MULTICULTURALISM IN HISTORICAL DIDACTICS: CASES OF VILNIUS, KAUNAS AND KLAIPĖDA

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Rezumat: Multiculturalism în didactica istorică: cazurile Vilnius, Kaunas şi Klaipeda

Studiul analizează reprezentarea diferitelor comunităţi interetnice în curriculum-ul de istorie lituaniană din perioada interbelică şi din zilele noastre. Accentul principal este pus pe moştenirea interculturală a trei mari oraşe lituaniene – Vilnius, Kaunas şi Klaipeda – şi înţelegerea sa în două perioade diferite ale Lituaniei independente – în perioada interbelică, atunci când a fost creată prima Republica Lituania şi după căderea comunismului în 1990, când Lituania a redevenit independentă şi a început să-şi dezvolte un nou curriculum pentru istorie. În acest articol autorul caută să evalueze pe scurt importanţa educaţiei (învăţământului) istoric din perioada interbelică pentru educaţia (învăţământul) istoric din zilele noastre şi să distingă principalele diferenţe şi cauzele adiacente lor.

Abstract: This study analyses the representation of different ethnic communities in Lithuanian history curriculum both in interwar period and nowadays. The main focus is on the multicultural heritage of three major Lithuanian cities – Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda – and its understanding in two different periods of independent Lithuania – during the interwar period, when the first republic of Lithuania was created, and after the fall of Communism in 1990, when Lithuania became independent once again and started to develop new history curriculum. In this article the author seeks to briefly evaluate the importance of interwar history education to nowadays history education, and to distinguish the main differences and their causes.

Résumé: Multiculturalisme dans la didactique historique: les cas Vilnius, Kaunas et Klaipeda

L'étude ci-jointe analyse la représentation des différentes communautés interethniques dans le curriculum d'histoire lituanienne de la période de l'entre-deux-guerres et de nos jours. On mit l'accent principal sur l'héritage interculturel de trois grandes villes lituaniennes – Vilnius, Kaunas et Klaipeda – et sur sa compréhension durant deux périodes différentes de la Lituanie indépendante – pendant la période de l'entre-deux-guerres, lorsque fut créée la première République Lituanie et après la chute du communisme en 1990, lorsque la Lituanie redevint indépendante et commença à développer un nouveau curriculum pour

l'histoire. L'auteur cherche à évaluer bref dans cet article l'importance de l'éducation (de l'enseignement) historique de la période de l'entre-deux-guerres pour l'éducation (l'enseignement) historique de nos jours et à distinguer les différences principales et leurs causes adjacentes.

Introduction

Multiculturalism is a trend-name in today's world. Starting from the basics of everyday life – talking about multicultural food or fashion industry, it spreads over every topic – history or historical understanding of the society is no exception at all. Researches of Lithuanian history and its interpretations for past two decades have revolved around the concept of multiculturalism. As one of the most famous Lithuanian interwar historians Adolfas Šapoka[1] and many of its contemporaries aimed to find Lithuanians in Lithuania`s history, it seems that nowadays many historians mostly seek to find the satisfactory prove of multiculturalism in Lithuanian past. This perspective is perfectly understandable because of its correlation both with the lack of historical studies on Lithuania's ethnic minorities and of course with the so-called *Zeitgeist*, the global interest to form tolerant, wide-sighted society.

However, in this article this matter will be discussed from a bit different and a bit more pragmatic perspective – the representation of multiculturalism in historical didactics and its contradiction to the main current historiographical line regarding multicultural Lithuanian history. The brief comparison in the representation of Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda cities in multicultural context both in interwar Lithuanian historical didactics and in nowadays public historical education will be conducted. Thus this article will be mostly focused on the one of two different narratives of Lithuania`s history regarding the topic of ethnic minorities – historical didactics, oriented towards general public.

In terms of historiographical depiction of the issue being studied, it is worth mentioning that it has not gone beyond the scope of the researchers in Lithuania. The relevance of this topic is usually forgotten in the light of more common nationalistic perspective – analysis of history curriculum in the schools of ethnic minorities and its consistency with the interests of national Lithuanian

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[1] Adolfas Šapoka, *Lietuvos istorija* [History of Lithuania], Kaunas, 1936.

state[2]. In the absence of adequate studies in Lithuanian academic space, the significant historiographical importance is of joint academic project conducted by scholars of Eastern Europe (in Poland[3], Slovakia[4], Czech Republic[5], Hungary[6] and Russia[7]), their studies analyze the representation of Jewish history and culture in different school systems of Eastern Europe. Although, not so similar to the topic of this article, there are also several Lithuanian studies regarding the common features in educational programs and its changes, thus these works are considered for historiographical background of this research as well.[8]

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[2] Benediktas Šetkus, *Tautinių mažumų mokykla Lietuvoje 1918-1940 m.: daktaro disertacijos santrauka* [*Schools of ethnical minorities in Lithuania 1918-1940: the abstract of doctoral dissertation*], Vilnius, 2000; Nijolė Saugėnienė, *Lietuvos tautinių mažumų švietimas multikultūriškumo vertybiniame kontekste* [The education of Lithuanian ethnical minorities in the context of multicultural values], Kaunas, 2003. The increasing attention to these topics are shown by the increasing number of conferences and publications of its materials as well: *Tautinių mažumų švietimas Lietuvoje: teoriniai ir praktiniai aspektai: konferencijos medžiaga* [The education of ethnical minorities in Lithuania: theoretical and practical approaches: materials of the conference], Vilnius, 2001; *Švietimas daugiakultūrinėje aplinkoje - Europos dimensija: tarptautinės konferencijos medžiaga* [Education in multicultural society – European dimension: materials of international conference], Vilnius, 2008.

[3] Hanna Węgrzynek, *Treatment of Jewish Themes in Polish Schools*. Via website: http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/7B42D75369-D582-4380-8395-D25925B85EAF7D/Treatment_Jewish_Themes_Polish_Schools.pdf [2013-01-13]

[4] Peter Salner and Eva Salnerova, *Treatment of Jewish Themes in Slovak Schools* : http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/7B42D75369-D582-4380-8395-D25925B85EAF7D/Treatment_Jewish_Themes_Slovak_Schools.pdf [2013-01-13]

[5] Leo Pawlat, *Treatment of Jewish Themes in Czech Schools*. Via website: http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/7B42D75369-D582-4380-8395-D25925B85EAF%7D/Treatment_Jewish_Themes_Czech_Schools.pdf [2013-01-13]

[6] Monika Kovacs, *Treatment of Jewish Themes in Hungarian Schools*. Via website: http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/7B42d75369-d582-4380-8395-d25925b85eaf7D/treatment_jewish_themes_hungarian_schools.pdf [2013-01-13]

[7] Lev Krichevsky, *Treatment of Jewish Themes in Russian Schools*. Via website: http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/7B42d75369-d582-4380-8395-d25925b85eaf7D/treatment_jewish_themes_russian_schools.pdf [2013-01-13]

[8] *Mokykliniai istorijos vadovėliai ir europinės visuomenės ugdymas Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse. Konferencijos medžiaga* [History textbooks in schools and education of Europe-oriented society in Eastern and Central Europe], Vilnius, 2006.; Audronė Svėrienė, Istorijos vadovėlio kultūra (1999-2002 m.) [The culture of history textbook], *Knygotyra*, no. 43. Vilnius, 2004; Stanislovas Stašaitis, *Istorijos didaktika ir jos uždaviniai* [History didactics and its aims], Vilnius, 2002; Benediktas Šetkus, *Istorija bendrojo lavinimo mokykloje* [History in school], Istorija (LXI). Vilnius, 2004. pp. 65-68; Idem, *Istorijos mokymo Lietuvos bendrojo lavinimo mokykloje tobulinimo kryptys* [The development of history education in Lithuanian schools], Istorija (LIII). Vilnius, 2002. pp. 90-97.

The main sources used in this study are Lithuanian history, ethnography and geography textbooks of interwar period (1918-1939) and current Lithuanian history textbooks (1990-2012), and school history education programs for both periods. During this research, 26 interwar history, ethnography and geography textbooks (1919-1939) and 35 current history textbooks (1990-2012) were analyzed.

History education in interwar Lithuania: variety of nations and variety of denationalizations

When the first republic of Lithuania was established in 1918, it established itself as a state, which majority of population were Lithuanians. However, until the independence of Lithuania, due to many political, cultural and historical reasons (which are not the basis of this article) the majority of Lithuanians were villagers, and city life revolved around the large groups of ethnic minorities – Jews, Poles, Germans etc. In this context the question, how the self-perception of traditional rural society coped with the idea of Lithuanian state and foreign cultural heritage of the major cities, raises itself. The first thing we notice, while analyzing the contents of interwar history textbooks, is the highlights on the idea, that every other nation, except Lithuanian, are eternally alien to Lithuanian lands, there are no discussions about their historicity there. It should be noted, that this kind of image is common to many modern nations of that time, when the idea of each nation having its *promised land* was highly accepted. In Lithuanian textbooks existed such presumptive statements as – "People, who have been living in Lithuania since ancient times, are called Lithuanians. Together with them live other ethnic groups as well"[9], - these kind of statements enabled diverse interpretation regarding nationality, citizenship or homeland. Both in public discussions and history textbooks the concept of nationality generalized, and was perceived only by origin (and usually by the language, which is specific to that origin, like Lithuanians – Lithuanian language, Poles – Polish languages etc.), and individuals self-identification with one or another ethnic group is understood as irrelevant, or is to be regarded negatively as a fake, illusory escape from his reality: "next to the real Poles in Lithuania, there are *Polonized* Lithuanians, whose last names and traditions prove them to be not actual Poles, just *Polonized* Lithuanians".[10] In this situation the most relevant and commonly used

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[9] Antanas Vireliūnas, *Krašto mokslo vadovėlis: III-jam pradžios mokyklos skyriui* [Ethnography textbook: the 3rd grade of primary school], Kaunas, 1931. p. 50.

[10] Peliksas Šinkūnas, *Lietuva: geografijos vadovėlis V sk.* [Lithuania: geography textbook for the 5th grade]*,* Kaunas, 1937*.* p. 51.

was the example of Vilnius region and its problematic, also exceptional was the interpretation of the situation in Klaipeda city and its region, which were inhabited with a large German community for centuries: "on the other hand, the process of villagers moving to the city actualized the need for adaptation, changed their communication habits and enforced Lithuanians to use German language in daily life more and more. It is no coincidence that in traditional rural society, there was a stereotype about those who migrate to the city – even the willingness to migrate meant that they are ready to be "Germanized".[11]
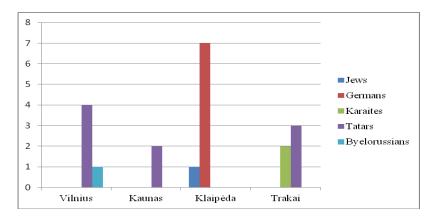

Figure 1. The most common historical links between ethnic communities and Lithuanian cities (including Vilnius region) in interwar history textbooks (data of 26 textbooks)

Two-dimensional identity, *gente – lituanus, natione – polonus,* which existed in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was forgotten and at the margins of understanding in interwar Lithuania (even so during this period another variation developed – by origin Lithuanians, by language - Germans), national narrative eliminated the possibility to be Lithuanian without talking Lithuanian. In addition, the concept of homeland was specifically clarified. An excellent example of this kind of clarification is the commonly used statement, that Jews "have lost their homeland long, long ago"[12] [which presupposes that Lithuania have

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[11] Vasilijus Safronovas, *Atminties orientavimas ir mentalinis Klaipėdos integravimas Lietuvoje XX a.* [The orientation of memory and mental integration of Klaipėda in the 20th century Lithuania], *Nuo Basanavičiaus, Vytauto Didžiojo iki Molotovo ir Ribbentropo: atminties ir atminimo kultūrų transformacijos XX-XXI amžiuje* [From Basanavičius, Vytautas Didysis to Molotov and Ribbentrop: transformations of memory and memory cultures in the 20th-21st centuries], Vilnius, 2011. p. 71.

[12] Elena Baronienė, *Gimtasis kraštas: geografijos vadovėlis pradžios mokyklų V sk.* [The homeland: geography textbook for the 5th grade of primary school], Kaunas, 1937. p. 80.

never been and will never be their homeland, because what matters is the histori-cal narrative of homeland]. Although, this kind of understanding of homeland is not applied for Lithuanian Tatars, because, according to textbooks` authors, they came to regard Lithuania as their homeland due to privileges and freedoms, which Vytautas granted them[13]. Thus accepting Tatars rights to Lithuania as a homeland and denying the same legitimacy to Jews, the authors of textbooks showed their double-standard evaluation of ethnic groups in Lithuania. In this respect, it is questionable, whether the new homeland can be created as such, and where is the homeland of secular non-Zionist Jews of interwar Lithuania. However, both text-books` authors and society members did not seek to find the answer to this com-plicated question regarding other local ethnic communities, because they had an-other goal – to legitimize the historicity of Lithuanians as a nation and the legal existence of the Republic of Lithuania, which emerged from this historicity.
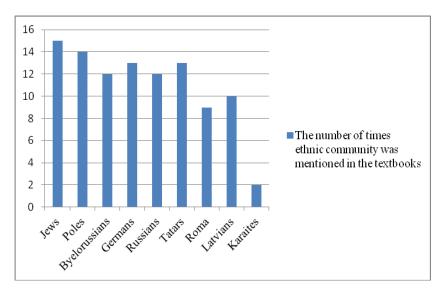

**Figure 2. The representation of ethnic communities
in interwar history textbooks (data of 26 textbooks)**

Historical didactics of interwar period is usually seen in a relation to the au-thoritarian regime of Lithuanian president Antanas Smetona (1926-1940), espe-cially emphasizing the influence of this regime on both historical and cultural edu-cation of the society[14]. Even quite neutral interwar studies critique the relation

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[13] Peliksas Šinkūnas, *op. cit.* p. 89; Stasys Matulaitis, *Lietuvių tautos istorija* [The history of Lithuanian nation], Kaunas, 1923. p. 91.

[14] Bernaras Ivanovas, *Tautiškumo beieškant Antano Smetonos Lietuvoje: tautinių įvaizdžių klausimas* [In a search for nationality in Antanas Smetona Lithuania: the issue of

between authoritarian ideology and educational system[15]. However, it should be noted, that historical didactics, oriented towards one – Lithuanian nation, is the prerogative of Lithuanian education during the whole interwar period – both before the authoritarian regime, and during that. Moreover, most of the textbooks, published during the democratic period, were republished during the reign of Smetona as well. It shows, that even with the changes in political conjuncture, when democratic government was replaced by authoritarian one, narrative of Lithuanian history, which started to form in independent Lithuania, have not been modified much – it was acceptable for both moderate and more radical ideologists.

We can distinguish the main aspects, with which ethnical minorities, represented in the history textbooks, are being related:

1. Influence on the de-nationalization of Lithuanians;
2. Literacy and cultural traditions;
3. Religious traditions;
4. Relationship with the major Lithuanian cities.

While talking about the influence on the de-nationalization of Lithuanians the emphasis is both on the guilt of Lithuanians, who denied their ethnical identity by their own choice („Due to the passivity and hindsight of Lithuanians *Germanization* is going on very well in Klaipeda"[16]) and the guilt of another ethnic groups, which supposedly encouraged Lithuanians to do so for pragmatic reasons – for instance, already mentioned Germans in Klaipeda`s region („*Germanization* work is driven by a strong pace, and it is generously supported by Germany itself"[17]). Textbooks` authors usually emphasized the *Germanization* of Klaipeda region[18], but differently than in the case of *Polonization* in Vilnius region, the situation in Klaipeda was presented not as a historically influenced reality, but as a deviation influenced by the current time („From Germany poison are coming to Lithuania and settling in profitable commercial institutions"[19]). This kind of cultural distance between Klaipeda city and the rest of Lithuania is not totally unexpected and is not only the image formed by nationalist ideology, which sought to protect Lithuanians from the foreign influences. The newest historiography, which analyses historical changes in Klaipeda city, suggests that

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ethnic images], Vilnius, 2005.

[15] Saulius Kaubrys, *Lietuvos mokykla 1918-1939 m.: galios gimtis* [Lithuanian school in 1918-1939: the rise of power], Vilnius, 2000.

[16] Stanislovas Tarvydas, *Antropogeografija su ekonominės geografijos priedu: vadovėlis VI klasei* [Anthropogeography with economical geography: a textbook for the 6th grade], Kaunas, 1937. p. 186.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

[18] Peliksas Šinkūnas, *op. cit.* p. 52.

[19] Stanislovas Tarvydas, *op. cit.* p. 186.

there was not a favourable social environment, which would enable the development of Lithuanian cultural ideas or national principles.[20] Moreover, after the region of Klaipeda was attributed to Lithuania, German ethnic minority group sought to fight the *Lithuanization* politics in this region – both by establishing more German schools and raising German national feelings[21], which were the most likely inspired by the expansionist ideology in interwar Germany itself. The continuous emphasis on the cultural and political strength and influence of Germans in Klaipeda shows, that Klaipeda region, which was recently returned to Lithuania, changed only in the cartographic and administrative sense, while culturally it continued to be tightly bonded with Germany, which also subsidized the process of *Germanization* in this area. In this case interwar Lithuania is a standard example of „oversized" state[22] - the newly formed national state, which territory includes other ethnic groups with distinctly expressed nationalism and appreciation of their ethnical homeland rather than the current homeland (as in case of Germans in Klaipeda city).
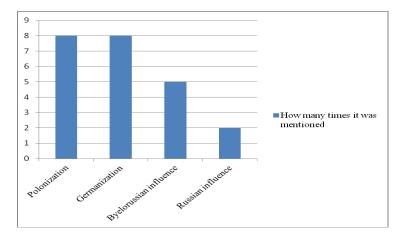

Figure 3. Directions of Lithuanians` de-nationalization
mentioned in interwar history textbooks (data of 26 textbooks)

In the complex ethnic context of Vilnius and Klaipeda regions during the interwar period the question of ethnicity in other Lithuanian cities is also very intriguing. It is interesting, that while talking about the Lithuanian cities and

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[20] Vasilijus Safronovas, *op. cit.* p. 72.

[21] Saulius Kaubrys, *op. cit.* p. 143.

[22] As these kind of states during the interwar period could be reffered such neighbouring countries – Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. See more: Mark R. Thompson, *Building nations and crafting democracies – competing legitimacies in interwar Eastern Europe, Authoritarianism and Democracy in Europe, 1919-39*. Houndmills, 2002. pp. 20-38.

their historicity as such, there are no mentioning of Trakai as a city, which does not belong to the interwar Lithuania and as a part of Vilnius district belongs to Poland – Trakai is represented with a patriotic note as a truly Lithuanian Medieval city. The small ethnical group, Karaites, were also historically associated especially with Trakai and represented as a group, which were localized only there. However, this was far from reality, because interwar period in Lithuania could be even called as a cultural Karaite Renaissance, which centred in another major Lithuanian city – Panevėžys[23].

Historically the strongest position regarding the main Lithuanian cities is given to Tatar community – they are repeatedly related with Vilnius, Trakai and Kaunas. Paradoxically Jewish connections to the main historical cities of Lithuania stayed unnoticed by the authors of textbooks. Although the fact, that Jews have been living in cities and towns, was repeated commonly, these cities and towns are usually depersonalized and Jews are represented as living everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Although in historiography there is a popular opinion[24], that during the interwar period Lithuanians used the image of Jewish Vilnius as a means of propaganda against Poles, the information regarding this matter in the textbooks proves it wrong – this type of propaganda did not exist on official educational level, textbooks did not emphasize so-called Jewish Vilna. This way Jews are eliminated from the mental map of Lithuania as historically and culturally alien element.

While talking about the formation of Kaunas as an extremely Lithuanian city image, we can notice, that it was a gradual process. In the twenties textbook authors did not coronate Kaunas as Lithuanian Mecca – on the contrary: „In Kaunas one can easily communicate only in Russian"[25] or „Kaunas is forced to be the provisional capital of Lithuania"[26] (as if it would not suit this city). However, this tendency seems to fade out in the thirties and is replaced by the newly represented understanding of strong connection between Kaunas city and new concept of Lithuanian identity, which basically legitimized Kaunas as Lithuanian

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[23] Dovilė Troskovaitė, *Periferinės karaimų bendruomenės. Centro ir periferijos įtakos pasidalijimas XVII-XVIII amžiais* [Peripherial Karaite communities. The influence of center and periphery in the 17-18th centuries], *Orientas Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos visuomenės tradicijoje: totoriai ir karaimai* [Orient in the tradition of GDL society: Tatars and Karaites], Vilnius, 2008. pp. 38-44.

[24] Ezra Mendelson, *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars*, USA, 1987. pp. 213-223.

[25] Kazys Pakštas, *Baltijos Respublikų politinė geografija* [Political geography of Baltic States], Kaunas, 1929. p. 73.

[26] Peliksas Šinkūnas, *Lietuvos geografija: vidurinei mokyklai bei namų mokslui* [Lithuanian geography: for a secondary school and home-schooling], Kaunas, 1927. p. 161.

capital (although it never excluded its temporal aspect and the longing for Vilnius as a historical capital was never replaced). Historians, who have been analyzing interwar cultural formations, pointed out, that particularly after the coup of 1926, between 1927 and 1930, the strategy of *Lithuanization* process have been changing both in Kaunas and in the province – „in the quite forced pace the history of old Lithuania was integrated with the images of nationalist era, giving the priority to the ancient history but not the reality of interwar world. "[27] So little by little Kaunas gained the status of exceptionally Lithuanian city, and this status was even more strengthened by the cases of two other cities - Vilnius, which at the time belonged to Poland and was greatly missed as the cultural space of Lithuania, and Klaipeda, which even now belonging to Lithuania, maintained its German culture and heritage.

Nowadays historical education: one nation and historical *Lithuanization*

Nowadays nationalism in many of its forms reveals itself usually as a reaction to the over-escalated issue of globalization, which is presented in the perspective of Western Europe and its complex situation regarding ethnic minorities. However, Lithuania does not fit the same frame – differently from the Western cases, the majority of local ethnic groups are historically related to Lithuanian land. Even the special kind of *Lithuanianess* of Lithuania`s ethnic minorities can be emphasized (for instance, unique development of Litvak, Karaite or Russian Old-Believers cultures in this region), thus not confuse the threats of globalization with non-existing threats of ethnic minorities. On the contrary – historical perspective can contribute to the liberation of society from provincial thinking about the ethnical minorities, which tends to be quite stereotypical[28].

All current history textbooks representing the interwar period emphasize the complicated relationship between Lithuanians and Poles in Vilnius district. Different to the period of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in interwar history it is

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[27] Dangiras Mačiulis, Alvydas Nikžentaitis and Vasilijus Safronovas, *Simbolinis daugiakultūrio miesto užvaldymas: Kauno, Klaipėdos ir Vilniaus atvejai* [Symbolical possession of multicultural city: cases of Kaunas, Klaipėda and Vilnius], *Naujasis Vilniaus perskaitymas: didieji Lietuvos istoriniai pasakojimai ir daugiakultūris miesto paveldas* [Vilnius in a new perspective: the great historical narratives and multicultural city heritage], Vilnius, 2009. p. 114.

[28] Rita Repšienė, *Mitologija šiandien: nacionalumo klausimai ir istorinės perspektyvos* [Mythology today: questions about nationality and historical perspectives], *Istorinės realybės ir mitai nacionalinėse kultūrose: dabarties vizija* [Historical realities and myths in national cultures: present vision], Vilnius, 2009. p. 36.

the most important to distinguish Poles from Lithuanians, because Poles, who were both culturally and religiously the closest community to Lithuanians, were also the biggest threat to the formation of Lithuanian identity – the fact of their similarities questioned the authenticity of Lithuanian cultural traditions and its importance in historical perspective. And of course, next to these more philosophical matters, there was a real threat to Lithuania – the occupation of Vilnius region. Textbooks still highlight that Lithuanian patriotism contradicts with Polish culture, and express the remaining grievance for the loss of Vilnius district in interwar period. However, this grievance is not a passive one, and it embraces negative emotions in both historical didactics and public opinion – not only Poles from Vilnius district, but Poles in the territory of Lithuania as well, are considered as enemies: „Patriotic Lithuanians were very displeased with the news about the establishment of 75 new Polish schools in Lithuania"[29]. However, in the light of nowadays historiography educational materials represent the city of Vilnius itself as an example of multicultural and multi-confessional city, so its history is relevant to many nations: Lithuanians, Poles, Jews and Byelorussians. Authors of different textbooks do not agree on the question, which ethnical group culturally dominated in Vilnius in different historical periods. With the tolerant notions, which are a-must in the 21st century, textbook authors introduce us with the equal rights for every ethnic community in the city, however, while talking about Vilnius situation in interwar period, they tend to support the position of Lithuanians. Nevertheless, all textbooks state, that Poles occupied Vilnius region exactly from Lithuanians, even if Vilnius of that time the same as many other major cities of Lithuania was populated more by other ethnic groups than Lithuanians.

In 35 nowadays textbooks, which are analysed in this research, there are 60 illustrations on the topic of ethnic minorities of Lithuania (their number varies in different textbooks, there are several textbooks without this kind of illustrations at all). The examples of religious buildings are the most prevailing, and mostly related to the Jewish religious buildings in Vilnius (The Great Synagogue in Vilnius, still existing Vilnius Choral Synagogue) (6), past and present Tatar mosques in various parts of Lithuania (4), also – Karaite kenesa in Trakai (3). The richness of illustrations in topics presenting Holocaust (22 illustrations about Holocaust in Lithuania, while about local Polish community – 2; Karaites – 6; Tatars – 8; about Jews in Lithuania (not related to Holocaust) – 21) is remarkable – it exceeds the number of all illustrations about ethnic minorities: photographs from daily life in Vilnius and Kaunas ghettos, photographs of mass mur-

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[29] Arūnas Gumuliauskas, *Lietuvos istorija nuo 1915 iki 1953 metų, X klasei* [Lithuanian history from 1915 until 1953, 10th grade], Kaunas, 1993. p. 66.

der in "Lietūkis" garage or portraits of the Righteous among Nations from Lithuania (O. Šimaitė, Č. Sugihara).

Sadly, the history of ethnic minorities in Lithuania ends after the Second World War – and do not get me wrong, ethnic minorities still existed in soviet times, and of course there is a variety of ethnic groups in nowadays Lithuania. Their history ended only in the history textbooks, and the fact of their existence in the second part of the twentieth century is mostly ignored. This fact is quite ironical considering that current educational programs emphasize the importance to understand the link between present and past, and this is highlighted as one of the most important tasks to reach by historical education[30]. It should be noted, that illustrations are at least used as a productive means to relate historical and nowadays dimensions of ethnical minorities and their culture in Lithuania. Although, textbooks` lack of representation of the late 20th regarding ethnic minorities should be noted, illustrations help to fill in these gaps a little bit: nowadays Karaite girl in ethnic clothing[31], Tatars in ethnic clothing[32], tombstones from old Vilnius Jewish cemetery[33] etc. Also, the photographs of current religious buildings of different ethnic and religious groups illustrate the continuum of different cultural traditions, especially in the biggest cities of Lithuania.

Conclusions

The comparison of both factographical and interpretational information about ethnic minorities in interwar and nowadays history textbooks shows, that despite both the close interaction with ethnical minorities in interwar daily life and nowadays increasing historiography about the history and culture of different local ethnic groups, textbooks of both periods are full of factographical mistakes regarding ethnical minorities and their history in Lithuania and its cities. However, interwar textbooks present ethnic groups as still existing and active units of society, while nowadays, in the light of Holocaust, Jewish community is presented as only the relict of the past, and other ethnic groups are left only in the past without the emphasis of their situation in nowadays Lithuania.

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[30] *Socialinis ugdymas: istorija, geografija, integruotas istorijos ir geografijos kursas, teisė, religijotyra, filosofija, ekonomika ir verslumas, psichologija* [Social education: history, geography, integrated history and geography, law, religion studies, philosophy, economics and bussinessmanship, psychology], *op. cit.*, passim

[31] I. Kapleris *et al. Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis, 8.* II dalis [Time: history textbook, 8. Part II], Vilnius, 2005. p. 212.

[32] Evaldas Bakonis, *Tėvynėje ir pasaulyje, 9* [In the homeland and the world], Kaunas, 2009. p. 143.

[33] Bronius Makauskas, *Lietuvos istorija* [Lithuanian history], Kaunas, 2000. p. 162.