Beata Kałęba, *Rozdroże. Literatura polska w kręgu litewskiego odrodzenia narodowego*, Kraków: Universitatis, 2016. 296 p. ISBN 97883-242-3038-9

Beata Kałęba's research activity is an excellent example of academic collaboration between Polish and Lithuanian literature researchers in analysing socio-cultural phenomena and processes of the formation national identity from the mid-19th to the early 20th century.¹ In 2016, Kałęba, who is head of the Lithuanian Cultural Research Centre at the Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland), prepared the monograph *Rozdroże. Literatura polska w kręgu litewskiego odrodzenia narodowego* (Crossroads. Polish Literature in the Environment of the Lithuanian National Movement), an important contribution to modern research on Lithuanian nationalism. In her monograph, she raises the questions *how* the Lithuanian national movement's ideologues read Polish-language historical literature and fiction, *how* they understood that literature, and *why and in what ways* that literature was used (p. 17). Literature researchers and historians had earlier looked at the latter question when analysing the emergence of bilingual fiction, and how it functioned in the Polish and Lithuanian national discourses.² However,

¹ On 5 January 2018 Kałęba was awarded the Algis Kalėda Award for research into the Lithuanian literary heritage, Lithuanian-Polish literary links, and comparative and cultural interaction. Kałęba is known in Lithuanian and Polish academic communities as a translator of research works (*Carų valdžioje: Lietuva XIX amžiuje* by E. Aleksandravičius and A. Kulakauskas, *Vilniaus literatūros kontrapunktai. Ankstyvasis modernizmas, 1904–1915* by M. Kvietkauskas, and, with colleagues, *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos kultūra: tyrinėjimai ir vaizdai*). In 2014, Kałęba compiled and published an anthology of Lithuanian literature called *Widziałem świat* (I Saw the World), for which she translated a whole swathe of Lithuanian poetry, prose, drama and extracts thereof (from Lithuanian folk songs and Martynas Mažvydas to work by Aidas Marčėnis, Marius Ivaškevičius and Gytis Norvila). Kałęba also took a separate interest in the development of the Lithuanian national movement, and prepared source collections: *W kręgu sporów polsko-litewskich na przełomie XIX i XX wieku. Wybór materiałów*, t. I–III, eds. M. Zaczynski i B. Kałęba (Kraków, 2004–2011).

² The following research is worth mentioning first: V. Kubilius, *Romantizmo tradicija lietuvių literatūroje* (Vilnius, 1993); B. Speičytė, *Poetinės kultūros formos. LDK palikimas XIX amžiaus Lietuvos literatūroje* (Vilnius, 2004); P. Bukowiec, *Dwujęzyczne początki nowoczesnej literatury litewskiej. Rzecz z pogranicza polotiniastyki* (Kraków, 2008); M. Jackiewicz, *Literatura polska na Litwie XVI–XX wieku* (Olsztyn, 1993); *Lietuvių kultūros veikėjų laiškai J.I. Kraševskiui* (Vilnius, 1992); Z. Stoberski, *Między dawnymi i młodszyimi laty. Polsko-litewskie związki*

Kalėba's scientific research also stands out for its methodological approach, and for her conclusions, which expand what both literature researchers and historians know about the importance of reading 19th-century Polish-language fiction, or more precisely, about the *ways* this literature was read, and its *impact* on ideologues of the Lithuanian national movement. This is why in this review I focus on the methodology of her research and the conclusions, rather than just presenting a consecutive structural description of the work.

Concepts. Kalėba starts the introduction to her research with a discussion of the concept of *Lithuania* which is given by the Lithuanian intellectual Petras Vileišis in his popular booklet published in Chicago in 1898 *Trumpa geografija arba žemės aprašymas* (A Concise Geography or a Description of the Earth).³ The dynamics of the spatial concept of *Lithuania* in the 19th century⁴ act as a pivotal point for Kalėba to talk about the fact that in the 19th century, the concepts 'Pole' (Polak), 'Lithuanian' (Litwin), 'Polish' (*polska*) and 'Lithuanian' (*litewska*) all had their content as well. In the 19th century, some members of the intelligentsia wrote works in both languages. How should we refer to this section of the intelligentsia? Were they Polish or Lithuanian writers? And should their work be counted as Polish or Lithuanian literature (p. 18)? Kalėba suggests discarding the concepts 'Polish literature' (*polska literatura*) and 'Lithuanian literature' (*litewska literatura*), and using instead the concepts 'literature written in Polish' (*literatura języka polskiego*) and 'literature written in Lithuanian' (*literatura języka litewskiego*). In her view, when analysing works written in Polish, we should take note of one important thing. For many who wrote in Polish, this was the language they spoke at home with their families, and the most suitable means for expressing their ideas, but it did not necessarily indicate the individual's decision to identify just with the Polish nation (pp. 18–19).

Probably unaware of the continuing scientific discussion in Lithuanian historiography, Kalėba makes rather wide and uncritical use of the concepts

literackie (Łódź, 1981); V. Berenis, 'LDK kultūros paveldo problema lietuvių nacionalinio judėjimo ideologijoje', in: *Senosios raštijos ir tautosakos sąveika* (Vilnius, 1998); D. Staliūnas, 'Adomas Mickevičius ir tautinis lietuvių panteonas (XIX amžiaus antroji pusė – XX amžiaus pradžia)', in: *Lietuvos kultūra: romantizmo variantai. Mokslinės konferencijos, skirtos Adomo Mickevičiaus 200-osioms metinėms ir įvykusios 1998 m. gruodžio 4 d., medžiaga*, ed. A. Jurgutienė (Vilnius, 2001), pp. 65–82; R. Griškaitė, 'Auszra ir Teodoras Narbutas', in: *Archivum Lithuanicum*, Vol. 15, (2013), pp. 191–270.

³ Neris (P. Vileišis), *Trumpa geografija arba žemės aprašymas* (Chicago, 1898).

⁴ *Lietuvos erdvinės sampratos ilgaėjame XIX šimtmeityje*, ed. D. Staliūnas (Vilnius, 2015); *Spatial Concepts of Lithuania in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. D. Staliūnas (Boston, 2016).

‘young Lithuanians’ (*Młodolitwini*) and ‘old Lithuanians’ (*Starolitwini*),⁵ identifying Lithuanians as ‘young Lithuanians’, and ‘old Lithuanians’ as Poles from the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania (p. 19). She has specifically aimed to talk about the *crossroads* (*rozdroże*) at which Lithuania’s population (*mieszkańcy Litwy*) found itself at the end of the 19th century: both ‘old Poles’ (Poles, *Polacy*) and ‘young Lithuanians’ (Lithuanians, *Litwini*) (p. 20). At precisely this time, according to Kalėba, there was still no definite separation of national communities, while some of the intelligentsia only *made the decision* to count themselves as members of the Polish or Lithuanian nation (p. 20).

Conclusions. Why and in what way did figures in the Lithuanian national revival movement use literature written in the Polish language? I would like to present the results of Kalėba’s particularly detailed research separately, especially since it is an important contribution to modern studies of Lithuanian nationalism.

As Kalėba accurately notes, figures in the Lithuanian national movement were guided by the ethno-linguistic concept of modern Lithuanian nationalism (p. 33). Indeed, as a rule, most of the Lithuanian intelligentsia learned Polish (on estates, and at primary schools where Polish was taught as a separate subject, or where Polish was the language of instruction), and basically grew up under the influence of Polish culture, while the understanding that folk (peasant) culture was *their culture* was the result of a specific choice or decision, usually made at gymnasium or university (p. 218). This is why, according to Kalėba, for much of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, involvement in the Lithuanian national movement was a complicated psychological step, a kind of ‘self-liberation’ (*samozniewolenie*). She says that for most of the Lithuanian intelligentsia, the greatest hurdle to forming the Lithuanian national identity was not the teacher in the state gymnasium (a Russian), but *works by authors* from which the Lithuanians drew their patriotism. The authors of this historical literature and fiction were not ambiguously ‘one of us’, but neither were they definitely ‘foreign’. That is why, according to Kalėba, there was such a harsh counter-position against Polish culture (more specifically, Polish-language culture) in early modern nationalist Lithuanian publications, because the

⁵ A review of K. Buchowski’s book: D. Staliūnas, ‘Stereotipiškai apie stereotipus’, online: <http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2013-07-29-darius-staliunas-stereotipiskai-apie-stereotipus/104988> [accessed 29 July 2013]; R. Miknys, D. Staliūnas, ‘Lenkų ir lietuvių konfliktas XIX amžiaus pabaigoje – XX amžiaus pradžioje: senų koncepcijų atgimimas’, in: *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos istorijos ir tradicijos fenomenai: tautų atminties vietos*, ed. A. Bumblauskas, G. Potašenko (Vilnius, 2013), pp. 173–184. A. Bumblauskas, ‘Apie „starolitvinus“, senąją Lietuvą ir šiuolaikines tapatybes’, in: *Kintančios Lietuvos visuomenė: struktūros, veikėjai, idėjos. Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys, skirtas prof. habil. dr. Tamaros Bairašauskaitės 65-mečio sukakčiai*, eds. O. Mastianica, V. Pugačiauskas, V. Žaltauskaitė (Vilnius, 2015), pp. 445–463.

sharpest conflicts took place first amongst ‘nearest and dearest’, especially when we are talking about our own identity and standing out from others.

Literary works written in Polish were a source of creative motifs, themes and ideas, and a writing school for much of the Lithuanian intelligentsia (p. 219). For many contributors to the periodical *Aušra* (1883–1886), the Polish language was a stage in their development as creators (pp. 246–247). Kalėba bases this conclusion on an analysis of names that have rarely appeared in Lithuanian literature studies or which have disappeared altogether, such as Andrius Vištelis, Liudvika Malinauskaitė-Šliūpienė, Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis, Simonas Norkus, Juozapas Miliauskas-Miglovara and Stanislovas Dagilis. Many of the collaborators on *Aušra*, says Kalėba, actively adapted Polish romantic literary works and ‘Lithuanianised’ Polish writers by attributing them as Lithuanians, based on the ethnic origins argument and the themes in their work (p. 240). Vincas Kudirka, the editor of the Lithuanian periodical *Varpas* (1889–1905), especially translated many fictional works from Polish into Lithuanian, choosing pieces that were important in an ideological sense, but which also had an aesthetic importance. In this way, Kudirka sought to enrich the Lithuanian language in order to be suitable for literary expression (p. 175).

After 1904, attention to literature written in Polish increased even more in the Lithuanian national discourse, and the ‘Lithuanian’ perspective on works written in Polish gradually waned when readers ‘searched’ only for information about Lithuania and Lithuanians. According to Kalėba, Lithuanian national culture started to strengthen after 1905, which allowed writers to ‘unhinge’ themselves from purely patriotic aims. As a result, there were more cases of Polish-language fiction that dealt with ideological and stylistic issues being translated for Lithuanian periodicals (p. 242).

About one case. When analysing the lives of contributors to *Aušra*, primarily those who wrote in Lithuanian and Polish and translated works of Polish fiction into Lithuanian, Kalėba pays particular attention to Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis (1849–1919).⁶ She states that the poem ‘Lithuania and her Sons’ by him, or more precisely, the poem’s rhythm and form, printed in *Aušra* in 1885, shows clearly the influence of Polish literature on a member of the intelligentsia of noble origins who had learnt Lithuanian (pp. 88–89). So it is no accident that, pointing out Davainis-Silvestraitis’ long-running editorial position, and the publication of the periodical *Litwa* (1908–1914), Kalėba poses several rhetorical questions: is it not surprising that a collaborator on *Aušra* who propounded modern Lithuanian nationalist ideas in the 1910s was involved in the publication

⁶ B. Kalėba, ‘Publicystyka kulturalna Mieczysława Dowojny-Sylwestrowicza na łamach ‘Lietuvių laikraštis’, in: *Ostatni obywatele Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego*, eds. T. Bujnicki, K. Stępnik (Lublin, 2005), pp. 265–271.

of newspapers for Lithuanians in the Polish language? Is it not surprising that original works by Davainis-Silvestraitis are based on the influence of a foreign (Polish) tradition (p. 91)?

Despite believing that in becoming involved in the Lithuanian national movement the nobility should convert to using Lithuanian even within their family, Davainis-Silvestraitis wrote in both Lithuanian and Polish all his life.⁷ The newspaper *Litwa* which he edited, besides its primary aim of involving the nobility in the Lithuanian national movement, also served as a space for people for whom Polish was the most suitable medium of literary self-reflection. This is why, as Algis Kalėda and Tadeusz Bujnicki⁸ have pointed out, a sizeable group of literary figures published works in the newspaper: in addition to Davainis-Silvestraitis, there was Helena Cepryńska, unquestionably the most productive and active writer, who cultivated works in all genres, Stefan Okulicz (1839–1918), a participant in the 1863–1864 uprising,⁹ Michał Skirgiełł,¹⁰ Maria Łońska,¹¹ Maria Vileišytė¹² (Maria Wileiszis, the daughter of the famous Lithuanian intellectual Petras Vileišis), and Julija Wichert-Kairiūkštienė (1864–1949).

The poet and playwright Helena Cepryńska, one of the most prolific contributors to *Litwa*, explained in a letter to Davainis-Silvestraitis dated 12 February 1912 why, despite trying to write in Lithuanian,¹³ she specifically chose Polish for her work: ‘I love the Lithuanian language, and am especially concerned that this language should become as widespread as possible. However, neither do I hate that beautiful language in which I publish my work in *Litwa* [...] Does he who speaks and writes Lithuanian truly love his Homeland Lithuania more? [...] Lithuanian is only a way

⁷ We should note that Davainis-Silvestraitis’ first poems were written in Polish. When the periodical *Aušra* appeared, he started writing in Lithuanian, but he did not reject Polish as a language conducive to creative work. In the first decades of the 20th century, he created pieces both in Lithuanian and in Polish, while in the newspaper *Litwa*, his work appeared in Polish.

⁸ A. Kalėda, ‘Integralumo strategijos (M. Davainio-Silvestraičio „Litwa“),’ in: *Vilniaus kultūrinis gyvenimas 1900–1940*, ed. A. Lapinskienė (Vilnius, 1998), pp. 112–121; T. Bujnicki, ‘Polskojęzyczne piśarstwo Litwinów w Wilnie. Rekonesans’, in: *Życie literackie i literatura w Wilnie XIX-XX wieku*, eds. T. Bujnicki, A. Romanowski (Kraków, 2000), pp. 241–265.

⁹ S. Okulicz, ‘Ze wsi litewskiej’, in: *Litwa*, no. 1 (1908), p. 2; S. Okulicz, ‘Echa lasów’, in: *Litwa*, no. 2 (1908), p. 19.

¹⁰ Skirgiełł published the poems ‘Swit’ (Dawn) and ‘Wiosna’ (Spring) in the newspaper *Litwa* in 1909.

¹¹ M. Łońska, ‘Duch litewski’, in: *Litwa*, No 6 (1910), p. 8.

¹² M. Wileiszis, ‘Credo’, in: *Litwa*, No 17–18 (1910), p. 258.

¹³ Cepryńska’s Lithuanian-language poem ‘Meldimo himnas’ (Dovanok Dieve) was published in the Lithuanian newspaper *Rygos garsas* in 1910. ‘Tautietis. Pirmieji bandymai’, in: *Rygos garsas*, No 76 (16 October 1910), p. 2.

of relating about one's soul, and if this soul is Lithuanian, then it does not matter that the soul speaks Polish.¹⁴ Cepryńska's idea is perhaps one possible answer to the question posed again at the end of Kalėba's monograph: 'Polish writers? Or Lithuanian writers?' (*Pisarze polscy? Czy pisarze litewscy?*).

According to Kalėba, a book by Jonas Šliūpas, one of the editors of *Aušra*, published in Tilžė in 1890, called *Lietuviskieji raszta ir rasztininkai: raszliszka peržvalga parengta Lietuvos mylėtojo* (Lithuanian Works and Writers: A Written Overview by a Fan of Lithuania) already obviously showed *why* members of the Lithuanian national discourse considered works written in Polish as *their own*, and how Polish writers *became* Lithuanian writers (p. 227). As Kalėba accurately notes at the end of her monograph, it is *necessary* first of all to understand the content of the late 19th and early-20th century national discourse, and to clarify *why* historical literature and fiction in Polish were so important to the Lithuanian intelligentsia, and *why* and *in what way* this literature was used. Kalėba's monograph just happens to offer a whole range of answers to the earlier mentioned questions.

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¹⁴ Cepryńska's letter to Davainis-Silvestraitis, 18 February 1912, Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, col. 249, file 285, l. 1.