

LITUANUS

LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Volume 11, No.4 - Winter 1965

Editor of this issue: Thomas Remeikis

ISSN 0024-5089

Copyright © 1965 LITUANUS Foundation, Inc.



LITUANUS

www.lituanus.org

RUSSIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE ORIGIN OF THE LITHUANIAN STATE Some Critical Remarks on V. T. Pashuto's Study

JUOZAS JAKŠTAS

Dr. Juozas Jakštas, formerly a Professor in Lithuanian universities, is a member of the Institute for Lithuanian Studies. He specializes in the history of Medieval Europe in general and Lithuania in particular. He has written widely, including major contributions to the *Lithuanian Encyclopedia* and *Slavic Review*.

This article is a revised critical evaluation of V. T. Pashuto's study *Obrazovanie Litovskogo gosudarstva* (Moskva, 1959), delivered to the 1964 meeting of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies. Page numbers in the text refer only to this work of Pashuto.

Russian Historiography of Lithuania and V. T. Pashuto

The noted Soviet historian B. D. Grekov has made the following impressive and ethnocentric contention concerning the Russian lands which fell to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: "Vanquished Russia subjugated victorious Lithuania — Rus-sias' superior culture prevailed. The Russian idiom and the Russian law found a place for itself in Lithuania. Not only did Lithuania not see any need to change Russian antiquity, but more than once demonstratively proclaimed by word of law to maintain it".¹ These words of the soviet historian represent the traditional viewpoint toward Lithuania's past held by Russian historians. According to them, the history of Lithuania was not a unique development and the Lithuanian nation did not generate its own life in the past. It created an existence by injecting itself into the life of the Russian nation. The Lithuanian nation became a sort of a historic attribute of the Russian nation, of Western Russia, as the Russian lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuanian were designated. Similar chauvinistic Russian views of Lithuania's past were also expressed regarding the partition of the Lithuanian-Polish state. In Russian viewpoint, the partition was in effect a restoration of the detached Russian lands. The Russian historians thus tended to emphasize the role of Russia in Lithuania's past.

First to take up the Russian interpretation of Lithuania's past was the Archeographic Commission (*Arkheograficheskaja kommissia*), established in St. Petersburg in 1834. One member of this commission was the well known professor J. Z. Onacewicz, who, among other things, educated two noted Lithuanian historians, Th. Narbutas² and S. Daukantas.³ At the invitation of Count N. P. Rumiancev, Onacewicz went to St. Petersburg to work in the famous museum, founded by Rumiancev. In 1811 Onacewicz moves to the University of Vilnius and teaches here until he again returns to the Rumiancev museum in 1835. From that date on he works with the Archeographic Commission, which entrusts to him the writing of Lithuanian history.

It is known that Onacewicz had done research until his death and had written several volumes of Lithuanian history. The manuscripts, however, vanished after his death and the nature of his history remains a mystery. It is amazing that S. Daukantas, who collaborated closely with Onacewicz and who looked after him during his last days, fails to mention in his correspondence with Narbutas the history that Onacewicz was writing. It appears to be most plausible that the history commissioned by the Archeographic Commission was not to Daukantas' liking and that was why the Lithuanian-oriented Daukantas did not even mention it.

At about the same time Professor N. G. Ustrialov of the University of St. Petersburg wrote a special study about the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and its place in the history of Russia.⁴ According to Ustrialov, from the beginning the Lithuanians were small and weak people and in no position to establish their own state. First of all, the Grand Duchy arose as a result of the unification of the Russian duchies beyond the River Dniestre by the sagacious policy of the Lithuanian duke Gediminas.

Only afterwards the territory of Lithuania proper was included into the Grand Duchy. The unification of the Russian duchies meant the founding of the Grand Duchy and the role of Lithuania in this development was meaningless. The Grand Duchy was Russian in character, a counterpart of the Grand Duchy of Moscow. Thus Ustrialov considers both of these duchies as two separate Russian duchies. The end of the Gediminas dynasty and the union with Poland pushed the Grand Duchy of Lithuania into a second-rate position. This was the situation until the time when, thanks to the statesmanship of Catherine II, the Western and Eastern Russian lands were united in a single empire. "From that time the history of Lithuania must be mute".⁵

The reactionary epoch of Nicholas I (1825-1855), with its chauvinistic imperialism, stands out vividly in Ustrialov's consideration of the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. His conclusion appeared extreme even to Russian historians and he was berated "for implanting the Lithuanian duchy within Russian history".⁶ It would be erroneous to say that the later Russian historians absolutely followed Ustrialov and intermingled Lithuania's past with that of Russia. Nevertheless, there is an unmistakable tendency of Moscovite historians to belittle the role of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The well known Ukrainian historian M. Hrushevsky has aptly characterized and criticized this tendency of the Moscovites.⁷ According to the scheme drawn up by Hrushevsky, the Russian historians began with the history of the eastern Slavs and then passed on to the Russia of Kiev, whose history they followed until the second half of the 12th century. Afterward, they turned the wheel of Russia's history to the north, to the Duchy of Vladimir, later to that of Moscow, and halted at the burgeoning of the Moscow state and the empire which followed. The lands remaining outside the borders of the state of Moscow, such as Halich-Volhynia and Lithuania, were considered as mere adjuncts. When the Duchy of Halich-Volhynia vanished with the end of the Rurik dynasty in the beginning of the 14th century, outside of Moscow there remained only one large Slavic bloc — the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Russian historians, of course, centered their attention on the state of Moscow. They were concerned only with its rise, its winning of lands, and its relations with the Tartars. In the main they only touched upon the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in passing, and then mainly only in its contacts with Moscow. However, there were quite a few Russian historians, who interpreted Lithuania's history together with that of Moscow, even changing its name to "Western Russia". for example D. Ilovaisky and K. N. Bestuzhev-Rumin.

Perhaps the greatest effort to "russianize" the past of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was made by St. Petersburg University Professor M. Kojalovich, who delivered "Lectures on the History of Western Russia".⁸ According to him, the state of Lithuania first came into being after the incursions by the Tartars. The small Russian states had then sought Lithuanian protection and both nations easily combined into a western, Russian state. The Lithuanians, first the eastern part of them (*aukštaičiai*), soon forgot their "old scores" and "changed into Russians". They were later followed by the Samogitians (*žemaičiai*), to whom Kojalovich attributed the honor of giving a dynasty to the future Western Russia.⁹ Kojalovich is an obvious exponent of the Muraviev epoch, when the attempts were made to mingle the former lands of the Grand Duchy with Russia and to erase any Lithuanian individuality.

The extremist view of Kojalovich, like that of Ustrialov before him, was not followed by the majority of Russian historians. In their works, however, the tendency to play up Russia's role, great or small, in Lithuania's past, still was notable. This inclination is evident even among the Kiev historians, including some Ukrainians.

The Ukrainian historian V. N. Antonovich published the first truly scholarly history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania up to the death of Grand Duke Algirdas (d. 1377). He knew how to analyse critically the Russian sources and base his conclusions on firm data. However, even he did not avoid the general pro-Russian tendency of that time, perhaps because his work was a thesis for the University of Kiev, and throughout emphasized the dominant Russian role in the ancient Lithuanian state. Several other Kiev historians — N. P. Dashkevich,¹¹ M. V. Dovnar-Zapolsky,¹² and F. I. Leontovich,¹³ for example — all noted for their important research, wrote about Lithuania's past in a similar vein.

The viewpoint of two Russian historians, M. Lubavsky and I. I. Lappo, and the Belorussian historian V. I. Picheta were comparable to that of the Kiev historians. Lubavsky's work "Sketch of the Lithuanian-Russian state until the Lublin Union"¹⁴ was based in the main on unpublished historical sources of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. His research was focused on the Russian areas of the Lithuanian state and for this reason he was more a historian of Western Russia than of Lithuania. The Lithuanian nation in his so-called Lithuanian-Russian state was of limited importance to him. He considered Western Russia as the continuation of the Kiev state.

I. I. Lappo maintained a position somewhat similar to Lubavsky's. In his booklet "Western Russia and her union with Poland in their historic past",¹⁵ published in exile in 1924, also gives preference to the Russian factor in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. He further claims that the Russianization of the Lithuanian state stifled its Polonization after the union with Poland, which eventually contributed to the national awakening of the Lithuanian people.

To V. I. Picheta, who studied the socio-economic condition in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the 15th and 16th century, the Russian bias seems to have been alien; nevertheless, he could not free himself entirely from the Russian habit of seeing in Lithuania's past the supremacy of the Slavic (Belorussian) factor.¹⁶

Historian V. T. Pashuto matured academically while studying the Russian historians of Lithuania's past, who were briefly described above. According to Pashuto himself, he was a student of Grekov and Picheta, and like his masters, concentrated primarily on socio-economic history. In his earlier career he published studies of Russian feudalism and

perio-dization.¹⁷ Apparently influenced by World War II and subsequent events, he turned his attention to Lithuanian history. Already in 1947 he published an article on the economy and technology in medieval Lithuania.¹⁸ Pashuto approached Lithuania's history through the ancient Prussians, whose past became relevant to the Russians with the appropriation of East Prussia (now Kaliningrad oblast) after World War II. Pashuto wrote an article on the Prussian wars for freedom¹⁹ and a special study of the Prussian tribe of Pamede, especially their legal code. By concentrating on the past of the Prussians perhaps Pashuto felt that he was fulfilling an obligation to his fellow nationals, who had just defeated the descendants of the German knights who exterminated the ancient Prussians. Such a deduction almost begs recognition from Pashuto's remark in the Introduction to *Obrazovanie Litovskogo Gosudarstva*: "It seems to us that the time has come to write a history of the Prussian nation exterminated by German feudal lords. This is a direct obligation of the historians of those countries which have now inherited the Prussian lands freed from the yoke of the German conquerors."

Although the Russian orientation in Pashuto's work cannot be entirely overlooked, there is no longer the ancient Russian patriotic bent in it. Pashuto repeatedly comes out against Russian "patriots" (*otechestvenniki*), who saw the Grand Duchy of Lithuania matured only by Russianism. Pashuto more or less restores to it a Lithuanian character. On the other hand, he muddles the picture of the individual development of the Lithuanian nation by viewing it through the filters of Marxist historical theory.

Positivistic Approach to the Origin of the Lithuanian State

V. T. Pashuto's study *Obrasovanie Litovskogo Gosudarstva* is a worthy creative work, not only from the viewpoint of Lithuania's past, but from that of general history as well. To the Lithuanian historian the work is attractive and interesting for its wealth of collected materials. The extensive data from Western as well as Russian sources makes this work a genuine encyclopedia of ancient Lithuanian history. Pashuto's book reminds one somewhat of H. Lowmianski's ponderous work.²⁰ Both are similar in the mass of collected material. Pashuto's history, however, excels by its in-depth analysis of sources and literature. The author has a highly critical intellect and is able to penetrate into the basic original sources and historical studies, viewing the materials from a Marxist point of view.

This is the first truly erudite work on Lithuania's history, written according to the Marxist theory. To the Lithuanian historian, acquainted with this earliest period (Pashuto's work covers the period up to 1341, although occasionally he touches even 16th century), it is interesting to follow how the facts so assiduously collected and cleverly analyzed are all woven on the same woof. Even though one disagrees with the basic theory of Pashuto's work, the study should still be considered worthwhile for its copious material and many original deductions. The work could also be of interest to the general public because of the broad review of sources and especially for the extensive bibliography. It is possible that the review of sources and historical studies may have been the very thing that interested Lithuanians most, since the work was sold out just several days after it reached bookstores in Vilnius. After all, the local Lithuanian readers were interested in learning something of the works of the historians of independent Lithuania, most of them unknown locally until Pashuto's evaluation.

First we shall consider how the author defines the goal of his chosen task. In the interesting Introduction to the study he says: "However up to now in our science we lack research, which in the establishment of the Lithuanian state would observe an immanent process, expressing itself socio-economically in the transformation of a part of the freeholders in the agrarian community into privileged landowners-feudal lords and of the overwhelming majority of them — into dependent land holders — peasants . . . We consider the formation of the Lithuanian state not as an historical accident, arising because of Mindau-gas's birth, but as law-governed consequence of the economic and social development of the country, and also of the changes in its international situation." (p. 5) As we see, the author first of all sought to explain social and economic problems, showing their development, and to follow simultaneously the immanent process of the formation of the -state. Furthermore, the author maintains that the state developed according to certain laws. The basic theses of the study, which, it is possible to say, became a dogmatic doctrine under the Soviets, will be found in the Marxist-Leninist historical theory.

A recent formulation of the Marxist-Leninist theory of history was given by the Soviet historian G. G. Diligensky, who polemicizes with the Italian historian P. Rossi.²¹ He attacks Rossi's contention that the Marxist-Leninist theory is useful only as a working hypothesis in research and cannot explain the entire historical process.²² In opposing Rossi, Diligensky cites such authorities as Engels, Marx, and Lenin and concludes that the Marxist-Leninist concept of history emerged from the studies of historical phenomena and is to be found at their bases. According to Diligensky, Marx had discovered the universal law of history that the economic structure of society determines its political structure. Historical materialism thus defined is further elaborated as in the following contention: "One of the basic methodological principles of historical materialism, is, for example, the view that political and ideological phenomena reflect the interests and aims of certain social groups, which differ fundamentally one from the other in their economic situation".²³ In other words, history, as interpreted according to Marxist-Leninist methodology, must in the first place be a history of economic groups and their mutual relation, which are determined by their economic conditions. In a word, economic groups and their economic conditions are the vehicles of history. Thus Soviet histories become essentially histories of economies, to which Pashuto's work also closely corresponds.

Even though Pashuto ascribes primary importance to economic and social phenomena, nevertheless he does not negate the political and ideological factors in the formation of the Lithuanian state. Moreover, Pashuto in his Introduction stated

that he would pay attention to the changes in the international environment. It was plain to the acute intellect of Pashuto, that Lithuania arose during the struggles with the Teutonic Knights and the expansion eastward, i.e. developed as a consequence of external relations.

However, in considering political and ideological factors the author follows the line of the Soviet school, drawn according to the old positivistic approach which was adopted by Marx. This school of thought, with roots in the rationalism of the 18th century, viewed the Middle Ages (13th and 14th centuries in case of the Lithuanian state) with derision and considered these centuries as a sort of spiritual erring of mankind. Pashuto is a strong representative of this viewpoint when he writes about the Teutonic Order and its struggles with the Lithuanians, about the popes and Christian missions, about the holy wars and similar events.

His inability to comprehend the spiritual motives in the missionary policies of the Church and the crusades is shown by the exceptional criticism of a thesis of the Lithuanian historian J. Stakauskas [24](#) and the dissertation of E. Maschke [25](#). Both historians viewed the missions and crusades according to the medieval ideals and this is incomprehensible to Pashuto.

Because he did not understand or did not want to understand the leading ideas of the medieval world, Pashuto explains the establishment of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia in a distorted and biased manner. For example, the following contention is surely incompatible with objective historical facts: "The abysmal failure to transform the Arabian east into a colony of several European states encouraged similar aggressive [X]licity in the Baltic, and this accounts for the transfer of the capital of the Order from Venice to Marienburg" (p. 143). If the conquered Islamic east could be considered a colony, it would not be a colony of "several European states", but a French colony. And in general, the Crusades cannot be considered as undertaking of different European states, for national states in the modern sense did not exist at that time. It was the Christian community, encompassing the entire western world, that was supreme and responsible for starting and encouraging the Crusades. Thus even the states founded in the east were its accomplishment.

Pashuto correctly sees the relation between the Crusades and the establishment of the Teutonic Order in Prussia. However he has a distorted picture of events when he completely ignores the same Western Christian missionary aims in the policy of the Teutonic Order, which were sought equally by holy wars and peaceful means. A statement about the first Prussian bishop, Christian, that "The Prussians understood well that Christian was not an apostle, but a robber" (p. 94), is truly inexcusable to a serious historian. Indeed, not having any force to rely on, Christian could not have been a robber, just as later he could not put up any opposition to the Order which forced him out. Similarly, Pashuto often reacts disparagingly about the policies of the popes. He sees aggression and selfish Curia purposes everywhere. In a word, whatever is related to Christian ideology of the Middle Ages is condemned by the author. It is hard to appreciate the value of a number of statements, as the following one concerning the establishment of the Teutonic Order in Prussia: "In this case (Pashuto here has in mind the disunity among the Prussians) the emissaries of the Curia must be given credit, they chose an altogether appropriate moment for the knights to invade" (p.338). Pashuto fails to indicate here what emissaries he had in mind. It is a historical fact that the Order came to Prussia at the invitation of the Mazovian Duke Conrad, after receiving the Golden Bull (1226) from Emperor Friedrich II. The Curia intervened in the Order's affairs later (1234), issuing to its Grand Master Herman Salza a bull granting certain privileges. At that time the Order had already been settled in Prussia for four years.

A Lithuanian historian misses most in Pashuto's work a more detailed account of the political-ideological aspects in the relations between the Lithuanians and the Order. Among the brief mentions of wars, negotiations, and treaties, the baptism and crowning of the Lithuanian duke Mindaugas is tersely mentioned: "Soon the Master, with the aid of the bishop of Kulmia, invested Mindaugas with a crown made in Riga" (p. 379). Bearing in mind the relations between the Order and Riga in those days, it is doubtful that Mindaugas' crown could have been made there. There is no mention of the election of a bishop or the founding of the bishopric in Lithuania. Most important, nothing at all is said about the political aims of the Livonian Order and the archbishop of Riga toward Lithuania. Pashuto is not in the least concerned with the interesting papal bulls, the grants to the Order by Mindaugas (apparently the author considers these documents as forgeries), or the consecration of bishop Christian, which would enlighten the circumstances of the conversion of Mindaugas. Then, too, Grand Duke Gediminas' attempts to Christianize Lithuania gets only a superficial attention and the missionary activities of the Order, the city of Riga and its archbishop are almost disregarded. The author does not delve at all into the famous letters of Gediminas and directs the reader only to the old and new- literature on the subject, including the old and tentative Russian study by Vasilevsky. A man of erudition such as Pashuto doubtless could have poured out quite a few thoughts on the question had he been prepared for this by his schooling. The historical school to which Pashuto belongs did not give him such a preparation.

Origin of the Lithuanian State According to the Marxist-Leninist Theory

The main task of Pashuto's work is to explain the origin of the state by the immanent socio-economic factors, as the Marxist-Leninist theory demands. The author deals with this subject in a special chapter, entitled "The Formation of Feudal Social Relations" (pp. 284-325).

To Pashuto the state from its inception has been a class organization, having evolved from "pre-class" communities. The latter were "patriarchal societies of households and villages, that is, there had existed a communal system" (p. 284). Unable to find direct documentation for such a community in the historical sources, he attempts to provide all kinds of

indirect proofs from certain allusions found in later sources. For example, he finds it a proper proof for his contention a recorded item by the 13th century chronicler Henry of Latvia, that 50 Lithuanian wives committed suicide upon learning of the death of their husbands. How this fact is connected with the existence of a patriarchal society is not explained. If the suicide of the Lithuanian widows was a "survival" of the patriarchal community, then how must one consider the practice of suttee in India? Also of doubtful value as proofs of a patriarchal community are the Lithuanian words *bičiulis* (co-owner of a beehive) and *talka* (mutual help) (pp. 286-287).

The patriarchal communities, existence of which Pashuto deduced from the Marxist doctrine, supposedly were associations of free and equal land tillers with common ownership of land. A differentiation later set in, first by partitioning the use of land for life by lottery, later converting the land into private ownership of a family. It is true that only the arable land became private property, while the forests, pastures, and grazing lands continued as communal property. With the appearance of private ownership of arable land, the former patriarchal society of equals began to differentiate according to the size of lands possessed. During this differentiation process the wealthier separated and eventually evolved into a nobility. In such a manner, the former "pre-class epoch" (*doklasovaja epocha*) was transformed into a class or feudal epoch. At this time private property was dominant and only certain relics reminded of the former communal ownership of land. To Pashuto the Prussians represent a classic example of the feudal era since they had not yet created a state. He therefore minutely investigated the Prussian sources, especially the Christburg (Kishpor) treaty of 1249 and the so-called Pamede law.

In the feudal society there appeared large and small land owners. The large land owners, the feudal lords, thus created a state to keep the masses of small land-holders dependent upon them. In other words, the state is an instrument for the suppression of the masses by the dominant economic group. To use the author's words, "Under these conditions gradually there emerged the feudal and peasant classes. The strengthening of the government of the former meant the twilight of freedom for the latter" (p. 324). It is exactly this struggle for the maintenance of feudal rule that led to the formation of the Lithuanian state.

The definition of the state as an instrument of class suppression is of course found in the Marxist-Leninist theory, which determines the direction of Soviet historical research. It is interesting to point out, however, that according to B. D. Grekov (d. 1953) one of the mentors of Pashuto, that, in addition to Engels, the American Ludwig Morgan and the Russian Maxim Kovalevsky proclaimed a similar theory. Which means that it is not an exclusively Marxist discovery.

It has been convincingly demonstrated by leading modern historians, particularly Vienna Professor A. Dopsch (d. 1953) that the dogmatic theory about primitive communities of free farmers and their later class differentiation had its roots in the doctrines of the Enlightenment and in the great French Revolution.²⁶ Decisive in this was the impressively drawn picture by J. J. Rousseau of the former free, happy, and good people who lived in pre-state and pre-cultural period. The abolition of serfdom in various countries according to the ideas of the French Revolution further strengthened and disseminated this viewpoint. Among the German historians thus arose for the first time the theory about the freedom of the ancient Germans. The free German land tillers lived in the so-called *Markgenossenschaften*, were all equal and held all land in common. These mark-associations possessed self-government and constituted a sort of patriarchal society, about which Pashuto also speaks.

Connected with the studies of the mark-association are the great scholars of the 19th century, such as J. Moser, K. Eichhorn, L. Maurer, Zeuss, A. Meitzen and others. The theory was borrowed from the Germans and applied in other countries, including Russia. In Russia the agrarian community (*mir*) was considered equivalent to the ancient German mark-association. Russian revolutionary leaders (Herzen, for example) were proposing to organize the liberated serfs into a system of *mir's*.

The German theory apparently was also known in Lithuania. It is probable that the theory was propagated in the University of Vilnius. The Lithuanian historian S. Daukantas possibly became acquainted with it at the University and, influenced by it, wrote enthusiastically about the "golden liberty" of ancient Lithuanians. To Daukantas the ancient freedom of his people represented antithesis to the serfdom of his time. The same idea rings out in the verses of the people's poet A. Strazdelis:²⁷

When the world began
The Lord ordained equality.
When the people neglected God
And chose the devil for themselves,
The Lord ordered them to honor Satans,
And then imposed upon them masters.

A similar idea echoed in the popular and sincere song of bishop A. Baranauskas²⁸ about ancient Lithuania:

Happy people were wealthy
Nowhere was there slavery.
Some of the nobles were powerful
Chosen as governors,

While others obeyed their sweet rule
And were all called little ones.

It is evident that the same idea of the happy and equal primitive people is expressed here, as it was described by J. J. Rousseau and repeated by his disciples. This is nothing else than the patriarchal communal system (*obshchinnii stroi*) of Pashuto. But the Lithuanian bard A. Baranauskas immediately adds another stanza, in which a different note is sounded:

Ages passed, as the ancients say,
And different was Lithuania.
The powerful, the nobles thrived.
The people fell into bondage.

In the above lines we have more or less the second stage of Pashuto's social development theory, namely, the feudal or class society.

It is evident, then, that the Marxist-Leninist theory which Pashuto applied to Lithuanian history has deep roots in history and originated in the political and social theories of the 18th and 19th centuries. This has no basis in ancient historical sources. Neither is it compatible with the life of primitive tribes, where the individual was concerned only with having his own shelter, a garden, a plot to provide food for himself. A communal system, with common ownership of land, would have required much more rational and planned economy, which the primitive people lacked. It is not surprising, then, that we can find no traces of any such communal order. Nevertheless, its supporters attempt to prove, from later sources, that there had been at some earlier time mark-associations. They were endeavoring to explain sources in their own fashion or even change their meaning in accordance with the presupposed theory. From the very outset, their evidence did not receive a universal recognition, and such eminent authorities as G. Waitz, Fustel de Coulanges (the first and, it seems, the greatest critic of the mark-association theory), and in recent years the above mentioned A. Dopsch, came out in opposition to them. A critical present-day review of the mark theory was made by the German scholar K. S. Bader.²⁹

The views of these critical scholars, which had found their way into the historiography of independent Lithuania, are well known to Pashuto. He criticizes Lithuanian historians for rejecting the mark theory. His criticism is directed somewhat at the deductions on this matter in the history edited by A. Šapoka³⁰ and more elaborately at the works of other Lithuanian historians, especially at K. Avižonis' dissertation on the development of Lithuanian nobility.³¹ According to Pashuto, "In principle K. Avižonis maintains the usual assumption of bourgeois historiography that we find social and proprietary differences among Lithuanians from the very beginnings" (p. 222).

Pashuto seeks to demolish this viewpoint of "bourgeois historiography" by citing the Prussian sources on this matter, particularly the Christburg agreement and the so-called Pa-medede law, which in Pashuto's opinion, are the most valuable sources. However, both of these sources, as also other land grants to the nobles of the Order, prove that there was at that time a clearly socio-economically differentiated society. This society recognized variously titled nobles of different ranks, free tillers of the soil, and those in bondage (serfs). Private property is widely enjoyed, with an unlimited right of inheritance. In the light of these facts Pashuto is frantic. He attempts to prove that the sources document an already overgrown patriarchal society into a feudal one, as various allusions in the sources suggest. He seeks to convince the reader that the nobility arose from the peasant stock and became wealthy by enslaving other tillers of the soil. Among the nobility he finds some who recently were farmers and were not yet completely divorced from that work. For example, he exhibits (p. 120) a land grant to the Prussian Pamuselis given by the Order in 1275, which contains a special privilege, exempting him from paying the tithe and from performing other duties for the land worked by him and his serfs. To Pashuto Pamuselis is an example of Prussian nobles who still were not entirely disassociated from the peasantry and who, perhaps, as he says elsewhere (p. 285), still had callused hands. The medieval historian, who does not accept the theory of mark-association or patriarchal community, could see an entirely different thing in the source cited by Pashuto, i.e. a well established manorial system. The privilege granted to Pamuselis most likely related to his homestead farm, where he himself lived and worked with his serfs. In addition to his residential manor, Pamuselis could have had other manors, tended by his trustees or let to other nobles and worked by serfs. To Pashuto such interpretation is not acceptable and from the cited sources he draws the conclusion that other nobles also had long since left farming and lived by exploiting the formerly free communal peasants.

Pashuto extends the conclusions derived from Prussian sources also to the Lithuanians even though such conclusions cannot be deduced from documentary sources. For example, he cites a document of 1268 in which a nobleman by the name Sukse fled from the Nalshia area to Riga and granted to the archbishop the land he inherited from his ancestors (p. 152). To a historian without preconceived theories this document shows that there were Lithuanian nobles who owned inherited land. Pashuto, however, doing *salto mortale*, says: "The precursors of Sukse, like of the other Lithuanian nobles and some of his contemporary Prussian nobles, still trudged behind the plow and hoarded treasures not by subjecting neighboring nations but by enslaving their neighboring poorer peasants" (p. 152). To clarify the idea put forth by Pashuto here it is useful to consider his distinction between Lithuanian and Prussian nobility. To Pashuto Lithuania of the 13th century, which already was evolving into a state, was farther along in the evolution toward feudalism than was Prussia, whose tribal characteristics still were notable.

Concluding Pashuto's review of the development of the patriarchal community into feudal society, it is worth mentioning also his brief remark concerning Lithuanian word *viešpats* (lord) : "It should be noted that the etymology of the word *viešpats* seems to indicate that he (the lord) arose from village (*vesi*) and stood at its head" (p. 287). It has been ascertained by linguists Skardžius, Fraenkel and the Soviet Lithuanian historian J. Jurginis [32](#) that *viešpats* in the beginning meant the head of the *viešės*, i.e. of the peasant community. Yet this same word *viešpats* is found also in the ancient Hindu language,[33](#) as well as the Iranian, where it meant land-owner.[34](#) Did it also have the same village origin in these ancient languages ? Pashuto should prove this if he wants to explain the Lithuanian word *viešpats* by its village origin.

The Marxist character of the work is best exemplified by a section of Part III, entitled "Early Forms of Class Struggle" (p. 325). According to Pashuto, the Lithuanian people were divided into two classes : the boyars or nobles and the common people. Among the Prussian nobles he finds traitors of their nation, who fled to the side of the Order and later fought against their own people. The genuine fighters for freedom had been only the Prussian villagers who had revolted against the Order in 1295 and 1525. Even the uprising of the Samo-gitians (*žemaičiai*) in 1418 against the Order really had been a revolt of the peasants against their own boyars. In other words, the revolt was a manifestation of class struggle. The author does not explain why the nobles had to be traitors and the peasants loyal to their country. His thinking is obviously determined by his theory.

Pashuto disregards the sharp class cleavages of those days, the complex economic relationship and the interdependence of men arising out of these relationships. According to the customary law of the Middle Ages the serf was considered proprietary and the owner had a legal right for the serf's return in case of escape. This is evident in the agreement between the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas and the Order (1323) according to which each party promised the repatriation of escaped serfs. In this case Pashuto reasons not so much historically as propagandistically: "The master class of the two states confirm their domination over subjects (*nad poddanyimi*)" (p. 331). That the above provision has no relation to the policies of the two states is shown by another provision attached to the same agreement, namely the freedom of freemen to move from one state to another. The freemen were also subjects and still exempt from compulsory repatriation. In general, the section on class struggle is purely propagandistic, devoted to support the chosen historical theory.

The Pro-Russian Tendency of Pashuto

The American reviewer S. W. Hanchett correctly noted that Pashuto's study was written "in the wide framework of Marxistic and pro-Russian interpretation".[35](#) Regrettably, the reviewer did not elaborate on the "pro-Russian interpretation" shown by Pashuto in two instances. First, Pashuto points out the significance of Belorussia's merger with Lithuania. According to him, it had hastened Lithuania's economic development, and strengthened Lithuania's struggle with "the Papal Curia's announced blockade and made it easier for the Lithuanian nation to fight for freedom" (p. 284). The importance of Belorussian element is especially emphasized in Lithuanian policy in the upper Dauguva River area and the ties of the rulers of this area with Livonia. In short, Pashuto follows the old Russian interpretation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as it was expressed in the old monograph by V. B. Antonovich.[36](#) Pashuto only cloaks his interpretation with Communist doctrine.

The second pro-Russian tendency of Pashuto, which goes even beyond the chronological framework of the work, is found in his exposition of Moscow's national aspirations in annexing the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. "The little Duchy of Moscow became the nucleus of Russia which ... was able to support the liberation of the fraternal Belorussian and Ukrainian nations" (p. 397). Although the author does not clearly state what period he has in mind, his mention of the Russian overthrow of the Tartar yoke indicates that he is speaking about the times of Tsar Ivan III (1462-1505). Ivan III was the first ruler of Moscow to begin incursions into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and, to paraphrase Pashuto, to support the efforts of the Belorussians and Ukrainians to liberate themselves. However, the actual words of Ivan III — his answer to the Pope when he apparently intervened in behalf of the kings of Poland and Hungary — do not confirm this contention of Pashuto. The Tsar stated. "It would be worthwhile for the Pope to understand that neither Hungarian nor Polish kings have any rights to Russian lands — to Kiev, to Smolensk, to Chernigov, and other cities, to many cities and lands. They are patrimonial Russian lands and the people who live here are Russians, and Ivan is their heir, the lord (*hospodor*) of all those Russian lands." [37](#) In this statement there is no reference to the Ukrainians or the Belorussians. To Ivan they did not exist. He considered himself the lord of "all Russia" (*vseja Rusi*), having appropriated this title from the designations of Moscow metropolitan. Just as to the metropolitan *vseja Rus* were all the Orthodox believers, even those living in Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary, so to the Tsar they were his potential subjects. He considered himself to be the temporal ruler of the Orthodox believers, just as the metropolitan was the spiritual ruler. This is the Russian counterpart of the dual powers — *Regnum and Sacerdotium* — known in medieval Western Europe.

The identification of Russian with Orthodoxy, which already marked the policy of the imperialistic Duchy of Moscow in the 15th century, remained a guiding principle of the later tsarist policies toward Lithuania - Poland until their annexation. Thus expansion of Orthodox Russian empire was aggression and not liberation of the Ukrainians and Belorussians, who did not exist to the Russian autocrats. This is well expressed in the famous slogan of Catherine II which was engraved on her monument in Vilnius: *Ottorshennaya vozvratikh* ("the torn-away restored").[38](#)

Thus Pashuto's mention of the "fraternal" Belorussian and Ukrainian nations is a purely political statement derived from present-day circumstances and appallingly disregarding historical truth. Another statement, equally unhistorical and even more colored by Russian chauvinism, goes as follows: "The Russian nation, led by the government of Moscow, put an end

to the expansion of the Lithuanian and Polish feudal lords to the east" (p. 207). In other words, the eastern expansion was the work of the Lithuanian and Polish feudal lords, who were opposed not by the feudal lords of Moscow but by the Russian nation. Is Pashuto claiming that in Moscow there were only one nation without feudal lords and in Lithuania and Poland there were only feudal lords without nations? How easily is a historian led to assert such nonsense when he deviates from objective research and serves the political ends of his government.

Conclusion

The history of the origin of the Lithuanian state by Pashuto is a result of an intensive and broad research, and a significant contribution to the study of the earliest period of the Lithuanian state. The study unfortunately suffers from the political and ideological preconceptions of the author. Pashuto's work confirms precisely the statement of the great Italian his-toriosoph B. Croce that "each history is contemporary history".

NOTES

- 1 B. D. Grekov, *Kreatjane na rusi do XVII veka* (Moskva, 1946), p. 258.
- 2 Th. Narbutas (Narbutt) (1793-1864), a Lithuanian noble, was a great admirer of his country's past. He wrote a nine volume history of Lithuania in the Polish language: *Dzieje narodu litewskiego* (Wilno, 1835-1840).
- 3 S. Daukantas (1793-1864), was an ardent Lithuanian patriot, educated at the University of Vilnius. His best work, which is in the Lithuanian language, is *Lietuvos istorija* (History of Lithuania), published in Plymouth, Pa. in 1897. In this work he attempted to show the greatness of the Lithuanian nation in past centuries. For a historical portrait and the role of Simonas Daukantas in the Lithuanian national awakening, see the article by Vincent Trumpa, "[Simonas Daukantas, Historian and Pioneer of Lithuanian National Rebirth](#)", *Lituanus*, Spring, 1965, pp. 5-17.
- 4 N. G. Ustrialov, *Issledovanie voprosa, kakoe mesto v russkoi istorii dolžno zanimat velikoe kniaiestvo Litovskoe* (St. Petersburg, 1838).
- 5 Cited from Pashuto, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
- 6 See the remarks of Pashuto, *ibid.*
- 7 M. Hrushevsky, "The Traditional Scheme of 'Russian' History and the Problem of Rational Organization of History of the Eastern Slavs", *The New Review*, No. 2(9), 1963. This article is a translation of an older one, written in 1904.
- 8 M. Kojalovich, *Lekcii po istorii Zapadnoi Roxii* (St. Petersburg, 1864).
- 9 Apparently he had in mind the old legendary story about the Samogitian origin of the Gediminas dynasty.
- 10 V. N. Antonovich, *Ocherk istorii velikago kniazhestva Litovskogo do XV v.* (Kiev, 1878).
- 11 N. P. Dashkevich, *Zametki po istorii Litovskogo-Russkogo gosudarstva* (Kiev, 1885).
- 12 M. V. Dovnar-Zapolsky, *Gosudarstvennoe khoziaistvo velikago kniazhestva Litovskogo pri Jagellonach* (Kiev, 1901).
- 13 F. I. Leontovich, *Ocherki po istorii litovskogo-russkogo prava* (St. Petersburg, 1894).
- 14 M. Lubavsky, *Ocherk istorii Litovskogo-Russkogo gosudarstva do Liublinskoj unit vkluchitelno* (Moskva, 1910).
- 15 I. I. Lapo, *Zapadnaia Rossia i eia soedinenie s Poltkoju v ikh istoricheskom proilom* (Praha, 1924).
- 16 Still maintaining the influence of Russian historians, even in 1928, in a lecture in Berlin, Picheta spoke about the Lithuanian-Russian state, and not about the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. See his "Agrarnie reformi v vostochnikh oblastiakh Litovskogo-Russkogo gosudarstva vo vtoroi polovine XVI i nachala XVII v." in his *Belorussia i Litva XV-XVI vv.* (Moskva, 1964).
- 17 See C. E. Black, ed., *Rewriting of Russian History* (1962), p. 71.
- 18 "Khoziaistvo i tehnika srednevekovoi Litvy", *Voprosi Istorii*, t. 8 (1947), pp. 74-81.
- 19 "Borba prusskago naroda za nezavisimost do konca XIII v.", *Istoriia SSSR*, t 6 (1958), pp. 40-62.
- 20 See H. Lowmianski, *Studia nad poczatkami spoleczenstwa i panstwa litewskiego* (Wilno, 1931-1932), 2 vols.
- 21 Diligensky's article "The Marxist-Leninist Theory and Concrete Historical Research" was published in *Voprosi Istorii*, vol. 38 (1963) and in *Rivista Storica Italiana*, vol. 75 (1963).
- 22 P. Rossi, "Storiografia e 'Leggi storiche'," *Rivista Storica Italiana*, vol. 73 (1961).
- 23 *Rivista Storica Italiana*, vol. 75 (1963), p. 600.
- 24 J. Stakauskas, *Lietuva ir vakarų, Europa XIII-me amžiuje* (Lithuania and Western Europe in the 13th Century) (Kaunas, 1934).
- 25 E. Maschke, *Der Deutsche Orden und die Preussen. Bekehrung und Unterwerfung in der preussischen Mission des 13 Jhrh.* (Berlin, 1928).

- 26 A. Dopsch, *The Economic and Social Foundation of European Civilization* (London, 1937), *passim*.
- 27 A. Strazdelis (1763-1833) was an enlightened priest-poet. Some of his poems about the common man, the serf, and his life became popular folk songs.
- 28 A. Baranauskas (1835-1902), a bishop and a noted poet, made substantial contribution to the growth of Lithuanian poetry and the national movement.
- 29 See his *Dorfgenossenschaft und Dorfgemeinde. Studien zur Rechtsgeschichte des mittelalterlichen Dorfes* (Weimar, 1962), 2 vv.
- 30 A. Šapoka, ed., *Lietuvos istorija* (Fellbach, 1950)
- 31 K. Avižonis, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung des litauischen Adels im 13 und 14 Jahrhundert bis zur litauisch-polnischen Union 1385* (Berlin, 1932).
- 32 See Jurginis' study *Baudžiavos įsigalėjimas Lietuvoje* (The Growth of Serfdom in Lithuania) (Vilnius, 1962).
- 33 P. Skardžius, *Lietuvių kalbos žodžių daryba* (The Origination of Lithuanian Words) (Vilnius, 1943), p. 394.
- 34 M. M. Ehtécam, *L'iran sous les Aehéménides* (1946), p. 50: "L'autorité ... des *vithpaitiš* est fondée sur l'importance de leurs propriétés terriennes et sur le nombre considérable des individus attachés à leurs."
- 35 *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, vol. 67 (1962), p. 764.
- 36 Antonovich, *op. cit.*
- 37 As cited by H. Jablonowski, *Westruasland zwischen Wilna und Moskau* (Leiden, 1955), p. 125.
- 38 The mention of Pashuto's assertion about Belorussians and Ukrainians, which is incompatible with objective history, is not meant to disregard the present-day existence of these two nations. Their gradual development is quite a complicated question, as shown, for example, by the study of H. Paszkiewicz and his attempt to explain it from every angle; see his *The Making of the Russian Nation* (London, 1963), particularly chapter 5, "The Three Russian Nations".