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Egidijus Aleksandravičius et al., eds., *Antano Smetonos korespondencija 1940-1944* (Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo Universiteto Leidykla, 1999), hard cover, 676 pp., illustrations, index of persons, list of documents.

This handsome volume is the first in a projected series of primary source materials, undertaken by the Center for Diaspora Studies at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas. Through the cooperation of the survivors responsible for the Smetona estate, the famed collector, Bronius Kviklys, managed to acquire most of the letters of President Smetona, generated during his short years of exile in the United States, from his arrival in New York on March 10, 1941, until he perished in a house fire in Cleveland on January 9, 1944. The monograph is the combined effort of Professor Aleksandravičius; assisted by doctoral candidate Daiva Dapkutė; academic doctors Leonas Gudaitis, Kęstutis Skrupskelis and Bronius Vaškelis; and a team of students. The scholarship is of high quality. This collection heralds a fitting start to future volumes.

In his introduction, Liudas Truska cites biographer A. Merkelis's view that Smetona's final eight years in Europe and barely three years in the United States are so controversial and complex as to require a separate study. Without hitherto access to the U. S. correspondence, the Smetona biographies of A. Merkelis, (1964), A. Eidintas (1990), and L. Truska himself (1996) are in need of refinement that this publication at least partially allows.

The ensemble contains 484 letters, of which Smetona wrote 172 and the remaining 312 were written to him. For clarity, Smetona's missives are in italics. For the most part, chronology dictates the sequence. The letters are assembled in two major categories. The first 101 encompass writings between Smetona and private individuals. Numbers 102 to 484 embrace correspondence with diplomats and other public figures.

Obviously, Lithuanian is the language of most of the letters. An editor's translation into Lithuanian follows missives in another language. Texts are reproduced as in the original. Editorial notations attempt to supply corrections of dates and missing words.

The nature and flavor of Smetona's heavy correspondence emerge from an inspection of the volume of writing and likewise from the sender and his recipients. The Documentary Index furnishes this information at a glance.

The largest exchange of letters took place between the exiled president and Povilas Žadeikis (1887-1957) in Washington, D. C., where he held the title of Lithuanian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. Since the United States did not recognize the Soviet annexation of Lithuania, Žadeikis held this official post as the lawful representative of his homeland until his death on May 11, 1957.

Smetona did not hold Žadeikis in highest regard. Confiding in diplomat, Kazimieras Graužinis, in South America, the exile questioned Žadeikis's patriotism, based on his brief residence in the homeland itself. "Removed from Lithuania, he has no sympathy for her; he appears totally Americanized and strangely so: for him demagoguery is democracy... " (Nr. 238).

While observing formal politeness in their letters, the two men at times wrote to each other frankly and bluntly. On one occasion, Žadeikis told how disappointed ("nusivylęs") he was with the president's descent into a personal attack on his legate, closing with an apologia of his career (p. 444). By February 1943, Smetona remarked about their strained ties. "As regards my relations with the 'Legation, ' that is to say with you, Sir, from various symptoms, they [Lithuanians in America] have already gotten a whiff. Doubtless, they do not err in guessing that the relationship is what it is, but not what it ought to be" (p. 585).

Differences about interpretation of events and opinions about them often arose between Smetona and Žadeikis. The circumstances of the president's flight from Lithuanian was one such divisive and sensitive issue (Nr. 296). A frequent topic was Smetona's' rise to power in that fated December of 1926 with the change of government in the homeland (Nr. 298). Žadeikis irritated Smetona with speculations about the latter's possible return to Lithuania during the Nazi occupation (Nr.

280). On his part, Žadeikis more than once annoyingly cautioned Smetona to avoid public speeches and appearances because of his "guest" status in the United States (Nr. 415).

Next in frequency one finds correspondence with Kazimieras Graužinis (1898-1962), Lithuanian Minister Plenipotentiary to Latin America, with residence in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and later at Montevideo, Uruguay. Graužinis was a trusted confidante (some letters were marked "confidential") who regularly informed Smetona about European Foreign Affairs ministers and their views towards the Baltic nations. Furthermore, Graužinis relayed fragments of news about events in Lithuania, based on private letters that came his way. As in the United States, there were leftists among the Lithuanians in South America, including a communist paper, *Momentas.* "Nevertheless, the entire right-wing element - Nationalists and Catholics - harmoniously work with me, " Graužinis happily informed Smetona (Nr. 230). Unfortunately, only eight Smetona letters to Graužinis are extant.

Colonel Goland Grant-Suttie, the Honorary Consul of Lithuania in Canada, wrote at least twenty-nine times to Smetona. Often the Canadian sent copies of his correspondence with Povilas Žadeikis in Washington, D. C. The reason is not clear. Possibly Grant-Suttie feared that Žadeikis would not keep Smetona fully informed. The former's letter of 26 June 1941 (Nr. 155) hints at this possibility, though leaving the question unanswered. There he wrote:

> I do not know whether you desire me to keep you informed of diplomatic matters concerning which I should under normal circumstances inform your Minister for Foreign Affairs, but I am venturing to do so to a certain extent in the belief that you may find therein something of interest.

Meanwhile, only two letters from Smetona to Grant-Suttie are extant in this collection (Nr. 148, 180), one each at the start and the end of the correspondence. The latter note does offer thanks for the subscription to the Canadian *Nepriklausoma Lietuva* and for the flow of information.

Grant-Suttie transmitted detailed information about his conversations with Polish, Ukrainian, and Canadian officials at social gatherings and formal observances. From his Canadian listening post, he was able to keep Smetona abreast of shifting wartime events in Europe. Grant-Suttie also forwarded copies of pertinent news clippings, reflecting editorial opinions of major Canadian newspapers (Nr. 149-179).

In the United States, Smetona often kept in touch with Petras Daužvardis (1895-1971), Lithuanian Consul in Chicago. Since Smetona had never learned to use a typewriter, he often asked Daužvardis to prepare typescript copies of speeches and press releases. In other letters, the Consul reported his observations of events in the Chicago enclave, and made travel and hotel arrangements for the president.

Smetona and prominent activist Juozas Bačiūnas (Bachunas) (1893-1969) at Tabor Farm in Sodus, Michigan, also maintained mutual contact. In fact, Smetona lodged with this well-known nationalist ("tautininkas") for some months.

An inspection of the Index of Persons gives further clues to the identity of the principals who figured in the mind of the exiled president. Some were Smetona's friends. Others differed sharply in mentality.

Though not in the list of letters, there is considerable mention of Bronius Kazys Balutis (1879-1967), the counterpart of Žadeikis in London for Great Britain and the Netherlands. This seasoned diplomat occupied this position from June 1, 1934 to his demise on December 30, 1967. Often noted too is diplomat Jurgis Šaulys (1879-1948), who held office in various European capitals, especially in Switzerland in the early 1940s.

Kazys Pakštas (1893-1960) - geographer and geopolitist, appears over fifty times, while the name of Smetona's predecessor's son, Colonel Kazys Grinius (1899-1965), is referenced forty times. These two men were among the exiled president's enemies.

Owen J. C. Norem appears seventy times. He had been U. S. Minister to Lithuania from 1937 to 1940 and wrote *Timeless Lithuania* in 1943. Considerable correspondence touches on the preparation of this manuscript, which was scrutinized by various advisors.

From the letters, there surfaces the poignant image of a frustrated man. On arrival in the United States, he quickly perceived the disunity among Lithuanians, making him highly skeptical of the three major party leaders of Catholics, Nationalists, and Socialists. He perceived this "trinity" as he called it, as failing to understand what was politically wise for the homeland. In a letter of 9 April 1942 to the South American Minister, Kazimieras Graužinis, Smetona sharply criticized efforts to organize a Council that pretended to usurp the legitimate Legation in Washington ("statosi viršesnė už Lietuvos atstovybes"). Of this bent were the communist newspapers, *Laisvė* and *Vilnis,* as well as the Catholic *Draugas,* the nationalist *Naujienos* and several other Catholic and Socialist publications, as Smetona apprised the situation (Nr. 240). As soon as Smetona gave a speech, "Bolsheviks (Russians and Lithuanians), the Priests League, and the Socialists complained about me, " he lamented in a letter of 7 March 1943 (Nr. 252). To the end, the president remained quite skeptical about the effectiveness of the American Lithuanian Council (ALT), viewing it with grave suspicion.

Smetona did not hesitate to write to the president of the United States on behalf of Lithuania. The exile commended Franklin Delano Roosevelt for his proclamation of the "Four Freedoms, " with earnest wishes for his continued

"courageous steps. " Under- Secretary Sumner Welles replied with only a short, routine acknowledgment and thank-you (Nr. 43, 44). For the most part, Smetona left it to Žadeikis and other activists to send various resolutions and protests.

By the fall of 1942, Smetona had already been informed (Nr. 52) by a Marian priest that Lithuanian clergy regarded the exile as a persona non grata ("juoda asmenybė"). Though Catholics, including some clergy, had traditionally been active in the cause of the homeland, Smetona remained mostly uninspired by them. Still, in noncontroversial matters, one does find a few letters to or from priests.

There was a delightful exchange (Nr. 89-92) with Fr. Pijus Čėsna, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania in the summer of 1943. The priest invited Smetona to speak at the annual statewide Lithuanian Day at Lakewood Park, making the most congenial arrangements for travel and lodging. Čėsna signed his request "Your former Lithuanian-language student in Vilnius. " (Nr. 89)

One finds another exchange (Nr. 93-96) with the Jesuit missionary, Fr. Jonas Kidykas. He wrote in 1943 in behalf of an unnamed Lithuanian-American Jesuit, who was preparing his doctoral dissertation on the topic of stormy relations between the Catholic Church and the Lithuanian government during restored independence. The writer flatteringly recalled Smetona's help to Lithuania's Jesuits. The latter replied by saying he possessed no documentation to back his words, but would be glad to meet with the doctoral student for a lengthy interview.

A lengthy monograph of such detail can scarcely escape imperfections. This otherwise scrupulously prepared text seems to suffer from less than perfect proof-reading of the English portions. To be sure, the introduction indicates (p. 20) that all correspondence is reproduced exactly as in the original. Thus, one finds over 100 typographical errors and missing connectives as well as peculiar stylistic forms. In one short letter to the president of the United States, there are seven errors (pp. 81-82). Were they all the fault of Smetona or his advisor?

No doubt, Smetona's modest command of English accounts for most of the mistakes, or perhaps nearly all of them. This same limitation, nevertheless, would not apply to letters from senders knowledgeable in English. An errata insert would account for the errors that escaped the proof reader(s), and allow a reader to consider the remainder of the errors as attributable to Smetona's lack of fluency in English.

The apparent miscues led to a spot-check of the translations of original English letters into Lithuanian. Here one encounters a troublesome situation. A few samples will suffice. Some words and phrases are lacking. For instance, Smetona's communication (Nr. 10) with the University of Chicago explaining his desire "to present the qualifications of my son... " becomes in Lithuanian - "pristatyti Jums savo sūnų, " missing mention of "qualifications. " In the same letter, the original phrase "attaining a record of honorable accomplishments worthy of your high standards" disappears in the translation. Resolutions emanating from Brooklyn on behalf of occupied Lithuania were signed by Rev. Norbert Pakalnis (p. 181) as Chairman of the annual Independence Day observance in 1943. The translation (p. 184) omits the title of "Rev. " Yet the reader should be aware that priests such as Father Pakalnis were active in the homeland cause.

A bizarre juxtaposition of errors occurs on pages 471. A news clipping is recorded with the headline: "Pro-Nazi Drive Stars Among Lithuanians in U. S. " The omission of the letter "t" for "Starts" prompted this translation: "Pronaciai dalina žvaigždes lietuviams" meaning: "Pro-Nazis are Distributing Stars to Lithuanians. "

Other flaws show an unintended change of meaning. In letter Nr. 22, the subjunctive expression "if your son expects to come" turns into the declarative phrase "kai [when] jis atvyks. " In letter Nr. 23, "news of [about] my father" takes on a different twist, becoming "iš [from] mano tėvo, " even though the writer does not even know the address of his father. In the supplement (incorrectly dated 1942) to letter Nr. 155, there is mention of British authorities and their" tentative approval" of a wartime resettlement plan. The adjective "tentative" is missing in the translation. That same paragraph opens with an incomplete sentence.

One suspects that undue haste accounts for these failures, since the translations from Lithuanian to English are otherwise generally superb. Perhaps the editorial board placed too heavy a burden on the assistants, and should have confirmed their work of proofreading and translating by enlisting the aid of an English-language specialist.

These reservations aside, *Korespondencija* is surely an invaluable tool for researchers of political history. With an even more painstaking effort, such flaws in this first undertaking can be avoided. One can only offer best wishes for future endeavors of the Diaspora Studies Center.

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