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PRZEKROJE I ZBLIŻENIA

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## Finland and Lithuania: Features of Historical Relations (until the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century)

### Introduction

The Republic of Finland (with a population of 5.5 million people) and nearly twice less populous Lithuania<sup>1</sup> are separated by the Baltic Sea, but the distance from Vilnius to Helsinki is nearly twice shorter than the distance between Finland's southernmost point and northernmost point. Owing to this, the first contacts between the indigenous people who inhabited the present-day territories of Finland and Lithuania were established as far back as the prehistoric times. The Balts and the Finno-Ugric people exchanged agricultural, farming as well as the linguistic and cultural experiences. Later, in the historic times, Lithuanians first encountered Karelians (the old Karelian land – an area currently divided between Russia and Finland). In the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century, contacts further developed between the Grand Duchy of Finland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter – the GDL) in the context of the union ties with Sweden and Poland. Until 1809, *Finlandia et partes orientales* was a Swedish province, which was later incorporated into Russia as an autonomous state and declared its independence in 1917 only (Meinander, 2017, p. 28). After the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (hereinafter – the Commonwealth) Lithuania also became part of the Russian Empire, with the status of a Russian province. However, a single geopolitical sphere in the 19<sup>th</sup> century did not lead to closer contacts between two states. A noteworthy fact is a tragic campaign of the Finnish battalion to the Crimean War through Lithuania in 1854–1855; deployed Finnish soldiers were struck by cholera and typhus and were buried in Skapiškis (Skrodenis, 2015). It was

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<sup>1</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living\\_en#size](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living_en#size) [28.05.2021]

only in the late 19th century that the Finnish press published several dozen articles about the Lithuanians and their culture by writer Maila Talvio (1871–1951) who spent several summers in Lithuania along with her husband, linguist Jooseppi Julius Mikkola (1866–1946) (Kolupaila, 1950, p. 209; Skrodenis, 2005, p. 130; Skrodenis, 2016). In Finnish literary press the biggest attention was paid to Lithuanian-Polish poet Adomas Mickevičius (Pol. Adam Mickiewicz). He was considered a poet of two nations and two cultures and his works were started to be translated in the late 19th century (Kasperovič, 2002, p. 6).

Contacts flourished after Finland and Lithuania re-established themselves as the independent states. Diplomatic relations were maintained (consulates in Kaunas and Helsinki; extraordinary activities of Consul General Ragnar Öller (1893–1960)) (Tamošaitis, 2007, pp. 63–64); academic research was carried out (e.g., professor Aukusti Robert Niemi (1869–1931) prepared and published the collection of Lithuanian songs (1912), the history of literature in Finnish (1925), worked on the draft reform of Lithuanian schools) (Skrodenis, 2000, pp. 41–49; Ūsaiytė, 2009, pp. 31–50); the interest of Finnish tourists was on the rise: in 1920, *Brief History of Lithuania* in Finnish appeared; in 1934, *Lithuania Travel Guide* showed up (Silvanto, 1920; *Liettua lyhyt matkaopas*, 1934); the Lithuanian-Finnish Society pursued its activities (Skrodenis, 2007); cooperation in economic and commercial spheres took place (Skirius, 2007). The ties that almost discontinued during the Soviet era were renewed after the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence. Cooperation and the intertwining history of two states are also symbolised by the sculpture entitled *Suomis* (The Finn), which was revealed in Vilnius in 2015 (sculptor Tadas Gutauskas, architect Gintaras Čaikauskas).

Contacts between the indigenous inhabitants of Lithuanian and Finnish territories drew attention of linguists, archaeologists, anthropologists, ethnologists and historians from various countries; resulting in various generalising works (Öller, 2004; Skrodenis, 2003; Skrodenis, 2009). They mainly focused on pre-historic relations linked to the ethnogenesis of the Balts and Finns. It should be pointed out that the conclusions of the research are not always final; instead they are still open to interpretations. The topics of the territorial settlement of the Baltic and the Finno-Ugric peoples and their cultural interconnections fell into the scope of attention of archaeologists (e.g., the interconnections between the Narva Culture and the Comb-and-Pit Pottery Culture) (Girininkas, 2000, pp. 103–108). Loanwords, grammatical similarities and linguistic circumstances, hydronymy and toponymy in Finnic and Baltic languages were studied as well (Skrodenis (Ed.), 1972, pp. 226–336; Kalima, 1936; Sabaliauskas, 1963, pp. 109–136; Vanagas, 1966, pp. 28–29; Junntila, 2014, pp. 102–124). The Lithuanian-Finnish (Karelian) cultural ties were discussed in greater detail; and the comparative research took place. Over 200 articles and several studies in this field were published by Stasys Skrodenis (Skrodenis, 1989; Skrodenis, 2009). In addition to this, he compiled Niemi's and Talvio's Lithuanian writings and translated 25 books by Finnish authors. The Finnish range of problems also drew attention of historians. Most publications were addressing the relations with Finland during the interwar period. The dynastic marriage of 1562, which established the relations between the Duchy of Finland and the GDL, and the history of the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary, which also enrolled Finnish students, were studied in a broader context (Saviščevas, Uzorka (Eds.), 2014).

Contemporary textbooks on Lithuanian history pay attention to the close Baltic neighbour. Seventh-graders already know that the Balts traded with the inhabitants of the Fennoscandian region, and the shale brought from the Finnish territory was exchanged for amber. The teaching material for ninth-graders includes the facts about the right of Russia to impose its rule on Finland, the Finnish nation and the efforts to establish an independent state. Students learn about the Finnish national epic *Kalevala*, Aleksis Kivi, the founding father of the new Finnish literature; they get to know how Finnish national costumes look like, etc. It is noted that Finland and Norway were the pioneers of women's suffrage. Tenth-graders get an opportunity to learn about the Finnish interwar history better; such personalities as Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim (1867–1951) are presented. Textbooks elaborate on the Winter War and the territorial changes determined by it as well as the general situation of the Scandinavian countries during World War II (Porutis, 2013, pp. 85-97).

As we can see, individual historical periods are covered in greater detail in the research. Meanwhile, a synthetic approach towards the contacts during the *longue durée* period is lacking. The aim of the present article is to provide a more consistent view of the contacts between the people who inhabited the territories of today's Lithuania and Finland from prehistoric times until the beginning of the 17th century and to highlight the similarities and connections that exist between those two countries that are not often thought to be especially close to each other. Two periods are distinguished: early period and contacts in historical times (the 12<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries). It focuses on the major events and certain aspects of communication. Various historical and cultural facts, data about economic cooperation and exchanges are presented. The article highlights the mutual communication in the present-day territory of Lithuania, hence “the Lithuanian perspective” and their reflection of this communication in Lithuanian historical culture.

### Early Baltic and Finno-Ugric contacts

The first contacts between the Balts and the Finno-Ugric peoples took place very early and date to the Early Neolithic period (late 6th – early 5th millennium BC) when the south of the Gulf of Finland was settled by the Balts, the people of the Narva Culture, who moved further from the north of Latvia (Girininkas (Ed.), 2006, p. 106). Baltic hydronyms, toponyms or individual words found in Finland, Estonia and Karelia attest to the above fact. Meanwhile, the people of the Finno-Ugric tribes who scattered in the Eastern Baltic region, took hydronyms and toponyms as well as the traits of the material and spiritual culture from the Narva Culture. Back then their language was enriched with the words of the language spoken by the people of the Narva Culture, which have been retained in the Finno-Ugric languages to this day (Girininkas, 2000, pp. 103–108). It confirms an assumption about the influence of the Baltic languages on the syntax and phonetics of the Finnic languages (Junttila, 2014, pp. 102–124). Around 400 words of Baltic origin be found in Finnish. For example, Finn. *heinä*~ Lith. *Šienas* ‘hay’, Finn. *tarha*~ Lith. *daržas* ‘enclosure, garden’, Finn. *talkoo*~ Lith. *Talka* ‘working bee’, Finn. *morsian*~ Lith. *Marti* ‘daughter-in-law’, Finn. *siemen*~ Lith. *Sėkla* ‘seed’, Finn. *tuohi*~ Lith. *tošis* ‘birch-bark’, Finn. *halla*~ Lith. *Šalna* ‘frost’, Finn. *malka*~ Lith. *Malkos* ‘firewood’, Finn. *terva*~ Lith. *derva* ‘tar’, Finn. *ansa*~ Lith. *qsa* ‘handle’, Finn. *kirves*~ Lith. *kirvis* ‘axe’, Finn. *luuta*~ Lith.

*šluota* ‘broom’, Finn. *kattila*~ Lith. *katilas* ‘pot’, Finn. *seinä*~ Lith. *siena* ‘wall’ or Finn. *kantele*~ Lith. *kanklės* ‘a plucked string instrument’ (the Baltic names used for this string instrument from the west and north of Lithuania to the southeast of Finland and Karelia show the long-established common cultural space, which stretched across these areas), common bee-keeping terms (Apanavičius, 2005, pp. 27–33; Skrodenis, 2009, p. 27; Junttila, 2014, pp. 102–124). According to some theories, even the name *Suomi* is etymologically linked to the Proto-Baltic word *žemė* ‘land’, which is still being used by Lithuanians and Latvians (Kallio, 1998, pp. 613–620). It also attests to the early contacts between the indigenous people and the Balts.

In the Middle and Late Neolithic, the Finno-Ugric tribes reached the Eastern Baltic region and settled amidst the autochthons of the Narva Culture. Their culture featured the comb and pit ornamented pottery. In the late 3rd millennium BC, the Finno-Ugric tribes, moving southwestwards, reached the Lithuanian territory. Unable to push out or assimilate the indigenous people, some drew elsewhere, others merged with the autochthons. It is illustrated by over 20 hydronyms of Finno-Ugric origin in Lithuania: Jara (Finn. *jarvi* ‘lake’) (Anykščiai district), Suojys, Suoja (Finn. *suo* ‘bog’) (Molėtai district), Kidė (Joniškis district), Tilka (Pakruojis district), Kirgas (Akmenė district), etc. (Vanagas, 1981, p. 134, p. 320; Vanagas, 1988, p. 94). Archeologists found the Finno-Ugric traces in five Lithuanian settlements: Pašvitinys (Pakruojis district), Jara (Anykščiai district), Pasuoja (Molėtai district), Kretuonas and Žemaitiškės (Švenčionys district) (Girininkas, 2000, p. 107). However, barely several words were borrowed into Lithuanian from Finnish: Finn. *laiva*~ Lith. *laivas* ‘ship’ and Finn. *purje*~ Lith. *burė* ‘sail’ (Skrodenis, 2009, p. 27). It is likely that the Baltic dialect, which came into contact with the old Finns, got extinct and Finnicisms were not passed on to other Baltic dialects (Junttila, 2014, p. 120).

Folklore and mythology bear witness to the prehistoric contacts between the Balts and Finns. The names of some major Finnish mythological characters are of Baltic origin: Panu (the son of the Sun), Salme, Tapio (the god of the forest) or Ukko (the chief god, the ruler of sky and thunder) (Blažek, 2004, pp. 189–194). The Baltic and the Finno-Ugric mythology followed a similar scheme: after the world is created, the Sun is kidnapped, and the hero, the demiurge, travels to the underground kingdom to set the Sun free, and it is restored to its place. What follows is the final re-establishment of order in the world (Černiauskaitė, 2003). The motif of the smith as the creator of celestial bodies, the demiurge, is known in the mythology of both the Balts and the Finns (Laurinkienė, 2002, pp. 87–101). Such a smith known by the name of Ilmarinen forged the Moon and the Sun in the *Kalevala*. In *The Song of the Creation of the World* there is also a smith who helps to create celestial bodies. The Baltic and the Finno-Ugric traditions also feature the kidnapping of the Sun and the Moon by the characters associated with darkness and the underground world of the dead (Laurinkienė, 2002, p. 98).

Similar characters appear in Finnish and Lithuanian folklore traditions, such as a giant ox. In the Lithuanian fairy tale *The Lord and the Peasant Make Agreement upon Lying* it is used by a peasant trying to win a bet with a lord. One of the runos from the *Kalevala* depicts a wedding feast for which a giant ox is slaughtered: his head was over Kemi, his horns were in length a hundred fathoms, it took seven days for a weasel to encircle his neck and shoulders and one whole day for a swallow to journey from one horn-tip to the other, the squirrel travelled thirty days from the tail to reach the shoulders (Šlekonytė, 2010, p. 142–160). Finnish and Lithua-

nian folklore shares certain parallels concerning the image of the devil. The Finnish devil is known by several names; he is a certain guardian of moral values; he enters into treaties with people; occasionally, he is portrayed as stupid and appears to people in the form of a young gentleman, a man with a goat's head and horns, a cat, a ram, etc. He is pictured with a tail and a horse's hooves. Hence, he is very similar to the Lithuanian devil (Skrodenis, 2009, p. 305).

Similarities can be also found in the Lithuanian, Finnish and Estonian songs, in particular children's songs, lullabies, shepherd songs-incantations, nursery rhymes and formula songs. Lullabies have the same function and the same performer. In lullabies, sleep is invited to come out from behind the furnace or it is brought by a mouse. Sleep is only personified in Finnish songs: Uni ('sleep'), Uniukko ('sleep man'), etc. A baby lying in a cradle is called by the most beautiful names; it is considered a hope of the mother and the family. The old lullabies are combined with incantation formulas. Even the animals appearing in lullabies are nearly identical, only their popularity is different. We have similar lullabies about a rooster heating up a bathhouse and a hen chopping wood. A cat is an important character. Most Finnish lullabies start with the words: 'Aa aalasta' (hush a child). A cat comes, gets into the cradle and swings it. An interesting parallel can be observed in the incantation concerning the first tooth. After the first tooth falls out, Lithuanian, Finnish and Estonian mothers toss it behind the furnace offering the mouse to take a bone tooth and to give an iron tooth. According to the Finnish tradition, not an iron tooth but a golden or silver tooth is requested. The shepherd songs of both countries (Finn. *Paimen* (a word of Baltic origin)) reflect their difficult life, hardships and natural disasters. Hence, incantations are used to trigger an effect on nature and to create better conditions for shepherds. They include the chasing of clouds and the invitation of the sun, e.g., Lithuanians chase clouds away to Prussia or Belarus, whereas Finns drive them to Russia or Pirkkala. Such incantations are more numerous and diverse in the Finnish folklore. Calendar customs and the accompanying folklore demonstrate a number of ethnographic parallels between the Balts and Finns (Skrodenis, 1989, pp. 272–279).

There are quite a few parallels between Lithuanian folksongs and the national Karelian and Finnish epic *Kalevala*. It is one of the most beautiful and archaic heroic epics in the world literature, often compared to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (Ben-Amos, 1999, p. IX). The epic is a collection of epic folk poetry presented in a literary style. In the 19th century it was collected and published by Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884), a medical doctor and one of very few native Finnish speakers of his time to be educated at the university level (Hämäläinen, 2013, pp. 43–44). It should be noted, that Lönnrot, encouraged by the romantic attitudes and ideas of National Revival, edited the epic folk poetry quite a lot. In 1840, he edited and published 3 volumes of the Finnish folk songs collection, *Kanteletar*, where he presented translations of some Lithuanian folk songs (translated from Germany). Translations by Lönnrot are an interesting and important instance of popularization of Lithuanian folk songs in Finland (Skrodenis, 2002, pp. 124–136).

The *Kalevala* depicts the moments from the Finnish history: from the myths about the creation of the world to the 18th century elegies about army recruits. One of the highlights of the epic is the image of the World Tree and the Big Oak (i.e., a Baltic tree rather than a fir tree or a birch more typical of the Finnish landscape is chosen); its cutting shares some features with

Lithuanian folksongs (Skrodenis, 2010, pp. 82–101). Parallels are also seen in the episodes of the birth of beer. Presumably, Finns borrowed the ceremony of beer-brewing depicted in the *Kalevala* and the meeting of the ingredients – hops and barley – from the Balts. The rune about Kullervo bears a number of resemblances with Lithuanian folksongs: the mourning for one’s mother, the return of the soldier and other episodes (Repšienė, 2002, pp. 19–20; Balio, 2002, pp. 228–229; Kundrotaitė, 2005, pp. 48–50).

The *Kalevala* is translated into over 50 languages, including Lithuanian. The book *Finns and Their Life* published in Tilsit in 1893 was the first to include a short passage from Rune 44 about a weeping birch. The first poetic translation of the *Kalevala* was the passages from Rune 1 and Rune 2 translated from Russian by Liudas Gira in 1913. The full text of the *Kalevala* in Lithuanian was published in 1922. Poet Adolfas Sabaliauskas-Žalia Rūta translated it from the original version during his stay in Finland in 1916–1917. His translation is rather close to the original and adheres to the tradition to accompany proper names and ethnographic realities with commentaries. The translation of the *Kalevala* made by Justinas Marcinkevičius from the Russian translation by Siukijainen was published in 1972 (*Kalevala* 1922; *Kalevala* 1972; Skrodenis, 2009, p. 23).

It is interesting to note that similarly to Lönnrot, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski (1812–1887) endeavoured to create the Lithuanian mythological epic. He collected Lithuanian songs and tales based on which he published the poem *The Lamentations of Vitol. The Song from Lithuanian Legends* in 1840. It depicted the military adventures of the legendary demigod, Vitol, goddess Milda and a common man as well as the origin of the Lithuanian nation. The action takes place in prehistoric times. The poem includes a number of legends about the relations between old Lithuanian gods and people (Aleksandravičius, 1994, p. 204). However, in contrast to the *Kalevala*, before falling to oblivion Kraszewski’s work was considered an epic for several decades only (Prusinowska, 2002, p. 74).

## **Contacts between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Finland in the 12<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century**

### **Early contacts between Lithuanians and the inhabitants of the old Karelian land**

In the historic times, Lithuanians first encountered the inhabitants of the old Karelian land a part of which now belongs to Finland (South Karelia). From the 11th century, Karelian lands became a battleground between Veliky Novgorod, which Lithuanians sought to gain control of, and Sweden. In 1981, a birch-bark inscription was found in Veliky Novgorod saying that “Lithuania rose against Karelia” (Литва встала на Корелу). It would be one of the oldest surviving documents mentioning the name of Lithuania. It is likely a reflection of the Lithuanian raids to Novgorod lands in the late 12th century (Kitkauskas, 1986, pp. 65–66; Bumblauskas, 2005, p. 33). Messages in Karelian folklore also attest to the ravaging raids of Lithuanians to Karelia (*Русские эпические песни*, 1981, pp. 181–185).

In 1333, Narimantas (ca. 1300–1348), the oldest son of Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas, was nominated as regent of Veliky Novgorod. Baptised as Gleb in the Orthodox rite, he was in-

vited by the people of Novgorod to rule Ladoga, Oreshek, Korela and a half of Koporye, a certain “duchy of Karelia”, for his military assistance in the fight with Sweden and the grand duke of Moscow. Until the beginning of the 15th century, the Gediminids would always receive the right to rule these Karelian lands. They were ruled by Aleksandras (ca. 1320 – after 1350), Narimantas’ oldest son, and by his brother Patrikas († ca. 1397) (Krupa, 1993, pp. 29–35; Tęgowski, 1999, pp. 23–28). In the late 14th–early 15th century, Lingvenis Semionas (1356–1431), the son of Grand Duke of Lithuania Algirdas, helped Novgorod to withstand the attacks of Swedes. He ruled Koporye uninterruptedly, and this is where his son Jaroslavas (1411–1435) was born in 1411 (Tęgowski, 1999, p. 118, p. 123). In the late 15th century, Moscow assumed control of the part of Karelia ruled by the Gediminids. Most likely, the contacts established between the Karelians and the Lithuanians at that time are reflected in certain common features of folksongs, e.g., addresses with no answer used in lamentation songs or rhetorical questions (Stepanova, 2011, p. 130). However, the rule of the Gediminids in Karelian lands was not remembered in a positive light. For instance, there is an incantation formula in which Narimantas’ rule is associated with the plague in Karelia (Skrodenis, 1989, pp. 16–17).

### From the dynastic marriage of 1562 to the wars of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century

The contacts between the GDL and the Duchy of Finland as an integral part of the Kingdom of Sweden intensified from the middle of the 16th century. King of Sweden Gustav Eriksson Vasa (1496–1560) adopted an ambitious plan to bring the idea of the *dominium Maris Baltici* to life and to turn the state under his rule into one of the greatest powers of Europe. Therefore, in 1555, he proposed to the GDL and Poland to conclude an alliance against Moscow based on the marriage of his elder son Eric Vasa (1533–1577) and a lady from the House of Jagiellon. However, the project of such a marriage was only brought to life after the death of the founder of the Vasa dynasty. It was as far back as 1556 that Prince John III Vasa (Finn. Juhana III) (1537–1592) became duke of Finland, expanded the boundaries of the duchy designated to him and embarked upon his independent policy. In order to take control of Livonia, he held negotiations with Sigismund Augustus over the marriage with Catherine Jagiellon (1526–1583) with the consent of his step-brother, King of Sweden (from 1560) Eric XIV Vasa and disregarding his prohibition later. In October 1561, the duke of Finland took a ship named *Ursus Finlandicus* (Finish bear) to Poland and continued the negotiations with Sigismund Augustus in Kaunas a year later. With the ruler’s consent, on October 2, 1562, John III Vasa, accompanied by his own court, which consisted of 300 perfectly organized cavalry, made his solemn entry to Vilnius.

On Saturday, October 3, in the Vilnius palace of the grand dukes, John III Vasa signed the marriage contract. According to it, he was obliged to allow Catherine to remain a Catholic. Most attention in the contract fell on the princess’ dowry (clothing, money, textiles, etc.) and the keep of his future wife. The main event – the wedding ceremony – took place on Sunday, October 4. The marriage ceremony was conducted by Vilnius Bishop Valerijonas Protasevičius in the Vilnius Cathedral. Afterwards, all the wedding participants returned to the castle where the grandest banquet was held. On October 8, in the palace the dowry of the Duchess of Finland Catherine Jagiellon was inventoried. The Finnish duke was represented by his mag-

nates and officials. Some days later in Vilnius, on October 10–11, in abiding by the conditions of the marriage contract, the Duke of Finland signed under an annual income of 3,000 goldens to his wife in exchange for her dowry from the Abo prefecture and other properties. In turn, on the occasion of his wedding John III Vasa received seven castles in the Estonian part of Livonia for his earlier loan (120,000 talers). After a tense festive week, the duke and duchess left Vilnius and went to the Abo Castle in Finland. Thus, thirty-six-year-old Catherine was married to the Duke of Finland who was then twenty-five years old – eleven years her junior. Having survived their imprisonment, the couple's marriage life proved to be relatively happy (Ragauskienė, 2014, pp. 82–122).

This dynastic marriage was a rather significant event as much in the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as in Sweden's and Finland's history. Association with the female representative of the Gediminid (Jagiellonian) dynasty raised the prestige of the then young Vasa dynasty not just in Finland and Sweden, but in European courts as well. The factions at war over Livonia grew equal. Despite the temporary opposition of the King of Sweden, as a result of this dynastic marriage a new coalition of states was formed after 1568 and was directed against Muscovy. There was also another, cultural, side to the event. Even back when negotiations first commenced, cultural cooperation between the GDL, Sweden, Finland and Poland began, and the first serious mutual contacts between the aristocracy of these states were established (Ragauskienė, 2014, p. 102). Catherine Jagiellon strengthened the position of the Catholics in her new country. She became an intermediary in the cultural contacts between Italy and Poland-GDL, on one side, and Sweden and Finland, on the other side, e.g., along with her dowry she brought an impressive amount of silver items, among them the first forks used in Finland (Janonienė, 2005, pp. 28–31; Mattsson, 2018). However, Catherine Jagiellon is not as popular in Lithuanian historical memory as she is in Finland or Sweden.<sup>2</sup>

The son that was born to the couple imprisoned in Grippsholm Castle, Sigismund Vasa (1566–1632), went on to begin the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's Vasa dynasty. The rule of the dynasty in the Commonwealth lasted over 80 years. After Sigismund Vasa was also elected King of Sweden in 1594, a short-lived personal union between the Commonwealth and Sweden was established. However, it did not pave the way for more intensive cooperation between the GDL and the Duchy of Finland as an integral part of Sweden. The dethronement of Sigismund Vasa in which Finland had an important role to play (the war against Sigismund) made a significant influence. The nobility of Finland led by Sigismund-appointed Governor Clas Eriksson Fleming (1535–1597) refused to acknowledge Duke Charles (1550–1611) (later King of Sweden Charles IX) as a regent and considered him a rebel. However, Fleming failed in sending military assistance to Sigismund Vasa, as in 1597, he had to suppress the revolt by Finnish peasants inspired by Charles in Ostrobothnia (Finn. Pohjanmaa). The so-called Cudgel War (Finn. Nuijasota) broke out. In 1597, Fleming brutally suppressed the revolt. However,

<sup>2</sup> E.g., During the year marking Lithuania's 100th anniversary, the Swedish Embassy recreated the atmosphere of the times of Catherine Jagiellon in Vilnius on the occasion of her wedding anniversary. There is a genuine interest in Catherine Jagiellon in Sweden; her historical costume is being recreated. See <https://blog.lnb.lt/lituanistika/tag/eva-mattsson/>. [05. 05. 2021].

he passed away the same year, whereas Charles succeeded in taking the Abo castle guarded by Fleming's widow (Frost, 2000, pp. 45–46). In 1599, Sigismund Vasa was dethroned. To regain the lost crown of Sweden, he involved Lithuania in the war with Sweden soon afterwards. This time, Finnish soldiers fought on the side of the Commonwealth's enemy. For example, three Finnish cavalry squadrons fought on the Swedish side in the Battle of Kircholm in 1605 (Počiūnas, 2015, p. 28). As the Swedish and GDL troops were fighting near Biržai in 1625–1626, a number of Swedes were taken captive, including Finnish cavalymen and infantrymen taken individually or in small groups. In the autumn of 1625, when four Swedish ships bringing the cannons seized from the Radziwills of Biržai sank near the shores of Courland, the vice admiral of the Swedish navy from the House of Fleming, Clas Larsson (1592–1644), was preoccupied with saving the ships and taking the cannons to the Swedish side (Karvelis, 2015, p. 320).

Irrespective of the fact that quite a few Finns fought in the wars with Sweden in the early 17th century, the image of the brutal Swede was establishing itself in Lithuanian historical culture. Locals did not separate Finns and identified them as Swedes, blaming them for all the atrocities inflicted on people during the wars and occasionally noting how they themselves fought with them. Lithuanian folklore abounds in the images picturing how people went into hiding from Swedes, how Swedes murdered women and children, desecrated churches or how women burned Swedes with boiling water, etc. (Kerbelytė, 2009, pp. 4–12). The ethnonym *suomis* 'Finn' and the name of the country *Suomija* 'Finland' came to be used in Lithuania at the end of the 19th century only. In the 17th century, only the inhabitants of Lithuania Minor adopted the German tradition and referred to Finns as *pinas*, *fnas*, *Pinnu Zeme* (Drotvinas, 2006, p. 164).

Similarly, the soldiers of the GDL who fought in the war between the Commonwealth and Russia in 1610–1612 'earned' the name of fierce enemies in the folklore of the inhabitants of the old Karelian land, Karelians and Vepsians. Various legends tell stories of 'Lithuania' (Litva) and the 'Lords', their unexpected or deceitful raids and the murdering of local people, the looting of villages and the harassment of people, the robbing of their property, desecrated churches, and the deserved punishment. Though in reality not only Lithuanians were ravaging those regions at that time but also the Poles and the Ruthenians, who actually came from other countries, but local people, in particular from around Veliky Novgorod and Karelia, remembered Lithuania best of all, and it is therefore used in shaping the image of the fierce 'Litva' (Skrodenis, 1989, pp. 20–34).

### **Finnish students in Vilnius (mid-16th – early 17th century)**

Due to the civil war, which broke out in the Kingdom of Sweden in the beginning of the 17th century, around 500 political and religious refugees who were fleeing oppression in Sweden and Finland journeyed to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (see Krawczuk, 2019, pp. 37–47). However, few of them chose Lithuania. There is information about a dozen Catholic Finns who chose to study in Vilnius. It was in the second half of the 16th century that the first Finns came to study in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania due to the efforts of the Catholic Church and the Jesuits to embark on the campaign of re-Catholicization in the Kingdom of Sweden.

There are no precise data as to how many Finns studied in Vilnius. We know that, for instance, there were 15 alumni, mostly the sons of Protestants from the Kingdom of Sweden, in 1585. As pointed out by Polish, Finnish and Swedish scholars who addressed this topic (see Mikkola, 1931–1932, pp. 136–142; Poplatek, 1936, pp. 218–282; Piechnik, 1973, pp. 120–147; Nuorteva, 1997), the data on some students did not survive, yet others hide under the ethnonyms ‘Swede’. In Lithuanian historiography this question was most thoroughly covered by Stasys Skrodenis (Skrodenis, 1989, pp. 53–67; 2009, pp. 41–47). However, the lists of Finnish students compiled by the above authors are not exhaustive or accurate. For example, Skrodenis failed to include the famous student of the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary, Petro Erici Petrosa (died 1606), in the list. Apparently, it was determined by the fact that he is referred to as ‘szwed’ (Swede) in the list published by Poplatek (Poplatek, 1936, p. 241). Jussi Nuorteva indicated only four Finnish students in Vilnius (Nuorteva, 1997, p. 220, p. 477, etc.). Though he referred to the research of Poplatek, Skrodenis and other authors, he omitted references to three Finnish students in Vilnius. Probably the most exhaustive list of students of 1553–1622 was published by Oskar Garstein (Garstein, 1963, pp. 191–192; Garstein, 1980, pp. 351–352; Garstein, 1992, pp. 242, etc.). Drawing upon the above research, we can conclude that about 20 Finns studied in Vilnius during the period in question:

### Olaus Fundonius Northbotniensis

**Ericus Bartholdi.** He is described in the 1602 list of alumni of the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary as “Phinno, Infimista, annorum 15. Puer priori similis in omnibus [i.e. Puer bonis instructus moribus semper laetus et modestus]”. He was the author of the poetical work published in the collection *Theatridium poeticum sanctissimo et castissimo poetae D. Casimiro. Academiae Parthenii Vilnae monumentum immortale*, 1604 (Garstein, 1992, 255, 359; Nuorteva, 1997, p. 220, 245, 246).

**Joannes (Olaus) Brincius.** He departed to Vilnius on April 24, 1584 (Garstein, 1992, p. 317, 437, 444).

**Magnus Buch**

**Gregorius Clementis**

**Gregorius Erici**

**Joachimus Finlandus**

**Olaus Finlandus**

**Paulus Ingewaldi Nylandensis**

**Joannesas (Johannes) Mathiae Jussoila** (ca. 1555–1604/1608). He is mentioned in the sources of the GDL both as a Finn (Jan Phin) and as a Swede (Suecus) (Pawlikowska-Butterwick, 2014, p. 49, 71). He is the best-known Finnish representative of Counter-Reformation and the translator of the catechism of Petrus Canisius into Finnish. He studied in Stockholm, Rome and Prague where he was ordained as a priest. He was also an alumnus of the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary: “Joannes Jusyola, Finlandus, philosophiam audivit, annorum 30, venit 1581, sacerdos factus, in Sueciam rediit, ubi multas concertationes cum Lutheranis concionatoribus habuit [...]” (Garstein, 1992, 342–343; Nuorteva, 1997, 202–205, 211–217, etc.). He is considered a martyr of the Finnish Catholic Church (Nuorteva, 2008).

**Josephus Magni Jussoila Aboensis**, a brother of Johannes Jussoila. He started to study in Vilnius in 1597. (Zielonka, 2017, p. 426).

**Laurentius Magni Jussoila Aboensis** (Nuorteva 1997, pp. 204–205, etc.)

**Michael Magni Jussoila Aboensis**, a brother of Johannes Jussoila (Nuorteva, 1997, p. 413, 416).

**Casparus Pauli Juusten**

**Valentinus Thomae Lissius Palominensis**

**Andreas Oxe Aboensis**

**Petrus Erici Petrosa Ostrobotniensis** (1580 Osterbotten – April 26, 1606 Örebro, Sweden). In 1599, he briefly studied philosophy at the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary. On return to Sweden in 1604, he became a secretary of the royal chancellery. He was involved in conspiracy during his diplomatic mission in Prague. After his return to Sweden, he was accused of treason for serving the interests of Sigismund III Vasa and of confessing Catholicism and sentenced to death by quartering. His Catholic contemporaries considered Petrosa a martyr of Catholic faith in post-Reformation Sweden (Garstei, 1992, p. 249; Piltz, 1995–1997, p. 213; Zielonka, 2016, pp. 110–111).

**Ericus Alexander Erici Sorolainen Aboensis**

**Walentyn Zostacus**. He was born in 1565 in a Finnish noble family. He studied philosophy in Vilnius in 1590–1592 (Poplatek, 1936, p. 234; Toivo, 2016, p. 69).

**Haraldus Laurentii**. On August 10, 1587, he was sent to Vilnius “inde Graecium”. From there he went to study to Graz. On return to his homeland, he served as a chaplain of the regent of Finland, Klaus Fleming (Poplatek, 1936, p. 228; Toivo, 2016, p. 69).

**Olaus Marci Sundergelteus (Sundergeltus) Artopolensis** (1551–1601). A Bachelor at the Olomouc College in Czechia. Sundergelteus studied in Vilnius in 1579–1581: “Olaus Sundergelteus, Finlandus, 28 annorum, venit 12 Oct. Anno 1579, Physicus, Baccalaureus Philosophiae, discessit 15 Aprilis anno 1581 ad aulam Regis Poloniae” (Garstein, 1963, pp. 94–111; Garstein, 1992, pp. 342–343). It is interesting to note that in 1601 he tried to get back the debt of 16 thalers from his fellow-countryman, canon of Vilnius Joannes Jussoila (Pawlikowka-Butterwick, 2016, p. 63). In 1580, in the course of the studies in Czechia, papal envoy Antonio Possevini commissioned him to write the grammar of the Finnish language so that the Catholic catechism could be translated into Finnish. In 2009, the National Library of Finland presented a bound 24-page manuscript *Rudimenta linguae finnicae breviter delineata*, possibly the first grammar of the Finnish language, dating to around 1700 (*De novis libris iudicia*. 2012. Petri Lauerma (to im.) *Rudimenta linguae Finnicae breviter delineata: Suomen kielen varhaiskielioppi ja sen tausta*. Helsinki). Researchers believe that the manuscript was a copy of the late 16th–first half of the 17th century, and its author could be Sundergelteus or Johannes Jussoila, who continued his work (Nuorteva, 1997, p. 202, etc.; Palkki, Lauerma, Kuutti 2009, p. 217; Heikkinen 2015, pp. 278–280).

**Valentinus Thomae Losius (Lissius Palomimensis, 1563–1623)**. The author of the oldest secular poem in Finnish. The publication in which the poem was published was printed in Vilnius. The author was also included in the list of the men of letters in the framework of the project *Literatų street* in Vilnius (2010).<sup>3</sup> He began to study at the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary on August 20, 1586. In the

<sup>3</sup> The list of the men of letters for the project *Literatų gatvė*, 2010, <http://www.graphic.lt/konkursai/skelbiamas-literatu-sarasas-literatu-gatves-projektui-2010-m/2737>. [10. 05. 2021].

summer of 1589, he carried on his studies at the Collegium Germanicum in Rome. In 1593–1602, he served at the manor of Sigismund III Vasa (Poplatek, 1936, p. 229; Skrodenis, 1989, pp. 53–67; Garstein, 1992, p. 257, 259 etc.; Kajanto, 1997; Nuorteva, 1997, pp. 219–221). He published two of his works in Vilnius: *Finlandia ad serenissimum regem Valentini Thomae Finlandi; Rhythmi Finlandici in adventum Sigismundi III.* [...] *Vilnam ingressum gratulantur nonnulli bonarum atrium studiosi adolescentes*, in Academia Vilmensi Societatis Iesu, Vilnae, 1589 (see *XV–XVI a. Lietuvos lotynišky knygy sąrašas*, 2002, pp. 172–173). On the occasion of the king’s arrival he wrote: “As a most welcome guest Sigismund comes to us./ Such is the belief of all that dwell in Vilna. / May God, who created all things according to his wisdom, / Be praised because He brought him here. / Your presence was much longed for both by day and by night [...]” (translated into English by Garstein, 1992, 257–258). The author invited Sigismund III Vasa not to forget Finns, and that the beautiful name of Finland would remind him of that. Skrodenis points out that the author “by his modest contribution laid the foundations of the Finnish secular poetry, which formed [...] in the second half of the 16th century. It is also a pleasant surprise to us, Lithuanians: it is probably the only Finnish text published in Vilnius until the 20th century” (Skrodenis, 2009, p. 66; Ulčinėitė (Ed.), 2010, p. 221, 223, 225).

The number of Scandinavian students decreased in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the early 17th century after the king of Sweden prohibited the graduates of Jesuit educational institutions from taking up ecclesiastical or school related positions in their countries in 1606. In 1613, threatening with a death penalty, the studying at Jesuit educational institutions was banned (Zielonka, 2017, p. 412).

Finns could study at several educational institutions in Vilnius: Vilnius Jesuit College, Vilnius Academy, Vilnius Diocese Seminary and Vilnius Pontifical Seminary (Seminarium Pontificium, established in 1582). It was namely the latter’s function – in addition to Braunsberg and other Jesuit seminaries – to educate clergymen for missionary countries, including Scandinavia. It was supposed to train perfectly educated and spiritually prepared Counter-Reformation fighters. Not only clergymen but also laymen were trained in case learners resolved to live a secular life. Until the end of the first quarter of the 17th century, students were not obliged to accept ordination and therefore a part of graduates used to remain laymen (Poplatek, 1929, pp. 47–48, pp. 430–450; Piechnik 1987–1988, pp. 225–228; Grickevičius, 2009; Grickevičius 2011, p. 39). While studying at the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary, Finnish students attended the same classes as the students of the Vilnius Academy, only to a different scope. For example, we know that around 1599 Petrus Eri Petrosa took the course of philosophy. Therefore, in the works composed for a particular occasion, which also included the texts by Finnish students, they are all collectively referred to as “nonnulli bonarum atrium studiosi adolescentes, in Academia Vilmensis Societatis Jesu” or “bonarum atrium in Academiae Vilmensi S. I. studiosi” (Skrodenis, 1989, p. 55). However, we can hardly consider the students of the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary to be legitimate students of the Vilnius Academy.

Substantial funds were dedicated to the establishment and development of the seminary; by its academic level it was only topped by the prestigious Collegium Germanicum in Rome and surpassed Braunsberg<sup>4</sup> and Olomouc seminaries. The first alumni accepted to the seminary were

<sup>4</sup> The Seminary of Braunsberg was different from others in that Catherine Jagiellon provided scholarships to students from Sweden and Finland, creating favourable conditions for their studies.

obliged to take the course of philosophy and theology only. The studies were of two types: more talented students had to complete the studies of philosophy (3 years) and theology (4 years); the studies of less talented students were shorter and they mainly focused on moral and polemic theology. Exercises and disputes on debatable topics in these study subjects were held between Catholics and the followers of other religions (Garstein, 1992, pp. 234–266; Grickevičius, 2009; Vaišvilaitė, 2009, pp. 201–203).

## Conclusions

Communication between the people who inhabited the present-day territories of Finland and Lithuania took place from the first contacts dated to the Early Neolithic to the beginning of the 17th century. The intensity varied depending on different periods. Prehistoric times witnessed the cultural-linguistic and agricultural exchanges between the Baltic and the Finno-Ugric peoples. During the Middle Ages, the inhabitants of Lithuania and the old Karelian land (South Karelia), nowadays part of Finland, were linked by the representatives of the Gediminid dynasty. Closer ties between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Duchy of Finland were established in the middle of the 16th century.

Linguistic matters are a reflection of active contacts: toponyms, loanwords, parallels in folklore. Due to the possibly extinct Baltic dialect, which came into contact with Finns, there are very few loanwords in Lithuanian, though we can count around 400 words of Baltic origin in the Finnish language. The Baltic languages influenced the syntax and phonetics of the Finnish languages. Parallels between Finns and Lithuanians can be also found in the folklore traditions and the episodes of the Finnish heroic epic *Kalevala*.

The looting raids of Lithuanians to Karelia at the end of the 12th century and the rule of the Gediminids in the Karelian lands in the 14th–15th century left mark on Karelian folklore. Lithuanian and Karelian folksongs share some common features as well.

The dynastic marriage of 1562, the election of Sigismund III Vasa to the throne of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the short-lived Commonwealth-Swedish dynastic union intensified contacts between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Duchy of Finland. However, these contacts did not evolve into long-term communication, as it could have been reasonably expected considering the geographic position of two countries. The countries communicated in the context of the union ties with Sweden and Poland. What is more, Sigismund III Vasa was dethroned in Sweden. The number of Finnish refugees fleeing oppression in their country at the turning point between the 16th and 17th centuries was considerably smaller in the GDL compared to those Finnish refugees who journeyed to Poland. Until the beginning of the 17th century about 20 Catholic Finns studied at the Vilnius Pontifical Seminary.

The early Baltic and Finnish contacts have a much stronger reflection in contemporary Lithuanian historical culture; the epic *Kalevala* is well known as well. Later events or historical personalities are not widely known, even Catherine Jagiellon whose wedding actually took place in Vilnius is not as popular in Lithuania as she is in Finland, Sweden or Poland.

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## Finland and Lithuania: Features of Historical Relations (until the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century)

### Summary

The article analyses the historical relations between the people who inhabited the territories of today's Lithuania and Finland during the *longue durée* period (from the first contacts until the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century). Two periods are distinguished: early period and contacts in historical times (the 12<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries). The study, based on a rich historiography, provides a synthetic view on the issue. The article discusses the most important aspects of communication (from cultural-linguistic and economic exchanges in pre-historic times to the political-cultural contacts from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries). The article highlights the mutual communication in the present-day territory of Lithuania, hence “the Lithuanian perspective”, and reflection of this communication in Lithuanian historical culture.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Księstwo Finlandii, Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie, Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów, stosunki historyczne, komunikacja kulturowa, *longue durée*, kultura historyczna

**Keywords:** The Duchy of Finland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, historical relations, communication, *longue durée* period, historical culture.