunsberg. When a chancellor was needed for the new university in Vilnius, the first to occupy that post was Father Philipp Widmanstetter, who was transferred from the Braunsberg college; subsequently, the rector of the university, Father Friedrich Bartsch, moved from Braunsberg to Vilnius. These are only several examples from many possible ones.

The most important reason that at that time the university was established nowhere else but in Vilnius was the possibility to have one's *own* university in the capital of the Grand Duchy and thereby permit Lithuania to become equal to Poland and other civilized countries of Europe in this regard. In asserting this, I do not deny that, when the already-functioning Jesuit college was taken as the foundation of the new university, there was also the desire to strengthen the position of Catholicism in Lithuania. Yet two things must be distinguished: the settling of the Jesuits in Vilnius and the founding of the university. The concern with resisting the wave of Protestantism determined the invitation of the Jesuits, and the desire to possess in Lithuania a good institution of higher learning, comparable to the universities of Western Europe, determined the elevation of the Vilnius Jesuit college to the rank of a university. This ranking was not imposed from the outside, but desired, demanded, and obtained by the Lithuanians themselves.

In historiography it is customary to consider King Stephen Bathory as the founder of the University of Vilnius. This view, propagated by the Polish scholars more for political considerations, was also adopted uncritically by Lithuanian historians. It is of course more useful to the present masters of Lithuania since all the difficulties drop away in explaining how an ignorant and reactionary church, how its bishops and monks, could have performed such a significant role in the history of Lithuanian culture. Nevertheless, historical sources leave no doubts. The principal founding documents of the university indicate the Bishop of Vilnius, Valerijonas Protasevičius, as its founder. At his request, the King conferred the rights of a university upon the Vilnius Jesuit college which the bishop had established. His name, as the founder and sole applicant, was inscribed in the university bull which Pope Gregory XIII granted to Vilnius.**5** It was not the Jesuits, but the Bishop of Vilnius, as the person responsible for everything, who wrote to the pope in the summer of 1579 about the burdens which the privilege, granted by the king, gave rise to.**6** Most importantly, however, wherever and whenever the Jesuits remembered Bishop Protasevičius, they called him the founder of the Vilnius Academy, i.e., of the university, and during the entire course of 200 years, they celebrated the founder's day in the university church of St. John on July 17, or the following Sunday, and a special candle would be lit to commemorate him — as prescribed in the constitutions of the Jesuit order. Therefore, the University of Vilnius is without any doubt a foundation realized by the Bishop of Vilnius, hence by Lithuanians and within Lithuania. The privileges of the king and pope were merely jurisdictional acts of their offices, which by themselves do not constitute a bond of dependence, rather like a city administration in our times, which, by giving a permit to build a house, does not thereby become the builder and owner of that house, even though that permit might be so necessary, that without it, there would be no house.

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Just the fact that true university functioned in Lithuania's capital was of immense benefit to Lithuania and Lithuanians. Nowhere else at that time were there so many Lithuanians studying in one place and also, somewhat later, so many Lithuanian professors as in the University of Vilnius. Virtually everyone who wished to seek higher education in Lithuania studied there. Only a few of other beliefs, especially the Protestants, set out for studies to foreign universities, which were more favorable to them, and some of the sons from the nobility, after attending the University of Vilnius for the first few years, would often depart to "socialize," travelling among the universities of other countries. Historians must very much regret that the matriculation books of the University of Vilnius have not survived. Thus, today it is hard to present accurate statistics about the students, as many other universities are able to do. However, several auxiliary books have survived, e.g., the records or the scientific degrees conferred in the university over a century and a half in a book entitled "Laureae academicae", also several lists of students from the Pontifical Seminary or of the Jesuits themselves (particularly of those who had studied philosophy and theology in Vilnius), catalogues, and others. From them one can judge that approximately one-third of all the students was composed of Lithuanians and Samogitians. (In the sources from the academy period, the origin of individuals was always clearly distinguished, whether someone was a "lituanus" or a "samogita;" however, in indicating their knowledge of languages, most often only one expression was employed: "lingua lituanica").

One often thinks and writes that in those times only the gentry and nobility were able to study in the university, that higher education was inaccessible to the common people. This is an erroneous view. The university did not charge anything for education. Seminaries and dormitories existed which covered the living expenses for a certain number of youths. From 1585, the Jesuits themselves maintained a special dormitory, called a "bursa pauperum" — a "dormitory for the poor," which was also named a "bursa musicorum," or "schola musicorum," since the youths who lived there had to sing hymns in the academy church or perform in the academy's orchestra for their upkeep. In this way, talented, but poor students, who came from the rural areas, were given the opportunity to study and later participate in the cultural and political life of the country. The prefect for studies, who would accept new students, was ordered "not to reject even one because he is not from the nobility or is a poor person" *(Ratio studiorum: Regulae Praef. studior, infer.,* Reg. 9).

Taken as a whole, those authors who have examined this question concede that about half of all students originated from the peasantry or the townspeople. About two-thirds were composed of non-Lithuanian and non-Samogitian students. These were students who were from the eastern areas of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the so-called "rutheni," i.e., those who today are called White Russians. There were also quite a few students from Prussia, from Masovia, from present-day Latvia and Estonia, at that time called Livonia, and also several from other European countries. Even the Protestants and Orthodox believers sent their children to the Jesuit-directed university, because, as the Chancellor of Poland once affirmed to the Nuncio Giovanni Andrea Caligari, the heretics had attempted to send their children to Germany for studies, to the Protestant universities, but they return from there without having learned much, having acquired only evil and barbaric customs.[6a]

Of course, it would be interesting to learn how many students were in Vilnius from Poland itself, not including Masovia. Apparently, there were only several. First, the Poles had their own university in Cracow; secondly, the Poles somehow did not find a common language with Lithuanians in these matters. This is particularly evident from the sources of the Jesuits themselves. From the time when a separate Jesuit province was established in Lithuania (1608) through the entire period of their existence in Vilnius, I have not come across even one Jesuit belonging to the Polish province, who might have studied at the University of Vilnius, even though in Poland itself the Jesuits did not have their own university and, if they wanted to obtain university degrees, had to attend the Cracow University or leave for foreign countries to study — yet it would have been so easy to study in Vilnius with one's own people, as it were. Similarly, I have not encountered Lithuanian Jesuits who might have gone to Poland for studies. This assertion applies in the first place to the Jesuits. However, I would not think it would have been considerably different with other students.

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Just as quite a large portion of students at the University of Vilnius was of Lithuanian heritage, so were there always Lithuanians among the professors of this university — excepting only the first few decades of its activity, when Lithuanians who were prepared for this work were still absent. Because the Jesuit order was in charge of the university and provided the professors, their origin reflected more or less the origin of the Jesuits working in Lithuania. The Lithuanian Jesuit province (which, as we mentioned, had become an autonomous province, independent of Poland, in 1608) was a rather heterogeneous conglomerate, comprised of four quite strong groups: the Lithuanians with the Samogitians, Prussians, White Russians, and Masovians. Latvians, Ukrainians, and a few representatives of other neighboring or more distant peoples were also present. Since the largest part of the catalogues of the Jesuits in the Lithuanian province has survived up to our times, their analysis provides interesting data about the professors of the Vilnius Academy and other Jesuits living near it, their origin, age, education, and in certain periods, even the knowledge of languages for each of them.

Here I would like to cast a quick glance at the origin of the rectors of the University of Vilnius in its Jesuit phase and to give at least a few examples regarding the proportion of Lithuanian Jesuit priests who worked in the academy and lived there. First, the leadership of the order appointed the university rectors, just as it did for all its other colleges. In the first century of the university's activity, there were 27 rectors in all, of whom three held this position twice. The first university rector was a Pole, the renowned Piotr Skarga. When the king continued to assign him other tasks more and more frequently, Pavel Boksza, who was from White Russia, but later learned Lithuanian, was appointed his assistant and, after some time, an independent vice-rector. At the time he was still young and lacked a university degree; consequently he did not attain the title of rector. Yet, by his inborn administrative talent, he benefitted the Lithuanian Jesuit province a great deal. For a few years he directed it, at first as a vice-provincial, and when the province was separated from the Polish part, as its first provincial. In about 1600, he headed the university a second time, but now with the title of rector. After these two, who directed the university during the first five years of its activity, the subsequent rectors were already well-known professors who often came from elsewhere. Thus, among the rectors in the first century, we come across three Spaniards (Garcia Alabianus, Miguel Ortiz, and Benedictus de Soxo), one Italian (Niccolo Salpa), and one Englishman (Adam Broke). Among the local residents, four came from Prussia (Friedrich Bartsch, Johann Rywocki, Gregory Schönhoff, and Philipp Frisius), two were Poles (without the afore-mentioned Piotr Skarga, there was Leonard Kraker, who originated from Poznan, but first taught philosophy in Vilnius a long time and later theology), three were Masovians (Simon Ugniewski, Albert Cieciszowski, and Balthasar Rogalski), two were from White Russia (the already mentioned Pavel Boksza and Pavel Bochen at the end of the century), and one each from Pinsk region (Stanislaw Wloszek), from Lwów in the Ukraine (Simon Niklewicz), and from Livonia, the present-day Latvia (Merkel Schmelling).

The remaining eight were Lithuanians. The first Lithuanian to occupy this responsible position was Jonas Gruževskis (1618-25 and 1641-42). With the second Lithuanian rector, Albertas Kojelavičius, who came from Kaunas, begins a long series of seven Lithuanian rectors following in succession at the University of Vilnius: it is the Samogitian Žygimantas Liauksminas (1656-57), who as the vice-rector concerned himself for more than a year with the academy's buildings which were ravaged by the Russian and Cossack invasion of 1655; after him the rector was Kazimieras Kojelavičius (1657-62), the brother of Albertas, who began the enormous work of reconstructing the destroyed university under difficult conditions; the Samogitian Mykolas Ginkevičius (1662-63), whose work so admirably begun was cut short by death just after one year; he was followed by another Samogitian, Danielius Butvilas (1663-66); later came Andrius Valavičius (1666-69), who descended from an influential Lithuanian noble family; and finally, Stanislovas Tupikas (1669-72), who is also called a "lituanus" in the historical sources. Therefore, of 27 rectors at the University of Vilnius in the first century of its activity, eight (nine, if one adds the afore-mentioned Pavel Boksza) that is, a whole third, were Lithuanian. Considering that Lithuanian

Jesuits who were able to carry out such duties began to appear only after 40 years had elapsed from the founding of the university, those who were termed "lituanus" or "samogita" in the historical sources comprised as much as one half of this period's rectors during the remaining 60 years. This is truly a very significant proportion, which we will not see subsequently. It coincides with a strengthened expression of Lithuanian spirit in other spheres, with an atmosphere which at that time envigorated a common Lithuanian language, history, and customs. Under its influence, quite a few active Lithuanians matured, who were capable of assuming the most important and responsible positions and duties. It is the achievement of these same Lithuanian university rectors that the University of Vilnius, which had been turned into a pile of ashes and abandoned ruins in 1655, recovered within a relatively short time, re-established itself, and returned to its normal course.

If we also cast a glance at the second century of the Jesuit-led university, we will also discover in it almost the same number of rectors, namely 26 (in the first century there were 27); four of them held that position twice, and one, Tobias Arendt from Prussia, even three times. All the rectors who became members of the Lithuanian Jesuit province were people from this region — not one foreigner occupied this office. Three rectors are indicated as Poles, but they too had joined the Lithuanian Jesuit province at an early age. In this century there were only eight true Lithuanians, those who called themselves "lituanus" or "samogita." With the absence of foreigners and with just several belonging to other remote corners of the Lithuanian Jesuit province (two were from the Brest, two from White Russia, and two from Prussia, none from Livonia), the overwhelming majority of Vilnius rectors from this century (Twelve) originated from Masovia and other regions of Northeastern Poland. Until 1758, the composition of the Lithuanian Jesuit province included a large part of the Masovia region along with major colleges in Warsaw itself, and also in Pultusk and Plock. One may assume that the more important leading positions wree more accessible to the Jesuits from Masovia because of their closer ties with the kingdom's capital, Warsaw.

Of the eight rectors in this century, three (Andrius Rybskis, Kazimieras Pšeciševskis, and Antanas Skorulskis) came from Samogitia. The other five were: Jokūbas Hladovickis, who originated from Gardinas and always considered himself Lithuanian; also Kristupas Limantas, who served successfully as rector in the second decade of the XVIII century; after him — Kristupas Garšvila; and already in the second half of that century — Jonas Jurahas and Kazimieras Vazgirdas. To these may be added Vladislovas Daukša, who for some reason called himself a "ruthenus," i.e., a White Russian. He was one of the most notable men of Lithuania in the XVIII century, as his necrology stresses. Because of him, as the university rector during two periods (1727-31 and 1741-45) and, more importantly, as the head of the entire Lithuanian Jesuit province on repeated occasions (1723-27 and 1735-38), the University of Vilnius began to rise from its decades-old slumber. Cooperation with other countries began to increase. The more talented students, the future professors, once again began to travel to foreign countries for their studies after a lengthy interval — not only to Rome, but also Prague, France, and elsewhere. Special lectures in history, geography, experimental physics, and modern languages were introduced into the program of studies at the University of Vilnius; the field of specialties in mathematics was expanded. Today everyone recognizes this visible renewal of the university, the first signs of which are noticeable in the period 1730-40. Continuing in this direction, much was accomplished in a short time, so that the Jesuit-directed University of Vilnius could pride itself on its astronomical observatory and be considered one of the most important universities in Europe.

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Since the growing influence of the rectors of Lithuanian heritage is particularly evident in about the middle of the XVII century, another question becomes interesting — namely, what the proportion of Lithuanians among the Jesuit priests who generally worked and lived in the proximity of the Vilnius Academy was. From the Jesuit catalogues referred to above, it is not so hard to find out. Normally, these catalogues would be compiled every three years (and they are called "catalogi triennales" — "tri-annual catalogues"), although four or five years could occasionally elapse until the following catalogue. I have selected the interval between the years 1628 and 1672.[7]

In the spring of 1628, 21 Jesuit priests (these were professors, other officials, those performing pastoral work, and priests who were still studying) were listed in the Vilnius Academy. Of these, 8 were "lituani" and 3 "samogitae"; hence, a total of 11 or exactly 50% of the entire number. Among those who originated from elsewhere, the Masovians made up the greater number — 6.

In 1633, there were already 31 priests, of whom 11 were "lituani" and 2 "samogitae," or 42%. Among the others, as many as 12 were "masovitae," i.e., Masovians. One Pole was also present, Grigori Symonowicz, but it was said of him that he had preached his sermons and expounded the catechism in Lithuanian for three years.

In 1636, there were 27 priests, of whom 8 were Lithuanian and 1 Samogitian, or a total of 33%. The same number of Masovians (9) was that time there were 8 Masovians.

In 1639 there were 29 priests; the number of Lithuanians was the same: 8 "lituani" and 1 "samogita," or 31% of all the priests; at that time there were 8 Masurians.

I believe one can draw the conclusion that in the second quarter of the XVII century, the Lithuanian Jesuit priests in the Vilnius Academy constituted approximately 30-40% of the combined number of Jesuit priests there. However, at about the middle of that century, the proportion of Lithuanian clergy rose considerably.

In the spring of 1655, that is, just before the brutal Russian and Cossack rampage in Vilnius, a total of 43 Jesuit priests worked and studied at the academy. Twenty-one of them are indicated as "lituanus" and four as "samogitae". The rector also was a Lithuanian, Albertas Kojelavičius. Hence, at that time, a total of 25 priests, or 58%, were of Lithuanian descent, almost two-thirds. Only 6 were from Masovia.

In 1658, when some of the clergy already could return to Vilnius after the great destruction, only 8 priests lived in the academy, most of whom performed pastoral work because the university did not yet function at the time. Of those eight, five priests were Lithuanian, among them two from the Kojelavičius family (Albertas and Kazimieras) and Jonas Jaknavičius. In percentage terms this would be 63% — possibly the highest percentage during the whole 200-year history — but it must not be forgotten that the situation was not normal.

In 1669, after everything had already returned to its normal course, among 22 priests, 8 were "lituani" and even 5 were "samogitae," or 59% — just about as many as in 1655. It should be noted that at this period too, the rector was the Lithuanian Andrius Valavičius.

After three more years had gone by, in 1672, the proportion of Lithuanian clergy in the academy declined substantially: of the 20 Jesuit priests there, only 4 are pointed out as Lithuanians and 2 as Samogitians — in percentage terms, 30%, thus only half the number three years ago, although the university rector was now also Lithuanian — Stanislovas Tupikas. One of the causes of the sudden decline would have had to be that some of the Lithuanian Jesuits who had been performing pastoral work in Vilnius were transferred to other locations, particularly to the border area near Latvia, where new mission centers and residencies were set up at about this period. Therefore, after the temporary strengthening of the number of Lithuanian Jesuits in the academy and even their preponderance, there was a reversion to the previous proportion. Those 30-40% Lithuanian Jesuits also remained at the Vilnius Academy throughout the following century.

The curve illustrating the composition of Lithuanian Jesuits in the University of Vilnius, which rises considerably at about the middle of the XVII century and then descends again, I think permits one to assert that it is very probable (as I have mentioned earlier) that the trend of development manifested in the middle of the century would have continued longer and perhaps determined the university's subsequent evolution, were it not for that unexpected terrible blow delivered to the city of Vilnius and the university itself by the Russians and Cossacks in 1655, knocking everything out of kilter. Until it was possible to rise out of it and recover, one had to concentrate all of one's strength on the problems of existence and not much place remained for other aspirations.

Although in the first two centuries (more than at any time subsequently) the University of Vilnius was a multi-national university, Lithuanian problems always occupied an important place in it. When the first Jesuits arrived in Vilnius, not one Lithuanian was present in the entire order. One must acknowledge the great insight and sincere efforts by the first head of the Jesuits who had settled in Vilnius, the Pole Stanislaw Warszewicki, in quickly preparing several Jesuit priests who could perform Lithuanian pastoral work. In the first years already he sent several Lithuanian youths who were suitable to be brother assistants from Vilnius to the noviciate in Braunsberg. The very first Lithuanian Jesuit was Brother Petras Vaicekavičius, who knew the tailor's trade. Lithuanian priests joined the work in the 1580's. The first had a purely Lithuanian last name — Jonas Kumelis, the son of a Vilnius merchant, who was sent to Rome for theological studies. A few years later, Jokūbas Lavinskas, known in history for an interesting account of his travels through Lithuanian-Samogitian villages, was ordained a priest.[8]

It was also to the advantage of Lithuanians that, in the beginning, foreigners, mostly Italians and Spaniards, were appointed to administer the entire Polish-Lithuanian Jesuit province and were given the position of rector of the University of Vilnius. Being neutral, they were able to better understand the specific matters concerning Lithuanians and to more appropriately settle the disagreements arising among Poles and Lithuanians. Such disagreements and complaints appeared more and more frequently in Vilnius, the more the Lithuanians who had completed their studies took part in practical activity.

Here are a few excerpts from the correspondence of those years. Here is what one of the first Lithuanian Jesuit priests, Laurynas Monikovijus of Kaunas, writes in a letter to his superiors in Rome, dated February 6, 1595: "Religiousness and piety in Vilnius are sufficient and constantly gaining strength through the efforts of the Jesuits. But in the other towns and villages of Lithuania, a lamentable spectacle remains [in Latin: "More veteri miserabilis Lituania"; literally it would be: poor little Lithuania of old customs!] The inhabitants' ignorance of matters of the faith is such, that you will not find it greater in the mission lands." Monikovijus complains that there are very few pastors who speak Lithuanian and also few Jesuits who could evangelize in Lithuanian. There are only six students in the theological seminary from such a large diocese like Vilnius. In the dormitory for the poor twelve are somehow maintained. From the context one must conclude that these poor were Lithuanians. "In general, no one concerns himself with the Lithuanians here" ("De caetero nulla cura Lituanorum"), writes Monikovijus further on. "There is a pontifical seminary here and many various dormitories. However, let it be known to you, Honorable Father [he is addressing the general superior of the order] that since our own Polish Fathers favor the youths of their land, almost no Lithuanian succeeds in entering that seminary. For this reason, many talented Lithuanian youths, who later could perform pastoral work perfectly well, now, supported by indigent parents, study a few years, and, lacking the means to continue their studies, are forced, with a very heavy heart, into trade or some other craft." That is why he asks the Father General, that in his fatherly goodness, he somehow might help the young Lithuanians who are studying in Vilnius.[9] This is a truly interesting letter by a Lithuanian Jesuit. He graphically confirms the lamentable situation of

Lithuanians in the Vilnius diocese, which was visited that same year of 1595 by A. Comuleus, who was sent by the nuncio. The visitor saw to it then that the diocesan seminary and the "bursa Valeriana" (the dormitory for indigent noblemen), which was founded by Bishop Protasevičius and was under the academy's jurisdiction, should receive more funds for its maintenance with the condition that a certain number of Lithuanians be supported there and that they be supervised by a senior who would also be a Lithuanian.[10]

From the letter of Father Monikovijus, which was recounted here, it is also evident that the self-seeking designs of the Poles were already noted then. In addition, this letter serves as evidence that Lithuanians were not inclined to accept everything in silence.

More similar statements exist from that same period. One must not omit mentioning on this occasion one of the most zealous defenders of Lithuanian interests in Vilnius, the English Jesuit, a professor of the academy, and subsequently its rector, Adam Broke.[11] He taught moral theology in Vilnius for about 20 years and thus prepared several hundred priests for pastoral work in Lithuania and its neighbors. Hence, the situation of Lithuanian Catholics was well known to him, not only in the capital of Lithuania, but also in the provinces. Apparently the growing disagreements among Poles and Lithuanians prompted the then provincial to seriously consider the establishment of a separate Lithuanian Jesuit province by detaching it from the Polish province. The afore-mentioned Father Broke wrote to Rome in regard to this question at the end of May, 1595, that consideration should be given to preparing as many Lithuanian and German theology and philosophy specialists as possible, because there are too few of them now, although the Poles have enough of them. By dividing the existing Polish province in two, Lithuania would be allotted Prussia and Livonia; therefore German specialists would be needed, not just Lithuanian. Broke states that he had heard from one influential father that, if Lithuania were to become a separate province, the Poles would not want to remain in it (as he says) on account of the terrible cold. He is certain that the Lithuanians and Prussians would gladly set about studying and zealously evangelizing, if they would only see that they were being given consideration.[12]

In another letter, written a month and a half later, Father Broke suggests that among the provincial's and also among the university rector's advisors there should always be a Lithuanian. Otherwise, it might appear that the superiors do not take account of them and consider them incapable of carrying out these duties. Previously, among the advisors of the rector would be a Lithuanian, but this year, (1595) there was none. Therefore, he suggests appointing F.

Jeronimas Kniškas (elsewhere he is named Kiniškis) as one. Further, Broke notes that the provincial is afraid of accepting several true Lithuanians to the pontifical seminary. At the same time, Prussians and those who speak German are present there. That is why he asks the Father General to free the provincial of this scruple and permit him to accept at least 6 Lithuanians, who speak Lithuanian well, because of a great lack of Lithuanian clergy. The parish pastors often do not understand their parishioners and the latter are unable to communicate with the pastor. For this reason the parishes remain for a long time without a priest.[13]

Two years later, the provincial himself, the Italian, Bernardo Confalonieri, in writing to Rome, mentions the presence of something akin to two parties — the Lithuanians and Poles — which is felt among the Jesuits in Vilnius, but they are not public and do not disturb the common activity.[14]

The afore-mentioned Father Broke again spoke for the partition of the province in 1597. He discovered that the provincial with his three advisors had planned to divide the province in such a way that Prussia would be allotted to Poland and Livonia to Lithuania. Broke, however, was convinced that this kind of partition would be harmful to Lithuania. For this reason he wrote to the Father General in Rome: "Since the Poles defend their interests diligently and there is no one to look after Lithuanian interests," ("*Et quia Poloni diligenter agant in hac re causam suam et nemo est, qui Lituanorum agat")* he has resolved to state everything he is thinking about openly. (Brock underlined this sentence in his letter). He asks the Father General to take pity on poor Lithuania *("ut misereatur miserae Lituaniae")* and not agree to such a partition, in which one province would prosper and the other languish. Fr. Brock advises leaving the Prussian colleges (practically Braunsberg) to the Lithuanian province. Otherwise, Lithuania would be left with just one large college and university in Vilnius, although Poland would have as many as three similar (though not university) colleges; in Kalisz, Poznan, and Braunsberg. Vilnius alone could not assure an adequate increase in the number of Jesuits for Lithuania since not that many candidates exist for the Jesuits from the colleges in Livonia and Eastern Lithuania, where Catholics are only a minority, but quite a few of them would come from the Braunsberg College. People who speak German are needed for Livonia: where could they be found if Prussia were to be separated from the Lithuanian province? A serious danger is present for the Vilnius Academy itself. If there will not be enough young Jesuits, the number of philosophy and theology students will decrease. Should only about four students remain, who would want to teach an academic course for these few? Besides, Prussians get along better with Lithuanians than with Poles. All who have had dealings with these people know this. He himself (Broke) has observed this over many years in his discussions with the Jesuits from these areas. It is, in truth, known to him that the Prussian bishops would like to side with the Poles, and not with the Lithuanians. But, to him, this is nothing to wonder at because the bishops are Poles. If they were Prussians, they would think differently. Father Broke presents some arguments, all of which we cannot examine here in detail.[15]

I have dwelt upon this letter somewhat longer because from it one can see what kinds of problems troubled the University of Vilnius, which had not even lived through 20 years. One can sense from the letter in some measure the sincere efforts of the sympathetic Londoner, Adam Broke, to be an advocate for Lithuanians in the face of their ill-treatment by the Poles.

More than 10 years passed before the Lithuanian Jesuit province was entirely separated from the Polish province in 1608. Nevertheless, Fr. Broke's advice and admonitions were not in vain. From 1598, a vice-provincial was to be appointed for Lithuania and he was entrusted with responsibility not only over the institutions of the order within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania but also had authority over Braunsberg in East Prussia, Pultusk in Masovia, and even the Warsaw residence which was opened at about that time. It remained this way in the separated Lithuanian province. Today we have difficulty understanding such anomalies as the Warsaw Jesuit house, near which a large college was opened shortly, and the colleges of Plock, Pultusk, and Drohiczyn also being included in the framework of the Lithuanian Jesuit province, while at the same time, the college functioning in Lithuanian Brest was under the authority of the Polish province. In carrying out the division of the formerly unitary Polish province into two, the chief consideration was the survival of the separate provinces. To ensure that the Lithuanian Jesuits would have a firm backbone of colleges, that they would have an assured increase in the order's membership, they, and not the Poles, were allotted the institutions in Prussia and Masovia, and even the Warsaw residence itself, which was next to the king's court palace; for this, the Poles were incensed at the Lithuanians for an entire 150 years, until a separate Masovian Jesuit province was formed in 1758. We must admit that this partition of the provinces contributed greatly to the steady development of the University of Vilnius, in regard to both students and professors. However, from a national point of view, such a distribution of Jesuit institutions and territories was less favorable to the development of Lithuanian culture. But this, it seems, was a lesser evil *(minus malum),* for otherwise, as Fr. Broke had already foreseen, the University of Vilnius most likely would have completely failed. Now, however, as we have previously seen, there were admirable expressions of Lithuanian culture even under such circumstances, especially about the middle of the 17th century.

Similar situations of conflict, which are reflected in the quoted fragments of correspondence from the conclusion of the 16th century, one must assume, were present in other periods. They, however, did not attain such a dramatic character, if for no other reason than that the Lithuanian Jesuit province was autonomous and entirely independent of the Polish province. In general, it appears there were no closer ties between these two provinces.

* * *

Up to this point we have seen Lithuanian national identity as the students and professors of the Vilnius Academy had spoken out for it, as they had attempted to defend it against Polish predominance and the Poles' self-interested attacks. Nevertheless, we would like to know what the content of that Lithuanian identity represented, in particular, whether those who considered themselves Lithuanian or Samogitian also spoke Lithuanian. That the concept "lituanus" was closely tied to the knowledge of the language, at least in the initial period of the academy, is evident from the letter of the aforementioned Father Monikovijus. Pleading with the Father General to somehow help the Lithuanians studying at the Vilnius Academy, he foresees their usefulness in Lithuanian pastoral work. Therefore, knowledge of the language was a basic indication of Lithuanian national identity for those youths. But this was not always valid. When Nicolaus Christophorus Radziwiłł reminded his brother, Bishop George, that he was a Lithuanian, and not a Pole, he did so in a letter written in Polish, having in mind more a political aspect, since most likely neither the first nor the second spoke Lithuanian.

What was the situation with the Lithuanian Jesuits? Did those who considered themselves Lithuanian or Samogitian speak Lithuanian? Since the Jesuit catalogues sometimes (not always, for accurate information is lacking, notably in the 16th and 17th centuries) indicate who knew which languages, it is also possible to answer this question in general terms. I do not have systematically compiled statistics concerning this question. Up to now I have merely tried to bring this data together from the final decade of the Jesuits' presence in Vilnius, before the dissolution of their order, namely, during the years 1761 and 1770.[16]

In 1761, there was a total of 588 members in the Lithuanian Jesuit province (priests, seminary students, and brothers). Three years previously, the partition of the former Lithuanian Jesuit province had taken place. A separate Masovian province with its center in Warsaw was formed out of the Polish and, in part, White Russian areas. The remaining Lithuanian province now included the purely Lithuanian colleges and residencies, as well as the institutions in Prussia, in Latvia, and partly in White Russia. Thus, of the aforementioned 588 members of the Lithuanian province in 1761, 162 are called "lituani" and 62 "samogitae" — 38% of all Jesuits. Among those 162 "lituani," 85, hence somewhat more than half, spoke Lithuanian, and among the 62 "samogitae," as many as 61, i.e., *all* except one used Lithuanian. In addition, another 31 who were neither Lithuanian nor Samogitian knew Lithuanian: eight White Russians ("rutheni"), eight Livonians, four Curonians, four Varmians, three Prussians, two from the localities around Pinsk, and one Masovian and one Pole. Thus, in sum total 177 Jesuits of 588 (30%) used Lithuanian in that year, almost a third of the members of the province.

After nine years (1770), right before the abolition of the order, 671 Jesuits were present in the Lithuanian Jesuit province and as many as 192 seminary students among them — a good sign, testifying that the Lithuanian Jesuit province was still spiritually healthy and vigorous, untouched by spiritual decadence, since just during nine years its membership increased by even 85 members. Of those 671 Jesuits in 1770, 290 are termed Lithuanian or Samogitian (my fault, that I did not count Lithuanians separately from the Samogitians when I compiled these statistics) — therefore, 43% (9 years ago it was 38%) of the sum total of members in the province. Lithuanian was spoken by 158 or them. Since another 22 non-Lithuanians and non-Samogitians used Lithuanian, the total number of those knowing Lithuanian amounted to 180, or 27% (9 years before, it was 30%). The conclusion: as the number of Lithuanians joining the Jesuits rose, their knowledge of Lithuanian declined. Apparently the linguistic assimilation of Lithuania's eastern ethnographic regions had already begun by then. Those

originating from there felt and listed themselves as Lithuanians, but no longer spoke the language. Those from Samogitia, Western Aukštaitija, and Užnemunė (essentially contemporary Lithuania), evidently the great majority at the time — much more than has been assumed to the present, not only among the peasants, but also the gentry — used Lithuanian.

Another question: what was their level of knowledge of the language? Today it is difficult to provide an answer. Most likely there were no examinations of any sort in Lithuanian before registration in the catalogue. Apparently the experience of the superiors themselves and statements by separate individuals determined this. Because the purpose of such indications concerning knowledge of languages in the catalogues was to inform the provincial so that he could more easily determine the suitability of each Jesuit to work in one or another location, one must suppose that no one, especially among the clergy, boasted of a completely poor knowledge of the language because he could be assigned for apostolic work on the basis of that language and consequently, he would have only difficulties and unpleasant experiences from such unfounded boasting.

Where and how would Lithuanian be learned? Those who thought of themselves as Lithuanians or Samogitians, it must be assumed, most often learned Lithuanian in their home surroundings. However, it apparently was possible to learn Lithuanian or to improve one's knowledge of it and practice it elsewhere, e.g., while studying at Lithuanian colleges or the University of Vilnius, for otherwise it would be hard to explain how non-Lithuanians were able to learn Lithuanian — and we have seen that there always was a certain number of such people. In the two centuries surveyed here I did not have the occasion to encounter any special Lithuanian language lectures within the programs of studies in the university or colleges. On the other hand, neither was Polish taught, just as no special lectures were given in French at that time in Paris. Only Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were legitimate university subjects. Indications exist that, in the beginning, intensifying and stimulating the use of local languages was contemplated in the Jesuits' house of studies. This was included in the first *Ratio studiorum* project. But the commission which met in Vilnius to examine this project decided *against* such a suggestion; the Jesuits of Southern Germany and commissions in certain other provinces decided likewise, so that this initial suggestion by the leadership of the order was ruled out and Latin remained the official language of scholastic documents, classes, and lectures.[17] For Lithuanians this had positive consequences since the strengthened use of a local language would have meant for Vilnius and many other colleges — excepting perhaps Kražiai, Pašiaušė, and Kaunas — a strengthened dominance of Polish; in this way, the retention of Latin as the sole language markedly limited the domination of Polish.

This does not mean, however, that absolutely nothing was done to improve the learning of Lithuanian within the framework of the University of Vilnius and the Jesuit colleges. Researchers of our cultural history, particularly Prof. Jurgis Lebedys, have proven the existence of special groups concerned with practicing Lithuanian, e.g., at the home of the Jesuit noviciate of Vilnius near the Church of St. Ignatius.[18] Recently another scholar drew attention to several allusions in historical sources of the academy, which allow one to conclude that such a Lithuanian language group functioned at the University of Vilnius.[19] The statute of Jesuit schools itself — the so-called *Ratio studiorum* — provides for such practice groups and gives them the title "academies." Only exemplary and advanced students would be admitted to these academies, so that by getting practical experience they could extend their knowledge in a certain branch of learning. These groups also had to keep registration books with lists of members and reviews of their activities. What a treasure it would be for us if a similar record of a Lithuanian language practice group would have survived! Unfortunately, not one of them — nor from groups for other purposes — has survived.

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In this way, historical sources have opened up for us new horizons, so to speak, regarding the participation of professors and students of Lithuanian origin in the life of the university.

Unfortunately, time does not permit me to dwell longer on those fruits of Lithuanian culture attained by the numerous Lithuanians who took part in the life of the University of Vilnius. They are, in fact, more or less well known to us already. These are the first Lithuanian books in Lithuania Proper which appeared right in the vicinity of the university: Lithuanian catechisms, Gospels, prayer books, parables, hymnals, books of sermons, even a dictionary, and later a Lithuanian grammar textbook. All this was prepared, published, and disseminated, for the most part, by Lithuanian professors and students of the university. These publications were used by Lithuania's clergy and monastic orders (the Franciscans, Bernardines, Dominicans, Carmelites, and others), who performed apostolic work in Lithuania. It goes without saying that, besides the Jesuits, there were other individuals, other monastic orders and monks, who left behind Lithuanian writings and published Lithuanian books, but that these books were also printed in the university's printing shop. No doubt, the University of Vilnius contributed rather much to the support of Lithuanian culture in various ways, particularly in Lithuania's rural areas. And it was from these same rural areas that the new Lithuania, whose children we all are, was reborn.

In celebrating the 400th anniversary of the University of Vilnius, we can deservedly take pride in what our forefathers accomplished in those often difficult times, characterized by the oppression of wars, diseases, and all sorts of misfortunes, and sometimes by truly dramatic tension. Nevertheless, the venerable tradition of the university obligates its present, it invites everyone to be open to the spirit of the age and mankind's achievements in learning, but also to foster a complete person, capable of freely expressing himself and creatively maturing, not only in body, but also in spirit, in a word, having all the conditions and possibilities to freely search for truth and seek good fortune.

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1 The Latin texts of the cited acts on the foundation of the university will be found in the following publications: M. Baliński, *Dawna Akademia Wileńska,* Petersburg, 1862 (p. 435-438, 427-435); J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet Wileński,* 1579-1831 (1, p. 51-53 and 44-48), and in the study by P. Rabikauskas, "Die Gründungsbulle der Universität Vilnius": *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae,* 16 (1978), pp. 160-170.

2 "Wasza Miłość Litwin, nie Polak. Zycz Wasza Milość narodowi swemu, aby tez o nim wiedziano. Polacy mniemaja, zě nad nie nie masz, a Litw3 radzi by potłumic" — cited in the book by H. Wisner, *Najjaśniejsza Rzeczpospolita,* Warszawa, 1978, p. 17.

3 The original text of the letter is preserved in the Vatican archive: S.S. Vescovi 10, fol. 293r-v; it is also published in A. Theiner, *Annales ecclesiastici,* II, Romae, 1856, pp. 314-15.

4 Cf. J. Subera, *Synody prowincjonalne arcybiskupów gnieznieńskich,* Warszawa, 1971, p. 138.

5 See note No. 1 above.

6 The original Latin text of the letter is published in Theiner, op. cit.. Ill, pp. 66-67; and in Rabikauskas, op. cit., pp. 165-66.

6a Cf. *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana,* IV, 1915, p. 96.

7 The data presented here are from the catalogues of the Lithuanian Jesuit province: ARSI (The Jesuit archive in Rome), Lith. 7, 8,11, and 13.

8. This travelogue in Latin is published in *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana,* VI, Cracoviae, 1938, pp. 770-75.

9 ARSI, Germ. 174 fol. 108 r-v.

10 Cf. *Lietuvių enciklopedija,* IV, Boston, 1954, p. 86.

11 Cf. *Lietuvių enciklopedija,* XXXVI. Boston, 1969, p. 133.

12 ARSI, Germ. 174 fol. 238 r.

13 ARSI, Germ. 175 fol. 36 r, 37 i.

14 ARSI, Germ. 177 fol. 149 r-v.

15 ARSI, Germ. 177 fol. 38 r-39 r.

16 Data taken from the 1761 and the 1770 catalogues: ARSI, Lith. 31, 32.

17 Cf. S. Bednarski, "Jezuici polscy wobec projektu Ordynacji studjów", Przegląd Powszechny, 205, 1935, p. 235.

18 J. Lebedys, "Y-a-t-il eu à l'Université de Vilnius une chaire de lituanien aux XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles?": *Acta baltico-slavica,* 3. Bialystok, 1966, p. 99-106; J. Lebedys., "Ar senajame Vilniaus universitete buvo lietuvių kalbos katedra?", in J. Lebedys, *Lituanistikos baruose,* I, Vilnius 1972, p. 201-210.

19 Eugenija Ulčinskaitė in *Kultūros Barai* (Vilnius), 1978, No. 7.