



**Master of Arts Thesis
Euroculture**

Jagiellonian University, Kraków (Home)

Palacký University, Olomouc (Host)

June 2016

Models of Polishness among Lithuanian Polish minority

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**MA Programme Euroculture
Declaration**

I, (Simonas Teškevičius) hereby declare that this thesis, entitled “Models of Polishness among Lithuanian Polish minority”, submitted as partial requirement for the MA Programme Euroculture, is my own original work and expressed in my own words. Any use made within this text of works of other authors in any form (e.g. ideas, figures, texts, tables, etc.) are properly acknowledged in the text as well as in the bibliography.

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Introduction

‘Litwo, Ojczyzna moja!’ (Lithuania, my homeland!) in 1830s wrote one of the most prominent Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. By that time he could not have predicted that less than in a century the original meaning of this well-known phrase would be framed into a shape of a newly-born ideology of ethno-centric nationalism. Born in the Russian occupied lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1798, Mickiewicz represented civic identification and cultural memory of the state which had already faded away. However, even more unimaginable for him could have been the division of his memory among modern Polish, Lithuanian and Belarussian nations that were trying to answer the question for whose cultural heritage does the poet belong.

This example illustrates that ethno-centric nationalisms, born in the second half of the nineteenth century in the former lands of the Commonwealth, divided former citizens of the state according to new linguistic and ethnic categories, that before were meaningless. A few hundred years of common cohabitation of Poles, Lithuanians and Ruthenians were gone and each individual had to choose one of the modern nations to belong to. In these conditions new categories of Lithuanians, Poles, Lithuanian Poles and Poles in Lithuania were formed. Unfortunately, such fragmentation of the identities which causes ethnic tensions is still lively in contemporary Lithuania. As Nobel literature prize winner Czesław Miłosz during his last visit in Lithuanian capital of Vilnius in 2000 indicated:

‘I am eighty nine years old and I can say that Vilnius is a burden to me. Every time I come here it feels that I have to walk on a thin ice because here it is not enough simply to be a human. Everyone here asks of whom he is – Lithuanian, Pole, Jew or German. It feels as a dark twentieth age of ethnic disputes is still alive in here.’¹

With this notion Miłosz revealed present divisions of Lithuanian society that are rooted in ethno-centric concepts of nationality. However, in order to find origins of this phenomenon one has to understand history of Lithuania and processes of nation’s formation in relation to the Significant Other which since the nineteenth century was Poland and Poles. The disclosure of the following formulas also allows us to search of the identification models of Lithuanian Poles that form their identity in relation to Lithuanians and their common history.

¹Czesław Miłosz speech extracts in Vida Kamuntavičienė et al., *Česlovas Milošas ir Lietuva*, (Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, 2011), 49.

The search of history of Lithuanian Poles may be traced back to the fourteenth century and traditionally to the Union of Krewo in 1385. By signing this agreement between Grand Duchy of Lithuanian (GDL) and Kingdom of Poland both states agreed that Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila (Jagiello) would be crowned a Polish King through a marriage of a Polish ruler Jadwiga.² Also, Lithuania had to be converted from paganism to Roman Christianity and more other pragmatic accords followed.³ They marked cooperation between Lithuanian and Polish states. Union of Horodlo (1413) strengthened the ties between the countries and marked adoption of the Polish nobility estate into Lithuanian hierarchical systems.⁴ For the next 150 years Lithuania and Poland remained tied by dynastic and other bilateral agreements. Western culture and European civilizational achievements were brought to GDL through Poland, more precisely through Christianization and adoption of Polish hierarchical system. It naturally meant a gradual appropriation of a Polish language and culture among Lithuanian nobility since written Lithuanian language did not exist by that time.

The latter processes were strengthened after the Union of Lublin in 1569 when GDL and Kingdom of Poland were united into a federative monarchy of a Commonwealth of Both Nations. It existed until the last partition of 1795 when the state was divided between Russia, Prussian and Austria. As Krzysztof Buchowski indicates, throughout centuries of a cohabitation Lithuanian, Polish and Ruthenian cultures merged and a notion of Lithuanian acquired political meaning – a citizen of GDL. On the other hand, Kingdom of Poland was called Crown. Both inhabitants of the Crown lands and GDL were called Poles but the major feature of Polishness was self-attribution to state and its administration but not the ethnic affiliation.⁵

Polish Uprisings of the 1830 and 1863 seeking to re-establish a Commonwealth showed that even after the occupation, the cultural memory of the former state was still alive and that national identification formulas were the same as before the partition of the state. However, the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century marked a new era of ethno-centric nationalisms in the lands of a former Commonwealth. Buchowski claims that on the one hand, new Polish intelligentsia saw Polish nation and a possible future state as successor of a Commonwealth but besides

²By that time her title was *Hedvig Rex Poloniae* which meant a sovereign (or king) of Poland despite being a woman.

³Mečislovas Jučas, *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos Unija*, (Vilnius: Aidai, 2000), 109.

⁴*Ibid.*, 146.

⁵Krzysztof Buchowski, *Litvomanai ir polonizuotojai. Mitai, abipusės nuostatos ir stereotipai lenkų ir lietuvių santykiuose pirmoje XX amžiaus pusėje* (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2012), 33.

history here the word “Polish” meant the nation based on language dimension.⁶ On the other hand, arising Lithuanian national movement also viewed language as a major feature describing Lithuanianness. It referred to vernacular elements of Lithuanian culture that were searched in a folk culture. By this time historical definitions of Lithuanians and Poles gained completely different meaning as ethno-centric concept of nationalism entrenched among peoples of a Commonwealth.⁷ As a consequence, people had to choose their nationality on a basis of the language. In these circumstances Polish speakers who lived in the former territories of the Grand Duchy faced the situation when they had to identify themselves referring to a bigger Polish nation, even though a part of them did not feel belonging to it. It led to a search of models of Polishness that could be based not on a language, but on a cultural memory of GDL and Commonwealth. Polish speakers fragmented into those who adopted ethno-centric mode of identification and those who grounded their identity models on the old identity concepts of a Commonwealth.

Both ideas were developed in the first half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, political events changed ideological field as modern Polish and Lithuanian Republics were created in 1918. Even on Political field tensions between Lithuanian and Polish elites reached a peak when a war between the countries in 1918 and 1919 was fought. It resulted in the absence of diplomatic relations until 1938 and indirectly to Vilnius and its region occupation after a peace agreement of Suwałki (7 October 1920). As Audrius Abromaitis suggests, in this atmosphere negative image of Poland and Polishness became a juggernaut in Lithuania.⁸ Nevertheless, original concepts of Polishness were still developed among Lithuanian Poles.

This process was interrupted by the Second World War and its aftermath when Lithuanian state was occupied by the Soviet Union and between 40’s and 50’s Lithuanian Polish community was touched by the mass repatriations and forced migration.⁹ As the absolute majority of Polish elites left the country, local Poles found themselves in a cultural vacuum. Only after the restoration of Lithuanian independence on 11 March 1990, new cultural movements and the ideas of the old concepts were once again revived. However, it happened not only because democratic system was re-

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 39.

⁸Audrius Abromaitis, “Priešo įvaizdžio įsitvirtinimas: Lenkijos suvokimas Lietuvoje 1919-1920 metais,” *Istorija* 53 (2002): 63.

⁹Vitalija Stravinskienė, “Lenkų Demografiniai Pokyčiai Lietuvoje 1947 – 1959 Metais,” *Lituanistica* 66 (2006): 100.

introduced, but also because of the need of local Poles to break anti-Polish stereotypes that are still viable in Lithuania. As well-known Lithuanian historian Alfredas Bumblauskas indicates, nationalistic, anti-Polish and pro-Russian concept of Lithuanian history still dominates in Lithuania. According to Bumblauskas, it is based on the following formula: through Christianization Poles destroyed pagan Lithuanian Empire and by force Polonized Lithuanians.¹⁰ Such nationalistic concept of history reveals problematic Lithuanian identity which is based on anti-Polishness.

Hypothesis and research questions

This thesis suggests that after 1990, the reborn Lithuanian nationalism and patriotism on ideological level still has anti-Polish feature which comes from historical traumatic experiences and the nature of Lithuanian national identity. It provokes counter-nationalism of Polish minority group which amounts to 6.6 percent of Lithuanian population or about 200,000 individuals.¹¹ In these circumstances new cultural circles of intellectuals and Polish elites try to search of identity models that would stress their historicity in Lithuania. By doing so, they shape cultural memory of local Poles and form distinct identity which is framed in relation to Lithuania and Lithuanianness.

However, these identity constructions are not entirely new since they are grounded on historical models of Polishness that were created at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. The major questions of this thesis are to answer:

- How many models of Polishness operate among present-day Lithuanian Polish public figures?
- How historical concepts of Lithuanian Polish identity are being used and re-used in order to form contemporary Lithuanian Polish identity by Lithuanian Polish public figures – carriers of cultural memory?
- What are the major features, similarities and differences between the historical and contemporary concepts of Polishness?
- How cultural memory of Lithuanian Poles is constructed by the carriers and what are the major markers of it?
- How Lithuanian history is interpreted by Lithuanian Polish public figures?

¹⁰Alfredas Bumblauskas, "Dar kartą apie Lietuvos ir Lenkijos užmarštis," *Lietuvos istorijos studijos* 30 (2012): 66.

¹¹*Lithuanian 2011 Population Census in Brief*, (Vilnius: Lietuvos Statistikos Departamentas, 2011), 20.

Sources and methodology

In order to answer the latter questions, the combination of various methods are used in this research. First of all, the historical analysis is applied to distinguish historical methods of Polishness that were formed at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Since historical modes of identification are directly related to the ideas of Lithuanian Polish intelligentsia and nobility of that time, the analysis of their ideas is a primary focus. Published and unpublished primary sources such as diaries, public statements and political manifestations are analyzed in order to reveal ideological concepts of the authors. In addition, Polish, Lithuanian and American historiographical perspectives are combined and applied in order to provide a clear explanation of the ideas. One of the most valuable researches used in this thesis is Krzysztof Buchowski's monograph *Litvomanai ir polonizuotojai*¹² where Polish history professor explains the creation and development of myths and stereotypes among Poles and Lithuanians in the first half of the twentieth century. Here he reveals both Lithuanian and Polish perspective towards each other in a context of rising ethno-centric nationalism. Another valuable monograph belongs to Polish historian Jan Sawicki, who in 1999 researched¹³ Michał Römer ideas in relation to Lithuanian national movement. The latter monographs as well as a part of primary sources are used not in original Polish language, but as Lithuanian translations, so there may be slight discrepancies, however the major ideas are expressed appropriately.

From Lithuanian perspective, works of Alfredas Bumblauskas,¹⁴ Darius Staliūnas¹⁵ and Rimantas Miknys¹⁶ are valuable in the research since they explore ideas of the nationhood and national identity of *krajojcy* movement which promoted unique concept of Polishness in the beginning of the twentieth century. Furthermore, American perspective towards the research question is represented by Timothy Snyder's

¹²Buchowski, *Litvomanai ir polonizuotojai*

¹³Jan Sawicki, "Mykolas Römeris ir buvusios Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės žemių tautinės problemos," *Lietuvos Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos* 15 (1999)

¹⁴Alfredas Bumblauskas, *Dar kartą apie Lietuvos*

¹⁵Darius Staliūnas, "Lietuviškojo nacionalizmo erdvėkūra iki 1914 m.," in *Lietuvos Erdvinės Sampratos Ilgajame XIX Šimtetyje*, ed. Darius Staliūnas (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2015)

¹⁶Rimantas Miknys, Darius Staliūnas, "Lenkų ir lietuvių konfliktas XIX amžiaus pabaigoje – XX amžiaus pradžioje: senų koncepcijų atgimimas" in *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės istorijos ir tradicijos fenomenai: tautų atminties vietos*, ed. Alfredas Bumblauskas, (Vilnius: Vilniaus Universiteto leidykla, 2013)

monograph *Reconstruction of Nations*¹⁷ and Brian Porter-Szűcs's article¹⁸ about Polish national identity of the twentieth century, *Who is Pole and where is Poland*.

The second and major part of the thesis deals with contemporary models of Polishness. Here qualitative analysis of present Lithuanian Polish elites is done through the collection of nine semi-structural interviews from prominent scientists, cultural activists and politicians. Data analysis reveals positions of Lithuanian Poles towards their national identity and cultural memory. Results of the interviews are combined with additional sources - public statements, other interviews and articles in media. The combination of the above mentioned sources and literature helps to reveal a wider picture of identity construction of Lithuanian Poles.

Approach and actuality of the topic

From European perspective, rising nationalism is one of the major challenges in contemporary European Union. As it was stated in European Commission led research of East and West integration in the European Union, in Central and Eastern EU countries (CEE), national and ethnic minority issues have always been sensitive. According to the research, the situation has not changed much over a period of 1989 - 2014 and states have become even more protective of their nations. Few of the major problems causing this phenomenon are ethno-centric nationalism and a strong feeling of recently regained independence or sovereignty. Even though minority rights are usually granted by these states, but actual implementation may be questioned.¹⁹ A report gives generalizations about all CEE countries but similar trends may be noticed in Lithuania. Coming back to Bumblauskas idea that dominating Lithuanian nationalistic historical narrative portrait Poles as the significant others, it may be assumed that Lithuanian Poles may be seen as a fearsome element of Lithuanian society by dominating majority.

For this reason the deconstruction of the stereotypes and deep analysis and understanding of 'The Others' may lead to consensus rather than to differentiation between the citizens of one state. This thesis is supposed to be a minor input in the latter processes.

¹⁷Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)

¹⁸Brian Porter-Szűcs, "Who is Pole and where is Poland? Territory and Nation in the Rhetoric of Polish National Democracy before 1905," *Slavic Review* 51 (1992)

¹⁹Péter Balázs et al., *25 Years After the fall of the Iron Curtain: The State of Integration of East and West in the European Union*, (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2014), 35, accessed 16 March 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/east-west_integration.pdf

From Lithuanian perspective, it is important to research national minorities because despite quantitative sociological and historical researches this question still needs to be further analyzed. As Lithuanian Institute for Ethnic Research emphasizes, in the case of Lithuanian Poles the approach of cultural memory and its impact for the identity formation is not sufficiently researched. For this reason, thesis seeks to apply cultural memory approach to the elites of Lithuanian Polish group – formers of public opinion in order to research and evaluate their position towards Lithuanian Polish cultural memory and their identification processes. It makes topic of the thesis actual and innovative in academic field.

Thesis structure

This thesis is organized into introduction, three chapters and conclusions. Introduction provides short historical overview of Lithuanian and Polish relations and gives a brief understanding of contemporary situation of Lithuanian Poles. It also introduces hypothesis, research question, sources and methodology and actuality of the topic. Chapter One is a theoretical chapter where approach of a cultural memory is broadly explained. It is divided into three sub-chapters that discuss a place of cultural memory in the studies of collective memories, its role in the process of identity construction and finally explains formation and relation between ethnic, civic and national identities. This chapter opens a theoretical approach to the research problem that is discussed in the following two chapters. Second chapter explores historical models of Polishness formed in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. It distinguishes and defines concrete modes of identification and also gives short historical overview in order to orientate in the historical environment of that time. The Third chapter is the most important part of the thesis as it directly deals with the research questions. First of all, it provides historical explanations and illustrate contemporary situation of Lithuanian Poles. Further on, there is introduction and explanation of the qualitative research an analysis. Finally, it analyzes data of the research and additional sources and provides results about cultural memory and contemporary models of Polishness promoted by Lithuanian Polish public persons. Summary concludes the results and rise questions for the possible future researches. In addition, in the appendix number 1 there is a timeline of Lithuanian history where the facts and dates are selected in accordance to the topic of the thesis so a reader could more easily orientate.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework

Studies of cultural memory have developed from the concept of collective memories introduced by Maurice Halbwachs in the first half of the twentieth century. As Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning suggest, during the last few decades cultural approach to memory became significantly trendy in social sciences and humanities. Now it is an interdisciplinary concept used by historians, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, political and other scientists.²⁰ It also opens a wide space for debates and innovative researches in the field of ethnic and national identity. There are still many potential phenomena and cases where the approach of cultural memory could be adopted, however the usage of concept varies in different countries. As it was stated, researches related to Lithuanian Polish minority still lack the approach of a cultural memory and its impact for identity formation. For this reason, this thesis seeks to apply cultural approach to the elites of Lithuanian Polish group – formers of public opinion in order to research and evaluate their position towards Lithuanian Polish cultural memory and their identification processes. However, first of all, a deeper analysis of a theoretical framework is required. Subsequent sub-chapters provide an insight to the collective and cultural memories, their impact for the identity formation, and reveal how a group's memory depends and operates on national, ethnic and civic levels respectively.

From the collective to cultural memory

The concept of collective memory was first introduced and developed by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who claimed the existence of the dual model of memory: individual and collective respectively. According to him, every person is engaged in both types of memory but his approach depends on the participation in one or another. Being an individual he remembers through the prism of his own personality, but at the same time he is a member of a group which determines his remembrances.²¹ Halbwachs developed an idea that isolated individual memory does not exist. He emphasized that an individual constantly has to refer to other's remembrances in order to allude to his own past. On the other hand, the individual memory is not available to

²⁰Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning, "Preface and Acknowledgments," in *Cultural Memory Studies: an International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 7.

²¹Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (Philadelphia: Harper Colophon Books, 1992), 50.

operate without instruments, ideas and words created by the others.²² Halbwahcs stressed the overlay of the memories and distinguished the boundaries between the two.

In “*The Collective Memory*” Halbwachs emphasized distinction between autobiographical and historical memories both shaping the collective memory. The first one is “alive” memory– experienced or remembered by ourselves, another is much broader, reaching the times we could not physically remember, and learned at schools and through other institutions. Nonetheless, both are intertwined because the first one would use the latter as our own history belongs to the general history.²³ In this process we connect our remembrances with learned history and our autobiographical memory is framed into the collective context. Therefore, history should be considered as an opposition to collective memory but it is also a factor which influences and shapes formation of the collective memory.

Halbwachs identified two major opposing aspects that separate history and collective memory. First of all, collective memory, unlike history, has no clear boundaries and demarcations. On the other hand, history seeks to create a narrative, filling in the emptiness between past and present while there is no continuity in memory. There is a gap between present society learning a written history and the group in the past which participated or witnessed described events.²⁴ Historians seek unachievable goal which is to write universal history, but it is impossible because there is no such thing as universal memory.²⁵ With this important distinction Halbwahcs started everlasting discussion within social sciences about the similarities and differences between history and memory.

Probably one of the most influential scholars in this field was Pierre Nora, a French historian of *Annales* School who followed up Halbwachs idea, and claimed that memory and history are contrary to each other. In the article called “*Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*” he stressed that memory is a permanent substantial phenomenon which links us to a constant present. On the contrary, history is only a representation of the past. Memory operates in concrete images, objects and spaces while history is bounded to temporal progressions and associations among the things. In other words, history occupies a space of memory and destroys it tending to produce

²²Ibid., 53.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., 78-79.

²⁵Ibid., 83.

critical memory.²⁶ According to Nora, there is a gap between the true memory, embodied in habits, gestures, behavior passed by continual tradition, and memory transformed by history which is archived in order to conserve past and present.²⁷ Historization of the past absorbs the relation to it. A term *Leux de memoire* or *sites of memory* embodies the transition from the true memory to the constructed history. They: “stop the time, block the work of forgetting in order to capture a maximum of meaning in the fewest of signs.”²⁸ When we give a symbolic meaning to the sites of memory, our living memory is suppressed. Nora calls it the unconscious organization of the collective memory which creates ideological myth by giving similar meaning to distinct objects.²⁹

This transformation, as Paul Ricoeur noted, reveals a major challenge for the collective memory. It is mobilized and used for the process of the identity construction that leads to manipulation of remembering and forgetting. As soon as memory starts to serve ideology it is used and abused in order to legitimize the system power and integration of the common world. Then narrative serves as an incorporating tool of memory for the identity formation. Through creation and reconstruction of stories, founding events, glory and traumas, memory is armed with history which is publicly learned and celebrated.³⁰ Nora’s approach confirms the latter ideas by noting that every social group has to reformulate its identity through revitalization of its own history. As he indicates: “Every established group, intellectual or not, learned or not, has felt the need to go in search of its own origins and identity.”³¹ A quest of searching of origins and using them as a basis for the identity formation creates a wide space for manipulating memory.

Barry Schwartz emphasizes that the collective memory employs the past in a few ways. First of all, it is a model of a society – contemplation of the present mindset and questions. Further, it is a model for society – phenomenon which fulfills its values and meaning of the experience.³² In other words, our remembrances are always related to the present needs. As Wulf Kansteiner suggests, it is particularly visible when we talk

²⁶Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire,” *Representations* 26 (1989): 8-10.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 13.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 19.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 22.

³⁰Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 80-82. 85.

³¹Nora, *Between Memory and History*, 13.

³²Barry Shwartz, “Culture and Collective Memory: Comparative Perspectives,” in *Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, ed. John R. Hall et al. (New York: Routledge, 2010), 620.

about national memory. He emphasizes that small groups, such as veterans, who have directly experienced the events, can shape and influence national memory only if their version of memory is compatible with political and social objectives of the present political system or the ruling elites, if they correspond to contemporary interests.³³ Generally speaking, one of the major interests for a national group, as Ricoeur indicates, is integration of a group. For this purpose fixed points of memory and ideological framework are set as guardians of the identity.³⁴ So in case of intersection of a “real” memory and ideologically historized one, the latter always prevails.

A person can be a member of a few mnemonic communities of a different level – families, social and economic classes, ethnic or national groups. Halbwachs claims that each of such groups is confined in space and time and evokes original collective memory which registers everything about each member. Therefore, all individuals remember in common despite having different perspectives. If remembrances of one person are distorted, he can just place himself in the viewpoint of the others.³⁵ However, Kansteiner adds that: “Memories are the most collective when they transcend the time and space of the events’ original occurrence.”³⁶ In this sense, “live” collective memories of the smaller mnemonic communities are more likely to be temporary and fade away sooner than those of the larger groups like a nation.

This generalization originates from the ideas of Jan and Aleida Assmanns’. They were pioneers in describing how memory generates synthesis of time and identity. Assmann’ developed a concept of the collective memory and subdivided it into a dual model of communicative and cultural memories. The first one is based on informal traditions of everyday communication. Using Halbwachs’ idea that every person engages him/herself into different groups and composes a memory related to it, Jan Assmann suggests that such memory has limited temporal horizon which does not extend more than from eighty to one hundred years or three to four generations. In this kind of memory there are no fixed points that could connect and expand it to the deep past in the passing of time.³⁷ It means that communicative memory embodies itself in autobiographical memory and is less formal.

³³Wulf Kansteiner, “Finding a Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies,” *History and Theory* 41(2002):187-188.

³⁴Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 83.

³⁵Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*,78.

³⁶Kansteiner, *Finding Meaning*,189.

³⁷Jan Assmann, “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,” *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 127.

Another type of the collective memory, according to Jan Assmann, is the cultural memory. As he explains, Halbwachsian thought that as soon as a living communication or "live" memory gains objectivized forms, collective memory disappears and transforms into history.³⁸ However, Jan Assmann broadened this assumption by adding cultural dimension which allowed him to expand the frontiers of the collective memory into absolute time. According to him, cultural memory has its symbolic forms that are stable and resistant to the time because our memories are interacting not only with memories of other individuals but also with external symbols that, one the other hand, do not have memories of their own, but carries other memories that have been put into them. For this reason, the cultural memory is based on the fixed points of the past and its horizon reaches back into the past as deep as we understand it as ours. Jan Assmann claims that it is the major distinction why it is a memory and not a mere history.³⁹ Such idea opened a new space for discussions because previous "confrontation" between history and memory advanced into a new level of debates and a notion of memory was broadened into a field of, what was thought to be history.

Recent developments of the concept of cultural memory are even more "radical". Astrid Erll suggests that the opposition between memory and history does not exist at all but there are only different modes of remembering in culture. As she notes, the past is constructed and reconstructed and both individual and collective memories can be very different.⁴⁰ There are various possible ways of remembering the same historical event but the most important is a position which we take when we refer to the past. According to her, family remembrances, group, religious, political memory as well as trauma or generational memory are only different modes of associating to what has already been. In this sense, history then is only a form of the cultural memory and the historiography is only a medium.⁴¹ The most important is the position which we take when we remember the past, but the position itself depends on a cultural framework of the society we live in. This idea once again stresses the importance of self-identification affected by social and cultural environment which affects our relation with the past and history. As Aleida Assmann indicates, only through culture individuals can outstep their

³⁸Ibid., 128.

³⁹Jan Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory," in *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nunning, (Berlin and NewYork:Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 110-113.

⁴⁰Astrid Erll, "Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nunning, (Berlin and NewYork: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 7.

⁴¹Ibid., 7.

lifetime and relate themselves with the past and the future. Humans live with the cultural background and knowledge which can be reinterpreted and reused according to their present needs.⁴² Therefore, when we think about the history the most important is to feel the relation to it, which is determined by our environment. History is only a mere history – collection of the facts without the relation to it while history which has a cultural meaning is already a form of a cultural memory. The latter approach of a cultural memory is used in this thesis as the major objective is to reveal how the past is understood as own among the carriers of the memory in Lithuanian Polish society, and how it correlates with the self-identification.

Cultural memory and identity construction

Concession of the meaning to the past shapes cultural memory and makes history valuable. However, this process has constructivist nature. Eric Hobsbawm defines it as an invention of the tradition. According to him, it means the creation of the symbolic continuity with the past by accepting and repeating particular values, rules, symbolic rituals and norms of behavior. In other words, it is a process which creates the imaginary tradition of the present with the suitable past. Invented traditions tend to change according to the needs and demands of the social changes. Institutions as the carriers of traditions can change the rhetoric and use old models for completely new purposes in order to adopt in a changing environment.⁴³ Such changes are necessary to shape, construct and reconstruct the collective identity of a group.

As Jan Assmann indicates, all individuals have different identities according to the various groups they belong to, and in all levels memory is open to different systems. However, there are frames relating memory to particular boundaries of time and identity on various levels: cultural, political or individual.⁴⁴ Another feature of the cultural memory is incapability to preserve the past. It operates in two forms either potential (archival), where collected objects act as total horizon or actual, where contemporary context creates a meaning from its own perspective.⁴⁵ Such ideologization of the past, in often case, can be described as the invention of the tradition. Nonetheless, without this process there would be no cultural memory, only the facts without meaning.

⁴²Aleida Assmann, "Cannon and Archive," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 97.

⁴³Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-2. 5.

⁴⁴Jan Assmann, *Communicative and Cultural Memory*, 113-114.

⁴⁵Jan Assmann, *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*, 30.

In the context of invention of the tradition or actualization of the cultural memory, a distinction between remembering and forgetting must be added. As Aleida Assmann emphasizes, a process of forgetting is a norm when we talk about memory, that is to say, in order to remember something we have to forget particular things. She distinguishes a process of forgetting into passive and active one. First one may be caused by non-intentional acts like abandoning, losing or hiding and the latter is related to forceful forgetting like censorship, destruction or negation.⁴⁶ Passive forgetting can occur if, for instance, the objects of cultural memory lose their meaning for a group or individuals. On the contrary, active forgetting is related to the regulations of the memory imposed by the institutions.

Similar distinction can be made between active and passive remembering. However, both forms are much more related to the cultural institutions. As Aleida Assmann describes, institutions of the active memory preserve past as present while those of the passive one, preserve the past as past. She defines active part of cultural memory as the canon and passive one as the archive. Only the canon supports the collective identity but it is highly selected and canonized – provided a real meaning and value that is resistant to the time change. It can only be reinterpreted.⁴⁷ In Hobsbawmian terms it is not completely invented but is taken and adapted in accordance to the contemporary needs.

Jan Assmann underlines that cultural memory is objectivized into the carriers of the memory: texts, rites, persons, anniversaries, artefacts, sites of memory, archives, museums and others. But besides, there are individuals, groups and institutions that work as carriers and also influence the collective memory.⁴⁸ As it was mentioned, active cultural memory is highly selective. Institutions or carriers also influence the process of selection and shaping of the memory. On the one hand, it would seem that such carrier groups could be defined in the same way as Jeffrey Alexander defined them in his research of a notion of cultural trauma. According to him, they are collective agents of the cultural trauma process that influence collective identity. Carrier groups are the ones who make the meaning in the public sphere by creating a narrative. Those can be elitist or any other social or even institutionalized groups that represent material and non-

⁴⁶Aleida Assmann, *Cannon and Archive*, 98.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 99-100.

⁴⁸Jan Assmann, *Communicative and Cultural Memory*, 115.

material interests.⁴⁹ If to follow this idea, it would mean that carriers of cultural memory can also be easily influenced by such groups. Even though same mechanisms may apply, to establish, shape and form cultural memory is much more complicated process.

Agness Heller claims that identity formation is based on old cultural memories that are reinterpreted and contextualized according to the present needs.⁵⁰ However, it is hard to establish a new cultural memory and on contrary to carriers of the cultural trauma, carriers of cultural memory cannot form it as easy as the primes. If in the first case, for instance, some social group or movement is shaping a public space and forming opinion about some traumatic event, by repeating it they can stimulate a formation of cultural trauma. Nonetheless, if it considers cultural memory, according to Heller, it can usually be called only the raising of consciousness. She provides examples of the single-issue social movements like abolitionists that also have their shared symbols, signals, purpose they are visible in a public sphere. Despite of that, they are future oriented and do not establish a cultural memory for the future generations. Heller makes the major distinction between single-issue and identity-oriented movements, related to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation etc. Such groups must establish or re-establish cultural memory because without it, there is no identity. According to her, ethnic groups have the easiest task as they have never completely lost their cultural memory which can be re-established easily by bringing forgotten ideas, stories and myths into the light.⁵¹ In this sense, the task for the carriers of cultural memory is easier achievable because usually they can reconstruct the past instead of establishing it. However, if they have to construct a cultural memory, it is much harder than to form a cultural trauma from contemporary events as these events may be only single-issue tasks oriented to the future without cultural background.

As it is said, in order to construct identity one has to establish a cultural memory. In case of ethnic groups the constructors or active carriers of this memory must link the present identity needs to the past ideas and events. The major ideological tool for this purpose is creating and combining narrative which would allow to connect the past with the present and to create commemorative nature, embodied in the symbolic objects or practices. As Aleida Assman indicates, each group is constructed through specific

⁴⁹Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward Theory of Cultural Trauma," in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander et al., (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 11.

⁵⁰Agnes Heller, "Cultural Memory, Identity and Civil Society," *International Politics and Society* 2 (2001): 140.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 142-143.

discourse which draws the lines and criteria for belonging to a group. Having group's identity, means sharing its history that transcends individual life span and in order to share it, one has to learn it.⁵² Given this point of view, it can be named historical memory or cultural memory, but in both cases the most important is the discourse which creates the meaning – historical narrative.

Jörn Rüsen describes three major qualities and functions of the historical narrative: 1) It is a medium of memory which uses the past in order to provide a meaning for the present and to make expectations for the future. 2) It unites all three dimensions of time into continuity so the past experiences become actual in contemporary which respectively shapes the future. 3) It serves as the factor of identity formation both for its listeners and the authors.⁵³ The latter functions operate differently in a quaternary model of narration which Rüsen distinguishes. Taking the most important part of the narration – relation to identity, four types of narratives follow in this way: traditional narrative – affirming identity; exemplary narrative – generalizing identity, critical narrative – denying given patterns of the identity, genetical narrative – mediating. According to Rüsen, all types are intertwined and none of those is excluded in any historical text but the dominant part establishes a general epoch. In each kind of historical narrative there is arguing and reasoning but practical function of the narration stays the same - to mobilize historical memory in order to shape human identity.⁵⁴ In this sense, the most important question is why some parts or facts of the past were selected or rejected, what are the present conditions and needs for which historical narratives are mobilized and who determines this mobilization.

Bernhard Giesen notes that humans tend to sacralize past or the future because of the necessity to change present situation by the historical action which is usually determined as ideal past. He emphasizes that nowadays future is not that distant as it used to be. A time between idea and its realization has shortened so the past and memory once again became the most important factors transcending the time. It extends imagination of the sacred and collective memory plays the most important role in the formation of a collective identity.⁵⁵ Such notion could wrongly lead to the idea that present collective identity construction is based on the same principles as in the

⁵²Aleida Assmann, "Re-framing Memory: Between Individual and Collective Forms of Constructing the Past," in *Reforming The Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, ed. Karin Tilmans et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 40.

⁵³Jörn Rüsen, *History: Narration-Interpretation-Orientations*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 11.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁵Bernhard Giesen, *Triumph and Trauma*, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 9-10.

nineteenth century when nations were creating nationalistic metanarratives. Yet speaking about contemporary societies and groups it is essential to have in mind present transformation from modernism into post-modernism.

French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard claims that in an age of post-modernism metanarratives are disappearing in favor of localized alternative narratives. A progress of science is destroying functions of the old-fashioned metanarrative with all the sacred “great” stories, with heroes and epic adventures. Even the old institutions that represent nation-states, parties, historical traditions are losing their attraction together with the great narratives they try to promote.⁵⁶ Taking into account Lyotard’s ideas one could say that national narratives are falling apart, and it would be partial truth but it is happening not only because the postmodern societies do not believe in absolute truths anymore, but also because of the processes of globalization and intercultural connections.

Giesen indicates that cultural memory in all its forms have to be narrated and exposed. It is represented in objects, written texts, oral narration, other symbolic objects and ritual. Participation in them creates sense of belonging to a group and that’s how social boundaries between “us” and “them” are being created. However construction of the trans-local communities make “threat” to such unitary culture and its boundaries because even some practices are watched by the unfamiliar spectators who automatically are involved in the process. Giesen claims that at this point such groups seek for the external recognition of their symbolic representations. For this reason there are institutional arenas that establish boundaries between what is outside and what is inside. Institutions represent a public discourse of a civil society embodied in a public memory which is related to rituals and modern media.⁵⁷ But then there is question of what kind of public memory is represented and to whom it belong.

There is important distinction when we talk about the public space and cultural memory. Even though they are closely related, Aleida Assmann clearly distinguishes spheres between political and cultural memories. Both of them are very similar and overlapping because they are embodied in symbols, carriers, material representations, both are trans-generational, both are narrated and influence collective identity. Nonetheless, there is one essential difference which separates them – it is a principle of

⁵⁶Jean-Francois Lyotard, “The Postmodern Condition: A Report of Knowledge,” *Theory and History of Literature* 10 (1984): XXIV – XXV. 19.

⁵⁷Giesen, *Triumph and Trauma*, 9-10.

creation of memory. According to A. Assmann, cultural memory works on a bottom-up basis and becomes political when is transformed and institutionalized in a top-down political memory. Nation-states, church or other large social groups do not have their own cultural memory but they make it through symbolic signs and creation of narratives in order to form civic identity and political memory.⁵⁸ It does not mean that such social groups as nations do not have a cultural memory; it means that they are adopting cultural patterns and transform them for the present needs that can be for instance, political, social, cultural or any other.

Agnes Heller emphasizes that civil society must also have a cultural memory otherwise it will not have the identity, even though it can exist without one. She claims that a civil society, for instance nation, consist of many identities and non-identities, of groups with cultural memory and without it. There are groups that need and try to create cultural memory and on the other hand, there are groups and movements without it. They are mixed, co-existing or even competing but all of them are based under the wing of a civic space.⁵⁹ However, then there is a question of how they are represented in a civic space.

Such idea leads to Lyotard's assumption that metanarratives, such as great historical narratives of the nation, are disappearing in favor of localized alternative narratives.⁶⁰ In case of nations, these types of grand historical narratives are losing their meaning as in present globalized world different ethnic minorities, even though united by citizenship may easily resist and create their own alternative cultural memories and reinforce their identities. So the questions are: in what condition, why and in what relation to the majority groups, and how cultural memories are being re-established, and established. A case of Lithuanian Polish minority perfectly illustrates latter questions. However, to answer them, major principles of the formation of nation states, relation between civic and ethnic identities and between majority and minority groups must be revealed.

Ethnic, civic and national identities

As it was stated, a civil community like nation can implicate multiple cultural memories. However, types of cultural memory embodied in a political identity depend on a concept of a nation itself and features that characterize it. According to classical

⁵⁸Aleida Assmann, *Re-framing Memory*, 42-43.

⁵⁹Heller, *Cultural Memory*, 143.

⁶⁰Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, XXIV-XXV.

description, there are civic and ethnic models of nations, historically originating from Western and East-Central Europe respectively. The core elements of the first one are common civic culture and ideology, historic territory, legal political community and equality of members. In the second case ethnicity, descent and language are more important elements defining a notion of a nation.⁶¹ Nevertheless, according to Anthony D. Smith, both types of nations and national identities have same fundamental features: “historical territory or homeland, common myths and memories, common mass public culture, common legal rights and duties, common economy with territorial mobility of its members.”⁶² This description of nation is based on commonalities that, as stated by Benedict Anderson, create an imagined community between people who do not know each other.⁶³

Even so, it is essential that members of such an imagined community recognize the rights and duties to each other through a shared membership.⁶⁴ Common perception and acceptance of shared values and norms is created through construction of common symbols and political/cultural/historical memories. Though taking into consideration different types of nationhood, participation in the shared membership can be problematic. For instance, can members of the same nation, who speak different languages, have common political and cultural identity? It is a question largely discussed by political scientists.

Rogers Brubaker suggests that viewing ethnic model of nationalism based on citizenship as exclusive, and on the other hand, civic based on ethnicity as purely inclusive is fallacious. He claims that both types of nationhood are as much inclusive as exclusive, only the degree varies. Even a citizenship is already exclusive, as it excludes non-citizens from the citizens, and the unilateral automatic attribution of the citizenship may also violate personal values and convictions. Brubaker provides example of the Hungarians living in Romania who resist civic rhetoric of citizenship, which makes them members of Romanian nation, while being citizens of Romania they identify themselves with Hungarian nation. With this example he shows that division made by Anthony D. Smith is deficient. Instead Brubaker suggests alternative concepts of state-framed and counter-state nationhood. In the first one it is compatible with the state, its

⁶¹Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1991),11-12.

⁶²Ibid.,14.

⁶³Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), 5-6.

⁶⁴Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006), 7.

territory and institutions. On the contrary, in the second nation is understood in opposition to territorial and institution frames of the state.⁶⁵ This distinction puts a relation to the state into the center of question.

According to David Miller, national identity and nationality can often be challenged by the ethnic identities, as ethnic groups alike nations, have their own collective memory, cultural features and often a relation to the territory. In a state they usually rise demands for their political and cultural recognition together with the language they use. Usually ethnic groups aim for the equal status of their native language in a common public space as they see it as one of the major identity markers. However, from the viewpoint of the majority, it can be seen as a threat to their national identity. Following up this notion, national identity is associated to the authority expressed through institutions that preserve it.⁶⁶ In such case cultural memories and other expressions of the ethnic minorities are suppressed and tensions between different groups of the civic society are created. In Brubaker's terms counter-state nationhood is being stimulated.

As a solution to the problem, Miller suggests to perceive common membership in a nation as a dynamic process where all the voices and groups would be heard. Through the public discussions about the status of language, the commemoration of the historical facts and figures and similar identity-related issues, questions about nation's identification are raised. According to Miller, if a group or nation understands that its identity is always changing and cannot be fixed on the same points throughout the time, it does not see a threat to itself by incorporating or equally representing other group memories/languages/cultural expressions.⁶⁷ Coming back to Heller's idea, there are many cultural memories within a civic space⁶⁸ and nation's or ethnic group's memories are few of them. What is the most important is how they co-exist.

Miller's multicultural approach to the issue may sound simply achievable but Brubaker's example of Hungarians who live in neighboring Romania⁶⁹ rise another problem that is common in reality. Borders of the contemporary nation-states usually do not correspond with the ethnic borders of the nations. To believe that they should be

⁶⁵Rogers Brubaker, "The Manichean Myth: Rethinking the Distinction Between "Civic" and "Ethnic" Nationalism," in *Nation and National Identity: The European Experience in Perspective*, ed. Hanspeter Kriesi et al., (Chur: Rüegger, 1999), 65-67. 69.

⁶⁶David Miller, *On Nationality*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 122-124.

⁶⁷Ibid., 127-128.

⁶⁸Heller, *Cultural Memory*, 143.

⁶⁹Brubaker, *The Manichean Myth*, 65.

compatible would mean thinking in nationalistic categories of the nineteenth century, but in spite of that, even inside the present day European Union with the Schengen Area, cases of national minorities create disputes and problems.

The above mentioned example of Romanian Hungarians living in Transylvania illustrates the problem. As Dragos Dragoman indicated in 2011, hard violent nationalism seemed to be gone in Europe but it still manifested in many other symbolic forms and especially in public spaces.⁷⁰ In such areas like present-day Transylvania, where the ethnic composition is broad, two major ethnic groups are constantly competing between each other for the dominance over a public space. One of the key issues is the official use of Hungarian language in minority schools, local administration and public inscriptions. Even though it is officially allowed to use Hungarian language, surveys revealed that majority of Romanians feel offended and disagree with these rules. On the other hand, such disagreements are always led by practical examples. Dragoman indicates that actual implementation of the double signs is poor because local authorities refuse to place bilingual inscriptions.⁷¹ He also provides an example of touristic inscriptions that were put up in Hungarian language marking the borders of the historic Szeklerland. Soon they were removed by Romanian Road Company and the meaning was symbolic. They were understood as a symbolic threat to the principles of the Romanian unitary state.⁷² These are only a few examples of the symbolic clashes between ethnic groups inside the state. In Miller's terms, they show discussions and agreements on a national level, but as it is seen from the example, cultural memories of the ethnic groups are alive in people's mind and they are not easily replaceable by citizenship or civic attributes.

As it was discussed, collective memories are carried through the symbolic expressions such as narratives. The case of Hungarians shows a strong cultural memory which is in opposition to the political one fostered by the central Romanian Government. As it is clear from the example, both memories stand in contrary to each other because they are based on symbolic points and narratives where each of the actors plays a role of the other and specific territory becomes mythologized. Anthony D. Smith stresses that every nationalistic movement has its myths of descent that are unique. He distinguishes one type of a myth as a myth of location and migration. It is especially

⁷⁰Dragos Dragoman, „Ethnic Groups in Symbolic Conflict: the “Ethnicisation” of Public Space in Romania,” in *Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review* 11 (2011): 107.

⁷¹Ibid., 117.

⁷²Ibid., 52.

vital in the case when territorial claims, in cultural sense, are being suppressed. Then a notion of “homeland” starts to play a central role. Ethnic group then fosters the creation of myths and legendary meaning of this “sacred” territory in order to legitimate autonomy or independence. They are reinforced by the other myths, such as of ancestry that encourage the creation of kinsmen and the others, who do not share the same roots and kinship ties.⁷³ Such narratives internalize in the cultural memory which in turn is further reframed and reshaped for the contemporary needs of the group and becomes a part of nationalistic ideology. If similar symbolic meaning is given to the same territory by the two competing nationalisms, it may lead to the further escalation of the conflict or can further deepen the fragmentation.

Even greater disagreements can evolve if ethnic groups that demand for the better cultural or political representation inside political entity, have a kin state outside the country they live and citizenship possess. As EUDO Citizenship Observatory Report indicates, in European Union some countries like Poland, Croatia, Romania, Hungary and others have special constitutional provisions that concern their kin groups. They include trans-border minorities whose homeland once was a part of the present state, and also scattered migrant diaspora. These states seek to protect kin-minorities on the one hand, and to expand size of the homeland nation and get influence over external kin populations that are understood as part of the kin-nation, usually described by ethnic ties, on the other.⁷⁴

These regulations provoked series of disagreements and conflicts between European states. For instance, in 2010 Slovakian Government announced that Slovak citizens who will acquire Hungarian external citizenship would be stripped of their Slovakian citizenship. This regulation deteriorated international relations between the countries and put kin minorities into a more problematic situation as Hungarian external citizenship does not provide full membership in a political community.⁷⁵ Cases like this have impact not only on the political level but they also foster cultural segregation and deepening of the stereotypes. On the other hand, it is a question not about the relation between the countries but also about the kin minorities who are viewed even more negatively from the perspective of the majority in their living state after such

⁷³Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 63-65.

⁷⁴Szabolcs Pogonyi, et al., *The Politics of External Kin-State Citizenship in East Central Europe*, (Italy, Badia Fiesolana: RSCAS, 2010), 4, accessed 28 March 2016, <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/ECEcompreport.pdf>

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 12.

international conflicts. Having in mind that both countries are members of the European Union, it may seem that such legislations are motivated not by the economic but by cultural and ideological incentives.

Speaking of the minorities, given examples show the counter-state nationhood that can be stimulated by other kin states. But it is clear that in all the cases nation-state and the rules that it sets plays a crucial role in regulating the relationship between the ethnic or national groups. As Thomas Hylland Eriksen suggests, nation-state is ideologically successful when identities of the groups become compatible with demands of the nation state which in turn responds credibly to demands of its citizens.⁷⁶ He propose a multi-cultural approach which means that all the groups in the state should have equal access to educational system, labor market. Nonetheless, there should be a right for groups to legally be different and to some extent act differently according to their cultural values. Besides, national identity should represent all citizens regardless their cultural differences and symbolically represent them respectively. All in all, political power should also be decentralized.⁷⁷ In this multicultural model all cultural memories of different groups must not be suppressed by the dominating one, and should be equally respected. However, it is only a framework or aspiration purpose to align with.

Inverse model is state-centered where one dominating ethnic group impose its exclusive ideology and tries to re-shape political memory by using patterns of cultural memory. Such states have culturally exclusive nature that shifts towards the confrontation instead of multiculturalism. This research suggests that present exclusion of the local Polish minority in Lithuania creates cultural and intellectual reaction from Lithuanian Poles. Various intellectual groups of local Polish intelligentsia take different approaches towards common history and establishment or re-shaping cultural memory of Lithuanian Poles. For these reasons they construct different models of Polishness in relation to Lithuanian state and Lithuanianness. As an ethnic group, first of all, it turns to history and historical models of identification as they try to re-construct and re-establish cultural memory for the contemporary needs. The following chapter focuses on historical perspective and creation of ideological models of Polishness in Lithuania

⁷⁶Thomas Hylland Eriksen, "Ethnicity versus Nationalism," *Journal of Peace Research*, 28 (1991): 267, accessed 30 March 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/424407>

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 276.

in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century as they are used as a basis for contemporary identity formation.

Chapter Two: Formation of the Historical Models of Polishness in Lithuania in the End of the Nineteenth and Beginning of the Twentieth Centuries

Origins of the question of historical models of Polishness in Lithuania are directly related to the formation of the modern Polish and Lithuanian nations in second half of the nineteenth century and subsequent interaction between each other in the changing political environment. First of all, in 1795 Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was finally divided between Prussia, Austria and Russian Empire. The Confederation of two equal political units – Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) and Kingdom of Poland (Crown lands) fell under different administrations of the occupiers. Russian occupied lands of Kingdom of Poland preserved autonomy within the Empire while territories of GDL fell under the direct rule of Russian authorities. The uprising against the Imperial rule in 1863-1864 was the last common resistance and attempt to restore independent Commonwealth. It was the fight of Poles in the political sense, inhabitants of the former Commonwealth regardless their ethnic affiliation. This uprising inspired Russian authorities to undertake new divisive tactics that matched contemporaneous wave of nationalistic ideology in Europe. Both factors significantly affected the formation of Lithuanian ethnic nationalism in the end of the nineteenth century.⁷⁸

The rise of Lithuanian national movement, on the other hand, was a phenomenon that shaken up until then established concepts of nation in the territories of DGL. This thesis suggests that the formation of distinct models of Polishness in Lithuania, first of all, came into the existence as modes of Lithuanianness that became a counterweight to ethnocentric nationalism coming from the Crown lands and Lithuanian National Movement in ethnic Lithuania. This chapter explains historical condition and discusses the features of national identity models of Lithuanian Poles that were developed in the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries.

Historical conditions

Soon after the uprising was suppressed in May 1864, a new de-Polonization program was confirmed in the territories of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) by the Russian government. It aimed to forbid the use of the Polish language in public, to restrict individuals with Polish descent of serving in a public sector, to control Catholic Church, to restrict local nobility and to intensify Russification in the region. In

⁷⁸ Egidijus Aleksandravičius, Antanas Kulakauskas, *Carų valdžioje. Lietuva XIX amžiuje*, (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1996), 50.

addition, between 1864 and 1865 Lithuanian Latin alphabet was gradually reversed to Cyrillic and written Lithuanian language was forbidden in Russian Empire.⁷⁹ According to Timothy Snyder, this policy marked an important turning point because local Polish elites were seen as the major state enemy. In order to weaken it, for the first time Russian government saw Lithuanian ethnic national movement, arising from the peasantry to intelligentsia as a counterweight to the Polish speaking nobility. Russian repressive policies deliberately changed the notion of Lithuanian (*Litwin*: Inhabitant of the GDL) by narrowing it to the ethnic meaning.⁸⁰ Even though in the majority of Lithuanian territory written Lithuanian in Cyrillic was forbidden, another type of policies were introduced in the Polish governorate of Suwałki inhabited by vast number of ethnic Lithuanians.

Since the 1870s in Suwałki and Marijampolė gymnasiums as well as in Sejny progymnasium Lithuanian language classes were introduced.⁸¹ Those who had a high mark of Lithuanian language in their graduation certificate could apply to ten yearly governmental scholarships at Moscow University. With such policies, Russian government sought to form pro-Russian and anti-Polish Lithuanian intelligentsia. As a consequence, the absolute majority of Lithuanian national movement leaders of 1880s, such as Jonas Basanavičius and Vincas Kudirka, were educated and arose as leaders in these conditions.⁸² Besides the resistance to imperial rule in Lithuania they also developed the idea of ethno-linguistic Lithuanian nation within ethnic territories, where Poles and Polishness itself played a role of significant other.

Extracts from one of the first and leading national periodicals “Ausra” (published between 1883 and 1886) illustrate visions and ideas of new Lithuanian intelligentsia. The importance of language was always highlighted: “Lithuania is gradually disappearing because its language is disappearing.”⁸³ Wrote Jonas Basanavičius in 1883. On the other hand, a new romantic version of history started to dominate Lithuanian narrative: “In 1569 Lithuanian nobles were finally connected to Poland. Unfortunately, since then Lithuania had to suffer all the misfortunes brought by the Poles.”⁸⁴ As it is seen from the example, the Union with Poland and a period of

⁷⁹Ibid., 83-84.

⁸⁰Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 49.

⁸¹Suwałki governorate formally belonged to Polish Kingdom and anti-Lithuanian language rules were not applied in here.

⁸²Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas, *Carų Valdžioje*, 94.

⁸³Jonas Basanavičius, “Priekalba,” *Ausra*, 1883 (1), 3.

⁸⁴“Lietuviai kitą gadinę ir szendien,” *Ausra*, 1883 (8-10) 224-225.

Commonwealth started to be viewed negatively. It presupposed that a creation of a possible common political unit with Poland in the future would have disastrous outcomes for the Lithuanian nation. On the contrary, following Lithuanian nationalistic ideology, Lithuania should preserve its language and search of inspiration in its medieval history.

The elites of Lithuanian national movement developed ethno-linguistic territorial idea of what is Lithuanian nation. The ideas were gradually changing as it was hard to determine concrete ethnographical and linguistic Lithuanian regions. However, in the beginning of the twentieth century, the ethnic space was more or less clear and it included non-Lithuanian Vilnius, as it was historical capital, together with other territories. Elites understood that ethnic Lithuanians should become a titular nation while others would become minorities.⁸⁵ The latter concept illustrates that a notion of Lithuanian (*Litwin*) has been narrowed down and Lithuanian space included almost only Lithuanian speakers. Polish speaking inhabitants of the former GDL were excluded from a concept of *Litwin*.

On the contrary, from the Polish perspective, representatives of arising Lithuanian national movement started to be called *litwomani*. A term was created in the 1890s but it gained popularity in Polish discourse after 1905. The meaning of the term was related to mania, obsession of Lithuanian ideas but not all of the Lithuanians were understood as *litwomani*. According to Krzysztof Buchowski, *litwomani* were those accused for embezzling a historical term Lithuania, narrowed to the ethnic meaning.⁸⁶ However, according to Darius Staliūnas, Polish right – National Democrats (*endecja*) gradually started to use similar rhetoric. If in the end of the nineteenth and the first years of the twentieth century they avoided to use language as determining factor of the nationality, already after 1906 in their party magazine “*Kurjer Litewski*” in Vilnius region it was declared that Poles are the ones who speak in Polish. Open statements about the language from *endecja* showed their changing position towards Lithuanians and Lithuanian Poles.⁸⁷ It illustrates that Polish Right and their ideologists gradually gained similar features as Lithuanian nationalists. This situation led to ideological

⁸⁵ Darius Staliūnas, *Lietuviškojo nacionalizmo erdvėkūra*, 168-169.

⁸⁶ Krzysztof Buchowski, *Litwomani ir polonizuotojai*, 99-102.

⁸⁷ Olga Mastianica, Darius Staliūnas, “Tarp etnografinės Baltarusijos ir Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštysės atkūrimo: baltarusiškojo nacionalizmo erdvėkūra XX a. pradžioje,” in *Lietuvos Erdvinės Sampratos Ilgajame XIX Šimtetyje*, ed. Darius Staliūnas (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2015), 177.

confrontation and left the old “citizens” of the GDL or Commonwealth between the intersection of two ideological movements.

In this environment, part of intelligentsia of Belarussian and Lithuanian territories formed a new ideological concept of *krajowość*. The meaning of it was based on political identity of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a part of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Representatives of *krajowość* movement or simply *krajowcy*, identified themselves as *kraj* (land) citizens emphasizing their historical ties with homeland and former political unit. Ethno-linguistic identity and language was irrelevant in this ideology. As Aliaksandr Smaliančuk notes, they were real historical Lithuanians (*Litwini*) with Polish cultural orientation.⁸⁸In other words, *krajowcy* ideas reflected civic identity with a strong cultural memory where historical state, which did not exist anymore, played a major role.

Krzysztof Buchowski described relation between *krajowcy* and Lithuanian National movements as a competition between *starolitwini* (*old-Lithuanians*) and *młodolitwini* (*young-Lithuanians*) respectively. The first ones represented historical tradition, while the latter – ethnocentric nationalism.⁸⁹On the other hand, *starolitwini* were also in opposition to the “Young-Poles” or *młodopolacy*⁹⁰, if they can be described in such generic term. Major distinction between them is the same as in relation to *młodolitwini*, but when it considers Polish-speaking society in former territories of GDL it gets completely different meaning. As Rimantas Miknys notes, a part of Polish speakers who identified themselves with an ethnic Polish nation could be called as Poles in Lithuania (*Polacy na Litwie*),but could not be identified as *krajowcy*. On the other hand, those who described themselves as Lithuanian Poles (*Litewscy Polacy*) or Poles-Lithuanians (*Polacy-Litwini*) showed their relation to the homeland and had completely different ideological meaning.⁹¹ Latter terminology was used variously according to different personalities and their self-identification.

It is hard to group precisely the ideas of each of intellectual but historians more or less agree that there were two major branches in *krajowość* movement: Conservative – Traditionalist and Democratic. Representatives of the first one saw society as united by the common past, religion and hierarchy. Grand Duchy for them was unique political,

⁸⁸Aliaksandr Smaliančuk, “Sources for the Krajowość Idea at the Beginning of the 20th Century,” in *Kintančios Lietuvos Visuomenė. Struktūros, veikėjai, idėjos*, ed. Olga Mastianica et al., (Vilnius: LII leidykla, 2015), 510.

⁸⁹Buchowski, *Litvomanai*, 126.

⁹⁰ Not to be mixed with “Młoda Polska” modernist visual arts period in Poland.

⁹¹ Rimantas Miknys and Darius Staliūnas, *Lenkų ir lietuvių konfliktas*, 178.

societal, cultural and economic structure, different than the one in Poland or Russian Empire. On the other hand, Democrats emphasized democratic and civic society without denying ethnic nations. They thought that formation of such nations in the former territory of GDL could be united by the civic principles.⁹² Such generalizations are very broad and varied according to historical conditions and personalities, but in one way or another, they were alternative to ethnocentric movements. Changes of the political situation: World War I, independences of Poland and Lithuania in 1918, Polish-Lithuanian War between 1919 and 1920, Vilnius question, tensions during the interwar deepened stereotypes and contraposition of both nationalisms. Nevertheless, ideas of *krajowość* did not die and were further developed. Ideological competition between *starolitwini-mlodolitwini-mlodopolacy* in GDL territories, later in Lithuania and Vilnius city, formed a groundfor a creation of different models of Polishness rooted in *krajowość* and *endecja* ideologies and variations between them.

***Krajowość* and two concepts of Polishness**

Looking back to the formation of *krajowość* ideas it may be assumed that they started to arise and gain popularity around 1905 and similarly like ethno-centrist concepts of nationality, were promoted by intelligentsia which spread them through newspapers, books, essays and public statements. It was reflection to nationalistic processes in former lands of Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Early ideas, first of all, can be related to lawyer Michał Pius Römer, noble and cultural activist Tadeusz Wróblewski, editor and writer Ludwik Abramowicz and others.⁹³ Besidesthem, one of the first promoter of *krajowcy* concept was writer and essayist Józef Albin Herbaczewski whose essay *Lithuanian Rebirth from the Perspective of the Polish Idea*, printed in Kraków in 1905, embodied meaning of the notion.

According to Herbaczewski, a concept of reviving Lithuanian nation was not the one promoted by *mlodolitwini*. For him Lithuanian nation consisted of many elements: people of different ethnicities, languages, social classes that would form a real civic nation where: “everybody would be connected by the totality of Lithuanian sole.”⁹⁴ It means that uniting factor is a historical land or patria which creates a common sense for all of its inhabitants. However, Herbaczewski saw Polish nation as the only possible

⁹²Ibid., 180-181.

⁹³Buchowski, *Litvomanai*, 128.

⁹⁴Juozapas Albinas Herbačiauskas, *Lietuvos atgimimas lenkiškosios idėjos atžvilgiu*, (Vilnius: Regnum fondas, 2001), 10.

true ally for Lithuanians. He emphasized that both nations should be equal to each other and none of them should dominate on each other's account. According to him, only immature nationalistic politicians do not understand this concept. He described ethno-political conflict as the civil war between vernacular side of the nation against the noble part. Polish nobility and intelligentsia understood themselves as the carriers of Polish patriotism and nationalism. When suddenly "some kind" of ethnographic Lithuanians appeared, it was understood as an attempt to overtake their paternalistic mission.⁹⁵ The latter ideas reveal an important relation between Lithuanianness and Polishness. Even though Herbaczewski did not speak openly about his relation to Polishness, it appears through his relation to Lithuanianness. He described himself as a Lithuanian in a civic sense despite the use of Polish language and revealed his understanding of Polishness first of all, as a form of Lithuanianness. On the other hand, by distinguishing Poles from Poland and Polish speaking citizens of the Grand Duchy he clearly showed that despite using the same language both are separate political nations.

Historical state was the unifying feature for all *krajowcy* and it played a central role in their civic identification formulas. However, these ideas and concepts were related to the new models of nationhood and different thinkers and cultural actors had slightly different positions – conservative or democratic respectively. Herbaczewski belonged to the democratic circle of *krajowcy* but according to Vladas Sirutavičius, around 1905 his ideas were met with a negative reaction from Lithuanian national movement.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, they made a huge impact for the most prominent *krajowiec* and representative of the democratic branch of movement Michał Römer who further developed democratic concept of nationhood and national identity. According to him, historical Lithuania is based on historical, territorial, cultural and economic commonalities. Equality of all of the inhabitants of former Grand Duchy is based on a common citizenship and all ethnic communities have same democratic rights to develop their cultural and national rights.⁹⁷ Römer saw practical realization of these ideas only by restoring concept of Jagiellonian Rzeczpospolita which meant political confederation from the Baltic to the Black Sea where Poles, Lithuanians, Belarussians, Ukrainians and

⁹⁵Ibid., 18. 24-25.

⁹⁶ Vladas Sirutavičius, "Dvi lietuvių tautinio atgimimo interpretacijos (Mykolas Romeris ir Juozapas Albinas Herbačiauskas)," *Lietuvių Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos* (13), ed. Antanas Kulakauskas et al. (Vilnius: Saulabrolis, 1996), 58.

⁹⁷ Rimantas Miknys, "Mykolo Römerio Lietuvos valstybingumo koncepcija ir pastangos ją įgyvendinti 1911 – 1919 metais," *Lietuvių Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos* (13), ed. Antanas Kulakauskas et al. (Vilnius: Saulabrolis, 1996), 91-92.

Latvians would be united in one union on equal conditions. It would be a counterpoise to Russian and German powers and would finally lead to the creation of independent national states.⁹⁸ This model represented aims of the nations of the former Commonwealth and it also clearly indicated democratic principles based on equality and united by the civic identity. However, it was only one of the political visions that were seen and formed by different intellectuals and thinkers of the *krajowość* movement.

Besides other confederative geopolitical thoughts, one of the most unique concepts was promoted by Tadeusz Wróblewski who also promoted consolidation of peoples from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by the civic identity. However, his model had unique variations. He proposed the idea of corporation of the nations which meant that nations should be unified into confederations but they would keep their national and cultural autonomy. According to Wróblewski, such confederation in the former lands of GDL would satisfy the aspirations of all nations, especially Lithuanian and Belarussian as they would be protected from Polonization that was their biggest fear. Generally, nation states for Wróblewski would sooner or later lead to the creation of confederations and for this reasons nation states are not the best model to create nationhood.⁹⁹ This concept illustrated anti-ethnocentric ideas of national identification. Andrea Griffante claims that in Wróblewski's vision of historical homeland embodied common space and memory that have clear territorial boundaries and create opportunities for different cultural and linguistic coexistence in the same space. Those two factors would be able to solve conflicts and ensure peace.¹⁰⁰ These ideas were based on the same ground as Römer's and similar to other confederative proposals of *krajowcy*.

Interestingly enough, confederative geopolitical implications can be clearly seen even after the creation of Lithuanian and Polish independent states and especially carried out by Polish politicians whose roots were in the former territories of GDL. According to Paul Brykczynski, one of such individuals was famous Polish marshal and the dictator Józef Piłsudski whose concept of Polishness was also based on territorial

⁹⁸ Ibid., 94-95.

⁹⁹ Darius Staliūnas, "Tado Vrublevskio politinės minties bruožai," *Lietuvių Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos* (13), ed. Antanas Kulakauskas et al. (Vilnius: Saulabrolis, 1996), 161-162.

¹⁰⁰ Andrea Griffante, "Homeland, Languages and Nations. Observations on T. Wróblewski, G. Martinuzzi, and Multiculturalism in Early Twentieth-Century Central Europe", in *Lietuva ir Lenkija XX amžiaus geopolitinėje vaizduotėje*, ed. Andžej Pukšto, Giedrė Milerytė, (Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, 2012), 91-92.

and historical principles.¹⁰¹ Coming from the Duchy lands he also had a cultural and linguistic identity of a Pole but political as Lithuanian or *starolitwin*. His political understanding of Polish nation was embodied in a memory of a Commonwealth.¹⁰² It was very close to the ideas of *krajowcy* that also promoted federative ideas and had a strong cultural memory of a former GDL. After the Polish military occupation of Vilnius, on April 22, 1919 Piłsudski appealed to the local people in local languages and stated that:

“Your homeland for more than one hundred year suffered from enemies – Russians, Germans, Bolsheviks that without asking, by force implemented their rule here. For me, who was born in this land, this state of slavery is well known. Finally in this God forgotten land a peace and freedom of our all goals should prevail. I want to give you an opportunity to solve national and religious matters in the way how you will choose on your own without any pressure or coercion from Poland.”¹⁰³

A content of the appeal reveals that Piłsudski viewed Polish and Lithuanian relations in a federative way. On the other hand, by promising to ensure national matters for all ethnic groups without Polish regulation, he showed that he sees Vilnius - a capital of historical land of GDL as a political body, different from Poland. However, relation between *krajowość* and Piłsudski's ideas can be better seen in another speech given by the marshal in Vilnius on 20 April, 1922 where he said:

“Let me share a memory of my own to which I am personally related. When I was born not far from Vilnius and I was still small, I could still hear the echo coming from the gallows built not only here in Vilnius but also in Kaunas. I cannot forget that in these lands the fights against Imperial rule were the strongest (Talking about uprising of 1863-1864). Even when a fight in Warsaw was over, Samogitian uprising lasted till the end involving also those who did not speak in Polish. When I speak here I want to express my gratitude for our glorious past. I cannot be irrelevant to the glorious efforts that are common for both nations that made Vilnius as a monument of our past. I cannot not to give my hand for our common peace and love. I cannot think about them (Lithuanians from Lithuanian independent state, Lithuanian national leaders) not like about brothers.”¹⁰⁴

Latter speech shows the same pillars of the identity as those in the *krajowość* movement. First of all, Piłsudski appealed to the cultural memory of a former Commonwealth and their equal parts of a Crown and GDL. On the other hand, by

¹⁰¹ Paul Brykczynski, “A Poland for the Poles? Józef Piłsudski and the Ambiguities of Polish Nationalism,” *PRAVO: The North American Journal for Central European Studies* 1 (2007): 12-13.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰³“Vilnius, 22 April 1919. Appeal of Chief of state of the Republic of Poland J. Piłsudski to residents of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania regarding their right to self-determination,” in *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos santykiai: nuo Pirmojo pasaulinio karo pabaigos iki L. Želigovskio įvykdyto Vilniaus užėmimo (1918 m. lapkritis – 1920 m. spalio)*, ed. Edmundas Gimžauskas, (Vilnius: Lietuvos Istorijos Institutas, 2012), 131-132.

¹⁰⁴“Vilnius, 20 April. Speech of Chief of state of the Republic of Poland J. Piłsudski” in Czesław Miłosz, *Išvyka į Dvidešimtmetį* (Vilnius: Pasviręs pasaulis, 2003), 25-26.

mentioning Samogitians (ethnic group of Lithuanians) he stressed civic identity where language and ethnicity was not important. In general, Piłsudski highlighted historical importance of Vilnius as a monument of a common past to show that precisely common historical past, space and memory are the major features that join Polish and Lithuanian nations. Addressing citizens of former GDL he sought to create a common ground for a dialog and his future geopolitical vision of confederation. Nonetheless, it is hard to say what were the pragmatic objectives of Piłsudski in the conditions when Lithuanian and Polish states were at the state of war, but from ideological standpoint it is clear that he used very similar rhetoric as *krajowcy*.

Latter ideological visions of Römer, Wróblewski and Piłsudski illustrate few distinctive aspects of Polishness in Lithuania. It is a common cultural memory and the loyalty – imagined citizenship or a form of civic identity of the Grand Duchy and Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania that in Nora's terms could be called *le jeux de memoire*. It was an old form of noble identity of GDL, gradually former by the end of eighteenth century and called "*Gente Lituanus, Natione Polonus*"¹⁰⁵ However, it was hard for this formula to keep its original concept and meaning even for *krajowcy* since ethnic Polish and Lithuanian nationalisms were gradually entrenched. Besides the uniting features of cultural memory, space and civic identity, *krajowcy* could not avoid explanations of their cultural relations to ethnic Polish nationalism. Latter question divided them and created two separate models of Polishness in Lithuania.

As Michał Römer wrote in his autobiography, Lithuanianness and Polishness had the same importance for him and the opposition between them could be hardly imagined. Nonetheless, gradually with a rising Lithuanian nationalism he felt left outside the Lithuanian national movement, as according to their ideology, he did not fit into a new description of Lithuanian. Römer's confusion between his dual national feelings illustrates the core elements of *krajowość* concept. In his autobiography (it is not exactly known but most probably between 1921 and 1938) Römer wrote:

"By that time (Early 1900's) I did not understand that my skin is unique – nor purely Polish, neither Lithuanian. It is unique – the one as Adam Mickiewicz had. At that time I haven't realized that if I called myself Lithuanian, I would lie to myself. On the other hand, if I would call myself a Pole, it would be the same lie. I did not know that ours: Lithuanian Pole tragedy was that we did not have a name that could describe our unique concept of dual national souls. We use a notion of Pole which does not represent our psychological character which originates from Lithuanian people's character. We are no

¹⁰⁵ Alfredas Bumblauskas, "Senasis Vilniaus tautų istorinės sąmonės perspektyvose," *Lietuvos Istorijos Studijos* 8 (2000): 28.

Poles, neither Lithuanians, nor Belarussians. We are unique people in Lithuanian society. Many of others still do not understand that they are sons of Lithuania. They are Lithuanian Poles. They are sons of Lithuania, not of Poland.”¹⁰⁶

Römer’s reflections on nationality reveal his problematic relation to the Polishness and Lithuanianness. He suggests that the best definition for people like him is *Lithuanian Pole* which represents Polish speaking Lithuanian society. However, Römer mentions that Polish cultural, or in his words psychological character of Lithuanian Pole, originates from the same roots as Lithuanian and that makes it different from pure Polish culture. Römer developed this idea even before writing autobiography in his diary already by 1922 where he wrote:

“Second curse for our nobles (pol. *szlachta*) lost national identity. Through a flow of Lithuanian history it Polonized itself and lost its relation to the nation, the one where their roots are. They became aliens to their own people and viewed their homeland not the land of their roots but foreign country – Poland. Part of *szlachta* haven’t Polonized as they are “*purement et simplement*” Poles. There are also part of Polonized *szlachta* for whom homeland is Poland but still feel sentiments to Lithuania. It is their personal tragedy.”¹⁰⁷

These Römer’s ideas reveal precise problems of local Lithuanian Poles and their national identification. On the other hand, Römer proposed concept of Polonized ethnic Lithuanian nobility that over the centuries adopted Polish culture and language. In addition he talked about Lithuanian Poles who have sentiments to Lithuania as a historical land and clearly separated Poles from Poland or the Crown lands. This categorization is complicated because during the beginning of the XX century *krajowcy*, including Römer changed their position towards their nationality. Even though the uniting factor was civic identity defined by territory and cultural memory a relation to Polishness was changing over the period and according to different personalities.

In 1917, when Lithuanian national movement made plans for possible Lithuanian independence, Lithuanian Polish nobles and intellectuals wrote an appeal to German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg where they expressed their views about possible Lithuanian state and self-identification. They wrote:

“We are Lithuanian Poles: old local cultural element of the society. Lithuanian name has many meanings. In a narrow sense, it is ethnographic Lithuanian regions where Lithuanian speakers make the majority of the inhabitants. In a broader sense, Lithuania means lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. None of the ethnic groups has majority in these territories and none of them can represent the inhabitants

¹⁰⁶ Mykolas Römeris, „Autobiografija,“ in *Lietuvių Atgimimo Istorijos Studijos 13*, ed. Antanas Kulakauskas, (Vilnius: Saulabrolis, 1996), 190-191.

¹⁰⁷ Mykolas Römeris, *Dienoraštis. 1921 m. lapkričio 8-oji – 1922 m. birželio 15-oji*, ed. Rimantas Miknys (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2013), 246.

of the whole lands. And Lithuanians, despite their name, do not have more claims to Lithuania than Poles or Belarussians. We can find Polish strains in the whole region. Poles live here for hundred years and are mixed with other local people. Polish culture can be felt in every area of the social life. There is no such power which could exterminate Polishness in these territories. It has been and still is an integral part of these lands. We – Lithuanian Poles demand the equal conditions and we are equal Lithuanian citizens. Being indivisible part of bigger Polish nation we will always seek to join our state with Poland.”¹⁰⁸

Appeal was signed by the local Polish intelligentsia and nobility and embodied *krajowość* ideas. Polishness here was presented as a strong local cultural factor with a clear reference to the cultural memory and historical ties with the Commonwealth. Nonetheless, signatories of a document stressed their ties with a wider Polish nation. They considered themselves being a part of it despite their civic affiliations. Among one of the signatories was Tadeusz Wróblewski whose views did not coincide with other part of *krajowcy* on the latter question. There is visible distinction between two sides *krajowcy*. First part, embodied in the views of Römer stressed locality and specific Lithuanian Polish character while another part, embodied in Wróblewski’s views, stressed the links with bigger Polish nation. Both branches of *krajowcy* agreed that Lithuanian Poles are different than Polish Poles on a civic and partly cultural sense. Their distinction is expressed in their unique cultural memory and affiliation to the historical territory and space. However, there was a different view on the relation to the kin Polish nation.

Krajowość concept and the latter differences created two very close, but at the same time separate models of Polishness that could be described in further definitions: 1) Lithuanian Pole – historical inhabitant and citizen of GDL with unique and strong cultural relation to Lithuanians and also Poles, 2) Lithuanian Pole – historical inhabitant and citizen of GDL who is culturally and ethnographically related to the bigger Polish nation. The second definition presupposes that Lithuanian Pole has a distinct type of national identity but is linked to the kin state or nation. It suggests that long ago Poles settled in GDL and throughout the ages formed their distinct character. On the other hand, the first one does not stress the relation to the kin nation leaving a possibility of Pole to be ethnic Lithuanian who throughout the ages adopted Polish language and culture. But also, it can be Polish Pole, who long ago settled in GDL but now he has no ties with the kin nation and forms his own national identity. Both models were unique in their time. However, ethnolinguistic Lithuanian and Polish nationalisms became

¹⁰⁸ M. Węśłowski et al., “Lenkų raštas į Jo Ekscelenciją Vokietijos Kanclerį,” *Lietuvos Aidas*, 18 September 1917, 2-3.

prevalent. For the majority of Polish speakers this alternative was more understandable and finally it prevailed. Further sub-chapter presents a third – nationalistic model of Polishness in Lithuania.

***Endecja* and a third mode of Polishness**

Ethno-centrist concept of Polish national identity is directly related to Polish National Democrats (*Endecja* or *endeks*) and their ideological leaders Roman Dmowski, Zygmunt Balicki, Jan Ludwik Popławski and others. From the first sight, *endecja* ideology may not be seen as ethno-centrist, since it was based on unique concept, formulated by Roman Dmowski. According to Brian Porter-Szűcs, a word *narod* (nation) was a central in *endek* understanding of national identity. For them nation was a moral value without concrete historical, linguistic or cultural characteristics: “It was determined by the transcendent needs of the living nation – needs tied to an eternal international struggle for physical (state) existence and national expansion.”¹⁰⁹ This formulation of Polishness was vague and put a state into the first place.

Porter – Szűcs suggests that for *endeks* personal characteristics of an individual were not important. What mattered were that nation and its spiritual and material culture and common interests were above any personal thoughts or aspirations. A real Pole must accept everything what is related to Polishness, positive or negative. However, *endeks* thought that in the end a nation has to be culturally homogenous but it can be achieved through a longer process.¹¹⁰ Roman Dmowski wrote:

“I am a Pole –in an extensive side of my soul living Polish life, giving to it my feelings and my thoughts. The more I know am a Pole, the more I want it. That, in my opinion, is the highest expression of life – to be a part of the entire nation.”¹¹¹

This concept of Polishness could be applied to many people not even from the Poland but also for other peoples and ethnicities. According to Porter, in *ednecja* geopolitical vision a new arising Polish state should not be establish in a borders of a Commonwealth but it should be expanded as one of the major nation’s goals is to satisfy its strategic interests. Nonetheless, *endeks* have not determined concrete borders of Poland.¹¹² The idea was based on the expansion without concrete boundaries. As Czesław Miłosz wrote:

¹⁰⁹Porter-Szűcs, *Who is Pole*, 645.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 646.

¹¹¹ Roman Dmowski, *Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka*, (Skultuna, Sweden: Litteratursällskapet Ligatur, 2007), 29.

¹¹² Porter-Szűcs, *Who is Pole*, 651.

“Cultural infertility of Dmowski’s camp made me wonder. The majority supported them and this fact can be explained by the factor of disunity: a nation without a state faced to another (enemy) state, easily became a highest value and its idealization was equally proportional to the fear of everything what is extraneous.”¹¹³

Miłosz illustrates that *endeks* raised a state into the center of a national identity. However, he mentions a fear of everything what is extraneous and it means that for *endeks* everything what is not a part Polish nation in a wider sense is a threat. It illustrates the place of other nations and ethnicities in assimilative geopolitical concept of *endeks*. As Paul Brykczynski claims, even if they were ethnic nationalists, the possible territories for a Polish state did not coincide with the territories where ethnic Poles lived. On the contrary, they were based on potential areas where they thought, other ethnic groups (e.g. Ukrainians, Belarussians, Lithuanians and others) could be assimilated to the Polish ethnic. In this concept non-Poles had to be Polonized.¹¹⁴ Theoretically a model of *endecja* did not speak about the ethnicity however the fact that in the longer perspective all other nations should be assimilated to the one Polish nation showed their ethnic aspirations. It was completely different model than the one proposed by Józef Piłsudski. In this concept Lithuanian Poles were not seen as different from the Polish Poles since the Polish state was in the center of the ideology. They were viewed as a part of a whole Polish nation.

However, in the lands of the Grand Duchy, *endeks* usually avoided to use strictly nationalistic ideology. They were also searching for compromises between Lithuanians, Belarussians and Poles. In 1903 *endecja* section of the Russian ruled lands Lithuanian national movement was even viewed positively. *Endeks* claimed that Lithuanians should seek political unity with Poles and that Poles should support Lithuanian movement. On the other hand, it was stated that in those areas of political and social life where Lithuanian language and culture would not fulfill the needs, Polish language should be used instead. Also, Lithuanians should allow Poles who lived in the lands of GDL, spread Polish cultural and social ideas.¹¹⁵ Similar proposals were expressed in *endecja* media in Vilnius.

On the other hand, among local *endecja* in Vilnius there were opinions that after 1863 Lithuanians started to reject their Polish nationality. And according to one of the

¹¹³ Miłosz, *Išvyka*, 7.

¹¹⁴ Brykczynski, *A Poland for Poles*, 16.

¹¹⁵ Przemysław Dąbrowski, “Buvusios Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės Lenkų tautiniai Demokratai ir Lietuvių Tautinis Atgimimas XX Amžiaus Pradžioje,” *Lietuvos Istorijos Studijos* 27 (2011): 56.

Vilnius *endeks* Waclaw Studnicki, this phenomenon touched not only ethnic Lithuanians but also Polish descent and Polish speaking Lithuanian citizens as they turned away from their Polish roots.¹¹⁶ Another *endek* Stanisław Maciejewicz claimed that Vilnius city was never Lithuanian and it was Polish since Jagiełło was crowned a Polish king in 1386.¹¹⁷ Latter examples illustrate few important features of *endecja* ideology. First of all, it is clearly seen that for them notion of Pole is universal and there is no difference between Polish Pole and Lithuanian Pole. They express it through a phrase “Pole living in GDL” which presupposes that Lithuanian poles are *Polacy na Litwie* (Poles in Lithuania) instead of *Polacy Litewskie* (Lithuanian Poles).

Secondly, *endeks* turned to medieval history in order to justify the existence of Polishness in Lithuania by the adoption of a modern term “Polish” in the Middle Ages, in a context of Vilnius. It reveals their nationalistic aspirations that, on the other hand, were similar to those used by Lithuanian national movement. In comparison, *krajowcy* whose national identification was strongly related to the cultural memory and traditions of GDL were usually referring to the Commonwealth created by signing Lublin Union in 1569 but not to the XIV century. Jan Sawicki claims that if in the beginning of both *endecja* and *krajowość* movements in Lithuania had some similarities but very soon they were gone as *endeks* got new instructions from Warsaw that changed their rhetoric. A major task for *endecja* became protection of the interests of the Polish nation.¹¹⁸ This fact also confirms that from the perspective of *endeks*, Lithuanian Poles are the same part of greater Polish nation which is embodied in one big state. And civic, ethnic and cultural identifications are related to it.

This was another: the most popular model of Polishness among Lithuanian Poles in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Together with two other alternatives originating from the ideas of *krajowość* they made three major modes of national identification of Poles in Lithuania. They are primary ideological sources for contemporary Lithuanian Polish elites to form, create and recreate cultural memory and models of self-identification among Lithuanian Poles.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 58.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 59.

¹¹⁸ Jan Sawicki, *Mykolas Römeris*, 101.

Chapter Three: Towards Contemporary Models of Polishness in Lithuania

The historical models of Polishness were formed in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century and, as it was shown, they were further developed during the interwar period. However, the Second World War changed not only the boundaries of the states and political systems but also strongly affected intellectual and ideological field. After the War, the capital city of Vilnius and its region, where Polish speaking citizens accounted for most of the inhabitants, became a part of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. As Vitalija Stravinskienė notes, in the beginning of the Sovietization, most of the local Poles had negative position towards USSR and supported ideas of independent Poland with Vilnius area as an integral part of the state. On the other hand, they did not trust Lithuanians who were accused of the collaboration with Nazis and also of persecutions of Poles.¹¹⁹ For these reasons Soviet authorities sought to solve national tensions but the solutions were purely anti-Polish.

According to Stravinskienė, between 1944 and 1950 Soviet government aspired to minimize Polish influence by displacing Lithuanian Poles to Poland and by limiting Polish education. As a consequence, between 1944 and 1947 about 180 thousands of Lithuanian Poles moved to Communist Polish state. Repatriation and forced migration completely changed local Polish community since the absolute majority of intelligentsia and wealthy inhabitants left the country. Those who stayed were mostly villagers and workers of collective farms. Without the active carriers of the national Polish identity and cultural memory they could be easily affected by the Russification.¹²⁰ Models of Polishness that were promoted before and during the interwar period were forgotten and for almost fifty years Lithuanian Polish community stayed in a cultural vacuum. Instead, the Soviet culture and the Russian language entrenched among the local Poles.

Nonetheless, *krajowcy* concepts were further developed in the emigration, especially by individuals originating from the former lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. First of all, they can be related to the Nobel Peace prize winner Czesław Miłosz, editor of Polish intellectual journal in France *Kultura* - Jerzy Giedroyc, writer and essayist Józef Mackiewicz and others. As Timothy Snyder suggests, during the Communist period, *Kultura* magazine upgraded federalist ideas of the *krajowcy* to completely different level. In this new geopolitical concept, Eastern neighbors of Poland

¹¹⁹ Stravinskienė, *Lenkų Demografiniai pokyčiai*, 100.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

were seen as equal partners and cooperation between them had to be based on the respect of the modern borders and on the historical heritage of the former Commonwealth where Poland would be understood not as the dominating force, but as an equal friendly ally. According to Timothy Snyder, these geopolitical concepts influenced Polish communist and, after the independence, non-communist politicians and their thoughts about the Eastern neighbors.¹²¹ However, in Soviet Lithuania these ideas did not reach local Poles and the absolute majority of them were Sovietized. In other words, models of identification that had been constructed in the beginning of the twentieth century and developed by the Polish intelligentsia in the emigration did not have, or had just a minor influence on Lithuanian Poles. As a consequence, cultural memory of the GDL was affected, in Aleida's Assmann terms, by the active forgetting or the regulations of new Soviet institutions that reinterpreted tradition of the GDL and changed the original meaning of it. On the other hand, ethno-centric nationalist concepts of the Polish nation were also framed into a new communist narrative.

The rebirth of the Lithuanian national movement in the late 80's and finally the proclamation of the independence of Lithuania on 11 March 1990 marked a new period of ethnic relations between Lithuanians and Lithuanian Poles. Ethnic tensions emerged already around 1988 and 1990. Two major events illustrated Polish fears of Lithuanian independence. First of all, in 1988 Polish communist representatives raised an idea of autonomous Polish regions in Lithuanian SR. They were mainly popularized by the local nomenclature in Vilnius and Šalčininkai regions where Polish speakers made a majority of the inhabitants. According to Vladas Sirutavičius, by that time Lithuanian Poles fragmented into two major groups: those who supported Lithuanian independence and those who were against it. Poles then were afraid of domination of Lithuanian language and discrimination of the Polish one.¹²² Despite of possible political interests of various groups, this fact illustrates that preservation of the Polish language and its status was essential for the local Poles.

In addition, a fear of Lithuanian nationalism could be also illustrated by the fact that only six members of a Polish fraction in the Supreme Council of Lithuanian SR (Soviet Lithuanian Parliament) abstained from voting for the restoration of Lithuanian

¹²¹ Snyder, *Reconstruction...*, 222-223.

¹²² Vladas Sirutavičius, "Etniškumo politizacija Lietuvoje: lenkų autonomistų judėjimas, Sąjūdis ir Lietuvos valdžios politika 1988 m. – 1990 m. pradžioje," *Etniškumo Studijos* 2 (2013), 134.

Independence.¹²³ This decision may have been influenced by the political aspirations, but the fact that only Polish members of the Supreme Council abstained, shows the possible fear or a protest in order to attract attention to the Polish question in Lithuania. Nonetheless, the political agreement between Lithuanian Poles and the government was achieved in 1991 when a Law of National Minorities was adopted. It ensured protection of the use of minority languages besides official state language in those districts where ethnic minorities made up the majority of the inhabitants. However, in 2010 this law lost the power and until now it was not replaced by any other law protecting the rights of the minorities.¹²⁴ By May 2016 Lithuanian Poles still do not have a right to register their names in the original Polish alphabet and question of the signs in double language are debated almost on a daily basis. It shows that during the period of 25 years tensions between majority group of Lithuanians and Polish minorities are still alive. These discussions remind the situation of the late nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century when language was a central determining feature of the nationality and a point of intersection.

However, language aspect reveals another important element of the contemporary local Polish identity in Lithuania. Marijuš Antonovič suggests that a large number of Lithuanian Poles use non-normative mix of Polish, Belarussian, Russian and Lithuanian languages called *tutejsza* dialect (local sub-language). According to him, it shows that this category of individuals does not have a clearly formed national identity but in any case relates himself/herself to Polishness.¹²⁵ Contemporary data of self-identification of Lithuanian Poles confirms claims that Lithuanian Polish identification is fragmented. According to the last semi-qualitative sociological survey carried out by Mykolas Römeris University scientists, local Poles described their nationality in the following apportionment:

- I am Pole – 36,7 %
- I am Pole living in Lithuania (*Polak na Litwie*) – 24,6 %
- I am Lithuanian Pole – 11,2 %
- I am Pole from Vilnius area – 12,9 %
- I am Polish descent Lithuanian – 5,8 %

¹²³ *Deputies of the Supreme Council that abstained in a voting for restoration of Lithuanian independence*, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, accessed on 16 May 2016, http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_show?p_r=967&p_k=1

¹²⁴ Elżbieta Kuzborska, *Teisinė tautinių Mažumų Padėtis Lietuvoje*, (Vilnius: Artprint, 2012), 101.

¹²⁵ Marijuš Antonovič, “Apie Tuteišizmą,” *Lietuvos Žinios*, 20 May 2016, accessed 20 May 2016, <http://lzinios.lt/lzinios/komentarai/apie-tuteisizma/223346>

- I am Lithuanian descent Pole – 1,2 %
- I am Lithuanian – 3,6 %
- Other – 3,9 % ¹²⁶

Differentiation is clearly visible in the table above. According to the numbers, it is possible to make an assumption that two thirds of the respondents identify themselves in relation to a state or a region. On the other hand, numbers also reveal that only 25 % of the respondents are feeling as Poles living in Lithuania. It presupposes that they do not feel as local element and they only live in Lithuanian state. The hardest group to define is the one who described themselves as Poles. It may be the language factor which presumed people to answer in such term or they do not give the importance to the locality.

Nevertheless, segmentation of the identification models is clear among common Lithuanian Polish individuals who were an object of the research. Previously mentioned political tensions and models of identification theoretically remind the situation in the beginning of the XX century as local Polish speaking community had to choose one definition of their national identity despite having a mix of many-layer identification where civic, ethnic and local identities overlap. On the other hand, survey represents qualitative data of the common people who are more or less affected by the formers of cultural memory and public opinions. Further analysis reveals what models of Polishness are promoted and represented, and how local Polish cultural memory is understood by Lithuanian Polish intellectual elites and their circles.

Analysis of the contemporary Lithuanian Polish elites

Taking into account Aleida's Assmann idea that groups' identity is constructed through the specific discourse or narrative, it is clear that certain boundaries and criteria are drawn in order to define the belonging to a group. According to A. Assmann, every individual who wants to belong to a group has to learn certain patterns and knowledge about it in order to share group's identity and values.¹²⁷ In addition, Jan Assmann notes that there are individuals, groups and institutions that work as carriers and also influence the collective memory. Active cultural memory is highly selective and institutions or carriers also influence the process of selection and shaping of the

¹²⁶ Gediminas Kazėnas et al. *Lenkų Tautinės Mažumos Lietuvoje Identiteto Tyrimas/ Badania Dot. Tożsamosci Polskiej Mniejszosci Narodowej Na Litwie*, (Vilnius: Mykolo Rėmerio Universitetas, 2014), 82, accessed 18 May 2016, <http://www3.mruni.eu/~gkazenas/paskaitos/PolID/PolID.pdf>

¹²⁷ Aleida Assmann, *Re-framing Memory*, 40.

memory.¹²⁸ Following these ideas, one must say that Lithuanian Polish identification is not the exception and it is influenced by highly selective cultural and ideological constructions of memory promoted by certain carriers of memory.

For this reason a major focus of the thesis is given to specific part of the carriers of cultural memory: public figures that have an influence over the rest of Lithuanian Polish society. They include three major categories: politicians, journalists/public activists and scientists. Qualitative research is based on semi-structural interviews collected in Vilnius and Warsaw between 2 March 2016 and 10 April 2016. The analysis of the interviews is supplemented by additional sources that represent opinions of other public figures that did not agree to be interviewed or did not reply to the request. Besides articles, public statements and other public comments made by the interviewees are given in order to provide a wider overview of their opinions. A given table below represents interviewees and their occupation (names and surnames are given in Lithuanian language as in most of the cases original Polish spelling is unknown). In this study, the names of the interviewees are revealed as they fully agreed on disclosing their identity.

interviewee	occupation
Mr. Marijuš Antonovič	PhD student at Vilnius University, cultural activist, leader of Polish discussion club in Vilnius
Mr. Ryšard Gaidis	associate professor of history at Vilnius University
Mr. Bogušlavas Gruževskis	professor of social sciences at Vilnius University, director of Labor Market Research Institute
Ms. Elžbieta Kuzborska	PhD in law, expert of the question of national minorities in Lithuania, expert at the Polish embassy in Vilnius
Mr. Artur Liudkovski	director of Polish cultural home in Vilnius, former vice-mayor of Vilnius, city council deputy
Mr. Česlav Okinčič	advocate, signatory of Lithuanian Act of Independence, former Adviser to the President of the Republic of Lithuania, founder of Polish radio “Znad Willi”
Mr. Aleksander Radčenko	civil servant, publicist, author
Mr. Ryšard Rotkévič	editor of Polish section of the biggest Lithuanian news portal www.delfi.lt

¹²⁸ Jan Assmann, *Communicative and Cultural Memory*, 115.

Ms. Barbara Stankėvič	PhD in history, lecturer at Mykolas Römeris University in Vilnius
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Table 1 List of the interviewees¹²⁹

The above mentioned public figures can be described as well-known elites of Lithuanian Polish minority who have different degree of influence among local Poles and who form or have an impact on the formation of the contemporary models of Polishness in Lithuania. The “influence” in this thesis is understood as a power to make a clout on a basis of position, wealth, ability and prestige.¹³⁰ In order to set it, semi-structural interviews were conducted as, according to Bernard Russel, it is the most efficient option to interview the members of the elites.¹³¹

The major task of the interviews was to analyze how Lithuanian Polish elites, public persons, understand Lithuanian Polish identity, what is their relation, on one hand, to the Polish nation, and on the other, to Lithuanian state, what are the markers of the cultural memory they have and try to transmit to a wider masses, what are the corner stones in their understanding of history and what role they play in the formation of Lithuanian Polish identity and, finally, how they evaluate contemporary Lithuanian Polish community. The results of the interviews and additional quantitative discourse analysis in the end reveal how historical models of Polishness operate in contemporary discourse and how historical concepts are used for the present needs.

Interview questions were divided into three groups; personal questions, questions related to present Polish community and its problems and finally questions related to identity formation, and opinions about history, and its practical use. The first part revealed family roots and ethnicity of the interviewees, their personal ethnic and national identification and remembrances of their considerations about national identity in the past. The second part focused on individual views on Lithuanian Polish community and its general problems. It also included opinions about other Polish public figures and their groups. Finally, the last part revealed identity formation issues and viewpoints of history and Polish role in it. In different interviews various probing techniques as “echo”, “tell-me-more” and “long-question” were used but most of the interlocutors were talkative and open for the discussion.

¹²⁹ Results taken from the interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland.

¹³⁰ Leon H. Mayhew, *The New Public: Professional Communication and the Means of Social Influence*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 8.

¹³¹ H. Russel Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, (Oxford: Alta Mira Press, 2006), 212.

Even though interviewees belong to the Polish elite in Lithuania and their time is very limited but they gladly agreed to have interviews and expressed their opinions. As it was observed, the topic of the research was engaging to them and the idea itself was welcomed with a big interest. The interviewees were willing to share their viewpoints on a topic which has a strong emotional and political load in present-day Lithuania. However not all of the contacted persons replied or agreed to have an interview. Unfortunately there were no replies from a leading Polish party in Lithuania AWPL (*Akcja Wyborcza Polaków na Litwie*) which has a huge influence over the Polish speaking individuals in Lithuania. Nonetheless, besides the name of the party, which by itself has a hint of the identification model, its position will be represented through public statements and other interviews given by its leader Valdemar Tomaševski. On the other hand, there were individuals who refused to give interviews as they did not want to participate in the same research with other individuals who were on the list. It shows contraposition among Polish elites and their approaches towards present problems of Lithuanian Poles and the identity issues. Despite of that fact, their opinions will also be taken into account and presented in the results.

All of the interviews were conducted in Lithuanian language since interviewees were fluent in Lithuanian or it is a second mother tongue for them. The only transcribed passages in the text are the ones needed for the research, but the recordings with full interviews are attached in a CD and can be found in a back cover page.

Locality and relation to the ancestry as objects of communicative and cultural memories

One of the major criteria for the interviewees was that their birth place would be in Lithuania and that they would have Lithuanian citizenship. Research results have shown that all of the respondents have strong ties with the capital city of Vilnius and its region as most of their ancestors lived in here. There were no major disagreements about the importance of the city and the region which were understood as significant cultural symbols among Lithuanian Poles. The firm sense of locality was also felt as the respondents knew that their families used to live here as much as their communicative memory could reproduce. Seven out of nine interviewees knew that their grandparents and great-grandparents originated from Vilnius city and two knew that that their ancestors lived in Vilnius region. Strong regional identification level among

respondents was also associated to their national identification. As Artur Liudkowski stated:

“As I remember when I was young I never thought about my national identity or identification because my parents and grandparents were Poles and at home we always used only Polish language, I went to Polish schools so I did not think about the nationality at that time. Poles lived here since the old times and as I remember, since great-grandparents lived in this region and, as I remember we used Polish language for communication, and it was natural.”¹³²

As it is seen from the answer, the sense of Polishness is directly related to the locality and the use of the Polish language as the marker of national identity is understood as natural in the district of Vilnius. Similar viewpoint was expressed by Ryšard Rotkėvič who claimed that:

“I was born in Vilnius, everything is in Vilnius. Three – four generations of my family lived in Vilnius and I was always in a Polish environment and in the Polishness. I never even really felt the Lithuanianness even at school. In Soviet times there were some kind of ghettos and I lived in a closed Polish community. I was non-stop in the Polishness.”¹³³

A visible relation between Vilnius city and the notion of Polishness presupposes that interviewees see Vilnius, a historical capital of Lithuania, not only as their birth place but as a city of their historical roots. In other words, they also feel as successors of symbolic historical heritage and as a part of it. Barbara Stankevič noted that:

“Vilnius has a strong symbolic meaning. For Lithuanian Poles, I would say Vilnius, is also some kind of sacred symbolic city, cradle of culture. This is a space to be proud of. I believe Lithuanians are exaggerating this question too much. Sometimes we can feel Lithuanian concept that the city is Lithuanian and other cultures are not allowed to claim the heritage of it. In Lithuania Pole’s viewpoint it is a multicultural city and Lithuanian Poles see it through multicultural prism. Vilnius has unique meaning because here every culture and language can express itself and can find a place.”¹³⁴

Multiculturalism as a major feature of Vilnius city was mentioned several times in the answers. Generally all of the interviewees related this feature to Polishness as they claimed to know three languages: Polish, Russian and Lithuanian since childhood. According to the respondents multicultural character is one of the markers of Polish identity in Lithuania. It is a local aspect, common for Lithuanian Poles that is bound by local specifics of the region where they originate from. Multicultural and multilingual dimensions of the identity were understood as a norm for a territory where Lithuanian Poles, Lithuanians and Belarussians have interacted for centuries. As Marijuš Antonovič stated:

¹³²Interview with Artur Liudkovski conducted on 8 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹³³Interview with Ryšard Rotkėvič conducted on 8 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹³⁴Interview with Barbara Stankėvič conducted on 9 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

„Vilnius is very important for both nations. We can try to unite this heritage through memory policies because it is uniting us.”¹³⁵

Answer reveals that a part of present Polish intellectuals view Vilnius as a possible ideological platform for the discussions among Lithuanians and local Poles who try to substantiate models of their national identity in relation with the dominating Lithuanian concept of identification. However, the highlighting multicultural character of common historical and cultural heritage among the interviewees is not visible in the rhetoric of the leader of *AWPL* - Valdemar Tomaševski who in 2011 was asked by Lithuanian journalist to give his opinion about Polish integration in Lithuania. As a response he answered with more questions but they clearly indicate Tomaševski's position:

“Where to integrate? Where Poles have to integrate? We always lived here. Where have you born (V.T)? Where your parents are you from? From Vilnius? It is you (Lithuanians) who have to integrate because you came to live here and we do not have to integrate. This is our land. Check the inscriptions in the old cemeteries of Vilnius – only Polish surnames.”¹³⁶

Tomaševski's answer shows quite a different opinion about the Polish role in Vilnius city. First of all, he denied historical multicultural character of the city and claimed that it was purely Polish area until Lithuanians moved here. On the other hand, by saying “our land” Tomaševski suggested that impliedly it was territory inhabited by Poles who can be distinguished by the major feature of language, since the inscriptions in the cemeteries are written in Polish. By this idea leader of *AWPL* revealed that he understands the use of the Polish language in the past purely as a marker of a Polish culture and Polishness which, on the other hand, is related to modern ethno-centric Polish nationalism. This concept stands in opposition of the ideas promoted by the *krajowcy* in the beginning of the twentieth century and by a part of Lithuanian Polish intellectuals today. Here locality plays a crucial role as well as in the previous answers of the respondents, but the difference lays in the position towards other ethnic communities and the heritage which is seen either as common or unique Lithuanian Polish, or as purely Polish.

Different positions towards locality and symbolic meaning of Vilnius heritage show that it is not only an object of the communicative memory that is alive only three

¹³⁵ Interview with Marijuš Antonovič, conducted on 12 April 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹³⁶ Valdemaras Tomaševskis, “Lietuviai turi integruotis, o ne mes,” *Respublika*, 6 April 2011, accessed 25 May 2016, http://www.respublika.lt/lt/naujienos/lietuva/lietuvos_politika/vtomasevskis_lietuviai_turi_integruotis_o_ne_mes/print.1

to four generations, but that it is also an important object of the cultural memory for local Poles. Local, specific heritage of the Grand Duchy such as Vilnius City was important to *krajowcy* as it shown their differences from the Poles from Crown lands and formed unique character of Lithuanian Pole. On the other hand, it would not be important for the *Polak na Litwie* (Pole in Lithuania) as his or her identification would be marked by the common features of wider Polish nation. In Tomaševski's case, Vilnius and its role is important only in contraposition to Lithuanians who 'try to steal a Polish heritage'. Nonetheless, he can still be called a *Polak na Litwie* as, according to his concept, a territory where Poles in Lithuania constitute the majority always belonged to the Polish nation. Only when Lithuanian state was created, they became Poles living in Lithuania but not a local element formed because of historical reasons. It is the idea which forms one of the contemporary models of Polishness, but in order to provide a wider picture, other modes of identification must be discussed.

Qualificatory features of identification models

The contemporary models of Polishness among the respondents are clearly seen through their identification and relation to the state and ethnicity respectively. The interviewees were asked to answer how they represent themselves today. The results are given in a table below:

interviewee	personal identification
Mr. Marijuš Antonovič	I am Lithuanian Pole
Mr. Ryšard Gaidis	I am Lithuanian Pole
Mr. Boguslavas Gruževskis	I am Pole
Ms. Elžbieta Kuzborska	I am Lithuanian Pole
Mr. Artur Liudkovski	I am Lithuanian citizen with Polish nationality
Mr. Česlav Okinčic	I am a Pole from Lithuania
Mr. Aleksander Radčenko	I am Lithuanian Pole, Lithuanian citizen
Mr. Ryšard Rotkėvič	I am Pole
Ms. Barbara Stankėvič	I am Lithuanian Pole

Table 2 Identification of the interviewees¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Results taken from the interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland

As it is seen from the results, five individuals answered that they are Lithuanian Poles and two of them added citizenship dimension. However, the other two did not specify the locality. Theoretically, the word “Lithuania” should specify citizenship while “Pole” should indicate ethnicity and nationality. On the other hand, it would seem that two individuals do not distinguish Lithuanian Polishness from a wider notion of Polishness. Results given in the chart do not correspond with the results of common individuals provided by Mykolas Römeris University survey.¹³⁸ Among interviewed Lithuanian Polish public persons there are 55,5 % of Lithuanian Poles in comparison with the result of 11,2 % in Römeris survey, 22,2% of simply Poles instead of 36,7 %, Polish descent Lithuanians: 11,1 % instead of 5,8 % and 11,1 % of Pole from Lithuania but not Pole living in Lithuania (*Polak na Litwie*) that amounted to more than 24 % in Römeris survey.¹³⁹ Of course, the latter researches are completely different and cannot be equally compared to each other as the number of the respondents and other criteria are distant. Nonetheless, it may show a trend that qualified professionals, intellectuals, scientists, formers of the opinion and carriers of cultural memory have a deeper insight of the identity-related questions and that a notion of Lithuanian Pole is much stronger among them since they want to promote it as an identity model among other Lithuanian Poles. On the other hand, other answers given by the public persons also have “Lithuanian spice” in their model of Polishness. For this reason, general conclusions that may be based only on statistical numbers would be shallow and would not represent the actual relation to the state and ethnicity since a notion of “Lithuanian Pole” carries strong cultural memory which provides much bigger meaning to it.

Coming back to Miller’s idea, ethnic groups or national minorities have their own collective memory, cultural features and importantly the relation to the territory.¹⁴⁰ In this case relation to the territory plays a central role in the collective and cultural memory. Following answers of the interviewees confirms these ideas. As Elżbieta Kuzborska indicated:

“I am Lithuanian Pole. Lithuanian land gave birth to me and raised me. I sang Lithuanian anthem with all my heart since childhood. I understand this (Lithuanian) environment and this land. I also know Lithuanian character and Lithuanian identity and culture. I respect it and it is beautiful and close to me. I

¹³⁸Gediminas Kazėnas et al., *Lenkų Tautinės*, 82.

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰David Miller, *On Nationality*, 122.

am not a Pole in Lithuania, I am Lithuanian Pole. Lithuania influenced me since childhood and it is my homeland.”¹⁴¹

Given answer shows not only strong civic identity but also reveals a cultural layer which is seen through clear differentiation of Lithuanian Poles and Poles in Lithuania. This answer presupposes that the one who feels as a Pole in Lithuania does not have a cultural relation to Lithuanian homeland. Responses of Ryšard Gaidis and Barbara Stankėvič also illustrate the latter idea:

“I am Lithuanian Pole. In a political sense I am Lithuanian citizen, in a cultural sense I am Lithuanian Pole who, first of all, links himself to local Polish culture and only later with a wider Polish culture which is in Poland or outside of Poland.”¹⁴²

“I do not say I am Lithuanian but neither Pole. I am not pure Lithuanian, neither pure Pole. I do not agree with a term *Polacy na Litwie* because this term is coming from Poland rather from local Poles.”¹⁴³

The latter answers are identical to the ideas of Michał Römer who wrote that:

“By that time (Early 1900’s) I did not understand that my skin is unique – nor purely Polish, neither Lithuanian. It is unique – the one as Adam Mickiewicz had.”¹⁴⁴

As it is seen from the answers, those who identified themselves as Lithuanian Poles are tend to highlight their uniqueness which is defined by the historical territory or patria. This feature of modern Polishness is based on the ideas of *krajowcy* for whom territory was one of the major components defining their unique identity. Having in mind that all of the respondents since childhood used Polish language at home it shows that for them Polishness is not only described by language but also by the territorial dimension which operates in the cultural memory of local Poles. These are the answers given by those identifying as Lithuanian Poles. Nonetheless, another part of the interviewees who have introduced themselves differently had very similar understanding of their uniqueness. For instance, Boguslavas Gruževskis indicated:

„I am a Pole. I live in Lithuania, of course. But I am a Pole according to my personal identification but of course in Poland I feel that I am not a Pole. I feel that I belong to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. I am not a Pole of Poland, I am even not one of the representatives of *kresy*¹⁴⁵. They are different. Grand Duchy: this is our common feature. There are no arguments to characterize me as Pole in Lithuania, even in scientific sense. In XVI century my ancestors came to GDL from the Crown lands,

¹⁴¹Interview with Elżbieta Kuzborska, conducted on 12 March 2016, Warsaw, Poland.

¹⁴²Interview with Ryšard Gaidis, conducted on 17 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹⁴³Interview with Barbara Stankėvič, conducted on 9 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹⁴⁴ Mykolas Römeris, *Dienoraštis. 1921 m.*, 246.

¹⁴⁵A term meaning inhabitants and territories of Eastern Poland during the Interwar that were lost after the Second World War.

from Mazury. My family served Radziwiłł¹⁴⁶ nobles. Since then my family lived in GDL. I do not know but I think we can say that for one hundred – two hundred years you may be a Pole in Lithuania but gradually you become Lithuanian Pole. Maybe if you marry a wife from Kraków and she comes to live in Lithuania, then she is probably a Pole in Lithuania.”¹⁴⁷

The latter response was given by a person who indicated himself as Pole but as it is seen from the answer, he clearly distinguishes Lithuanian Poles from Polish Poles. Gruževski's ideas are basically the same of those who identified themselves as Lithuanian Poles and are based on the cultural memory and heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Similar and even further reaching concept was provided by Ryšard Rotkėvič who claimed that:

“I see my roots in GDL, I am a Pole from GDL. Maybe because I come from the noble family. There are differences between Polish Poles and Lithuanian Poles: we are different nations. Even for the Poles from Poland we are Russians, they see us not as true Poles.”¹⁴⁸

It was the only opinion which claimed Lithuanian Poles being a different nation. However, it shows that not only in political sense but also on a cultural level respondents feel different from Polish Poles. Even though they described themselves by generic term Pole, but this word has different meaning to them. In this sense, they could not be called a historical Polish diaspora outside the borders of a Polish state as they create their unique identity based on a different cultural memory. On theoretical level their ideas are very similar to a branch of *krajowcy* who claimed that Lithuanian Pole is historical inhabitant and citizen of GDL with unique and strong cultural relation to Lithuanians and Poles. Yet answers reveal that contemporary relation to Poland is not as strong or is weak in comparison to the historical models.

Important variation of the latter model of Polishness is promoted by one of Lithuanian Polish public person, politician and publicist Ryšard Maceikianec who was not interviewed in this research, but who often publically promotes his concept of identification. In one of his articles Maceikianec claimed:

“And in the end, few words about our name: Poles, Lithuanian Poles and Polish speaking Lithuanians. If we consider ourselves as local inhabitants whose ancestors lived in Lithuania for many centuries and historical sources prove that, we can make the only conclusion: we are Polish speaking Lithuanians. It happened because of historical processes that were determined by the existence of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and later by further processes of Polonization in the second half of the

¹⁴⁶ One of the most powerful noble families of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Boguslavas Gruževskis, conducted on 31 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Ryšard Rotkėvič, conducted on 8 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

nineteenth century and Interwar period...Until the Second World War Belarussian language was a language of peasants and it was used just outside the city (Vilnius).”¹⁴⁹

According to the logic of the latter statement, Maceikianec claims that Lithuanian Poles, or a part of them, are Polonized ethnic Lithuanians or Belarussians who throughout the centuries adopted Polish language as the language of culture and a language which was used in a public space and later even in a private one. In another article Maceikianec claimed that local Poles do not have any relation with Poland since they did not come from Poland to Lithuania. He claims that local Poles always were local inhabitants and only because of the processes of Polonization they became Poles.¹⁵⁰

This concept of Polishness is also based on the ideas of Michał Römer since he also used rhetoric of Polonization of the local Lithuanian and Belarussian elements. However, it is slightly different model from the first one whose promoters know that origins of their families are in Poland but because they came to live in GDL centuries ago, they formed a new type of Lithuanian Pole. For these reasons they became different from Poles from the Crown lands.

On the other hand, Maceikianec does not see any relation with Poland as for him local Poles are basically ethnic Lithuanians. Even though it would seem a meaningless difference but from ideological perspective of cultural memory there is a huge divergence. In this model a past which can be understood as own may reach back only to the sixteenth century and Union of Lublin in 1569 when Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was former or at best to 1385 when personal Union of Krowo between Poland and Lithuania was formed and as a consequence Lithuanian Grand Duke Jagiełło became a Polish king, because until then there were almost no relations between the countries. On the other hand, a second version may open much wider space for cultural memory as if one claim that Lithuanian Poles are Polonized ethnic Lithuanians, then it means that all the pre-Polish history before the fourteenth century may be understood as own. Both of the concepts are based on the historical ideas of *krajowcy* and especially Michał Römer, but their interpretations are slightly different in a capacity of a cultural memory.

¹⁴⁹Ryšard Maceikianec, “Eisime ten, kur eis Lietuva,” *pogon.lt*, 20 October 2015, accessed 27 May 2016, <http://pogon.lt/straipsniai-lietuviu-kalba/1719-eisime-ten-kur-eis-lietuva.html>

¹⁵⁰ Audronė Daraškevičienė, “Lietuvos lenkas R. Maceikianecas: Mes su lietuviais – tos pačios genties žmonės,” *www.alkas.lt*, 26 November 2013, accessed 27 May 2016, <http://alkas.lt/2013/11/26/lietuvos-lenkas-r-maceikianecas-mes-su-lietuviais-tos-pacios-genties-zmones/>

Another nearly related mode of identification also originates from the ideas of *krajowcy* and is closely associated to the described ones but it has its unique features. Its essence can be revealed through the ideas promoted by signatory of Lithuanian Act of Independence Česlav Okinčic. First of all, in his concept citizenship and civic identity plays a central role as the expression of loyalty to Lithuanian state. Already by December 1989 in a newly established Polish newspaper in Lithuania “Znad Willi” he wrote:

“Lithuania! My homeland. We want to follow these words and to promote love for our homeland and all its inhabitants. With Lithuanian nation we (Poles) are connected by the common history, faith and tradition. Our common roots lay in the same Christian culture. Since ages we (Poles) are permanent inhabitants of these lands and also heirs of common heritage of the Commonwealth of the both nations. It means both: Lithuanian and Polish.”¹⁵¹

This statement referred to a Commonwealth and supposedly GDL as part of it. As well as in the other mentioned contemporary models of identification Okinčic appealed to a common memory and historicity of Lithuanian Poles. However, interview conducted in the research and other sources show different position towards the relation of Lithuanian Poles and Poles from Poland. In one of the interviews he stated that voting for Lithuanian independence in 1990 was a way to show that Lithuanian Poles are part of a wider Polish nation which was always fighting for the independence of those states where they lived in.¹⁵² This notion is an important feature in another model of Polishness as Lithuanian Poles here are related to a wider Polish nation outside the Polish borders. In the interview given during the research Mr. Okinčic explained that:

“Similarity between Lithuanian Poles and Polish Poles is very simple – they are both Poles. There is no difference in ethnic sense. Sometimes when I speak with potential partners in Poland and they say: - Mister Česlav how beautifully you speak Polish. And I answer: - You too. And they say: - We are Polacy (Poles), and I answer: Ja też (me too). However, we still have much more differences than similarities as we are part of different state and cultural environment.”¹⁵³

Above given answer illustrates that ethnically Poles are understood as one ethnic body but culturally and politically they are determined by different conditions that make them exclusive. This concept contrast with the two described before that claim uniqueness of Lithuanian Poles. Even if a part of the promoters of the first model see their ethnic relation with a bigger Polish nation, they usually do not feel purely

¹⁵¹Witold Bereś, *Česlav Okinčic. Advokatas, signataras, ambasadorius. Atvirai apie Lietuvos laisvę*, (Vilnius: Vaga, 2015), 127.

¹⁵²Česlavas Okinčicas, “Esu lenkas, kovoju už Lietuvos laisvę,” *Veidas*, 11 September 2015, accessed 28 May 2016, <http://www.veidas.lt/tag/lenkai>

¹⁵³Interview with Česlav Okinčic, conducted on 24 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

ethnically connected as their ancestors gradually mixed with local inhabitants throughout the centuries.

Ideological content of a model of Polishness provided by Mr. Česlav Okinčičcan be traced back in *krajowość* thought. However, this case is much closer to the ideas of Tadeusz Wróblewski who claimed that Lithuanian Poles are ethnically the same as Poles from Poland. In other words, it is a part or branch of a kin nation to which it is connected by the ethnicity and culture. As it seen from the contemporary example, cultural dimension is not highlighted but the ethnicity works as a connecting link despite that culturally, historically and politically Lithuanian Poles are understood differently than Poles from Poland.

The latter two concepts contrast with a third one expressed by the leader of *AWPL* Valdemar Tomaševski. Nonetheless all variations of identification stress historicity of Lithuanian Polish community but interpretations and ideological constructions of a memory are completely different. This thesis claims that in short they can be described in following definitions:

1. Lithuanian Poles are historical inhabitants and citizens of GDL with unique and strong cultural relation to Lithuanians that lost their ties with Poland and Polish nation because of historical processes and mixing with local people.
2. Lithuanian Poles are ethnic Lithuanians or Belarussians who throughout the centuries gradually adopted Polish language and became Polish speaking Lithuanians (not in civic but even in ethnic sense).
3. Lithuanian Poles are the historical inhabitants of GDL that are a part of a wider Polish nation (whose members a long time ago settled in Lithuania) but culturally and politically are different from them as they live in a different state.
4. Poles in Lithuania are historical inhabitants in the lands of their ancestors, a part of a wider Polish nation which because of the historical circumstances and Lithuanian expansion found themselves in another state – Lithuania, but ethnically and culturally they are members of same Polish nation.

All of the models open completely different space for a creation of cultural memory. Theoretically the first and the third model can create and interpret past as own since the end of the fourteenth century while the second and the fourth models can reach back to the stone ages. However, the interpretation of the latter two would be completely different. Despite of that, there is also a civic level of identification which makes all of Lithuanian Poles equal as citizens. Nonetheless there is a question of what

narratives are created by Lithuanian majority and how Polish minority members find themselves in these narratives and what alternatives they create. The latter questions are discussed in the further analysis, but before more concrete positions towards identification must be further developed.

Approaches to *Karta Polaka*

Historical relation to the homeland and different models of identification are visible through positions of the interviewees towards *Karta Polaka* (Pole's card) in Lithuania. In September 2007 Poland introduced a special card for the citizens of the states from former Soviet Union. The general idea was to provide such card for the Polish descent emigrants and inhabitants outside the Polish state to indicate their ethnic relation to the kin nation and to minimize requirements for obtaining visas, living permits even citizenship. It also guarantees discounts in a public transport, museums and provides other pragmatic benefits. In order to receive a card, applicants have to prove that one parent or two great-grandparents were ethnic Poles and have to have a basic knowledge of Polish language.¹⁵⁴

As Sébastien Gobert suggests, it is more likely that a card serves Poland's economic and political interests rather than supporting Polish identity and ties with a kin nation of the communities abroad.¹⁵⁵ However, in Lithuanian case it carries a huge ideological load as according to the Poland's law of *Karta Polaka*, Polishness is understood on a basis of blood and language. In such ethno-centrist concept Lithuanian Poles are viewed as Polish diaspora outside the borders of Poland or in other words as Poles in Lithuania. Even if a card is provided only by pragmatic reasons, from the perspective of a Polish state, local concepts of Polishness in Lithuania based on the ideas of *krajowość* are not really correct as the features of Polishness may not be the same as understood from a Polish state perspective.

Interviewees were asked to share their opinions about this phenomenon. Results show various approaches to the Pole's card and justification reveals essential differences. A question of a Polish card has been added to the questionnaire in the process of making the interviews. For this reason two of respondents were not asked about the issue however the major trend is clear from other interviewee's opinions that are illustrated in the table below:

¹⁵⁴Sébastien Gobert, "Karta Polaka: in the Interest of Polonia or Poland?," *Ethnicity* 6 (2012): 34.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 38.

interviewee	opinion about <i>Karta Polaka</i>
Mr. Marijuš Antonovič	Neutral - sceptic
Mr. Ryšard Gaidis	Negative
Mr. Boguslavas Gruževskis	Positive
Ms. Ekžbieta Kuzborska	Positive
Mr. Česlav Okinčic	Neutral
Mr. Aleksander Radčenko	Negative
Ms. Barbara Stankėvič	Negative

Table 3 Opinions about *Karta Polaka*¹⁵⁶

Survey's data shows that three out of nine respondents evaluate this card negatively while other two pairs positively or neutrally respectively. The major justification for the negative evaluation was based on a strong local identification. Barbara Stankėvič claimed that:

“I do not have it (Pole's card) and I do not need it. My parents do not have it either. We know clearly that we are not the Poles from Poland. We do not need it.”¹⁵⁷

The answer illustrates a strong distinct Polish identification. Ms. Stankėvič made a precise distinction between herself and the Polish Poles. In her rhetoric Pole's card should be given to those who associate themselves to wider Polish nation or a modern Polish state. It presupposes that if one sees his or her roots in a Grand Duchy of Lithuania and present Lithuanian state, he or she should not culturally link himself/herself to the Polish state as being Lithuanian Pole means having different cultural memory and national identity. Such insights were also expressed by Ryšard Gaidis who stated that:

“It (*Karta Polaka*) is inconceivable phenomenon. Why should I need such document to confirm my identity? If I had a card would I be more Polish? Some people took these cards for the pragmatic reasons but to spread this card in the Baltic States it is complete nonsense. I do not need to prove anyone that I am a Pole because I know it...Maybe for the Poles in Kazakhstan it is a good and logical thing but here.”¹⁵⁸

Similar views were expressed by Aleksander Radčenko who also spoke against the Pole's card. Latter group of the respondents negatively evaluate Pole's card as they declare they do not want to be seen as the Polish Poles. However, four out of seven respondents evaluated it positively or neutrally. Interestingly enough, none of them

¹⁵⁶ Results taken from the interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Barbara Stankėvič, conducted on 9 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Ryšard Gaidis, conducted on 17 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

personally have the card but they support the existence of it. Boguslavas Gruževskis indicated that:

“In the pragmatic sense it is a good thing since it gives some discounts and advantages if you want to live or study in Poland. On the other hand, it is a mean to fight amorphousness of the national identification. Maybe it is a good thing for someone who does not feel the relation to the Polish culture. Even if you are Lithuanian Pole, Polish culture is still very important. I am for such cards – every state could have them. It is only a positive thing.”¹⁵⁹

Gruževski's answer could be supplemented by Kuzborska's reply that:

“It is a normal thing since it is affirmation of your relation to the Polish nation. Through it people can keep their relation to Poland. You can also have discounts and other advantages...For us (Lithuanian Poles) it is not actual, of course, but for everybody else it is good thing.”¹⁶⁰

Answers illustrate that interviewees view Pole's card as a positive thing from a pragmatic perspective. On the other hand, a relation to the Polish culture was also mentioned as one of the advantages. In the previous answers respondents claimed that they do not consider themselves as Polish Poles but in this answer they stressed the relation to the Polish nation and culture which is entrenched by *Karta Polaka*. Even though respondents do not owe this card, it is still interesting position meaning that Pole's card may express a relation to the kin nation. But if one understand himself or herself as having different kind of Polish identification then a relation to the kin nation may not be necessary, as it was seen from the contrasting answers. Nevertheless, these variations confirm the existence of different models of Polishness and how the relation to a wider Polish nation is understood. On the other hand, the promotion of cultural relations with Poland may be seen as positive pragmatic phenomenon that may form or keep some kind of identification model, what according to the interviewees, is better than not having any Polish dimension in self-understanding.

Features defining Polishness

From the first sight, defined contemporary models of Polishness seem to be very close to the concepts formed in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth centuries. As it was shown, the ideas and modes of identification are very similar however it is impossible for them to be exactly the same after almost a hundred years when social, political and cultural environment is completely different. One of the most controversial components of present constructs of identification is the importance of

¹⁵⁹Interview with Boguslavas Gruževskis, conducted on 31 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

¹⁶⁰Interview with Elżbieta Kuzborska, conducted on 12 March, 2016, Warsaw, Poland.

language. Interviewees were asked to name three major features that define Polishness. A table below illustrates the results that are arranged in original order:

interviewee	features I	feature II	feature III
Mr. Marijuš Antonovič	language	culture	self-identification with the latter features
Mr. Ryšard Gaidis	language	tradition	culture
Mr. Boguslavas Gruževskis	language	religiosity	tradition - customs
Ms. Elżbieta Kuzborska	language	culture	religiosity
Mr. Artur Liudkovski	language	history	tradition
Mr. Česlav Okinčic	language	history	self-identification with the latter features and fostering of them
Mr. Aleksander Radčenko	language	culture	history
Mr. Ryšard Rotkėvič	god	honor	fatherland
Ms. Barbara Stankėvič	history	literature	political concepts

Table 4 Major features of Polishness¹⁶¹

As it is seen in the results given in the table, seven respondents indicated that language is the major feature defining Polishness while history and religion amounted to one answer respectively. In the second and third places history, tradition and customs were mentioned six times and culture - four while religion was mentioned twice. The results illustrate a major difference between the historical concepts of Polishness promoted by *krajowcy* and contemporary modes of identification. The previous results¹⁶² indicate that three out of four contemporary models of Polishness are originating from the concepts of *krajowość* where historical tradition, unique cultural memory and territoriality is understood as the major features defining unique identification of Lithuanian Poles.

To remind, *krajowcy* built their identity on the historical tradition and a cultural memory of GDL and Commonwealth, and symbolic territory and space. According to

¹⁶¹ Results taken from the interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland.

¹⁶² See in a page no. 57.

their logic, to be Lithuanian meant to be a historical inhabitant of GDL despite ethnicity while to be a Pole meant to be a citizen of a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.¹⁶³ In this sense, *krajowcy* kept the definitions formed in a period of a Commonwealth when language was not a defining feature of the identification. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz illustrates that population in the Commonwealth was multi-ethno-cultural and a word “Pole” was understood in a civic sense. He provides the example of that time person:

“Who could call himself as natione Polonus, gente Ruthenus, civitas Magnum Ducatus Lithuanorum, origine Judaeus – of the Polish nation, of the Ruthenian people, of the citizenship of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and of Jewish origin.”¹⁶⁴

Chodakiewicz claims that it was very similar model of the contemporary American citizenship where one belongs to American civic community but at the same time has possibility of keeping, for instance, Irish, German or other cultural or ethnic identification of any other group.¹⁶⁵ In case of a Commonwealth a notion of “Polish” meant inhabitant of a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth heaving Lithuanian citizenship which was a double-layer since Lithuania was a part of a confederative state. This concept perfectly illustrates the ideas that were promoted by *krajowcy*.

Nonetheless, the given results of the research show that in contemporary models of Polishness, language is understood as one of the major features of identification beside history, tradition and culture. Interestingly enough, interviewees who want to promote identification models that are related to the ideas of *krajowcy* still mention language as a major marker of Polishness. From a historical perspective it was a common norm in ethno-centric concept of identification but not among *krajowcy*. For this reason it can be assumed that a part of contemporary carriers of Lithuanian Polish cultural memory base their ideas not exactly on the precise historical models of identification but it is rather a mix of all the models. In present days, linguistic dimension plays a strong role in identification processes nonetheless, on a cultural level, concepts of the *krajowcy* are also applied since they can be used as a basis for the creation of unique Lithuanian Polish character. However, such uniqueness can be better understood only through evaluation of historical interpretation that is made by contemporary carriers of a cultural memory.

¹⁶³Buchowski, *Litvomanai*, 126.

¹⁶⁴Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Intermarium: The Land between the Black and Baltic Seas*, (New Brunswick, US: Transaction Publishers, 2012), 25.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

Evaluation of historical markers of cultural memory

History itself would be meaningless in the process of identity construction if it would not carry symbolic content that create a sense of commonness for a group members. As Jan Assmann indicates, cultural memory is not only a simple history because it is based on the fixed points of the past and its boundaries can reach back as deep, as group understands it as own.¹⁶⁶ Following this assumption, interviewees of this research were asked to share their opinions about the brightest periods of Lithuanian history. Even though this question does not refer directly to the boundaries of the state history, which may be dated to the thirteenth century, but it reveals the most important and meaningful historical periods that are significant for Lithuanian Polish elites as markers of a cultural memory. Besides, respondents were asked to name historical personalities that have the biggest meaning to them. Latter question reveals not only their relation to dominating Lithuanian historical narratives that show unique Lithuanian Polish historical interpretations, but also indicates authoritative personalities and heroes that are referred to in a process of identity construction. Results of the research are provided in a table:

interviewee	brightest historical periods	most important historical personalities
Mr. Marijuš Antonovič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • period of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (XVI – XVIII centuries), earlier history of GDL (XIII century – 1569) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Józef Mackiewicz • Czesław Miłosz • Adam Mickiewicz
Mr. Ryšard Gaidis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • XVI century, when Commonwealth was established • present times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Czesław Miłosz • Adam Mickiewicz
Mr. Boguslavas Gruževskis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • period of a Commonwealth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Duke Vytautas • Jagiełonian dynasty • Czesław Miłosz • Adam Mickiewicz
Ms. Elżbieta Kuzborska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all periods when Lithuanians and Poles were together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Michał Römer • Gabriel Narutowicz

¹⁶⁶Jan Assmann, *Communicative and Cultural Memory*, 113.

Mr. Artur Liudkovski	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period of a Commonwealth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Adam Mickiewicz • Stanisław Moniuszko • Juliusz Słowacki
Mr. Česlav Okinčič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • period of a Commonwealth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Czesław Miłosz • Michał Römer • Tandem of Polish and Lithuanian presidents: Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus
Mr. Aleksander Radčenko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • period of a Commonwealth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Contraposition between Polish actual leader of a Second Polish Republic Józef Piłsudski and Lithuanian president and authoritarian leader Antanas Smetona
Mr. Ryšard Rotkėvič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • period when GDL was from the Baltic to the Black Sea (XV century) • when Lithuanians and Poles were together (supposedly – period of a Commonwealth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Józef Piłsudski • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Pope John Paul II
Ms. Barbara Stankėvič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christianization of Lithuania (1387) • earlier period of the GDL (XIII century – 1569) • period of a Commonwealth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Duke Vytautas • King Władysław II Jagiełło • Polish and Lithuanian writers Czesław Miłosz and Tomas Venclova • Michał Römer

Table 5 Brightest historical periods and the most important historical personalities¹⁶⁷

Data of the research illustrate few major trends that are further discussed separately. First of all, evaluation of history made by Lithuanian Polish public figures

¹⁶⁷ Results taken from the interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland.

reveal that their understanding of history can be seen as an alternative to a dominating Lithuanian historical narrative. According to Alfredas Bumblauskas, in present day Lithuania, nationalistic historical narrative originating from the interwar is still very lively. Generic formula of it can be described in the following rhetoric: nation's greatness lies in pagan times when Grand Duchy of Lithuania was a magnificent state (until 1387). However, a decline started with Christianization of a country which brought Polonization and loss of unique Lithuanian culture. Grand Duke Vytautas (ruled between 1392 and 1430) is a hero since he resisted to his cousin Polish king Jagiełło and tried to stop amalgamation with Kingdom of Poland. Unfortunately, in a few centuries GDL gradually leaned to Poland and in the end, a final catastrophe of Lublin Union (1569) happened. A period of a Commonwealth marked absolute decline of the state and processes of Polonization of Lithuanians. Constitution of the Third of May (1791), which was the second constitution in the World, was a negative thing and throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries Poland stayed a major enemy for Lithuanian nation and state.¹⁶⁸ This is an illustration of a nationalistic Lithuanian historical narrative that positions Poles as the significant others. Bumblauskas's assumptions may be supported by the fact that by June 2016 in Lithuania one could find a monument for Frank Zappa while there are none for Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila who later became a Polish king Władysław II Jagiełło.

Results given in a table No. 5 show that historical markers of Lithuanian Polish cultural memory create completely different picture as an alternative to the dominating historical narrative of the majority group. The first contrasting feature is a period of a Commonwealth (1569 – 1795). All of the respondents mentioned it as the brightest era of Lithuanian history. In their rhetoric, creation of a confederative state was an achievement on a global level. As Aleksander Radčenko explained:

“Brightest period was Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for sure, unfortunately it ended badly. But this kind of experience is unique in the world. Various nations and religions lived peacefully in one state. All citizens were able to make decisions and a voice of each individual was equal to thousand opinions. Of course, in the later period *liberum veto*¹⁶⁹ right degenerated but generally it was example for the whole Europe. There were made achievements in science, culture and everywhere else.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸Alfredas Bumblauskas, *Lietuvos etninės įtampos kaip didžiųjų istorijos naratyvų priešpriešų išdava*, accessed 1 June 2016, <http://www.mdl.projektas.vu.lt/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2011-lietuvos-etnines-itamos-kaip-didziuju-istorijos-naratyvu-priespriesu-isdava.pdf>

¹⁶⁹Veto right to stop the legislation in a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth Parliament (Sejm) allowing one of the deputies to veto the whole legislation.

¹⁷⁰Interview with Aleksander Radčenko conducted on 9 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

As it is seen from the explanation, Commonwealth is viewed as marker of a glorious period of nation's history. Mr. Radčenko also indicated European context as supposedly he wanted to show that democratic roots can be traced in the history of a Commonwealth while by that time the rest of the Europe was ruled by the absolute monarchies. Similar opinions were also expressed by other respondents, as for instance, Artur Liudkovski stated:

“I think our union was necessary and we existed only because we united. It was one of the greatest states in Europe. I believe that without unification Lithuania could have disappeared. There was a choice for Jagiello and Vytautas to choose between the West and East and they made a logical decision – West. So I believe that logically the most important in the history are: Christianization of Lithuania, battle of Grunwald,¹⁷¹ Act of Krewo (1385), Lublin Union (1569) and Constitution of the Third of May (1791).¹⁷²

Latter answer show that all the major dates and points are the ones marking joined history of Lithuania and Poland. From Lithuanian Polish perspective GDL's rapprochement with Poland opened Western Christian civilization for Lithuania which together with Poland became of the greatest states in Europe. It is completely different interpretation of a history than the one described as dominating Lithuanian historical narrative. It also shows that Lithuanian Polish perspective is more cosmopolitan and liberal as major aspects are given to the joining but not the divisive historical dates and periods. Multiculturalism and democracy are the major pillars of this alternative narrative. The first one is embodied in the multicultural traits of the Commonwealth while the second in democratic manifestations of political system of a state and finally in a second Constitution of the Third of May.

Above mentioned principles were also a basis of historical understanding of *krajowcy*. For them Commonwealth was not only a reference to the identification but played a crucial role in their cultural memory. As it is seen from the results, contemporary Polish elites also refer to a Commonwealth and the Grand Duchy as they see it as essential object around which they could build their cultural identity and memory. These generalizations correspond with the major findings of quantitative research of experts representing Lithuanian Polish community and their position towards history made by Lithuanian Social Research Centre. Here Lithuanian Polish experts had to name the most important historical events for Lithuania, Poland and both

¹⁷¹Battle between the Teutonic Order and joined Polish – Lithuanian forces on 15 July 1410. It is considered as one of the largest battles in Medieval Europe.

¹⁷²Interview with Artur Liudkovski conducted on 8 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

countries. Answering about medieval, early modern and late modern periods as historical events important for both countries they mentioned Act of Krewa, Christianization of Lithuania, Grunwald battle, Lublin Union, partitions of the Commonwealth, establishment of Vilnius University, uprising of Tadeusz Kościuszko¹⁷³, uprisings of 1830/1831 and 1863/1864. These events and dates basically correspond with the answers given in this research. However, interestingly the Constitution of Third of May here was mentioned as an event important only for Poland.¹⁷⁴ It contrasts with the results of this research and shows that respondents did not understand Constitution as a marker of cultural memory important for Lithuania. It is fascinating conclusion since Constitution is one of the primary markers of the history of Commonwealth. In this thesis in various contexts it was mentioned by seven out of nine respondents as one of the biggest achievements.¹⁷⁵

Nevertheless, another important feature can be noticed in both researches. According to the results of the research made by Lithuanian Social Research Centre, as for Lithuania important dates experts mentioned Coronation of Lithuanian Grand Duke Mindaugas (1253), establishment of Capital in Vilnius city (1323) and rule of Grand Duke Gediminas.¹⁷⁶ The latter results do not indicate directly if these dates and periods are important for the respondents as they thought them to be important for Lithuanian state. However, only the fact that precisely these days and periods were selected presupposes that latter events may be also important to them.

Results of this qualitative research provide a deeper insight since it shows a trend that Lithuanian Polish elites refer not only to a Commonwealth but go deeper to the tradition of the Grand Duchy. As Barbara Stankėvič noted:

“We understand that our roots are not in Commonwealth but rather in a tradition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. If we think about *krajowcy*, they draw a line until Lublin Union but now we can think about earlier periods of GDL. For instance I always thought if Vytautas who is a symbol of Lithuanianness, is important to me. And I think yes – he is.¹⁷⁷

This answer shows, that for some interviewees, pre-Commonwealth history is also important and the tradition of an earlier GDL is also understood as own. One third of

¹⁷³Polish – Lithuanian uprising against Russia in 1794 led by general Tadeusz Kościuszko.

¹⁷⁴Jolanta Aleknevičienė, Boguslavas Gruževskis, Laima Okunevičiūtė Neverauskienė, *Tyrimas apie Lietuvos lenkų ir Lenkijos įvaizdį Lietuvos visuomenėje*, (Vilnius: Lietuvos Socialinių Tyrimų Centras, 2012), 178-179.

¹⁷⁵Results taken from the interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland.

¹⁷⁶Grand Duke of Lithuania between 1316 and 1341, grandfather of Polish king Jagiełło and Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas. Founder of Gediminian dynasty which in Poland is understood as Jagiellonian.

¹⁷⁷Interview with Barbara Stankėvič conducted on 9 March 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania.

the respondents also mentioned pre-Commonwealth history of GDL as one of the brightest periods in Lithuanian history. This trend is particularly clear through the answers about the most important historical personalities since king Jagiełło was mentioned in eight of nine answers¹⁷⁸. However, he may be possibly interpreted as a uniting figure which started to build a union between the states that after 1569 developed into a Commonwealth, rather than exclusively Lithuanian hero.

On the other hand, some Lithuanian icons as Grand Duke Vytautas and president of the First Lithuanian Republic Antanas Smetona were mentioned twice and once respectively. According to the research of the most popular historical personalities in Lithuania, made by Irena Štutienė in 2007, the most popular Lithuanian historical person is Grand Duke Vytautas while Antanas Smetona was ranked third.¹⁷⁹ A fact that these epic Lithuanian historical figures were mentioned by Lithuanian Poles reveal that they also consider them as own and accept a small part of dominating narrative but adopt it in different ways. If these figures are accepted as the most important historical personalities then contemporary cultural memory of Lithuanian Poles is not only oriented towards Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth but reaches even older times.

Nevertheless, results reveal another important feature. There is a visible trend that Lithuanian Polish public figures orient towards representatives of *krajowcy* and promoters of their ideas. Michał Römer was mentioned thrice, Czesław Miłosz who consider himself as a promoter of *krajowość* ideas: five times, Josef Piłsudski who also represented confederative concepts: twice, Adam Mickiewicz who inspired *krajowcy*: five times. There is a visible logical line between these personalities that can be put into one narrative. First of all there is Jagiełło who started to join both countries, then there is Adam Mickiewicz who represented a citizen of a Commonwealth, later Michał Römer who was inspired by Mickiewicz, then Józef Piłsudski who sought to create federation as a new Commonwealth and finally Czesław Miłosz who called himself a last citizen of a GDL. This is a memory construction where uniting figures and their ideas are the pillars of it. As it is seen, majority of them is oriented towards concepts of *krajowość*.

For the latter reasons it is hard to distinguish if a personal identification models mentioned in the previous sub-chapters directly correspond with constructs of cultural

¹⁷⁸Results taken from their interviews conducted between 8 March 2016 and 12 April 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania and Warsaw, Poland.

¹⁷⁹Irena Štutienė, "Tautos istorijos simboliai Lietuvos gyventojų tautinėje vaizduotėje: herojų įvaizdžiai ir jų kaita," *Sociologija. Mintis ir veiksmai* 2009 (24): 47.

memory. It is clear that those models who originate from the ideas of *krajowcy* are oriented to the commonalities of Lithuanian and Polish history and especially towards Commonwealth. However, there is no clear points of distinction on cultural memory dimension as even those who acknowledged their ties with Poland see pre-Polish Lithuanian historical icons as own. It may indicate a level of cultural integration but on the other hand, it is still a distinct cultural memory which clearly differs from dominating Lithuanian nationalistic narrative. Taking four mentioned contemporary modes of identification it is clear that three of them are originating from the *krajowcy* concepts. However, the fourth mode based on the ideas expressed by AWPL leader Valdemar Tomaševski is not clear until the end as there are no more precise public statements about history and historical memory and he and some of his party members refused to be interviewed. Nevertheless, the existence of four modes of identification is clear but on a level of a cultural memory they may overlap as they create use almost the same historical points of reference that are based on a Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Conclusions

First of all, in order to conclude a research it is necessary to go back to Miller's idea that minority identities have their own cultural memory and the identity markers that, from a viewpoint of the majority, may be understood as a threat.¹⁸⁰ As the thesis has revealed, to be Lithuanian Pole means to be associated to the nation and a state (Poland) on which contraposition Lithuanian national identity was built. In this situation local Lithuanian Polish elites try to search and promote their unique identity formulas based on a historicity of a community since the majority of them are historical inhabitants in Lithuanian territory. However, present concepts of identification are many-layer and they vary as historicity, ethnicity and understanding of a cultural memory is diverse.

This fragmentation is apparent in the results of the interviews. Nevertheless, there is one noticeable uniting feature which in Heller's terms can be described as revitalization of the old concepts for the present-day needs. According to the philosopher, carriers of cultural memory of such groups as nations, usually never lose their cultural memory. They are re-establishing it through bringing back into the light old ideas, concepts, stories and myths.¹⁸¹ Results have confirmed the latter idea since Lithuanian Polish public figures ground their identity concepts on historical models of Polishness.

There are also analogies between the present times and the beginning of the twentieth century. Contemporary Lithuanian Polish public figures and intellectuals have to shape their national identity in response to ethno-centric majority nationalism and on the other hand to identity concepts proposed by Poland. As well as hundred years ago, a part of them try search for the distinct models of identification that would reflect their uniqueness. However, another part either assimilates with Lithuanians or follow ethno-centric concept of Polishness.

According to Aleida Assmann, one of the major elements of a cultural memory is that it works on a bottom-up principle. When it is institutionalized and starts to work on a top-down basis it is converted into political memory.¹⁸² As the thesis has shown, all models of Polishness promoted by Lithuanian Polish public figures are grounded on a cultural memory which is an alternative to dominating concepts of Lithuanian identity

¹⁸⁰Miller, *On Nationality*, 122.

¹⁸¹Heller, *Cultural Memory*. 140.

¹⁸² Aleida Assmann, *Re-framing Memory*, 42-43.

and prevailing historical narrative. It is natural that alternatives created today are based on the alternative memory and modes of identity invented in the past. This thesis claims the existence of three major historical models of Polishness constructed in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. In sum they can be defined in the following order:

- 1) Lithuanian Pole - a citizen and historical inhabitant of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with strong distinct cultural and ethnic relation to the compatriots of GDL. On the other hand there is also relation with Poland since together with GDL it forms one state - Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth.
- 2) Lithuanian Pole - a citizen and historical inhabitant of GDL with strong distinct cultural and civic identity. However, ethnically he/she is linked to a kin Polish nation.
- 3) Lithuanian Pole - is a Pole in Lithuania because Polishness is defined by language and ethnicity without making differences between Polish speakers in Poland, GDL or any other country.

First two models of identification were created and promoted by *krajowcy*. Both of them referred to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a component of Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth. Here GDL was a major marker of a cultural memory and identity in political, cultural and geographical senses. *Krajowość* concepts were based on the civic identity of a non-existing state which for them was *les lieux de mémoire*. A notion of homeland had clear spatial boundaries overlapping with a territory of GDL and cultural memory was oriented towards it. For *krajowcy* GDL symbolized a space where civic identification was above linguistic or ethno-centric categories.

Nevertheless, these concepts are separate modes of identification despite representing analogous ideas. A major separating feature was position towards kin nation. In the second concept wider Polish nation was seen as a kin while in the first, cultural and ethnic ties with Lithuania were emphasized. Theoretically it presupposes that in the first case Lithuanian Poles were local element - a mix of Poles, Lithuanians, Belarussians and from linguistic perspective, they were named Poles because they used Polish language. However, what mattered was the relation with GDL which in civic sense made all of them Lithuanians. The second concept suggested that Lithuanian Poles were politically and culturally separate from Polish Poles but ethnically they were still members of the same kin. Nevertheless, both branches underlined being Lithuanian Poles but not the Poles in Lithuania.

On the contrary, a third historical concept was the reflection of ethno-centric Polish nationalism coming from Polish Crown lands and promoted by *endecja*. It was based on ethno-centric nationalism where a notion of Pole was universal and it was applicable for any Polish speaker. Poles in Lithuania were seen as compatriots of the same nation which should be united by Polish nation-state. In this sense Poles who lived in Lithuania became an object of the Polish state that had to be protected after Lithuanian and Polish independence in 1918. This model opposed the first two as they promoted distinct concepts of Polishness.

All three historical identity concepts had not only cultural and ideological meaning but also very clear political visions of statehood. *Krajowcy* promoted confederative ideas in the former lands of Commonwealth. On the other hand, *endeks* had a vision of a unitary Polish nation-state. However in comparison, contemporary modes of identification do not have such strong political load. They are not political manifestations but they are more likely constructs that shape Lithuanian Polish cultural memory and identity. It is natural since contemporary situation in a political sense is completely different as Poland and Lithuania are neighbor partner states, both belonging to European Union and NATO. Nevertheless, in a cultural field local Poles still try to create identity concepts that would allow to feel equal, not only on a civic but also on a cultural basis. For this reason Polish public figures adopt historical modes of identification. Results gained in this thesis suggest that in contemporary Lithuania four major identity models could be distinguished among them:

- 1) Lithuanian Pole - historical inhabitant and citizen of GDL with unique and strong cultural relation to Lithuanians. His/her ancestors centuries ago moved to GDL and throughout the time mixed with local inhabitants and gradually former distinct identity of Lithuanian Pole. Ties with Poland were lost and in present times it is almost a different nation.
- 2) Lithuanian Pole - is historical inhabitant and citizen of GDL. He/she is ethnic Lithuanian or Belarussian who throughout the centuries gradually adopted Polish language and became Polish speaker because of natural process of Polonization. In other words he/she is Lithuanian in both ethnic and civic sense but uses Polish language.
- 3) Lithuanian Pole - is historical inhabitants of GDL with strong cultural and political relation to Lithuania. However, from a wider perspective he is still a member of a kin Polish nation which is scattered outside borders of Poland.

- 4) Pole in Lithuania - historical inhabitant of present Lithuanian territories who lived here since ages, member of a wider Polish nation. However, because of the historical circumstances he/she found himself/herself living in another state – Lithuania, since after creation of it, it included a part of non-Lithuanian areas. In other words, he/she became Pole in Lithuania not because he/she arrived here but because Lithuanian state arrived to him/her.

As it is seen from the results, three out of four contemporary models are directly related to historical formulas of identity promoted by *krajowcy*. Present Concepts: number one and three, are grounded on the second historical mode which stresses relation to a kin nation and was embodied in the ideas of Tadeusz Wróblewski. However, among present-day Polish public figures this model fragments into two different concepts. A major difference between them is position towards a kin nation. In the first one relation with Polish nation is understood as historical fact which throughout the centuries lost the meaning while the third one emphasizes unbroken ethnic ties.

Even though the latter two concepts are based on the ideas of *krajowcy* but they are different than the second contemporary model which is also constructed on the concepts of *krajowość*. However it can be directly linked to the first historical mode of identification which was embodied in the ideas of Michał Römer. Here Poles are understood as ethnic Lithuanians or Belarussians without ties with a kin nation. Despite the differences all three concepts are oriented towards cultural memory of GDL.

Finally, the last present concept stands in opposition the first three. Even though historicity of Poles in Lithuania is highlighted but it has completely different meaning. It represents ethno-centric nationalism similar to the historical one promoted by *endeks*. Unfortunately this model is least comprehended as implicit representatives of it were not interested in participating in this research. However, general trends and links are concluded and presented here but they need a deeper analysis.

Links between four contemporary models of Polishness and three historical ones are apparent. Nevertheless, contemporary public figures are tend to transform or interpret them slightly differently. It is revealed through respondents' positions towards major traits defining Polishness since absolute majority of interviewees mentioned language as a major marker of Polish identity. Ideologically such definition is contrary to the identification concepts of *krajowcy* where language and ethnicity were not important features in describing identity. It shows that throughout the twentieth century concepts of ethno-linguistic nationalism have entrenched among Lithuanian Poles and

even those public figures who try to revive old ideas of *krajowcy* view language as a major trait of the identity. It presupposes that old concepts are modified not only for the present needs but also because their advocates are affected by historical processes. As David Miller notices, national and ethnic minorities usually rise demands for their political and cultural recognition together with the language they use.¹⁸³ A case of Lithuanian Poles confirms this idea despite the attempt to revive anti-linguistic concepts of identification. It also shows that there is no continuity between historical and contemporary models of Polishness. Instead, it is an attempt to old concepts in the contemporary situation by selecting a part of the features of old identity constructions.

Adopted part of the historical models is a cultural memory promoted by the *krajowcy*. Representatives of the first three contemporary models clearly orientates towards it. Qualitative research has revealed that public figures highlight periods of a cohabitation of Lithuania and Poland. However they search for the roots not in a Commonwealth but in the end of the fourteenth century when Jagiełło was crowned a Polish king. Nonetheless, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth has a central role in their memory. Interestingly, results have shown that a small part of the dominating Lithuanian narrative may be found in the answers of the respondents but general trend is orientation towards alternatives contrasting to dominating historical narrative. Major features of the alternative memory are cohabitation, common achievements, multiculturalism and common heritage. This kind of memory is inclusive and may be adopted by few national or ethnic groups, majority and the minorities. It stands in contraposition to the exclusive nationalistic Lithuanian memory where the latter features are understood as a Polish threat.

Similarly as among *krajowcy*, within contemporary Lithuanian Polish public figures it is hard to draw clear links between modes of identification and differentiation of a cultural memory. Even though theoretically every mode of identification could open completely different space and time frames for a cultural memory, in reality it does not seem to be effective. Both *krajowcy* and contemporary public figures ground their cultural memory on the same basis. The first ones emphasized relation to a GDL and Commonwealth while the latter, Lithuanian-Polish connections since the fourteenth century, GDL and Commonwealth. It reveals that possibilities to form a cultural memory on the older medieval history or pre-historical times were neither actual in

¹⁸³ Miller, *On Nationality*, 124.

historical, nor in contemporary models of Polishness. Nevertheless, ethno-centrist nationalistic modes are tend to search own history and roots in older periods.

All in all, conclusions of the thesis may be expressed in the following statements that correspond with the research questions:

- There are four major contemporary models of Polishness that are promoted by Lithuanian Polish public figures.
- Present-day Lithuanian Polish carriers of cultural memory try to revive the old concepts of identification. Three out of four contemporary modes are directly related to the concepts of *krajowcy*. However, there is no continuity between them and old constructs are re-framed according to the present day needs and original ideas are modified according to the viewpoint of public figures.
- Major similarities between contemporary and historical modes of identification are that both refer to a Commonwealth and GDL as site of memory or one of the major markers of cultural memory. Also, both promote inclusive memory based on civic identity, multiculturalism and cohabitation of nationalities. Both form an alternative to the dominating ethno-centric nationalism. However, there is no continuity between historical and contemporary models of Polishness since language is understood as a major feature defining identity among public figures. Present modes are not political manifestations and projects but cultural memory and identity constructs.
- Contemporary cultural memory is constructed through the adoption of historical concepts of identity and memory, and application of them in the present context.
- Alternative narratives of contemporary public figures are based on uniting historical facts, phenomena and personalities that create a sense of a commonness and proudness of cohabitation between Lithuanians and Poles. Simplified line of the alternative narrative is illustrated in the following sequence: King Jagiełło – GDL – Commonwealth (1569-1795) – Adam Mickiewicz – *krajowcy* – Czesław Miłosz.

Possibilities for the future researches...

This thesis is only a minor attempt to research a wide question of Cultural memory of Lithuanian Poles. It was done through the viewpoint of public persons that may not necessarily represent a wider picture. It produces general trends that may be re-checked by bigger qualitative and quantitative researches. Nevertheless, an approach of theoretical models of Polishness, constructed in this thesis, may serve as a basis for the future researches. As one of the possible analysis of Lithuanian Polish minority could be an attempt to check how these models operate among local Poles from different social strata and if they are comparable to the results presented in the thesis

On the other hand, this research only partly covered position of the fourth – ethno-centric contemporary mode of identification presumably related to the position of the *AWPL* leader. There is a wide space for deepening a research of ethno-centric mode of Polishness in Lithuania and the variations of it.

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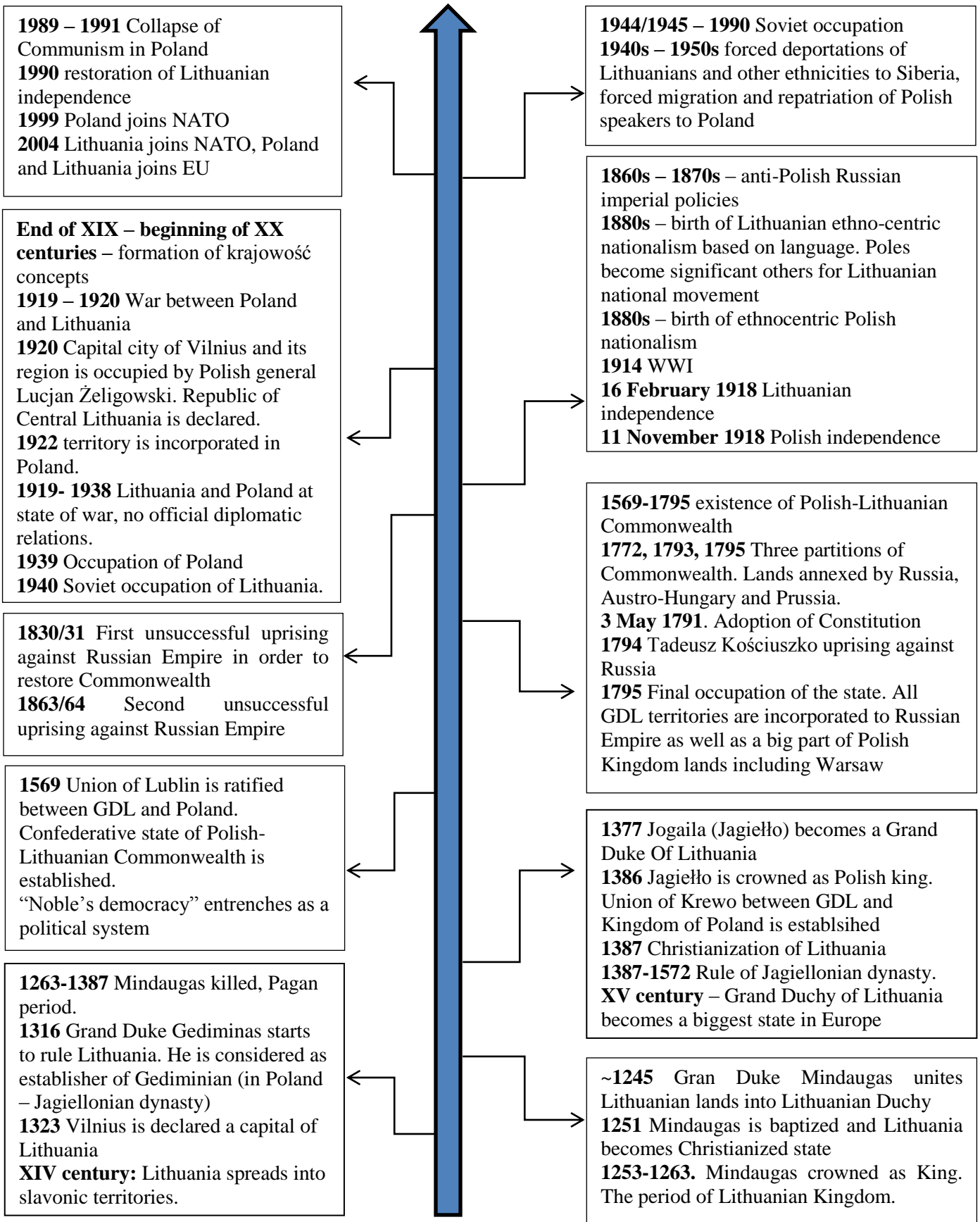
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Annex I: Timeline of Lithuanian History¹⁸⁴.



¹⁸⁴ Dates are selected in accordance with a research in order to help reader orientate in historical periods and personalities

Annex II: Interview Questionnaire

PART 1: personal questions

1a) Where have you born? Where have your parents born? What secondary or high school have you graduated in?

1b) Do you remember when you started to think about your nationality and national identity?

1c) Do you think that political or cultural processes had any influence on that? If yes, maybe you remember what and when?

1d) While growing up, have you noticed any ethnic tensions in your environment?

1e) How would you describe (or introduce) who are you today? (In ethnic/ political sense)

1f) Maybe you could describe in few words, what are the major traits defining Polishness?

PART 2: questions about Lithuanian Polish community

2a) Could you describe, in your opinion, what major problems or tensions is Lithuanian Polish community facing today? What is your opinion on recent public discussions?

2b) What in your opinion, are the biggest challenges in contemporary process of formation of Lithuanian Polish identity? (Or there are no challenges?)

2c) In general, how would you evaluate Lithuanian Polish community? Are there enough public discussions and opinions inside it? (If no, what could be the major reasons?)

2d) How you, as being one of the formers of public opinion and also representative of Lithuanian Polish society, would evaluate Lithuanian Polish public space or other groups/individuals that also shape it?

PART 3: questions about identity and history/cultural memory

3a) What major similarities could you name among Poles and Lithuanians in Lithuania?

3b) (If) You have already named similarities so it shows that we have something in common and on the other hand, Lithuanian Poles have something distinctive as well. So how then is it with Polish Poles? How would you describe the relation of Lithuanian Poles and Poles from Poland?

3c) What is your opinion about Karta Polaka?

3d) How would you evaluate representations of Lithuanian Poles in Lithuanian historical narrative expressed in media, school books, public space? What periods of history or historical facts, do you think, are too much exaggerated? Forgotten? What, in your opinion, should be more emphasized?

3e) Since when, in your opinion, when we can talk about Lithuanian Poles and their history in Lithuania?

3f) Could you name brightest historical periods or dates of Lithuanian history? Could you explain why?

3h) Could you name most important historical personalities in Lithuanian history? Could you explain why?

3i) How do you think these personalities can be evaluated: as more uniting or divisive Poles and Lithuanians?

3j) What is your opinion about such historical paradoxes like the fate of families like Narutowicz in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century?

3k) I have heard and seen that such places like monument of Adam Mickiewicz, Vilnius university (Former University of Stefan Batory), Rasos (Rosy) cemetery and other are the most important and popular objects for Polish tourists when they come to visit Vilnius. But on the other hand, I have heard opinions that these places are important only for the tourists but not for local Poles. Would you agree with this opinion? What sites of memory, in your opinion, are the most important for you and generally for Lithuanian Poles?

3l) For a century Vilnius question was a sensitive topic in discussions about Lithuanian and Polish relations. For Lithuanians it was like sacred city, historical capital with a

strong symbolic meaning. What role Vilnius as a cultural and symbolic image, do you think has for Lithuanian Poles? How would you evaluate these discussions?

