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## **GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS OF LITHUANIAN NATIONALISM<sup>1</sup>**

### **GEOGRAFICZNE ASPEKTY NACJONALIZMU LITEWSKIEGO**

#### **Abstract:**

The study of nationalism pays too little attention to the issue of territoriality, although it is a fundamental concept accompanying nationalism. Nor has nationalism been the subject of geographical studies, although as a vital ideology it influences the politics of states and, by extension, the functioning of societies, people's daily lives and the landscape. This article offers an insight into the study of nationalism through the example of the development of spatial concepts of Lithuanian nationalism, which allows us to understand the research potential that geography has in the study of nationalism. Inspired by the work of Anthony D. Smith and Thongchai Winichakul's concept of the geo-body, the author offers a deeper insight into Lithuanian nationalism and related spatial concepts.

**Keywords:** geo-body, Lithuania, nationalism, Poland, spatial concepts.

#### **Introduction**

If today we talk about Lithuania most likely the subject is the state of Lithuania. It took the strong forces of history and the work of Lithuanians for self-determination to get to this point today. Nevertheless, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the term Lithuania meant something very different. During the last few centuries, the term Lithuania went through many changes. For a long time, it was an administrative concept which also had a geographical understanding, but later with the emergence of the Polish and the Lithuanian national movements the question became even more complicated and often conflicting. In the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a Lithuanian national identity became dominant that separated Lithuanian identity from the Polish one. This created questions that the national movement had to find answers to.

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Where is Lithuania? What is part of Lithuania? Who are the Lithuanians, and who is not? During the development of the Lithuanian national movement these questions were addressed by several methods, often using the methods of geography or cartography. The Lithuanian national movement was faced by a challenge that every national movement had to face. They had to define the national territory. Borders are often created by committees, often needing approval by great powers, but the defining of national territory is something different. It is a process that creates a symbolic territory, something to which the member of the nation has emotional connection to. The national territory is something that *defines* national identity, and not just something that is *defined by* national identity. To understand the processes that shaped the concept of Lithuania for the Lithuanian national movement we have to understand how nationalism is connected to territoriality, how geography and cartography are connected to this process, what role the Polish national thinking played in shaping the concept of Lithuania. For the better understanding we ought to create a model to represent Lithuanian national spatial thinking in a way that is beyond mere territory.

### **Territoriality and the study of nationalism**

*'Whatever else it may be, nationalism is always a struggle for control of land; whatever else the nation may be, it is nothing if not a mode of constructing and interpreting social space'* - Anthony D. Smith starts his article like this in 1983 (Smith 1983). His article was titled *'The national construction of social space'* and it was published in the journal *Progress in Human Geography*. Smith's publication in a geographic journal was something new. To understand the significance of Anthony D. Smith's article and this sentence, we have to examine the major works concerning nationalism and understand a crucial and yet often ignored aspect of nationalism: the territoriality.

The study of nationalism as a phenomenon by itself was hugely influenced by the work of Benedict Anderson (Anderson 2004). Anderson analyzed the origin of nationalism, and he described the phenomenon not just as a story of one or two national movements, but he tried to find the universal characteristics of nationalism. His work can be regarded as belonging to the approach that sees nationalism as a rather modern invention, as something that is the product of modernity. The question of the origin of nationalism still divides researchers of the subject. Nevertheless, Anderson's work influenced several historians and

sociologists to describe the origin or to find answers about the nature of nationalism. Most of the time, their works analyzed nationalism from a historical, sociological or economic perspective. Anderson's description of nationalism refers to it as something that creates imagined communities in the sense that the individual may share experiences, emotions, memories and goals with a group that is not the individual's firsthand experiences on its own.

Anderson inspired since then plenty of researchers. The general problem they wanted to solve is to answer what social and economic processes, what technological inventions helped the development of modern national movements. One of the most prominent theory that tries to explain the origin of nationalism was developed by Ernest Gellner. Gellner gives a complex solution to the problem. He sees the emergence of nationalism as something that is the product of the industrial revolution. The change in the way of production created changes in the society itself. The technological advancement and economical demand increased focus on written-based communication, emphasizing the importance of language and, more importantly, the codified language. The together belonging of people speaking the same language is one of the most important principles of national awakening. Though it was not just the language that holds a nation together, but also culture. The national movements aimed to create a homogenic culture that can be identified as national culture. Gellner believed such a national identity -in the way we can see it in the modernity- did not exist in the medieval societies, where the production was mainly agricultural (Gellner 2004). The significance of Gellner's work was widely accepted but also criticized. One of the main critical point was the question of the origin of nationalism. Is it really the product of modernity?

Another school of thought emerged contradictory to the belief that nationalism would be really a product of the modern society. The primordialist approach was already present from the beginning, but it really became an influential school of thought by the work of Anthony D. Smith.<sup>2</sup> Smith argued that nationalism has its own roots in the premodern societies and he established the school of thought called ethnosymbolism. He used the word *ethnie* for a form of identity that is not defined, that we cannot call yet as a nation, but shares some characteristics of what nations will have. He emphasized that national

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<sup>2</sup> The controversy over ethnogenesis is explained by P.L. Wilczyński in an article in this volume (noted by editor).

identity is often based on shared symbols and narratives. In this understanding in the premodern era there were already groups that shared symbols, historical memories, narratives that created in them a sense of identity which later became the basis of modern national narratives (Smith 2009).

Smith names eight attributes that can be described as the general characteristics of nationalism. The aspiration of legal and/or political autonomy, aspiration of social and territorial unity, creation of shared identity, authenticity for national identity, restoration of national dignity, creating continuity with the claimed ancestors, manifesting the imagined national destiny, and for us most importantly a connection to a shared homeland (Smith 2009, p. 62-63).

According to Smith, the formation of the nation and defining the national territory is crucial for national identity. The national territory is not just the physical place of the nation, but symbolic space. The territory is strongly attached to the members of the nation. Smith believes the connection to land is coming from ancient practices, like being connected to the land of birth. He argues the nation defining its borders is something like creating boundaries for territory of a community, who shares a common identity. In nationalism we can see a process where territory and identity became interconnected and often considered inseparable. Nationalism shapes the perception of space. The national territory is something that is full of historical memories, which are shaping the national identity of the nation. There tend to be attempts to define the national territory's borders, in which geography and especially cartography plays a vital role. The national territory has to be defined for a national identity, and the process to create clear definition of borders has to take place, this is what Smith calls the hardening of space (Smith 2009, p. 49-52).

We can see that the development of nationalism is necessarily connected to the change in the perception of space. The study of nationalism often not focuses on the territoriality, despite how important and how general product of nationalism it is.

If we return to the work of Anthony D. Smith titled *National construction of social space* we can see how he is able to analyze nationalism from the perspective that understands how essential it is for the national movements to create national territories (Smith 1983). We might hypothesize that the importance of the land for national thinking is something that can be connected to romanticism, since the national land is a recurring motif of the nationalist art. If we accept Gellner's

theory that the modern nationalism is the product of modern society then we can see how romanticism is connected to nature, landscape, and land. Romanticism is widely regarded as a reaction to the social changes of the industrial revolution. The changes of everyday life by the industrial revolution at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Eastern Europe) might led to a reoccurrence to the appreciation of the land which was the center of production in the agriculturally based medieval society. Smith describes something very similar to this. He argues that nationalism indeed has a connection to countryside lifestyle. It often depicts the rural people as someone who are close to nature, who still hold the authentic culture of the nation, in contrary to those have been corrupted by civilization (Smith 1983, p. 504-505). The physical characteristics of the national territory was also something very important in creating national identity, including the size and location. It is also important to note that these elements that shaped identity also effected the relationship to others. In nationalist narratives there is always a significant other (or others) and that other is shaping the self-image of the nation (Smith 1983, p. 506-507).

In the case of Lithuania, we can see how important was that in relationship to Poland. What we can see is when the national movement tries to define the national identity they create a narrative for the nation. In Eastern Europe this narrative is almost always the story of a small nation fighting outsiders. Roles are created for the neighbors, and they are defined in the national narrative. For Lithuania it was an important change of Lithuanian national identity, that Poland was not depicted as the inseparable part of Lithuania, but as an outside invader. How that processes took place for the Lithuanian national movement will be described later.

Smith continued with emphasizing the importance of creating boundaries. Nevertheless, the most important part of defining a territory is to define where it is and where it is not. He also describes an interesting phenomenon what is often overlooked, but plays a critical role in the period right after the end of the World War I, when the nation-states were formed in the region. The national movements in Eastern Europe, which aimed to create a nation-state often aimed to create a state that is more or less self-sufficient. It meant that for national aspirations the goal was not just to create borders that have physical manifestation, therefore natural geographical borders, but also national movements aimed to create an autarchy for the possibly newly established nation-state. They wanted to create a nation-state that is

sustainable and not dependent on others. This kind of argument was very strongly present at the interwar period peace negotiations. But beyond physical reality there is an emotional connection to the homeland. The homeland is something mythical and has attributes in the national thinking that is indeed beyond its physical characteristics. The national space is not just the product of the nationalism, but something that inspires and shapes nationalism (Smith 1983, p. 507-516). We can see that nationalism is always connected to territoriality. So, although this has been a subject more analyzed by history and sociology, it can be understood in other ways. National territory is an important part of national thinking, and at the same time, territory is something that is the subject of geographical studies.

### **Geography, cartography, and nationalism**

If we analyze what Lithuania meant throughout the centuries by using the methods of geography, we might end up to a conventional understanding of the geographical concept of Lithuania. Analysis of maps and cartographic works depicting Lithuania can lead us to an acquaintance with how Lithuania is depicted, but not to an understanding of the country's territory as a more complex phenomenon. How the concept of Lithuania is connected to the national thinking may not be represented on maps. The cartographical representation of Lithuania rather shows us the relationship between geography and nationalism; and in many cases the relationship between the author of a cartographical work and territory that is represented.

The so-called spatial turn in several disciplines discovered (or rather rediscovered) the study of space (or the study of territory as an important aspect of space). We can analyze space as we understand it as an absolute and independent aspect of 'objective reality'. But studying not just the physical reality, but also physical reality as it is perceived was the subject of geography. The nature of space was something that created interest for scientists and philosophers alike. The Newtonian physics described space as something that is present in the objective reality, but that idea was contested. Leibniz described space as something that can only be described as a relation we perceive between spatial objects. For these problems Immanuel Kant offers a solution, he describes space as a priori experience, but something which is influenced also by our perceptions. Kant described that even though there is a physical reality of space that shapes us, also our perceptions of the space is something that we create (Richards 1974). In Kantian epistemology,

space is not a property of the (objective) physical world, but a form imposed by the mind on reality; so it is a feature of human thinking and perception and not a physical category (Wilczyński 1996). His concepts were comparable to the term mental maps which was borrowed from psychology to geography centuries later.

The study of mental maps is something that reshaped the study of geography. For the study of nationalism it is very important to see not just geography shapes the spatial thinking, but also what people think about geography. The study of spatial concepts can be understood as the study of relationship between humans and space. We can see how national thinking is transforming the space, not necessarily physically, but the symbolic meaning of space. Metageography is something that can be understood as how the knowledge of the world is being shaped by spatial concepts of the individual (Lewis, Wigen 1997). In many aspects we can see that nationalism is something that creates a framework to the understanding of space and the world. The national thinking is based on thinking on homeland and by creating boundaries for the homeland it simultaneously creates the other, the territory which is not the homeland, or very often the adversary, the anti-thesis of the homeland. That leads to that the nationalist thinking is not just something that concerns the homeland, but it also manifest itself as a view on the world.

While a spatial turn in social sciences and history shifted the focus to space and especially to the use of space, there was a postmodern approach that developed in geography. This turn was especially important for cartography in which the study of critical cartography emerged. Critical cartography tries to deconstruct the map. Not understand it as something that describes physical reality but as something that tells about the author's view on the world (Harley 1989). This approach can be very useful if we try to understand how national movements created their spatial concepts. For national movements, the maps were not meant to represent spatial reality, but to represent a concept of national territory and find physical -or claimed physical- reasons for the integrity of the claimed national territory. In this understanding we could see clearly propagandistic maps and scientific maps, but this is more complicated than that. Nevertheless, this kind of contextualization and classification is something that can help us in analyzing the cartographical works concerning Lithuania. Lithuanian historian Vytautas Petronis analyzed the most important cartographical works of Lithuania from this perspective (Petronis 2007). Lithuania in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on one hand was represented on maps created by

scientists creating maps for the Russian Empire or by politicians who tried to define the national territory. Also Petronis differentiated insiders and outsiders depending on the map makers perspective. A good example for an outsider is Pavel Jozef Šafárik, who created a map of Slavic people. His map nevertheless represented Lithuanians as the Baltic people were surrounded by Slavic speaking population. Šafárik's map is as interesting asset to defining Lithuania, since he was an outsider, he rather thought about ethnographic terms and not just meant to create a map based on distribution of the speakers of a language. On the other hand, Šafárik was a slavist, and his audience was the Slavic people and especially Slavs in support for pan-slavist ideas, so we might assume he might had his own prepositions before creating the map.

A prominent example of a map created by an insider -with assumed nationalist intentions- is the map created by Jadvyga Juškytė. Juškytė was a teacher who published several textbooks for Lithuanian children in order to help them learn the language and get familiar with the culture. She worked closely with members of the Lithuanian national movement in a period when Lithuanian education could only come from homeschooling, and for some part of her activity even the use of Lithuanian language was banned in the Russian Empire. In one of her textbooks, she created a map that defines the borders of Lithuania. She claimed these borders are based on ethnic distribution of Lithuanians, and the ethnographic extension of Lithuanian culture. Her map meant for quite different audience then Šafárik's, it meant for Lithuanian children. Interesting part of both of these maps that they considered Vilnius to be part of the Lithuanian territory (Petronis 2007, p. 19). Many outsiders acknowledged the Vilnius region as part of Lithuania in ethnographic sense, which meant that despite Lithuanian is not the dominant language in the region, but culturally it is connected to Lithuania, nevertheless. For some aspects it was not conflicting for the Polish national movement since they assumed to be Lithuanian also means to be Polish. The local polonized nobility considered themselves Lithuanian despite in the most cases having no knowledge of Lithuanian language. This leads us to a problem. The maps are representing what is considered Lithuanian, but the question who is Lithuanian and what does it mean to be Lithuanian is simply not presented on maps. The conflict between the Polish and Lithuanian national movement regarding the narrative who is Lithuanian is not present on the maps despite it made from different perspectives. Contextualizing and classifying maps to be able to understand the representation of Lithuania is something important, but



it is somehow insufficient to understand the mental maps, the spatial concepts of the national movements. Also creating scientific-propagandistic scale to classify the maps also helpful, but no map is free from the perspective of the author and from the interpretation of the user. This leads us to not just analyze national territory, but rather create a concept that is beyond territory, that also contains the national thinking connected to territory, something more complex and more alive.

### **The geo-body of the nation**

The geo-body is a term used by Anthony D. Smith, he borrowed the concept from Thongchai Winichakul, Thai historian. Winichakul used this term to describe the development of Thai national territory, but putting emphasis on how the territory was constructed by narrative, and by the tools of cartography. In his book *Siam mapped: the History of the Geo-body of the nation* he describes that the national territory of Thailand (then Siam) was defined by a process that was initiated by national thinking and also by cartographical works of outsiders. Winichakul realizes that, what was born from these processes is not just creating well defined borders for the territory, but the nature of the territory fundamentally changed. As he describes: *'...But the term geo-body is used to signify that the object of this study is not merely space or territory. It is a component of the life of the nation. It is a source of pride, loyalty, love, passion, bias, hatred, reason, unreason. It also generates many other conceptions and practices about nationhood as it combines with other elements of nationhood'* (Winichakul 1994, p. 17). We can see that Winichakul's concept of geo-body is something that is suitable to describe the national territory since for nationalism, territory is not merely a physical manifestation of the nation, but something more. What we can see, that Winichakul understands that the national territory is something that is produced, which need to be represented but something what is also affected by outsider's representation of the national space. If we use the concept of the geo-body, we understand and we can describe territory with it, but not just with quantitative methods, but also with qualitative methods to represent how the national thinking constructs national space. We can use the concept of geo-body for Lithuania in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and we can see the geo-body in the thinking of the Lithuanian national movement was different from the thinking of the Polish national movement. The territory could have been more or less the same, but the national thinking was different about what was

connected to the territory. This ultimately transforms the perception of the territory. Despite its extra connotations the geo-body remains to be a geographical concept and suitable to be analyzed by geography.

If we adapt the concept in this form to Lithuania, we can see that the geo-body is based on the national territory. It is based on the national territory of Lithuania as a spatial concept, but also it indicates something more. The territory is not an empty form on a map, but something living. Lithuania, as defined is not just an area that is considered by cartographers, but also the homeland of Lithuanians. The background, the place where the Lithuanian history happened and where the story of *Lithuanianess* manifested itself. The tower of Gediminas stops being a ruined historical building, but it becomes the symbol of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and by that the symbol of Lithuanian statehood. This is a process, that was very much formulated by the members of the national movement and was propagated by the press and textbooks. And eventually these thoughts took root in people's minds creating a new quality for the places inside the national territory. The Lithuanian geo-body also contains the *flora and fauna*, the Lithuanian forest was the place where ancient pagans Lithuanians resided and where the ancient Lithuanian language survived, an idea which was the basis of the early Lithuanian national identity developed by Simonas Daukantas, Lithuanian historian (Baár 2010, p. 226-231). The Lithuanian forest is the place where the grass-snakes of the mythological stories reside and where the ancient oak trees grow.<sup>3</sup> But not just the animals and plants are important, but also the humans. In the national thinking someone whose mother tongue is the national language (no matter how distant dialect it may be) is part of the nation. Every person like this with natural inhabitation in a land makes that land somehow connected to the nation. It is more than mere rational reasoning. As Smith described the nationalism demands the unification of the people who considered to be part of the nation. Nationalism ultimately seeks the control of the space and also the space affects the national movement's self-image. What Winichakul describes and also what we can see in the case of Lithuania that is more like a dialogue. The nation and the territory shape each other.

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<sup>3</sup> Both snakes and oak trees has significant role in Lithuanian folklore and that often represented in Lithuanian nationalist symbolism.

### **The formation of Geo-body of Lithuania and the conflict with Poland**

The formation of the geo-body is a long-term process and claiming certain territories as part of the national territory usually leads to conflicts. In the center of the conflict between the Polish and the Lithuanian national movements was the city of Vilnius. In order to understand the basis of the conflict we have to see what functions Vilnius had in the geo-body of the Polish and the Lithuanian nationalism. Since we have demonstrated that the geo-body cannot be understood by just cartographical works, because it is more than territory, we have to find other sources where the spatial concepts manifested itself.

Many important figures of the national movements didn't create maps yet nevertheless all of them had a concept about what contains the national territory. If we analyze the ideas developed by the national movements we can see that very often a few influential figures created ideas that become dominant in later phases of the national movement. A particularly good example is the work of Simonas Daukantas, who was a Lithuanian historian in the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Daukantas was not influential in his own lifetime, however he was the one who created the historical narrative of Lithuanian identity which diverged from the Polish narrative. Even more in his understanding the Polish influence caused the decline of the authentic Lithuanian culture. His movement is often regarded as the Samogitian national revival in order to differentiate from those Lithuanians, who were polonized in language and in culture. Daukantas rediscovered the ancient Lithuanian statehood, put emphasis on Lithuanian rulers who were not subject of Poland, like King Mindaugas, Grand Duke Gediminas or Vytautas the Great, the latter one he saw as the last authentic Lithuanian ruler, despite the Jagiellonian rule in Poland and Lithuania after him (Baár 2010). Daukantas' ideas of Lithuania were subject of criticism in his lifetime since his work was rather myth-building than actual historical research. Nevertheless, these myths prevailed and for the late 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalists his concepts became basic principles of their identity (Kulakauskas 2015). Vilnius, which was the most important city of the region and which was the center of the Wilno governorate had gained another significance for Lithuanian nationalism. It became a connection for lost statehood and independence of Lithuania. Despite the fact Vilnius had no Lithuanian majority in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the city became a vitally prominent place of Lithuanian identity. And in 1918 Vilnius became the place where the Lithuanian Act of independence was

signed, deepening the connection of the idea of Lithuanian statehood to the city (Eidintas, 2015).

The development of the Lithuanian nationalism caused conflict with the Russian authorities (for some shorter period with the German occupational forces too), but also with the developing Polish ideas of national territory. The spatial concepts of Polish and Lithuanian nationalism are suitable to research the development of the national geo-body. Poland and Lithuania both had its historical statehood which was lost to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Also in case of Poland we can see that the Polish state borders often changed since Mieszko established the Duchy of Poland in 960. That resulted that for the Polish national intelligentsia there were lot of historical narratives how they could claim the territory of the national geo-body. The situation is even more complex if we consider that most part of the Polish national movement claimed Lithuania is part of the Polish national territory. This gave the national movement many possibilities to define the Polish geo-body and it helps us to better understand in what way the national geo-body can be developed. The main approaches of course were historical, ethnic based and ethnographic claims. But the changing border also caught the attention of geographers. Geography developed together with nationalism, often the national movement used geography for claims, but on the other hand the discipline of geography shaped the views of the national movements. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Polish geographers tried to define the Polish national territory with geographical methods. This lead to several geographical concepts often contradicting each other. One of the most prominent debate was between Waław Nałkowski and Eugeniusz Romer, both of them tried to define the Polish territory by the means of geography, but while Nałkowski concentrated on physical aspect of space, Romer rather based his concept on human geography. The debate started when Nałkowski formulated his controversial concept about the transitional character of the Polish lands, he argued that Poland was lacking the natural boundaries that would firmly define the borders of the national territory. He published his work in 1887, and it was linked to the Polish sense of defeatism, since Poland had lost its statehood almost a century earlier and had failed to regain it until then. Romer criticized the concepts because he seemed it as it depends on geographical determinism ignoring the people and their effect on the territory (Wilczyński 2014). Romer realized that the physical characteristic of a territory is not the only thing to consider. In many sense he understood that the human

perception of territory is beyond the geographical elements, and it also shaped by the flora and fauna, and by the people living in that territory. Therefore we can say his concept of Poland was not just a describable territory, but it was something that is closer to what Winichakul defines as geo-body.

Nevertheless the Polish national movement did not try to establish a state based on the given geographical features. The geo-body of the nation which was formulated in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a mixture of ethnic, ethnographic and historical concepts. In the case of Poland we can speak about not just one national movement, but about even two in the sense that it was not just one group with diverse ideological background, but the Polish national movement split into two distinguishable groups. The two groups can be defined as they had different perceptions of the geo-body. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the two groups were the whites and reds. The usual explanation of the two groups is that, the whites aimed to gain autonomy for Poland and mostly was made up from intellectuals and members of Polish upper class. The reds were a more radical group that aimed independence and social changes at the same time. These two movements developed into the circles around Roman Dmowski, the national democrats, and the other around Józef Piłsudski, who lead the socialists. After the World War I both of them became influential in the revival of the Polish state. Dmowski by his international relations and diplomacy and Piłsudski mostly by his military achievements. It is also widely considered that Dmowski's goal was to create a Polish ethno-state, while Piłsudski -inspired by the former Jagiellonian Kingdom- wanted to create a multi-ethnic federative state that would not just contain Polish territories, but also the Eastern Borderlands with the local Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians. Piłsudski also supported the prometheism concept which held that Poland should be a supporter of every national movement that aims to be separated from Russia. Their goals diverged from each other nevertheless the chaos of the post-world war period did not allow idealist approach and both of them adjusted their ideas to the achievable reality. If we look at the so-called *linia dmowskiego (Dmowski's line)* what represented the Polish claims at the Paris peace conference, we can see that Dmowski was not shy about claiming eastern territories that did not have significant Polish population. In the case of Piłsudski we can see that his multi-ethnic federative idea he was willing to change in the light of disapproval of the ethnic minorities in the east and his Polish compatriots (Nowak 2014).

What we can see that the two movements differently defined that national territory and never could either one became the single doctrine of the national movement. After the world war II Poland lost its eastern territories and Poland was turned into something we can very much describe as an ethno-state. However, the Polish exile during the years of communist rule in Poland did not completely abandon the Eastern territories. The concept that Poland was responsible for the East was developed in the Giedroyc Doctrine. It aimed to reconcile Poland with the post-Soviet states and called for the democratization of the region, especially considering the Russian threat (Snyder 2003).

What we can see that the concept of the geo-body of the nation is not just based on ideas and geographical explanations, but often shaped by actual possibilities. Nevertheless when a territory becomes part of the established homeland it becomes inseparable in the national thinking. This was also true about the Vilnius for the Lithuanians. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Lithuanian national movement were highly active in the city. Vilnius became the center for the Lithuanian intelligentsia to organize their activities. The city was the place where the masses were reachable and the technological background made it possible to propagate ideas by the press, to organize events, to receive education and to reach as many people as possible at the same time (Balkelis 2009).

After 1918 the Lithuanian statehood was reestablished, but they lost control of Vilnius. That created frustration among the Lithuanian nationalists. The newly established state did not remain democratic for long. In 1926 Antanas Smetona established an authoritarian regime. Smetona's system in many aspects was the manifestation of nationalist ideas. What we can see is that after a nation gained independence the strive of the nationalists remain, but not just to create territorial unity, but also to achieve the nationalization of the state (Eidintas 1999). Vytautas Petronis<sup>4</sup> describes this phenomenon as vertical and horizontal aspiration of nationalism. The horizontal aspiration of nationalism aims to gain the territory and to establish control of the state on a certain place, while the vertical aspiration signifies up-down relationship between the state power and the territory (Petronis 2007, p. 26). When the nation-state is established, the goal of the national movement is to manifest the vertical aspiration of nationalization.

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<sup>4</sup> Inspired by Jouni Häkli, Finnish geographer.

## Conclusions

As we can see the Lithuanian geo-body was shaped by cartographical works, ideas developed by the members of the national movement, and also it had to be shaped by political reality. Nevertheless the geo-body of the Lithuanian nationalism never stopped changing, though the border of Lithuania remained stable since the fall of the Soviet Union. The geo-body gained new narratives and also the post-Soviet era gave possibility for the Lithuanian nationalist thinking to manifest itself. The public space what was ruled by the Soviet narrative could be reformed into the manifestation of *lithuanianness*. The national land is more than just territory, it is the geographical manifestation of the body of the nation.

We can see that the history of the national movements in Poland and Lithuania offers a possibility to understand the territorial aspects of nationalism. Nationalism and territoriality are inseparable phenomenon, yet it is often overlooked by researchers. Anthony D. Smith recognized that the territory for national movements is not just a practical aspect for the manifestation of nationalism, but something that holds symbolic value. With the example of Lithuania, we can see that describing national territory not necessarily means that we can understand the symbolic importance of certain territories. The concept of geo-body developed by Thongchai Winichakul offers a model that allows us to understand spatial concepts beyond territory and it offers a subject to analyze by geography in order to understand the general characteristics of nationalism.

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**Streszczenie:**

W badaniach nad nacjonalizmem zbyt mało uwagi poświęca się zagadnieniu terytorialności, choć jest ona podstawowym pojęciem towarzyszącym nacjonalizmowi. Nacjonalizm nie jest też przedmiotem badań geograficznych, chociaż jako żywotna ideologia wpływa na politykę państw, a przez to na funkcjonowanie społeczeństw, codzienne życie ludzi i na krajobraz. Niniejszy artykuł oferuje wgląd w badania nad nacjonalizmem na przykładzie rozwoju koncepcji przestrzennych litewskiego nacjonalizmu. Pozwala to zrozumieć potencjał badawczy jakim dysponuje geografia w badaniach nad nacjonalizmem. Zainspirowany pracami Anthony'ego D. Smitha i koncepcją geo-body Thongchai Winichakula, autor oferuje głębsze wniknięcie w litewski nacjonalizm i związane z nim koncepcje terytorialne.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *geo-body*, koncepcje terytorialne, Litwa, nacjonalizm, Polska.