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ENTANGLED  
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BETWEEN RELIGION  
AND NATIONAL  
CONSCIOUSNESS IN  
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# The Nobility in the Lithuanian National Project in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century: The Approach of the Catholic Clergy

Olga Mastianica-Stankevič

In 1915, the Democrat leader of the *krajojcy* (from Polish *kraj*—region)<sup>1</sup> Mykolas Römeris (Michał Pius Römer, 1880–1945), discussing the development of the Lithuanian national movement, noted quite accurately that, compared to other Lithuanian political parties and factions, the confessional intelligentsia (and Catholic clergy) was the greatest proponent of involving the nobility in the formation of the modern Lithuanian nation. Römeris raised the hypothesis that the Christian Democrats were probably the only Lithuanian political faction to consistently defend the idea of involving the nobility in the modern Lithuanian nation. According to Römeris, the Christian Democrats sought to maintain leadership over the Lithuanian national movement, and were against any expressions of social radicalism. As

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1 The *krajojcy* were an ideological political current whose followers understood Lithuania as an integral land based on historical, territorial, economic, and cultural similarities.

such, the main ally of the Christian Democrats could be the nobility.<sup>2</sup> After the January Uprising the Catholic clergy became the driving force behind the Lithuanian national movement. After the Revolution of 1905 a spectrum of Lithuanian political forces has emerged: Christian Democrats and National Democrats formed the right-minded Lithuanian political force which advocated a moderate Christian Catholic worldview. Social democrats and democrats appealed to rational, positivistic, and liberal viewpoints and formed the political left. In the Lithuanian political discourse mainly the Christian Democrats, a part of whom were Catholic priests, have raised the issue of the participation of nobility in the formation of modern Lithuanian nation.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, much like certain other leaders of Central and East European national groups, Lithuanian intelligentsia deliberated on whether the nobility should be involved in the process of forming the modern nation. This was not an easy task, as often most of the nobility considered their mother tongue to be a language other than what the "peasant" national ideologues desired (German in Bohemia, Latvia and Estonia, and Polish in Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania). Thus, when trying to resolve the question of the nobility's involvement in the modern nation, and for other reasons,<sup>3</sup> the ideologues of national movements had to modify their definitions of nationality: the criterion of ethnic origins was "recalled," and economic and social conflicts between the nobility and the peasantry were not specially incited in the public discourse. In other words, these disagreements were "transformed" into adversity between two national, though not two different social, groups.

Like their Czech, Ukrainian, Finnish, Slovak, and Croat counterparts, the Lithuanian national movement's ideologues also deliberated on the question of the nobility's inclusion in the process of the formation of the modern Lithuanian nation. The involvement of the nobility in the process was already relevant in the first (cultural) stage of the formation of the modern nation. Some of Lithuania's secular and confessional intelligentsia "searched for" ideological arguments in the pages of *Aušra* (*Auszra*, Dawn, 1883–86), the first modern illegal Lithuanian nationalist periodical, that would allow the Polish-speaking nobility to be considered a composite part of the Lithuanian nation. The problem of how to "nationalize" the

2 See Michał Römer, "Litwa wobec wojny (poufny memoriał Michała Römera z sierpnia 1915)," *Zeszyty historyczne*, no. 17 (1970): 101.

3 For example, because national movement ideologists needed to give a basis for their claims to "national territories."

nobility was also important in the Lithuanian national movement when it progressed to the stage of its political development. In 1908–14, Mečislovas Apolonijus Davainis-Silvestraitis (also Davainis-Silvestravičius, Dovoina-Silvestravičius, Dovoina-Sylvestravičius, Dovoina-Sylvestravičė [pol. Mieczysław Apoloniusz Dowojna-Sylwestrowicz, 1849–1919]), a writer of noble origins, published a Polish-language newspaper in Vilnius called *Litwa* (Lithuania), which sought to include the nobility in the modern Lithuanian nation.<sup>4</sup> However, between the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries, Lithuanian political parties and factions had different ideas of how the nobility could be involved in the modern Lithuanian nation.

The aim of this article is to explain the approach that of the Lithuanian confessional intelligentsia towards the nobility's place in the modern Lithuanian nation; how and why this approach changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and why it was so important for the confessional intelligentsia to include the nobility in the modern Lithuanian nation. Thus, this paper deals with rhetorical strategies of national activists and not with the results of that kind of agitation. The article delves into research into Lithuanian nationalism, and begins with an analysis of the ideological provisions of Lithuanian nationalism in the years when *Aušra* was still being published; when, having harnessed a means of public communication for the first time, the ideological foundations of modern Lithuanian nationalism were being formed, and the need to consider the nobility a part of the modern Lithuanian nation was raised. I also discuss separately how the confessional intelligentsia resolved the question of the nobility's participation in the creation of the modern Lithuanian nation at the start of the political stage of the development of the national movement. In the last section, I explain why the confessional intelligentsia supported the publication of the newspaper *Litwa*, and why and what meaning systems were created by the newspaper's contributors, a majority of whom were members of the Catholic clergy. The examination of the nobility's place in the Lithuanian national project in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rests not just on historiography, historical material the periodical press, but also on published and manuscript texts prepared by the confessional intelligentsia, many of which are introduced into the scholarly discourse here for the first time.

<sup>4</sup> Similar initiatives could be seen in other territories. For example, in 1909 in Lviv, Waclaw Lipiński (1882–1931), a writer of noble origins, published the first issue of the periodical *Przegląd Krajowy* (Country Review), which sought to acquaint the Polish-speaking nobility with the modern Ukrainian nationalism program.

## The Approach Towards the Nobility in the Cultural Stage of the Lithuanian National Movement

Researchers representing various scholarly paradigms agree that the publication of the illegal Lithuanian periodical *Aušra* (*Auszra*) between 1883 and 1886 marked a turning-point in Lithuanian (and Lithuania's) history. *Aušra* symbolized the initial (cultural) stage of the national movement, and demonstrated the programmatic provisions of modern Lithuanian nationalism. The editors and contributors who worked on *Aušra*, who included a number of members of the confessional intelligentsia, declared clearly that the most important feature of nationalism was the "national language." As with most other Central and East European nationalisms, the language first of all demonstrated belonging to a specific nation. In the understanding of *Aušra*, the decline in the numbers of people who spoke Lithuanian was compared to the decline of the nation, and at the same time of Lithuania, which could lead to the nation's extinction.

As has been noted on numerous occasions in Lithuanian historiography,<sup>5</sup> numerous contributors to *Aušra* believed that the nobility should not only support the national movement, but also be an integral part of the modern Lithuanian nation. As a result, ideological arguments started being formulated within the circle of *Aušra* that would allow the Polish-speaking nobility to be considered part of the modern Lithuanian nation. Contributors to *Aušra*, who included a number of members of the Catholic clergy, had to resolve a rather complicated problem. The modern Lithuanian identity was defined according to a linguistic concept of the nation, whereas the nobility spoke Polish. Thus, in order to include the nobility in the modern nation, the ideologues of modern Lithuanian nationalism had to find new arguments that were not based on a linguistic basis.

The first argument to be put forward was that of ethnic origins, which aimed to prove that all the members of a nation, regardless of which social

5 Piotr Łossowski, "Gazeta 'Aušra' i początek narodowego ruchu litewskiego (1883–1886)," in *Studia z dziejów ZSSR i Europy Środkowej*, no. 1 (1965) (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków: Zakład narodowy imienia Ossolińskich. Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1965): 81–129; Edvardas Vidmantas, "Aušros' vaidmuo lietuvių nacionalinio išsivadavimo judėjime," *LTSR Mokslų Akademijos darbai, A serija*, no. 3 (1984): 93–94; Leonas Mulevičius, "Aušros' socialinė-ekonominė programa," in *"Aušra" ir lietuvių tautinis judėjimas XIX a. pabaigoje* ed. Jonas Kubilius (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1988), 126–27; Darius Staliūnas, "Lietuvos idėja Aušroje," *Archivum Lithuanicum*, no. 15 (2013): 276, 285.

group they were from, were related along family or blood lines. In other words, a person's belonging to a nation also should determine his origins, which in turn should encourage loyalty not just to parents and ancestors, but also to a certain set of national ideals. According to Davainis-Silvestraitis: "Nobles and farmers here in Samogitia do not differ from one another, but show who they truly are: Samogitians who display the Samogitian element."<sup>6</sup> That is why in *Aušra*, nobles, and cultural and scientific figures of noble origin, such as Adam Mickiewicz, Joachim Lelewel, and Teodor Narbut, were strictly called "Polonised Lithuanians,"<sup>7</sup> who, despite writing in Polish, nevertheless "felt and thought in Lithuanian."<sup>8</sup>

Many collaborating authors who wrote articles for *Aušra* also offered arguments to convince readers that the Polonization of the nobility was merely "superficial," encouraging them to understand that its Polonization was not irreversible, and that the nobility's "return"<sup>9</sup> to the Lithuanian nation was indeed possible. They explained that the nobility was coerced into "adopting the Polish language,"<sup>10</sup> but still considered itself part of the Lithuanian nation. Stanislovas Raila, a lawyer of noble origins, explained that the Lithuanian nobility gave priority to expanding the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and protecting the state's territories, so it could not reasonably have overseen the creation of Lithuanian writing, and was forced to adopt Polish culture and scientific achievements.<sup>11</sup> Most of those writing for *Aušra* sought to "remind" the Lithuanian-speaking readership that the Radziwiłł (Radvila) family in Kėdainiai sponsored schools in which Lithuanian was the language of instruction, and that Juozapas Arnulfas Giedraitis, a bishop of noble origins, had translated the Holy Writ into Lithuanian.<sup>12</sup>

It is important to note that in order to involve the nobility in the creation of the modern Lithuanian nation, the editors of *Aušra* and many of its

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6 Vėversis (Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis), "Ar pritinka musu bajorams buti lenkais?," *Auszra*, no. 8–10 (1883): 232.

7 J. Sz. (Jonas Šliūpas), "Bicziūlistė," *Auszra*, no. 1–3 (1884): 70.

8 *Ibid.*, 70.

9 Lithuanian national movement activists were guided by this concept in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was based on nationalist logic: the nobles had "forgotten" their national spirit, and had to be "returned" to the real nation. In this article, the phrase referring to the nobility's "return" to the Lithuanian nation is used in the way it was used by the Lithuanian intellectual and political elite in the period discussed, but not as an analytical-academic category.

10 (I.e., Slavic) S. R. (Stanislovas Raila), "Į darbą, kas lietuvius!," *Auszra*, no. 6 (1883): 156.

11 *Ibid.*, 156.

12 *Ibid.*

contributing authors avoided fueling social or economic conflict between the nobility and the peasants in the pages of the newspaper. In addition, such conflicts were not even presented in the newspaper as conflicts between two social groups representing different national groups. Jonas Šliūpas, one of *Aušra's* editors, even went to special lengths to highlight the fact that it was not worth "mentioning the suffering of times past,"<sup>13</sup> but on the contrary, he urged the nobility and the peasants to improve the country's economy together, and to "forget" former social and economic grievances.

Indeed, *Aušra* had already started to pose the question: what did the nobility have to do in order to become involved in the modern Lithuanian nation? However, when discussing the need for the nobility to support the national movement financially, the editorial board only described the nobility as "true leaders of the clan who loved their homeland Lithuania and its language."<sup>14</sup> Clearly, this kind of declaration prompted the idea that the nobility should also use Lithuanian. But details were not given as to whether they should start using it for everyday communication, or whether it was enough just to learn it, without having to abandon the use of Polish in their family. It could be that, in order to lure the nobility in the modern Lithuanian nation, the editors of *Aušra* purposely did not go into further detail on how the use of Lithuanian was understood. Nevertheless, many of the newspaper's contributors thought it necessary to stress the fact that the nobility had an excellent knowledge of the language, but was simply "ashamed to speak Lithuanian and demeaned anyone who did."<sup>15</sup> However, the editors never formulated an open requirement for the nobility to use Lithuanian at home, unlike most members of the confessional intelligentsia did later on.

### Attitudes towards the Nobility in the Catholic Clergy's Periodical Press (at the Turn of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries)

The idea formulated by the newspaper *Aušra* that the nobility should be included in the composition of the modern Lithuanian nation was

13 J. S. Kūksztis (Jonas Šliūpas), "Iš Lietuvos. Lietuvoje," *Auszra*, no. 5–6 (1884): 182.

14 Redakcija "Auszros," "Apie insteigimą 'Lietuviszkòs mokslù bendrystès (draugystès)," *Auszra*, no. 4 (1883): 92.

15 Raila claimed definitively that "our language is known to those whom we are speaking about here" (musu kalba juk pažįstama tiems, apie kurius czia kalbame), Raila, "Į darbą, kas lietuvis!," 155.

maintained even when a distinct ideological-political and organizational polarization began within the Lithuanian intelligentsia. In 1890, the Catholic clergy started to publish a separate illegal periodical called *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga* (The Samogitian and Lithuanian Review, until 1896). In 1896 they started to publish *Tėvynės sargas* (The Guardian of the Fatherland, until 1904), in 1900 *Žinyčia* (The News, until 1902), and *Dirva*, *Dirva-Žinynas* (The Ground News, 1903). These publications not only expressed the idea and the hope that the nobility could become a constituent part of the modern Lithuanian nation, they also searched for more effective ways to achieve this aim.

The concept of the modern Lithuanian nation that was explained in introductory articles in *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga* (1890–96) included both the nobility and the peasantry. It was stated quite definitively that: “Our nation consists of nobles, people of higher origins, and ordinary people, of lower origins.” Both these groups had their roles: the first were “important to the nation due to their education” and their example, while the second “perform various temporary tasks that are necessary to save the soul,” giving meaning to the nation’s existence. A mandatory condition guaranteeing the fully fledged existence of the modern Lithuanian nation was “love, unity and peace” between both groups.<sup>16</sup> The concept of national unity proclaimed in *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga* was closer to the idea of national unity promoted in another illegal Lithuanian newspaper, called *Varpas* (The Bell, 1889–1905). It focused on the ideological-political tasks of the secular, liberal intelligentsia, and matters of organizational consolidation, in the name of the nation’s unity. This faction elevated nationalism as the highest value, and spoke against attempts at dividing the nation into estates, ignoring social conflicts. In the confessional intelligentsia’s publication *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, the existence of estates was acknowledged, though they were not opposed to each other, their functions in society were expanded, and the resolution of social issues was also postponed.<sup>17</sup>

As in *Aušra*, the confessional intelligentsia’s periodical press sought to smooth over as much as possible the social tensions between the nobility and the peasants. The newspapers *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga* and *Tėvynės sargas* “reminded” readers on numerous occasions that the local

16 Žaltauskaitė, *Lietuvos krikščioniškosios demokratijos genezė*, 110–11.

17 *Ibid.*, 112.

nobility had tried to abolish serfdom sooner than was done by the tsarist government.<sup>18</sup> In addition, these publications explained that it was precisely the Imperial Russian government that was purposely playing off the nobility and the peasantry against each other, even though both estates “lived in peace” after the abolition of serfdom. In other words, the press of this ideological stratum explained that no social tension remained between the nobility and the peasantry, and that it was not possible in the future either.<sup>19</sup> Such statements were made that “nobles, landlords and peasants were all children of the same mother country, Lithuania, and are true brothers,” and that it was very important that these social groups “live in unity and love, and be guided by the same rights and laws.”<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, the confessional intelligentsia were among the first to reject the judgement of an individual based on social origins. In the modernizing society, education and common human values had to be the ones by which a person could be judged. These were the words of the Catholic clergyman Kazimieras Pakalniškis (1866–1933), the editor of *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, who recommended not judging a person according to social origins, and using other criteria to assess an individual. “Today, the assessment of a person rests . . . not on the titles or privileges of the *szlachta*, but on their wisdom, mind and education.”<sup>21</sup> The argument that an individual should be judged according to their education, mental abilities, and common human values, not on their social origins, was also used in the quest to view the nobility as a constituent part of the modern Lithuanian nation.

Pakalniškis was convinced that, after becoming involved in the modern Lithuanian nation, the nobility could also contribute to the formation of an intelligentsia as a separate social class.<sup>22</sup> According to him, under the existing conditions, there were very few peasants with a higher education

18 See Vincas Pietaris, “Padejimas mūsų tautos XIX amžiuje,” *Tėvynės sargas*, no. 11–12 (1903): 2. The same kind of idea was expressed in the secular Lithuanian intelligentsia’s periodical *Varpas*. For example, see Greitakojis (?), “Skaitymas lietuviškoj draugysteje 19 dieną vasario 1892 m.,” *Varpas*, no. 4–5 (1892): 50; “Balsai lietuviszku draugysziui,” *Varpas*, no. 1 (1889): 45; (?) “Credo,” *Varpas*, no. 6 (1901): 61.

19 Žaltauskaitė, *Lietuvos krikščioniškosios demokratijos genėzė*, 111.

20 Gilis (?), “Isz Lietuvos,” *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, no. 8 (1893): 63.

21 Kazimieras Pakalniškis, “Musų bajorai,” *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, no. 16 (1893): 123. Also see K. Strelankis (?), “Musų ‘bajorai’ arba ‘šlėktos,’” *Tėvynės sargas*, no. 3 (1898): 6–7.

22 J. Szermunelis (Kazimieras Pakalniškis), “Szis-tas apie mūsų bajoriją, kunigiją ir ‘mužikiją,’” *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, no. 6 (1892): 43.

who could create and strengthen the Lithuanian intelligentsia. In addition, he claimed that the nobility's involvement in the intelligentsia would refute the claims made by certain members of Polish society that the Lithuanian national movement was simply a class war between the peasants and the nobility, and not an independent national movement with its own aims and goals.<sup>23</sup> The editor of *Žemajčių ir Lietuvos apžvalga* was also convinced that once it joined the Lithuanian intelligentsia, the nobility could play a leading role in the national movement.<sup>24</sup> Pakalniškis believed that the nobility and the clergy were the two social groups that could serve as the best "leaders in matters of education and nationhood."<sup>25</sup> This could first of all be how Pakalniškis responded to the intensifying discussions at the time on whether the confessional or the liberal intelligentsia could lead the national movement. It is why he found it so important to persuade readers that the clergy, like the nobility, was indeed capable of taking a leading role.

Those ideas also encouraged the discussion of projects to create a national family. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these projects were a constituent part of the modern Lithuanian national agenda. They were based first of all on the ideals of the national revival, the most fundamental ideal being sacrificing everything for one's love of the nation. This raised the hope not just of nurturing the Lithuanian spirit within the family, but of creating the right foundations for the society of the future. In other words, the first patriotic families had to foster future generations of patriots. This ideal was often considered a fundamental concern, for it was thought that the very survival of the nation was at the heart of the matter.

According to the Lithuanian historian Dalia Marcinkevičienė, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, two types of national family projects were discussed among Lithuanian intelligentsia.<sup>26</sup> The "radical" model saw women's Lithuanian-ness as the most important virtue of a wife, and accordingly a "pure" ethnic Lithuanian family was possible only among peasants; and in contrast, the second model foresaw a Lithuanian family with a "noble" "wife." The authors of the "radical" project identified "noble

23 Ibid., 43.

24 Ibid.

25 J. Szermunelis (Kazimieras Pakalniškis), "Szis-tas apie mūsų bajoriją, kunigiją ir 'mužikiją'" 43. The same idea was expressed in another illegal periodical published by the Catholic clergy *Tėvynės Sargas*: (?) "Duok Dieve," *Tėvynės sargas*, no. 1 (1897): 7.

26 Dalia Marcinkevičienė, *Vedusiųjų visuomenė: santuoka ir skyrybos Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje-XX amžiaus pradžioje* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1999), 104.

ladies” with de-nationalized “half-Polish women,” and they thought that the idea to make a couple from such a woman with a Lithuanian intellectual was tantamount to betraying one’s national ideals and the degradation of the society of the future. Some authors of the “radical” project did search for possibilities to bring “the uneducated peasant girl” closer to the ideal patriotic “wife,” recommending either “raising” a “wife” by educating her, or by marrying educated Latvian or Prussia’s Lithuanian ladies, who were believed to have close ethnic origin.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, supporters of the “noble” model disapproved of any member of the intelligentsia stooping to marry a peasant, and associated “a noble lady” with the image of “a patriot’s wife.” In their view, the idea of marrying “a peasant girl was risky and did not ensure favorable conditions for conscious national activity.”<sup>28</sup> In order to promote the need to forge marriages between the nobility and the peasantry, the authors of the “noble” family project often turned to fiction. Works by Lithuanian writers from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (such as Pakalniškis, Jonas Mačiulis [Maironis], Gabrielius Landsbergis-Žemkalnis and Liudvika Didžiulienė-Žmona) portrayed relations between a teacher-intellectual of peasant origins and a noble-lady pupil (or doctor and patient), representing potential Lithuanian-ness, which ended in successful marriage. It is important to note that these cultural character types (a male teacher or doctor, and a female pupil or patient) exhibited a shade of hierarchy and domination: people of noble origins were, originally Lithuanian but culturally Polish, considered dangerous and morally corrupt. However, the peasant environment was capable of “converting” people from this social group back to Lithuanian-ism. The kind of social utopia is best reflected in the Maironis’ poems *Tarp skausmų į garbę* (Between Pain, Towards Honor, 1895) and *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Young Lithuania, 1907), in the story by Pakalniškis *Mokytoja* (The Teacher, 1904), and in the drama by the clergyman Juozas Šnapštis-Margalis *Mūsų bajorai* (Our Nobles, 1904). Indeed, as historians of literature note, these works were not known for giving a particularly clear portrait of any psychological heroes or a consistent plot line.

27 “Keli žodžiai prie senojo klausimo,” *Varpas*, no. 2 (1893): 17–18; “Kritiška peržvalga straipsnių ‘Draugija pavojuje’ ir ‘Keli žodžiai prie senojo klausimo,’” *Varpas*, no. 4 (1893): 49–51.

28 G. Žemkalnis (Gabrielius Landsbergis-Žemkalnis), “Dar keli žodžiai prie senojo klausimo,” *Varpas*, no. 5 (1893): 67–68.

For example, in Maironis' poem *Tarp skausmų į garbę*, the marriage of a peasant girl and a young nobleman embodies triumphantly, almost naturally, the energy of the unavoidably democratic and Lithuanian national movement.<sup>29</sup> A young peasant girl develops a national consciousness, in Maironis' case Anusia Vilaitučia, and in Pakalniškis' work *Ona Perkūnaitė*, and manages to "Lithuanian-ize" a nobleman. In Maironis' work, the younger generation of peasants and nobles organize a national-themed evening with songs in honor of Grand Duke Vytautas.<sup>30</sup> In the story *Mokytoja*, Pakalniškis unambiguously demands that nobles "who considered themselves Lithuanians actually behave like Lithuanians: they should speak Lithuanian among themselves, think in Lithuanian, and love Lithuanian literature, science and history."<sup>31</sup> Pakalniškis' idea that the nobility had to not only learn Lithuanian but also to use it at home in order to become part of the modern Lithuanian nation was developed by the writer Aleksandras Dambrauskas (Adomas Jakštas), one of the most famous members of the confessional intelligentsia, who appealed to the younger generation of the nobility with his *Głos Litwinów do młodej generacji magnatów, obywateli i szlachty na Litwie* (A Lithuanian Voice for the Young Generation of Lithuania's magnates, citizens, and gentry, 1902).<sup>32</sup>

Dambrauskas-Jakštas' proclamation to the younger generation of the nobility *Głos Litwinów* was one of the first modern Lithuanian nationalist texts, specially created to address one question, the nobility's participation in the creation of the modern nation. On the other hand, in 1902 Dambrauskas-Jakštas was one of the first members of the Lithuanian intelligentsia who considered it necessary to communicate with the nobility in Polish (in 1908, Davainis-Silvestraitis followed his example, and started to publish his Polish-language newspaper *Litwa*, aimed at the nobility in Vilnius). What is interesting is that Dambrauskas-Jakštas' proclamation provoked a reaction from one of the groups it appealed to. This allows for an additional diagnosis of some of the nobility's opinions on the Lithuanian national movement, but also received criticism from other Lithuanian

29 Brigita Speičytė, *Anapus ribos. Maironis ir istorinė Lietuva* (Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2012), 163.

30 Speičytė, *Anapus ribos*, 163.

31 Kazimieras Pakalniškis, *Mokytoja, Apysaka, parasze Dede Atanasas, Atspaudas iš Dirvos-Žinyno* (Shenadoach: Lietuvių katalikų spaudos bendrijos spaustuveje, 1904), 33.

32 Aleksandras Dambrauskas (A. Jakštas), *Głos Litwinów do młodej generacji magnatów, obywateli i szlachty na Litwie* (Moscow: n.p., 1902).

political parties and political factions. The proclamation serves as an excellent example of how, at the beginning of the twentieth century, opinions increasingly differed in the national discourse on the necessity for the nobility to participate in the creation of the modern Lithuanian nation.

Dambrauskas-Jakštas (1860–1933) was one of the most consistent and influential figures involved in the formation of Catholic provisions. The epistolic legacy of his years at the seminary and St Petersburg's Imperial Roman Catholic Theological Academy shows that he exhibited a natural consonance between nationalism, faith, and the different estates.<sup>33</sup> It could be that most of the confessional intelligentsia supported the opinions in his proclamation. They thought the publication should also be translated into Lithuanian, and published in the periodical press.<sup>34</sup>

Dambrauskas-Jakštas' work *Głos Litwinów* starts with a discussion of political issues; or, more precisely, he explained that modern Lithuanian nationalism refused to build statehood on the foundations of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He stressed that this state entity was made up of two independent units, or more precisely, it was "Lithuania's union with Poland." According to his way of thinking, if in the past there were two separate units, then in the future it would also be possible to have two separate state compounds. Thus, he considered any union-based relations merely a "historical fact," which "did not carry the same meaning in our view."<sup>35</sup> The fact that he began his publication with a presentation of the political agenda of modern Lithuanian nationalism also signifies that the formulation of political requirements was what made the question of the nobility's participation in the modern Lithuanian nation so important and worthy of discussion. In other words, he believed that the Polish national movement could use the nobility's alleged "Polish-ness" as an argument for seeing Poland and Lithuania as one state and territorial unit. That is why he thought it necessary to stress and highlight in his publication that Lithuania's statehood could be seen only within "ethnographic boundaries." "Present-day Lithuania is where the Lithuanian

33 Žaltauskaitė, *Lietuvos krikščioniškosios demokratijos genezė*, 88–89.

34 This translation was published in the Christian Democrat newspaper *Dirva-Žinynas* as Aleksandras Dambrauskas (A. Jakštas), "Lietuvių balsas į jaunąją kartą Lietuvos didžponių, dvarponių ir bajorų" (Lithuanians' Voice to the Young Generation of Lithuania's Greater Lords, Landlords and Nobles), *Dirva-Žinynas*, no. 6 (1903): 3–21.

35 Dambrauskas, *Głos Litwinów*, 8.

language can be heard from the mouths of Lithuania's people," wrote Dambrauskas-Jakštas.<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand, Dambrauskas-Jakštas thought it important to give examples by which the nobility could be considered a part of the Lithuanian nation, and should be included in the formation of the modern nation. In fact, he did not even "think up" any new arguments other than those already given when *Aušra* was being published. Much like *Aušra's* contributors, he stressed that the nobility's belonging to the Lithuanian nation was a demonstration of their ethnic origins: "you are, after all, joined to us by blood ties, and that is something one cannot argue against."<sup>37</sup> As a result, he made a clear condition: a nobleman of ethnic Lithuanian origin could not be *gente-lithuanus*, *natione-polonus*, that is, he could not support both the Lithuanian and the Polish national movements. In another brochure *Vienybė ar separatizmas?* (Unity or Separatism?),<sup>38</sup> in which he replied to criticism, he considered as nobility of Polish origins only nobles who thought of themselves as Polish, spoke Polish, had Polish surnames, and most importantly, had arrived from Polish ethnographic areas.

In the brochure, Dambrauskas-Jakštas also encouraged the hope that this section of the nobility would be able to "rediscover the Lithuanian spirit" and "return" to the Lithuanian nation. In this case too, he quoted the examples of the Czech and Hungarian nobility as ones to follow.<sup>39</sup> He was obviously one of the members of the confessional intelligentsia who believed that the nobility should be included in the modern Lithuanian nation, and then the national movement would be equal to other national movements in which the nobility already played an active part. It could be that, at least in his view, the nobility's involvement in the formation of the Lithuanian nation was also an argument to show the national movement's

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Aleksandras Dambrauskas-Jakštas, *Vienybė ar separatizmas? Atsakymas kritikams "Lietuvių balso"* (Shenandoach: Lietuvių kataliku spaudos bendrijos spaustuveje, 1904), 12–13.

39 Dambrauskas, *Vienybė ar separatizmas?*, 16. As Miknys noted, the Czech national movement, its national ideology and organizational structures, were an important factor for the Lithuanian liberals (followers and readers of *Varpas*) for basing education in their national consciousness, the provisions of the national-cultural program, and for searching for practical possibilities to realize these provisions. See Rimantas Miknys, "Čekų tautinis judėjimas ir Lietuvos liberalai XIX a. pab. – XX a. pradž. ('Varpas')," in *Lietuvių ir čekų santykiai amžių bėgyje*. Pranešimai iš interdisciplinarinio mokslinio kolokviumo. Vilnius, 1995 spalio 25–26 d. (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 1998), 59–63.

equal placing in terms of other national movements. That is why he stressed so strongly the need for the nobility to “return” to the Lithuanian nation, and then participate in the creation and strengthening of the intelligentsia. Like Pakalniškis, he was convinced that the participation of the nobility was necessary, in order to strengthen the intelligentsia, as it could “bring into our fold new souls, a higher level of cerebral culture, greater examination, and elegance for a cordial life.”<sup>40</sup>

Dambrauskas-Jakštis was one of the first to define quite categorically under what conditions the nobility should be included in the modern Lithuanian nation. According to him, “the Lithuanian nobility is Lithuanian in the real Lithuanian sense, not because it has lived in Lithuania for so long, but because it openly counts itself as part of the Lithuanian nation, takes the Lithuanian language as its own, and uses it for everyday communication at home.”<sup>41</sup> So if we follow his conviction, in seeking to participate in the creation of the modern nation, the nobility not only had to speak Lithuanian in public, but also make it the language used by their family and in everyday life. He believed it did not have any other choice.

We should note that this rather categorical provision, that the nobility had to use Lithuanian in the home environment like other social groups, was criticized by other young political parties and factions, and also by some of the confessional intelligentsia. For example, members of the Lithuanian Democratic Party (LDP)<sup>42</sup> understood quite well that it was almost impossible to expect the nobility to cross over quite quickly to using Lithuanian, that it would be a comparatively complex psychological step for them to take. Some members of the LDP thought that the nobility’s inclusion in the modern Lithuanian nation had to begin by applying different conditions. In his review of Dambrauskas-Jakštis’ *Głos Litwinów do młodej generacji magnatów, obywateli i szlachty na Litwie*, Jonas Vileišis, a member of the LDP, declared clearly that not just “the Lithuanian language” but also “the country’s political and material matters” should be the basis on which the nobility should be included in the fold of the modern Lithuanian nation.<sup>43</sup> Some members of the LDP also recommended that the nobility work

40 Dambrauskas, *Głos Litwinów*, 8.

41 Ibid.

42 For more on the activities of the Lithuanian Democrat Party, see Rimantas Miknys, *Lietuvos demokratų partija 1902–1915 metais* (Vilnius: A. Varno personalinė įmonė, 1995).

43 P-tis (Jonas Vileišis), “Svetimi laikraščiai,” *Varpas*, no. 8 (1903): 192.

together with the peasants to improve the country's economy: to construct roads together, to share the tax burden, to organize agricultural shows together, and establish agricultural schools.<sup>44</sup> However, the LDP placed most attention on judging the nobility's political activity. Demands were made that the nobility should not spread "Polish-ness in Lithuania, and should not consider it a province of Poland."<sup>45</sup> Some members of the LDP even formulated provisions like: "If we saw a noble from Lithuania working hard for the benefit of our land and nation, despite speaking Polish, we would be very pleased with him."<sup>46</sup> So, at least for some members of the LDP, the requirement to learn Lithuanian (and to make it their home/everyday language in the future) was not the main condition for the nobility's inclusion in the modern nation. It was expected first of all to support the national movement's political agenda, and to take part in cultural and economic cooperation with Lithuanian social figures.

We should note that after 1905, the Christian Democrats were also no longer united in their opinions, or more precisely, they changed their provisions. The clearest example was one of the most active members of the confessional intelligentsia, the writer Maironis (Jonas Mačiulis, 1862–1932). His poem "Jaunoji Lietuva" (Young Lithuania, [1907]) already demonstrated his changed approach to the nobility and its role in the modern nation.<sup>47</sup> In the poem, he explored the motif of a marriage between a noble and a young peasant girl. However, it was incorporated into a rather different body: the depiction of Lithuania's landowners was replete with critical and satirical implications.<sup>48</sup> In his earlier poem "Nuo Birutės kalno" (From Birutė Hill), the nobility were identified as "guests" from Kraków, they became a "visitor" in their own land.<sup>49</sup> His didactic-satirical poem of 1909 called "Raseinių Magdė" (Magdė from Raseiniai) generally exhibits a

44 "Lietuviai, neapsileiskime," *Lietuvos ūkininkas*, no. 5 (1905): 111.

45 Žilvitis (Juozas Rimša?), "Lietuvių tautai atgijant," *Varpas*, no. 2 (1904): 18.

46 Tiligentas (?), "Lietuvos bajorai, lenkai ir lietuviai," *Lietuvos ūkininkas* no. 3 (1906): 46.

47 Vanda Zaborskaitė, *Maironis* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1987), 226; Speičytė, *Anapus ribos*, 158.

48 Speičytė, *Anapus ribos*, 171.

49 *Ibid.*, 172. According to Jan Jurkiewicz, Maironis was especially saddened that the nobility had rejected the Lithuanian language, and thus called this social group "visitors from Kraków." Interestingly, Maironis was critical of both the landed and the lower gentry. However, according to Jurkiewicz, Maironis considered the primary condition for the nobility's inclusion in the modern Lithuanian nation the "transformation" of Lithuanian into their everyday language. But he did not make any strict demands of the nobility on this matter. For more, see Jan Jurkiewicz, "'Znad Biruty' – poemat Maironisa o stosunkach polsko-litewskich," in *Problemy narodowościowe*

completely different relationship with the aristocracy's cultural heritage in terms of values. In the poem, he expresses a new approach: he no longer hopes to "return" the nobility to the Lithuanian national movement.<sup>50</sup>

Having evaluated the landowners' position during elections to State Dumas (parliaments),<sup>51</sup> Dambrauskas-Jakštas also acknowledged that trying to "return" the nobility to the Lithuanian nation was more difficult than he earlier thought. Yet at the same time, unlike Maironis, he stressed that "saying that bringing them closer is no longer possible would be false; it is possible, but much more difficult now than it was before."<sup>52</sup> In the early twentieth century, other Christian Democrats fostered the hope that Polish-speaking nobility will join the modern Lithuanian nation. Pakalniškis and Kazimieras Prapuolenis were mentioned on numerous occasions, even though generally the program of the Union of Lithuanian Christian Democrats (LCDU) of 1907<sup>53</sup> clearly declared that this political faction intended to stage an ideological or actual battle against the section of the nobility that promoted the spread of a Polish political and cultural agenda among other social groups.

### The Expression of the Catholic Clergy's Opinions in the Periodical *Litwa*

The fact that the confessional intelligentsia, which after 1905 gradually formed into a separate political faction, was one of the ideological strata of modern Lithuanian nationalism that supported most actively not just the idea and promoted the need to involve the nobility in the national

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*Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX i XX wieku. Księga pamiątkowa dla Profesora Przemysława Hausera*, ed. Antoniego Czubińskiego (Poznań: Wydawnictwo naukowe UAM, 1996), 91–101.

50 Zaborskaitė, *Maironis*, 320.

51 According to the election procedures to the State Duma, electoral districts coincided with the governorates, while voters were divided into four curia: landed gentry, city inhabitants, peasants, and workers. Representatives elected from the landed gentry usually entered into joint-factions with Polish political parties. See Roman Jurkowski, *Sukcesy i porażki. Ziemianstwo polskie Ziemi Zabraných w wyborach do Dumy Państwowej i Rady Państwa 1906–1913* (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, 2009); Aldona Gaigalaitė, *Lietuvos atstovai Rusijos valstybės dūmoje 1906–1917 metais* (Vilnius: VPU leidykla, 2006), 305–9.

52 (Aleksandras Dambrauskas-Jakštas), Adomo Jakšto, *Trys pašnekesiai ant Nemuno kranto* (Kaunas: spaustuvė M. Sokolovskio ir A. Estrino, 1906), 43.

53 For more on the preparation and content of the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Union's agenda, see Regina Laukaitytė, "Pirmoji Lietuvos krikščionių demokratų partijos programa," *Lituanistica*, no. 2 (1993): 14–27.

movement, but also encouraged this social group to consider themselves a part of the modern Lithuanian nation, is very well illustrated in the Catholic clergy's participation in the publication of the newspaper *Litwa*. As has already been mentioned, *Litwa* was a Polish-language newspaper published in Vilnius in 1908–14, and one of its main aims was to see the “return” of the nobility to the Lithuanian nation. Its editor was Davainis-Silvestraitis who contributed actively to the confessional intelligentsia's periodical press, and wrote a memorial in 1906 *Apie lenkų kalbą Lietuvos bažnyčiose/De lingua Polonica in ecclesiis Lithuaniae: lietuvių raštas, paduotas Jo Šventenybei Pijui X. Popiežiui ir visiems S.R. katalikų bažnyčios kardinolams* (On the Polish Language in Lithuania's Churches / *De lingua Polonica in ecclesiis Lithuaniae: A Note from Lithuanians to His Holiness Pope Pius X and all the Cardinals of the Catholic Church*). He was also a member of the Committee for the Return of Lithuanian to Roman Catholic Churches in Lithuania.<sup>54</sup> In addition, he maintained ties with Dambrauskas-Jakštas and Pakalniškis, who, as has been mentioned, were the most active proponents of involving the nobility in the creation of the modern Lithuanian nation. Dambrauskas-Jakštas' 1902 publication *Głos Litwinów* might also have inspired some of the ideas published in *Litwa*.

It was already quite common practice in the national discourse to publish periodical publications not only in the “national” but also in some other languages. For example, the Social Democrats published newspapers both in Lithuanian and Polish, and after 1907 even in Yiddish. However, their position can be explained not just by the party's orientation towards the urban working class (along with the rural poor), among whom the number of Lithuanian speakers was quite small, but also by the party's composition: some members of the party leaned towards internationalist ideas, and later even became communists.<sup>55</sup> However, these cases do not mean that modern Lithuanian nationalism had any doubt over the choice of a national language. Conversely, as mentioned above, Lithuanian was considered the most important criterion for the national spirit. This is why any writings written by Lithuanians aimed at “their” community had to be in Lithuanian,

54 The aim of the Committee for the Return of Lithuanian to Roman Catholic Churches in Lithuania (Sąjungos grąžinimui teisių lietuviškai kalbai Rymo-katalikiškose bažnyčiose Lietuvoje) was to introduce the use of Lithuanian in additional Catholic Masses held in churches.

55 See Darius Staliūnas, “Rusų kalba kaip lietuvių ir žydų komunikacijos priemonė: laikraštis *Naš kraj* (1914),” in *Abipusis pažinimas: lietuvių ir žydų kultūriniai saitai*, Jurgita Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė (Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2010), 171.

and not in Polish or Russian. In the Lithuanian national discourse, Polish or Russian was used in essentially two cases. Firstly, when the writing was oriented towards a section of society which they also sought to keep as part of the modern Lithuanian nation. On the other hand, an attempt was made to present the provisions of the Lithuanian national movement to members of other national movements, in order to organize appropriate discussions.

The idea to publish a newspaper in Polish aimed at the nobility in order to present the programmatic provisions of modern Lithuanian nationalism was conceived after the Seimas (parliament) of Vilnius on 4–5 December 1905. Some members of the nobility who sought to establish closer ties with various Lithuanian political parties and factions also participated in the Great Seimas of Vilnius, where the political, cultural, and also to an extent the economic agenda of modern Lithuanian nationalism was presented. However, the idea of a newspaper for the nobility was realized only in 1908, and the main contributors and distributors were the confessional intelligentsia.<sup>56</sup> In many respect, *Litwa* was a reflection of the ideological provisions of the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats, who were forming a separate political faction. This periodical publication reprinted the programmatic articles of some of the most famous members of the intelligentsia, such as Dambrauskas-Jakštas, Pakalniškis, Prapuolenis, and Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas,<sup>57</sup> which focused on the question of “returning” the nobility to the modern Lithuanian nation.

*Litwa* sought to solve the problem of the nobility’s inclusion in the modern Lithuanian nation in a somewhat broader context. Over time, the question of how to “re-Lithuanianize” the “Polonised and Russified” (*sulen-kėjusių ir sugudėjusių*) Lithuanians in Vilnius and the Vilnius governorate

56 For example, in 1909, out of 476 subscribers to *Litwa*, as many as 315 were priests. Most of the Catholic clergy who subscribed to *Litwa* carried out pastoral work in the Kaunas and Suvalkai governorates. In 1911–13, out of the total number of subscribers to *Litwa*, sixty-eight percent were priests.

57 As Žaltauskaitė noticed, Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas (1869–1933), one of the most famous members of the Lithuanian Catholic intelligentsia, believed that only the lower gentry or the younger generation of the nobility could become involved in the formation of the modern Lithuanian nation, as these subgroups had been influenced by modernization processes, did not judge an individual just on their social origins, and could understand and accept the programmatic provisions of the Lithuanian national movement. See Vilma Žaltauskaitė, “Apie lietuvių idėjų kunigo Juozo Tumo-Vaižganto pažiūrose. Iki 1904 metų,” in *Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos*. T.8: Asmuo: tarp tautos ir valstybės, Egidijus Motieka (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1996), 253–54.

was discussed extensively in its articles. In other words, the newspaper first of all looked at how to incorporate areas that did not have many Lithuanian speakers into the “national territory.” The argument of ethnic origins was exploited to include both the nobility and the “Polonised and Russified” Lithuanians in the Lithuanian nation.<sup>58</sup> However, the fact that the nobility’s “nationalization” was being discussed together with problems of “national territory” suggests that the nobility’s inclusion in the modern Lithuanian nation was more relevant to the national discourse when the national movement’s formulated political agenda. The Lithuanian intelligentsia, who promoted the concept of the modern nation-state within Lithuania’s ethnographic boundaries, found it important to ensure that the Polish-speaking nobility was loyal to the Lithuanian national movement’s political agenda. The Catholic clergy, primarily Dambrauskas-Jakštas, Pakalniškis, and Prapuolenis, used the newspaper *Litwa* as a platform to encourage the nobility not to follow the historic tradition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.<sup>59</sup>

The newspaper’s team did not think of any new arguments or more effective ways to involve the nobility more successfully in the modern Lithuanian nation. The confessional intelligentsia, who contributed actively to *Litwa*, used arguments that had been popular in the national discourse in the 1880s and 1890s regarding the nobility’s ethnic origins,<sup>60</sup> interpreting the nobility’s “Polonization” as part of Polish national policy,<sup>61</sup> seeking to “smooth over” the “memory” of social and economic conflicts between the nobility and peasantry, and to actualize marriages between the peasantry and the nobility that would lead to a more successful “Lithuanian-ization” of the nobility and the formation and strengthening of the intelligentsia

58 See Olga Mastianica, *Bajorija lietuvių tautiniame projekte (XIX a. pabaiga-XX a. pradžia)* (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 2016), 121–32.

59 (Aleksandras Dambrauskas-Jakštas), “Program litewski,” *Litwa*, no. 7 (1911): 108; (Aleksandras Dambrauskas-Jakštas), “Litewskie zasady narodowe,” *Litwa*, no. 9 (1911): 137.

60 For example, Dziadulek Antanazy (Kazimieras Pakalniškis), “Niec o krwi i pochodzeniu ‘szlachcica’ i ‘chłopa,”” *Lud*, no. 5 (1912): 36. In 1912–13, Davainis-Silvestraitis published a newspaper in Vilnius called *Lud* (*Liaudis*, The People), where he devoted a great deal of attention to the use of Lithuanian during additional Catholic Masses. This newspaper generally described the Catholic clergy’s attempts to use Lithuanian during additional Mass held in Vilnius and in the Vilnius governorate.

61 N. Downar (Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis), “Czy sprawę polską można oprzec na szlachcie?,” *Litwa*, no. 9–10 (1913): 89; M. D. S. (Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis), “Zgoda jest porządana, ale czy możebna?,” *Litwa*, no. 5 (1913): 50.

as a separate social class.<sup>62</sup> In the case of *Litwa*, the focus was more on the distinct representation of the idea (the inclusion of the nobility in the modern Lithuanian nation) than the idea's implementation. However, the very fact of *Litwa's* existence, which was also encouraged by the confessional intelligentsia's position, illustrates very well that the Lithuanian national movement, like the nationalisms of most other ethnic groups in Central and Eastern Europe in the late Nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sought and deemed it necessary to involve the nobility in the formation of the modern nation.

## Conclusions

The aim of the Lithuanian national movement to involve the nobility in the formation of the modern Lithuanian nation was already apparent in the years when *Aušra* (1883–86) was being published. Ideological arguments were presented based on which the Polish-speaking nobility was to be considered a constituent part of the Lithuanian nation. The secular and confessional intelligentsia understood perfectly well that the language criterion would not be effective, as most of the nobility considered Polish to be their native language. That is why the argument of ethnic origins was put forward in the national discourse, based on which the nobility was held to be an inseparable part of the Lithuanian nation. During the years of *Aušra*, some of the intelligentsia tried to find an answer to the question of how to involve the nobility more successfully in the formation of the modern Lithuanian nation.

The right-wing stratum of modern Lithuanian nationalism, firstly the confessional intelligentsia which later formed into a separate political faction (the Christian Democrats), saw the nobility's "nationalization" as an important objective for the national movement. The confessional intelligentsia sought to prove that the nobility was indeed an ethno-genetic part of the nation, gradually involving itself in the formation of the modern nation, and supported the idea of Lithuanian statehood as a separate phenomenon from Polish statehood. In addition, it was particularly this ideological stream of modern Lithuanian nationalism that searched most extensively for more effective ways for the "more successful" involvement of

62 N. Downar (Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis), "Litwini są narodem arystokratycznym," *Litwa*, no. 27–28 (1913): 202–3; N. Downar (Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis), "Zanikanie antagonizmu stanowego," *Litwa*, no. 45–47 (1913): 315.

the nobility in the modern Lithuanian nation to take place. It was no accident that the editorial board of the newspaper *Litwa*, of which one of the main aims was to “return” the nobility to the Lithuanian nation, enjoyed strong support from the Catholic clergy, who were the newspaper’s main contributors and distributors.

In the national discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the confessional intelligentsia promoted the idea of national unity, in order to encompass different social classes. Members of the Catholic clergy were among the first to suggest rejecting the assessment of an individual based on social origins, and instead to judge them according to their level of education, mental abilities, and ordinary human values. On the other hand, the confessional intelligentsia widely promoted the need for the nobility to become involved in the creation of the Lithuanian intelligentsia. According to this group, the nobility’s inclusion in the formation of the Lithuanian intelligentsia would also put the Lithuanian national movement on equal term with other national movements forming across Central and Eastern Europe, where the participation of the nobility was indicative of the national movement’s political maturity. In addition, the nobility’s more active involvement in the Lithuanian national movement would mean that they could deny the prevailing argument in the Polish national discourse that the conflict between the Lithuanian and the Polish national movements was just social clash between the peasantry and the nobility, but actually a confrontation between two national groups.

Like most other modern Lithuanian nationalists, the Christian Democrats, with the Catholic clergy making up a clear majority, demanded first of all that the nobility abandon the historic tradition of the Polish-Lithuanian statehood, and instead be loyal to the political agenda promoted by the Lithuanian national movement. However, unlike other Lithuanian political parties and factions, the Christian Democrats intended to begin the nobility’s “nationalization” with the requirement that they begin using Lithuanian as their everyday language and at home. As a result, they greatly promoted marriages between the nobility and the Lithuanian-speaking peasantry. In the opinion of members of this ideological stratum, such marriages would lead to the more successful “re-Lithuanianization” of the nobility (the use of Lithuanian in private), and the formation of the Lithuanian intelligentsia as a separate social class.