LITUANUS
LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Volume 44, No.2 - Summer 1998
Editor of this issue: Robertas Vitas

ISSN 0024-5089

THE FIRST LITHUANIAN BOOK IN PRINT

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1997 marked an important event in any nation's past: the appearance of the first book in the native language, in this case in Lithuanian. It was four hundred and fifty years ago. For this occasion a great deal has been written about the event,[1] because the previous anniversary, in 1947, was a time closely following the Second World War and Lithuania lived under stern restrictions imposed by Stalin who did not view Lithuania, or any nationality, with favor. Now, however, is the first time that the newly reborn independent Lithuania has a chance to celebrate an important cultural event of its past without any pressures from the ouside.

This article will not examine in detail any of the works by Lithuanians that have appeared both in Lithuanian and in English. Basically they all have the same attitude towards history, which does not differ greatly from the traditional views first established by Simonas Daukantas (1793-1864), who had absorbed the romantic consciousness during his studies at the University at Vilnius from his teachers: I. Danilowicz, J. Lelewel and I. Onacewicz. In his works Daukantas mingled facts with legends and myths; his aim was to present the new Lithuania in the image of the old, e. g. medieval pagan Lithuanians were more virtuous than their Christian neighbors.

Since the middle of the nineteenth century Lithuanian historiography followed Daukantas' mode of thinking: history was conceived primarily as a means of instruction and edification. The establishment of an independent Lithuania in 1918 saw the need to produce nationally and socially useful myths, especially during the medieval period before the Act of Kreva of 1385-1386, before Lithuanians became involved with the Kingdom of Poland, which in their view was the cause for the subsequent decline and fall of the *Rzeczpospolita*.[2] The anti-Polish sentiments became even more acute after Poland's illegal occupation of Vilnius in 1920.

During the years of independence (1918-1940) Lithuanian historians tried to enlarge their vision by earning their doctorates in western European universities, especially Germany, but Lithuanian historiography on the whole remained conceptually and theoretically feeble as was admitted by leading Lithuanian historian Zenonas Ivinskis in 1940.[3]

During the Soviet occupation the historical laws of vulgar, i. e. Soviet-style Marxism became dominant and class struggle became the universal explanation of all historical processes, which led to many anachronisms. Furthermore, Muscovy, later Russia and then the Soviet Union, becomes the liberator, promoting the welfare of the oppressed classes.[4] The past was used to legitimize the present, and the present depicted as the acme of human progress. The method used is well represented by Bronius Dundulis, who, received his doctorate at Paris, but who in 1968 stated in one of his books that "...Soviet historical science also recognizes a certain role for individual actors in history, for those who through their acts, in essence coinciding with the interests of the people, objectively played a progressive role in Lithuanian history..."[5]

But the most detrimental effect of Soviet occupation was Lithuania's parochial isolation from Western European historians, and the determinist and the positivist mode of historical writing remains dominant even today. After *perestroika* and, especially the reestablishment of independent Lithuania, nationalism plays an important role.

Western historians, especially in the last forty years, have made tremendous changes in historiography; the horizons of historical research have markedly widened. Of the many sub-specialities, only two bear directly on the problem at hand, namely the history of books and printing and the history of popular culture. Therefore this treatment of the appearance of the first book in Lithuanian will differ greatly from traditional interpretations, which tended to view it from a national perspective, rather than a part of the Reformation that was revolutionizing Europe.

As in any other society, the Lithuanian intellectual elite as a whole consisted of multiple scholarly communities, each being more or less hierarchical with individuals scrambling to the top. What we find in the northeast corner of Europe in the first half of the sixteenth century is not that different, but the climbers use two approaches to the truth, the traditionally learned and the one newly constructed by contemporary thinkers: Valla, Erasmus, Luther and Calvin, to name the most prominent ones.

Print, by establishing larger and larger peer groups, inevitably required standardized languages, as it did eventually in Lithuania.

What was new during the Renaissance was the possibility to think independently, or at least delude oneself into believing it. And that is where Wycliff and Hus, Luther and Calvin come in, who changed the limits of belief. When Rome awoke in 1543, the Council of Trent made all Catholics as much missionaries as the Franciscans had been before. And its elite troops were the Jesuits. Notice the Franciscans were in Vilnius by about 1245, while the Jesuits arrived only in 1569. Yet it is they who dominated the scene after that date.

Before we turn our attention to Mažvydas, we have to discuss the role of literacy in any given culture. In Lithuania in the sixteenth century there was practically nothing written in Lithuanian, except for some twenty-four lines of the most basic prayers on the flyleaf of a book in Latin, printed in 1503, and some ninety marginal notations of words and phrases in another, printed in 1501.[6] In 1994 Narbutas uncovered another two words inscribed in Lithuanian in a book of homilies, published in Cologne in 1530.[7] It has to be assumed that other manuscripts must have contained similar religious materials, but at best it was used by priests to enable them to communicate with their newly converted parishioners in their own language. Mažvydas' catechism played a very similar role, as shall be seen below. For all practical purposes one can say that there was no manuscript tradition in Lithuanian until then, and literacy appeared only very slowly with the coming of the printed book.

On the other hand, it would be incorrect to call Lithuanian society illiterate, because Latin was used by the educated elites and Belorussian was the official language of public documents. The situation was not that different from western European countries several centuries earlier, when vernacular languages were first written down. This began in the ninth and tenth centuries.[8]

To argue the importance of the contents of a book, or literacy in general, might seem unnecessary, but this importance is a relatively recent insight, and the difference that literacy had on society must be stressed. It is a difference not only in a purely mechanical sense but, more importantly, in a cognitive one: "what we can do with our minds and what our minds can do with us."[9]

Put in its simplest form, the proposition seems self-evident, that the means of storing, retrieving, and transmitting information over space and time influence the way people think. Among the earliest to state it were two Soviet psychologists, Lev S. Vygodsky (1896-1934)[10] and Alexandr R. Luria (1902-1977),[11] writing from the thirties on. In the west, however, it was not until 1962 that Marshall McLuhan, a professor of English at the University of Toronto, pointed out the problems associated with typographical literacy and its conflict with the electronic media.[12] Since then anthropologists (Jack Goody, Edmund Leach, and Robin Horton), classicists (Eric A. Havelock, Albert B. Lord), philosophers (Walter J. Ong) and others have treated this subject, but historians have avoided it.

The first two historians who fleetingly broached the subject of the influence of printed books on the literate public were Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin in 1958,[13] but it was not until 1979 that Elizabeth L. Eisenstein made the history of books and printing legitimate topics for historians.[14] Today it is a blossoming sub-speciality of history with a rapidly growing list of publications. Perennial specialization, however, tends to splinter the enterprise into a variety of insights and approaches.

It is generally accepted among historians and anthropologists that what is termed civilization demands a complex society and it cannot be reached without writing.[15] But from the very earliest beginnings the written word often became the sacred word of God, especially because the early writing systems were complicated and required years of study, and for that reason usually were a monopoly of the religious establishment. What was true for the Egyptians or the Summerians was also true during most of the Middle Ages, i.e. that the written word was primarily produced and read in ecclesiastic and monastic establishments.[16] Secular literary texts in Greek and Latin first emerged from musty libraries only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries thanks to humanists enamored with the classical past.[17] This and the invention of the printing press led to the desacralization of the written word. Its effects, however, do not appear clearly until the seventeenth century when, gradually, the observed universe replaced the revealed one. In our period — mid-sixteenth century — the Bible in the hands of the reformers became a weapon to fight papal authority.

The situation was quite different in Lithuania, where religious texts dominated the production of printed books well into the nineteenth century. Of the 1,375 editions printed in Lithuanian until 1861, 880, or 64%, were religious in nature, and all the *belles lettres* constituted only 59 editions (4.3%).[18] Therefore, while it is true that the first book in Lithuanian appeared in 1547, the medieval mode of mentation prevailed much longer.[19] Mažvydas' spark did not start a fire, but it smoldered until nationalism was born in the second half of the nineteenth century and produced a real Lithuanian Renaissance. True,

some ideas of the Italian Renaissance did penetrate the Lithuanian elite (they are enumerated by Jurginis),[20] but the only one that really took root was the myth that Lithuanians were descendants of Roman exiles,[21] an idea that was motivated not so much by the love of the classical culture, but as a means to counteract the pretensions of the Polish-Sarmatian nobility.

Another notion that distorts the perception of the religious situation in Lithuania at this time is the belief that Lithuanians were much more pagan than other Europeans. We can read this in Mažvydas' own writings and those of many others, especially in the reports by various Jesuits.[22] The fact the Lithuania was converted to Catholicism in 1387 and Samogitia only in 1413 gave credence to such beliefs, but few non-specialists realize that the situation was not much different in other parts of western Europe, where pagan customs flourished.[23]

We should also remember that the Catholic Church adopted and adapted existing pagan myths for its own purposes, the line separating the practice of religion and the practice of magic being vague and indistinct.[24] The Church from its very beginnings incorporated in its popular practices pagan ones, or what was later called magic and, eventually, witchcraft.[25] After all, every Catholic priest during the celebration of the mass by pronouncing the words *Hoc est enim corpus meum* magically/religiously transforms (transubstantiates) bread into the flesh of Jesus Christ.[26]

As a matter of fact, the major problem that faced the reformers was not exegesis but translation into vernacular tongues. It was Dante who two centuries before the Reformation, in his *De vulgari eloquentia,* claimed for the vernacular the same capacity to express ideas and sentiments as Greek and Latin. But it was only at the beginning of the sixteenth century that vernacular writings began to gain respect and, possibly, the growth in the cities of a middle class which was literate in its own language, but not in Latin or Greek, created a demand, especially after the invention of printing and the subsequent decrease in the price of books.

Luther was not so much interested in verbatim translation as in getting to the spirit of the Bible, considering it as God's incarnation in the word, just as Jesus was the incarnation of God in the flesh. He dared to ignore the *magisterium of* the Catholic Church and viewed his own insights as absolutely correct.[27] And while in the early days of the Reformation a great number of reformers arose and various opinions were being proclaimed by many, Luther's translation of the New Testament was most popular and, by 1533, at least eighty-five editions had appeared. By 1546, the year of his death, 430 whole or partial editions of his version of the Bible had been published.[28] There were also many translations into other vernacular languages, including Lithuanian, the first of which was partially published around 1660 - 1662 in London by Samuel Boguslaw Chylinski.[29] The first complete New Testament in Lithuanian appeared in 1701 and the first complete Bible in 1735, both in Königsberg.[30]

By the end of the twenties, especially after the Peasant Rebellion of 1525, Luther realized that reading, and especially interpreting the Bible correctly, was impossible for the masses. What they needed was an authoritative textbook which made Luther's understanding of the Bible clear in a compact fashion. For this reason Luther published in April 1529 his (long) *German catechism,* which consisted primarily of sermons he had delivered the previous year. The *Short catechism* appeared in May of the same year.[31] Both were intended for pastors, instructing them "what they shall teach and preach."[32]

The Reformation temporarily permitted the freedom to speculate, to create new ideas, not to repeat everything (catechism) by rote. That is why so many free thinkers arose: Erasmus, Zwingli, Calvin, Bucer and scores more. But note that all came from educated middle-class urban societies. That means that the great majority of the European population were illiterate agriculturalists. And it was the duty of the new churches to look after the masses of peasants. The pastors' duty was to teach the catechism.

This *Short catechism* by Luther was the first of all the great number of catechisms in vernacular that were produced during the next thirty years. Most major reformers wrote their own, but eventually Luther's won out.

Luther's *Short catechism* is three pages long and consists, after a short preface, of five parts:

1. The Ten Commandments.
2. The *Credo.*
3. Our Father.
4. The sacrament of Baptism.
5. The sacrament of the Eucharist.

The first three parts of these texts are unchanged from the Catholic version, but when writing about the two sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist (the only two accepted by Luther),[33] he quotes Matthew 28:19, which is most important for future developments in Königsberg: "Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples...," a biblical injunction that included even the Lithuanians.

Now we have to turn our attention to East Central Europe of the sixteenth century. There were three major powers, with weak elected kings and strong legislative bodies controlled by the magnates and lesser nobility: Poland-Lithuania, Bohemia and Hungary. These powers also shared a similar ethos and culture, and interacted constantly. To understand the

Reformation, all three realms need to be taken into consideration. The Habsburg Empire was the only superpower of the day, but quite weakened by various struggles with the Protestants, the Turks and France. Muscovy, which in subsequent centuries incorporated most of Poland-Lithuania in its czardom, at this time was yet too feeble to present any real danger. Thus, there was space for political interplay. This discussion shall be limited to the Teutonic Order, which for much of the time was the main enemy of Poland-Lithuania.

On February 13, 1511 the Order elected as its Grand Master Albrecht Hohenzollern from Brandenburg-Ansbach, a twenty-one year old Markgrave. The Order was in disarray and only a small part was not in Polish hands. But one of the main reasons why Albrecht chose to secularize the Order was that in 1519, urged by the Czar Basil, he became embroiled in a war against Poland. A truce was reached in 1521, but the Order was decimated by a mass conversion of knights to the new Lutheran faith. In 1525 he petitioned Sigismund the Older of Poland to turn Prussia into a secular fiefdom of the crown and accept him as the hereditary duke.[34] Sigismund accepted the deal and after Prussia performed the homage ceremony at Cracow on 10 April 1525, Albrecht remained a loyal subject of Poland.

Albrecht installed Lutheranism as the state religion and took to heart Luther's injunction to spread the Gospel to all the inhabitants of his realm. This was determined by the Church Order of 1544, inspired by Albrecht himself and developed by Doctor Briessmann, which made the catechism and the sermon the central elements of the church service and stressed the idea of propagating the new faith among all the inhabitants of his realm.[35] Prussia at that time contained, besides the German immigrants, a significant proportion of Poles (Mazurians), old Prussians akin to Lithuanians, and Lithuanians themselves. Since many of them were more pagan than Catholic, Albrecht found it imperative to take care of his subjects' spiritual welfare in their own languages, in order to turn them into good Lutherans.[36] Furthermore, he was interested in spreading Lutheranism in Poland and Lithuania as well.

The first translation was in Polish, when a catechism was produced by an anonymous writer before April 3, 1531, but no copies of it survive.[37] Many found this catechism unsatisfactory and a new edition by Schadilka was produced in 1533. This translation was made at the urging of Paul Speratus, the Bishop of Pomesania.[38] In a letter of May 1, 1545 to Professor Rapagelanus (Rapolionis), he informed him that several years before he had three hundred more copies printed at Wittenberg.[39]

An interesting problem arises from Rapagelanus' letter of January 4, 1545 to Bishop Speratus, in which he mentions a Martinus with no further identification, who had been active in the preparation of the catechism which had just been published by Johannes Seclutian (Seklucyan). This catechism served as a model for Martin Masvidius' (Mažvydas) own catechism. Because of the name Martin, Alexander Brückner tried to prove that with this Polish translation Masvidius started his career as translator. However the prevailing opinion is that the compiler was a Polish reformer, Martinus Glossa (ca. 1515-1564), who in 1544-1545 resided in Königsberg.[40]

In 1543 an anonymous catechism was printed in Cracow which is a free adaptation of Urban Regius' work of 1540, and some scholars believe that Mikolaj Rej participated in this enterprise.

In 1544 a Prussian church decree *(Kirchenordnung)* was promulgated that stipulated the use of the catechism in liturgical services, but none of the existing Polish catechisms could serve these needs. Therefore, the above mentioned Seclutian produced a new catechism by the end of that year: *Katechismu text prosti dla prostego ludu.* Obviously it was not an original composition but an adaptation of Luther's catechism. In the next year, 1546, another Polish rector in the service of Duke Albrecht, Johannes Maletius (Maleczki), accused Seclutian's translation of being incorrect in many places and produced his own version, the *Catechismus to iest nauka Krzescianska.* The real difference between these two antagonists was that Seclutian reflects most of the Melanchthonian liberal views, while Maletus clings mercilessly to a most narrowly interpreted Luthereranism. The fight among the various reformers was to go on for a while yet, but eventually a common religious reality was created when a single authority was accepted.[41]

Next come the catechisms in Old Prussian, the language of the original inhabitants of the land, who by now were greatly reduced in numbers. Many peasants had been germanized, even if their language itself did not die out until the end of the seventeenth century.[42] As in the case of the other two languages, it was the 1544 Church Order that prompted their printing in Old Prussian.

There are two manuscript documents in Prussian. The first, *Das Elbinger deutsch-Preussische Vokabular,* anonymously written in the early fifteenth century, consists of words arranged by subject in 800 categories; the second is *Das preussische Vokabular des Simon Grunau,* the work of a Dominican monk writing in the years 1517-1526 and has only 100 Prussian words.[43] Both these works were printed only in the nineteenth century.

The first catechism in Prussian, *Catechismus jn preüßnischer sprach vnd da gegen das deüdsche,* was printed by Hans Weinreich at Königsberg on May 1, 1545 on orders of the Duke. The translator is unknown, but he made the mistake of putting together various local dialects, so that it was incomprehensible to the Prussians. This necessitated a revised second edition the same year, *Catechismus jn preüßnischer sprach gecorrigiret vnd dagegen das deüdsche,* published in 1545 by the same printer. The difference is reflected in the beginning of the *Credo* from both editions:

I As drowe an Deiuan Thawan wismosing kas ast taykowuns dangon bah semmin. Bah an Jesum Christum swaian ainan Sunun nusun rekian.

II Es drowy en Deywan Thawan wissemokin kas est tykynnons daengon bhe semmien. Bhae en Jesum Christum swaien aynen Sounon nouson reykyen.[44]

From other sources we learn that there were 197 copies printed of the first edition, and 192 of the second. These few copies were soon exhausted, requiring a new edition translated by Pastor Abel Will of Pobeten, for which he received ten talers from the royal treasury *(Hoffkammer).*[45] It was printed in Königsberg in 1561 by Johann Daubman.[46]

The first catechism in Lithuanian appeared last, in 1547, and is the one celebrated in 1997. As mentioned above, there are practically no Lithuanian texts in manuscript form[47] and, therefore, one can treat Masvidius' *Catechismusa prasty Szadei, Makslas skaitima raschta yr giesmes del krikszczianistes bei del berneliu iaunu nauiey sogulditas. Karaliauczui VIII. Dena Meneses Sausia, Metu ušgimima Diewa. M. D. XLVH,* and printed by Johann Weinreich, as the first text in Lithuanian. Therefore it has been examined most carefully, but mostly by various linguists.[48] This article will review it as an historical document, shedding some light on the cultural scene of the day.

At first it was believed that the book did not contain Masvidius' name and his authorship was deduced from a statement by his cousin, Bartholomew Vilent, who mentioned the fact in the preface to his *Euangelias bei epistolas* of 1579.[49] As was first shown in 1938 by J. Safarewicz, the dedicatory letter, *Knygieles paczias byla,* spells out MARTINUS MASVIDIUS when the first letters of line four through twenty-one are read downward as an acrostic.[50]

In order to understand Mažvydas we have to understand the mental world of Martin. What made Mažvydas write the Cathechism in 1547? Mažvydas was working for Duke Albrecht. It was not his idea and it was Albrecht who paid the bills. His cathechism in Lithuanian may have been in a much more finished state when he first started working on it than most scholars presume, probably in order to glorify Mažvydas. [51]

There is no information on Mažvydas before 1546, but the absence of documents has given rise to speculations that Mažvydas was working on the project before he came to Prussia. A much more rational hypothesis would be to presume that Mažvydas, having arrived in Königsberg in 1546, was entrusted by the authorities with the manuscripts left behind by Kulvietis and Rapolionis. That would explain much better the appearance of both names (along with Zablockis) as translators of separate hymns, than to speculate that Mažvydas saw the copies of these while still in Vilnius. It is interesting to note that a 1995 book on Mažvydas published in Lithuania, calls him *sudarytojas,* (compiler) in the title of the book itself.[52]

The following scenario in Königsberg is possible: Albrecht is the chief actor. It is he who determines the actions. He has two main goals to achieve: political security and the spreading of Lutheranism, which he soon finds out is one and the same. By spreading the new faith, he undermines the power of his suzerain, the staunchly Catholic King of Poland-Lithuania, Sigismund I (1506-1548), who represents the only force he has to fear. But there is an equally strong religious motivation: Luther stressed the need to teach the natives in their own language, even as different dialects in Germany were used in print very much longer after Luther's Bible was published.

Albrecht was influenced by Lutheranism in the person of Andreas Osiander, whom he had met at Nüremberg in the early 1520. Thus one must suspect not only political considerations, but also a genuinely felt religious obligation. While it remains impossible to estimate which element played what role in this decision, it is clear that both were present, as well as many more.

Besides translating catechisms, Albrecht was also interested in providing pastors who could understand and be understood by the native peasants. For this reason he established the University of Königsberg, the Albertina, in 1544 and was especially interested in attracting minority students from Prussia and abroad.[53] We should not forget that the university, as most universities of the day, was meant primarily to prepare an educated clergy and bureaucrats. The language of instruction was Latin, not German.[54] Albrecht's success can be estimated from the fact that from 1544 until the end of the sixteenth century, 233 Lithuanian students were enrolled at the university.[55] Two Lithuanian scholars taught there: Rapagelan (Stanislovas Rapolionis), the main professor of theology, and Abraham Culvensis (Abraomas Kulvietis), who became the associate professor in the cathedra of law held by Christopher Jonas.[56] Often we find a third person mentioned in conjunction with these two names, Jurgis Zablockis, but he played quite a secondary role compared to the other two.[57]

Rapolionis had been studying at the University of Cracow at least since 1530[58] and probably received his bachelor's degree there, but starting in 1543 he was in the employment of Duke Albrecht as his stipendiary at Wittenberg.[59] After receiving a doctorate in theology from Luther himself at Wittenberg on May 29, 1544,[60] Rapolionis, after strong urging from Duke Albrecht, later that year moved to Königsberg as professor of theology,[61] but died too soon on May 13, 1545 to complete the translation of the catechism into Lithuanian.[62]

Rapolionis' close ally at Königsberg was another Lithuanian, Abraham Kulvietis (Culvensis), who was probably his student and also had been studying at the University of Cracow since 1528.[63] Already in 1536 he is a stipendiary of Albrecht at the University of Leipzig and in 1542 was already at Königsberg, which he left, but returned in April 1544. He was appointed prorector of the *Particular,* which Albrecht had established in 1542. When in 1544 the *Particular* was elevated to a university, he became a professor. He, too, died very soon thereafter, on June 6, 1545, without reaching the age of forty.

Rapolionis and Kulvietis, may have been the original preparers of the *Catechism but* died too soon to see it through to press. The work had to be completed by Martynas Mažvydas, to whom this compilation is usually ascribed.[64]

The first historical document that we possess on Mažvydas dates from June 8, 1546, when Duke Albrecht invited him to come to Königsberg.[65] On August 1, 1546, Mažvydas is matriculated at the university[66] and already on April 5, 1548 he received his baccalaureate.[67] There has been much speculation about where he had received his previous education, but it remains mere speculation. One final fact: the publication of the catechism he had prepared or for which he had used materials prepared by Rapolionis and Kulvietis, and probably also by Jurgis Zablockis.[68] Many Lithuanians active in East Prussia may have acted in response to Martin Luther's injunction to his *Kirche* to spread the truth through vernacular catechisms and not through the Bible itself. This was because it was realized that catechisms were the most effective means to shape habits of thought, in other words, to construct the metaparadigm of an age.[69]

Ideas (or *memes)* become pervasive only when they are accepted by substantial communities of thought which share a common metaparadigm. In the sixteenth century all of Europe lived in a mythopoetic, i.e. religious universe and nationalism was yet far in the future. Only slowly, mainly in Suvalkija (Samogitia), which abutted Lutheran Prussia, did the first awareness of nationality take root. At least until the Soviet occupation these two metaparadigms coexisted side by side in the Lithuanian mind.

Anybody who perceives national feelings in Lithuania before Basanavičius's *Auszra,* printed in 1883 in Tilsit (Tilšė), East Prussia, deludes himself by the urge to show the world, or at least themselves, the glorious past of the Lithuanian nation. Some point to the Belorussians who have just started writing the history of their independent republic. Lithuanians find it appalling that they use the *Vytis* symbol and claim the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as their own. However, even today the majority of Lithuanian historians pursue the same goal. It is high time for a cultural history to be written where not only the elite is considered, but the whole population which was, after all, mainly agrarian and illiterate. Lithuanian culture stems mainly from its ethnic roots which were preserved by the peasants, not the nobility, which was bought by the Polish coats of arms.

For the *memes* to spread they need a medium, which today is television, but then it was only print. New ideas can develop only when print begins to reach larger segments of the population, and in Lithuania this does not happen until late in the nineteenth century.

Mažvydas cetechirm may not have been writen for Lithuanian nationalist motives. It represents all Lutheran principalities which, following Luther's injunctions, attempted to spread the new religion among their subjects and often their neighbors. The fact that the Reformation did not take root in Lithuania is due more to the population's inability to separate the two Christian Churches than to their ability to form preferences. What did develop was the fear and hatred of Russian Orthodoxy, but probably much later. In any case, during the Soviet occupation, the Catholic Church became the focus of national activity, as it did in Poland.

So Lithuanians should celebrate Mažvydas's *Catechismus* of 1547 as a goalpost that Lithuania successfully passed. But what retained the Lithuanian ethos was precisely the lack of literacy in the countryside, where old beliefs would continue to dominate the mind.

But Lithuania is no longer occupied and needs to think about the way the Western world has been thinking for the last seventy years. The old structures of nationalistic and Catholic historiography are gone, as is vulgar (Soviet-style) Marxism. Let us build bridges to the future and not seek solace only in the past.

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