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*Between hatred and cooperation: Stalinist
foreign policy in the Lithuanian and Polish
debate in emigration*

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Abstract

Stalin's foreign policy was an important factor for post-war Polish – Lithuanian relations. Stalin's regime left a deep scar in the memories of Lithuanians and Poles in emigration and brought about a change in their geopolitical imagination. By analysing the case of Lithuanian-Polish relationship in emigration, this article shows how Stalinism was manifested in Soviet foreign policy and demonstrates how this policy and its cruelties caused and even determined the political imagination of its neighbours in the West, the Poles and the Lithuanians. While this geopolitical imagination could not be legally achieved in occupied Lithuania and Poland, a Soviet satellite state, emigres in the West were undoubtedly thinking about a different outcome for their countries.

Keywords

Polish-Lithuanian relations, emigration, soviet foreign policy

1. Introduction

The 20th century was full of events that caused a rethinking of the relationship between the new states and nations in Europe. Stalin's foreign policy was a particularly important factor for Central-East Europe. World War II resulted in a large emigration from Poland in 1939. Soviet occupation and the ferocities of war descended on the Baltic States, including Lithuania, in 1940. In order to avoid deportation into the depth of the Soviet Union, some residents of the Lithuanian Republic chose another form of exile, i. e. emigration. The people left their homes and their small homeland and emigrated to the West because they hoped to avoid direct repressions and death. In the light of this real threat, Lithuanian-Polish relations, which had been broken, were reviewed anew. Concentration camps and mass murders, the signs of Stalin's policy, caused disagreements and mutual offenses to be forgotten. After a very strong hostility in the interwar period, mistakes were reconsidered, which led to an attempt to cooperate for expressing their common painful experiences to the world.

At the peace conferences, organized by the main winners after the end of the First World War, German National Socialism was condemned as the greatest evil. However, based on the principle that the winners are not judged, nothing was said about the crimes of the Soviet Union and Stalin. A feeling of hopelessness and Western treachery are depicted very well in the words of Henryk, the character in a book by Józef Mackiewicz:

I don't agree that Germans were the greatest enemy. The greatest one is the Bolsheviks because they are the most dangerous to every country. It's because the simplest formula that no Pole can be a German at the same time, because these conceptions are absolutely opposite. However, every Pole can be a communist at the same time. <...> We falsify reality when we put the equal sign between the German and Soviet occupations. German occupation makes us heroes, while the Soviet one makes us shit. Germans shoot at us, while Soviets attack us with bare hands. We shoot at Germans, while we get into the butt for the Soviets.¹

While trying to reform their identities, both Lithuanian and Polish emigres attempted to reveal information to the world about what was happening in their homelands behind the Iron Curtain. Speaking publicly about these things to the West became their only form of fighting.

This article has several aims: first, it reveals the manifestation of Stalinism in Soviet foreign policy and, secondly, it explains how this policy and its cruelties caused and even determined the political imagination of its neighbours in the

1 Józef Mackiewicz, Barbara Toporska, *Droga pani...* Londyn, 1998, p. 8.

West, the Poles and the Lithuanians. This can be achieved by analysing the case of Lithuanian-Polish relations. The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact caused the start of World War II in Poland, while Finland and the Baltic States became the victims of Stalinist aggression. If Stalinism is mainly described by depicting its actions within Soviet society, can it also be revealed by its external specific shapes? Occupied Lithuania and the satellite state of Poland could not legally implement the geopolitical changes they imagined, but emigres in the West were undoubtedly thinking about such changes.

Contemporary historians devote much attention to individual periods of Lithuanian-Polish relations. The interwar hostility has been quite sufficiently described by researchers of both countries. This is also true for Lithuanian-Polish relations in emigration during World War II². Nevertheless, despite very intensive Polish research on post-war emigration, the Lithuanian-Polish question has been analysed only by researchers at the journal "Kultura"³. This article also does not aim to answer many questions in great detail. It only attempts to show how the Lithuanians and the Poles recognised and evaluated Stalinist crimes after emigrating during World War II, as well as how they described them to the Western world and what guidelines they saw from the past.

2. Hostility

The period between the two world wars (1918-1939) was marked by a deep mistrust and hostility in Lithuanian-Polish relations. After World War I, the question of future borders was especially important for Poland, as well as Lithuania. Neither country hid its desire for Vilnius. At the end of 1918, when the Bolsheviks were approaching Vilnius, Lithuanian authorities moved to Kaunas. During the period of 1918-1920 Lithuanian foreign policy was clearly anti-Soviet. This was influenced by the march of the Red Army to the West and its invasion of Lithuania. During the year when Bolshevik and Polish troops were fighting each other in this region, Vilnius belonged to one side or to the other. On January 5, 1919, the Red Army entered the city. Even though there was no common agreement, the Polish Seimas decided that "North-Eastern provinces with the capital Vilnius" should be liberated⁴. In April of the same year, the Poles occupied Vilnius. The agreement about the final distribution of territories was not reached in either the countries nor in Versailles. Polish Marshal J. Pilsudski believed that the question about Vilnius would be solved only when Soviet Russia was defeated on the battle field.⁵ Inspired by this idea, he attacked the Bolsheviks in April 1920. The Poles were not successful in these battles. In exchange for permission to march to Poland through Lithuanian territory, Russia gave occupied Vilnius

.....
 2 Krzysztof Tarka, *Konfrontacja czy współpraca? Litwa w polityce Rządu Polskiego na uchodźstwie 1939–1945*, Opole, 1998; Dušan Segeš, *Litwa w polityce rządu PR gen. Władysława E. Sikorskiego (1939-1943)*, Warszawa, 2006, (MA thesis defended at Warsaw university in 2006).

3 Iwona Hofman, *Ukraina, Litwa, Białoruś w publicystyce Paryskiej "Kultury"*, Poznań, 2003; Grażyna Pomian, *Polska-sąsiedzi-Europa, Wizja Polski na łamach Kultury 1947–1976*, Liublin, 1999; Krzysztof Tarka, *Emigracyjna dyplomacja. Polityka zagraniczna Rządu RP na uchodźstwie 1945–1990*, Warszawa, 2003.

4 Timothy Snyder, *Tautų rekonstrukcija. Lietuva, Lenkija, Ukraina, Baltarusija 1569–1999*, Vilnius, 2008, p. 72.

5 Norman Davies, *Dievo žaislas. Lenkijos istorija*, Vilnius, 2002, pp. 433–443.

back to Lithuania. On July 12, a peace agreement was signed between Lithuania and Soviet Russia⁶, which acknowledged Vilnius, Gardinas and Ašmena for Lithuania. However, this agreement complicated the relationship between Lithuania and Poland. After a month, the front changed completely. The Poles stopped the attack of the Red Army not far from Warsaw and drove the Bolsheviks from Poland. Even though the Poles agreed to give Vilnius for Lithuania in the peace negotiation with Russia, Pilsudski had another plan in mind. On October 9, 1920, troops led by general L. Želigowski occupied Vilnius⁷. Protest notes and angry shouts did not help the Lithuanians. After three days Vilnius, together with the annexed territories, was formed as a separate administrative unit in Poland called Middle Lithuania. Because Lithuania could not acknowledge losing its historical capital Vilnius, diplomatic relations were broken between the two countries. The Lithuanian-Polish border was understood as a demarcation line. All attempts to make an agreement at the state level failed to lead to tangible results. The problem of Vilnius was emphasised both in the international arena and in internal life. The Lithuanian media was full of anti-Polish articles, notes and caricatures. Lines from the poem “mes be Vilniaus nenurimsim” (we won't calm down without Vilnius) by Petras Vaičiūnas were transmitted from person to person.⁸ The young generation was educated with the idea that a Polish person is an enemy. The “liberation” of Vilnius became a common national mission. During twenty years of independence, the Lithuanian-Polish conflict appeared to become frozen. Attacks against Poles became permanent in Kaunas and other Lithuanian towns, along with restrictions of Lithuanian rights in the Vilnius region⁹.

The internal situation in the country was very beneficial for the Soviet Union to expand its influence. Lithuanians were seeking to regain their capital and this impaired their ability to think broadly about the needs of the whole region. All international problems were viewed through the prism of the Vilnius question. Desperate attempts to raise this question in the West did not provide any benefit. Warsaw was supported by the West in the Lithuanian-Polish conflict¹⁰. The West was interested in a strong Poland as a mediator between Soviet Russia and Germany. According to this Western conception, Lithuania, together with Latvia, Estonia and Poland, were to be a buffer against Russia¹¹; however, the conflict over Vilnius created a break in the relationship between Kaunas and Warsaw and, accordingly, destroyed the Western plan. Lithuanian authorities in Kaunas did not receive support from the Western allies and directed their attention to the East, as the only one to whom they could plead the question of Vilnius' liberation. This was especially convenient for the Soviet Union, which had further plans for exporting revolution to Poland and Germany, as well as a gradual so-

6 For more see Česlovas Laurinavičius, *Lietuvos ir Sovietų Rusijos taikos sutartis*, Vilnius, 1992; Algimantas Kasparavičius, “Don Kichotas prieš Prometėją. Tarpukario lietuvių–lenkų iracionalioji diplomatija”, in *Darbai ir Dienos*, Kaunas, 2002, No. 30; Gintautas Vilkelis, *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos santykiai Tautų sąjungoje*, Vilnius, 2006.

7 Pranas Čepėnas, *Naujųjų laikų Lietuvos istorija*, t. II, Chicago, 1986, pp. 614–664.

8 See more on this: Krzysztof Buchowski, *Polacy w niepodległym państwie litewskim 1918-1940*, Białystok, 1999; Krzysztof Buchowski, *Panowie i żmogusy. Stosunki polsko-litewskie w międzywojennych karykaturach*, Białystok, 2004; Krzysztof Buchowski, *Szkice polsko-litewskie czyli o niełatwym sąsiedztwie w pierwszej połowie XX wieku*, Grado, 2005; Krzysztof Buchowski, *Litwomani i polonizatorzy. Mity, wzajemne postrzeżenie i stereotypy w stosunkach polsko-litewskich w pierwszej połowie XX wieku*, Białystok, 2006.

9 Bronius Makauskas, *Litwini w Polsce 1920-1939*, Warszawa, 1986; Bronius Makauskas, *Vilnijos lietuviai 1920-1939 metais*, Vilnius, 1991.

10 Algimantas Kasparavičius, *op.cit.*, p. 52.

11 Alfonsas Eidintas, Vytautas Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics*, Vilnius, 1998, p. 60.

vietization of Western states. The Baltic States were viewed as a bridgehead for further expansion, first, to Germany¹². In order to reach these aims, all means were possible. Large sums of money reached Lithuania from Moscow, which helped to destroy the natural political life, weaken defensive systems and encourage a spirit of “class conflict”. Contacts with almost all influential political parties were maintained, including parties on the right. First, Lithuanian communists received support; in addition to them, financial support went to officials who were ideologically different but supported the Soviet Union. It was probably easiest to affect nationalist Lithuanians over the issue of Polish influence. The Soviets contributed to an escalation in order to benefit from the conflict between the Lithuanians and the Poles. Often visits of Lithuanian authorities to the USSR embassy in Kaunas had some results, as the nationalists were convinced that Lithuania had to orientate itself towards the USSR and Germany because only their support could help to get Vilnius back and defend Lithuanian interests against Poland. In 1924, President A. Smetona wrote in the newspaper “Tautos vairas” (“Wheel of the Country”):

The question about Vilnius can be seriously solved only with the help of Russia <...> Great Poland with the supplements of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are the tool of France and England against Russia. The question arises: great Russia or great Poland? <...> If the question of Vilnius can be raised beneficially for Lithuania only with the help of Russia, this means that we have to be in some contact with Russia¹³.

The Soviets attempted to eliminate Christian Democrats from political life in Lithuania because their policy supported closer contact with Poland and this impeded the principle divide et impera used by Stalinism. This became especially apparent during the takeover in 1926, when the Soviets encouraged Smetona to reject the Christian Democrats¹⁴. This party was the political force which had a very long experience in managing the country and was much better organized than the Nationalists. In order to discredit the Christian Democrats, they were associated with Poland in the press. Both President A. Smetona and Prime Minister A. Voldemaras had their articles revised by the USSR embassy¹⁵. According to historian Z. Butkus, “*the Nationalists were not more seriously blamed even for destroying the Communist movement¹⁶, so that they, not Christian Democrats, had the authority. The Soviets suffered all this with their teeth clenched because they understood its extent very well*”¹⁷ All means were possible in order to reach the Soviet aim. There were no scruples if it meant keeping their influence on Lithuania’s ruling circles.

Despite Soviet efforts, the Lithuanian-Polish conflict reached its climax in 1938, but did not grow into a military conflict or annexation or occupation of Lithuania. On March 17, 1938, the Polish government delivered an ultimatum to Lithuania after a border conflict and urged it to establish diplomatic relations as quickly as possible. As soon as Lithuania received the ultimatum, the Lithuanian Communist Party encouraged a defense of the country’s independence. In Kau-

12 Zenonas Butkus, “SSRS intrigos Baltijos šalyse 1920 -1940”, in *Darbai ir Dienos*, Kaunas, 1998, No. 7 (16), p. 3.

13 A. Sm. «Kėlias Vilniui atgauti», in *Tautos Vairas*, 1924 05 29, No. 12, pp. 1–4.

14 Zenonas Butkus, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

15 Zenonas Butkus, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

16 After the takeover December 17, 1926, the Nationalists arrested the authorities of the Lithuanian Communist party. Rapolas Čamas, Kazys Giedrys, Juozas Greifenbergeris and Karolis Požėla were fusilladed.

17 Zenonas Butkus, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

nas, they disseminated the idea that the Nationalist government sold the country to Poland and another union would be made in the future¹⁸. The alternative of a union with the Soviet Union was suggested, but the country's authorities did not act on this proposal. The idea of getting Vilnius back was regretfully given up and the Polish ultimatum was accepted. This turning point broke a long-lasting diplomatic silence. Credentials were exchanged and Colonel Kazys Škirpa became the first Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in Poland on March 31. Polish minister Franciszek Charwat came from Warsaw to Kaunas. Despite varied public opinion,¹⁹ the bilateral relationship started to improve. The new period in the relationship of the two neighbours was not favourable to the Soviet Union because it destroyed its method of divide et impera.

However, there was not enough time to recover trust and normalise the relationship between the countries. World War II and the occupation of Poland, the new status of the Vilnius region and finally the occupation of Lithuania complicated the situation and left the solution to very serious problems for the future.

3. Communication

The beginning of World War II in September 1939 and the agreements signed by Germany and the Soviet Union affected the lives of Central-East European countries directly and destined the disappearance of some of them from the political map of Europe for 50 years. On August 23, 1939, the territories divided by the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact expressed the future dependance of Lithuania and Poland. According to the secret protocols of this agreement signed on September 28, Lithuania came under the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. Poland was divided into two halves along Narew, Wisla and Sane rivers.

When Germany attacked Poland, Polish political circles started immediately emigrating to the West. On September 30, a government in emigration was formed in Paris, headed by Władisław Sikorski. After two weeks, Soviet troops invaded the eastern part of Poland. In the same way, its Lithuanian neighbour was totally occupied and divided in several weeks. The Vilnius question appeared again in the international arena. The Soviet Union offered to return Vilnius and the Vilnius region to Lithuania in exchange for allowing military garrisons to enter the country. On October 10, Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Juozas Urbšys signed an agreement with the Soviet Union²⁰. It seemed that trust in the Soviets and the good will of Stalin were most important. Even though military garrisons were a possible step towards occupation, the authorities did not want to believe that would happen. Trying to recreate his feelings, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time wrote the following:

<...>the destiny of the country was dependent only on the Soviet Union, on its good or bad will. If it keeps (optimistical thoughts swirl in my head when I fly) , if it really keeps to the provisions of the Mutual Help Agreement, respects Lithuanian independence and old agreements, does not interfere in Lithuanian internal affairs <...>, those ten years, I say to myself, for which the Soviet Union garrisons enter

18 Giedrius Janauskas, «Jėga nėra teisė (1938 metų Lenkijos ultimatumas ir Lietuvos visuomenė)», in *Darbai ir dienos*, No.30, Kaunas, 2002, p. 115.

19 Giedrius Janauskas, *op. cit.*, pp. 90 –120.

20 Regina Žepkaitė, *Vilniaus istorijos atkarpa 1939–1940*, Vilnius, 1990.

Lithuania, will soon pass. <...> Oh, Vilnius!!! An incredible occasion to get it back! ²¹

Lithuanians finally got back their historical capital after nineteen years of talking about its liberation from the Poles. Despite Polish dissatisfaction, the joy of Lithuanians was immeasurable. Observing the events in Lithuania, Polish military attaché in Kaunas Leon Mitkiewicz wrote the following:

The tone of the Lithuanian and Latvian press suddenly became awful. Indulgence, humbleness, efforts to get the favour of Moscow, the Kremlin or Stalin. Moscow gives a piece of Polish territory with Vilnius and requires a railway line to Liepaja through Vilnius, a military base in Radviliškis, accepting Soviet military garrison of 30 thousand soldiers and four times bigger business scope. All in all, it is an absolute Russian protectorate. ²²

On October 13, Polish minister F. Charwat, after agreeing with the government in Paris by telegraph, presented a protest note to the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry over Vilnius and the occupation of Vilnius region. J. Urbšys rejected the note as absolutely groundless. According to the agreement of July 12, 1920 between Lithuania and the Soviet Union, Vilnius was an integral part of the state of Lithuania and the capital of Lithuania. In addition, Lithuania did not acknowledge the Polish government-in-exile in Paris, since Poland had ceased to exist as a state on September 18, 1939²³. This response shows that at the beginning of the war, Lithuanian authorities really imagined that the country could remain neutral and that the division of Poland was the reward for its imperialist policy with respect to neighbouring countries. After this reply, F. Charwat and L. Mitkiewicz left Kaunas for Stockholm. Diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland were again broken after a short period of time ²⁴.

Despite the occupation and division of the country, the Polish government-in-exile headed by W. Sikorski was planning to form a Central Europe federation in the future; therefore, it was important for it to maintain as good a relationship as possible with its neighbouring countries. Already in October, 1939, W. Sikorski expressed the idea of a possible federation, the centre of which would be Poland. Its union with Lithuania and Czechoslovakia or Czech and Slovakia separately would be a strong force against Germany and Russia²⁵. Poland was the first to experience blows from these countries, it was also the first to understand that neither Russia nor Germany could be its allies. The Poles' first meetings with Lithuanian diplomats began by expressing such feelings. On October 20, the Polish representative Feliks Frankowski met the Lithuanian ambassador in France Petras Klimas. Frankowski wanted to find out whether the Lithuanian government would agree to take a Polish delegate, who would be the mediator between both governments. P. Klimas expressed his and the government's wonder about F. Charwat's quick departure and even suggested him as a mediator if the latter wanted to come back²⁶. The belief in Lithuanian statehood was apparent.

Other meetings of Lithuanian and Polish diplomats took place mainly in Bern, Switzerland. Polish representatives devoted the greatest attention to the situation in the Vilnius region while talking to Lithuanian diplomats Jurgis Savickis

21 Juozas Urbšys, *Atsiminimai*, Chicago, 1988, p. 68.

22 Leon Mitkiewicz, *Kauno atsiminimai*, Vilnius, 2002, p. 307.

23 Leon Mitkiewicz, *op.cit.*, p. 313.

24 Krzysztof Tarka, *Konfrontacja czy współpraca*, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Leon Mitkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 313; Krzysztof Buchowski, *Litwa wobec*, *op.cit.*, p. 334.

25 Dušan Segeš, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

26 Dušan Segeš, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

and Jurgis Šaulys. Until the occupation of Lithuania in June, 1940, several meetings of Lithuanian and Polish diplomats took place; however, they did not have noticeable results in the relationship between the two countries.

The September catastrophe made the Polish government-in-exile rethink the relationship with its neighbours. For a while it was clear that the previous imperialist policy did not have any meaning. W. Sikorski government started creating plans for the future. At the end of 1939, it seemed that the best shape of a future Poland would be a federation with its neighbouring countries. The complicated period influenced decisions about the states and the conditions according to which they were to form the imaginary federation were postponed to the future. Czechoslovakia was viewed as an equal partner with Poland²⁷. In meetings with the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the idea that the Poles create a federation of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary was proposed, “*the purpose of which would be to maintain balance between Germany and USSR. The Poles agreed to this conception*”²⁸. Negotiation with the Czechoslovaks was very difficult. Former President of Czechoslovakia Edvard Beneš was in emigration and had become a partner of Poland, but his pro-Russian position was not acceptable for the Poles. He thought that a Central Europe Union might be established only with the agreement of the Soviet Union. Even though the Poles did not want to make the Soviets angry, they did not want to align all their actions with them, as E. Beneš did. An agreement was not reached. Beneš evaluated the attempts of these neighbours quite critically. He wrote in a letter to J. Šaulys:

“Polish-zheck and other confederations are based on fashion. It is too early to think about them. The British allowed the Poles, Czechs and other small countries to play with the idea of confederation,; however, it is doubtful whether they themselves believe in these ideas. Small Antante (may it rest in peace?) and Poland will not counterbalance either Vokia, or Russia, as the past shows. <...> We, Lithuania, are small. <...> First, we have to recover our government and then to think where to turn the wheel of the country: to the South, to the West or to the North, just not to the East.”²⁹

In regards to Lithuania, the Polish position was very different. Kazimierz Sosnowski's position “*either annexation or union, or regaining what we had before the war*”³⁰ depicts very well the opinions of what to do with Lithuania at the intersection of the year 1939/1940. It was the only way to convince the Lithuanians to form a union with the Poles, i.e. to use as leverage the aggression of the Soviet Union and Germany. Neither of these variants was suitable for the Lithuanian side. The Polish appeal to the grand and glorious tradition of the Republic of Both Nations [the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth] also did not provide the expected result. The Lithuanians had learned to mistrust this neighbour during the independence period and “were keeping vigil” later on, while the talks about the Republic of Both Nations were first associated with the dominance of the Polish language and culture and the dangers of polonization. Without mutual trust, consensus about the future was delayed by the problem of Vilnius. Neither side wanted to give it up. At the beginning of the war it was an undiscussed question

27 Marek K. Kaminski, *Edward Beneš kontra gen. Władysław Sikorski*, Warszawa, 2005, pp. 21–58.

28 Tadeusz Kisielewski, «Federaciniai planai Vidurio rytų Europoje ir Baltijos valstybių klausimas Antrojo pasaulinio karo metais Lenkijos politikos kontekste» in *Lietuva Antrajame pasauliniame*, Vilnius, 2007, p. 170.

29 A. Smetonos laiškas J. Šauliui, 1942 06 15, in *A. Smetonos korespondencija 1940–1944*, Kaunas, 1999, p. 79.

30 Dušan Segeš, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

4. Repentance

The occupation of the Baltic States in June 1940 greatly changed the situation in the region. Lithuania was losing its independence and a large number of its representatives moved to the West. President Antanas Smetona left the country. Fleeing Stalinist repression, A. Smetona went to Lisbon in January 1941 and was planning a trip to the other side of the Atlantic Ocean from there. In the capital of Portugal, the President met the representatives of the Polish government-in-exile several times. After a longer talk, the Polish government-in-exile representative Stanisław Tyszkiewicz expressed in a report to London: A. Smetona “agreed in a longer monologue that the creation of a Lithuanian state grounded on the narrow national socialist base was a mistake and he came back to broader conceptions in his talk. He did not hide the approach of becoming closer to Poland. He talked about its present position with great respect³¹”. He also emphasised his great disappointment with Russia and Germany and the belief that it is possible for Lithuania and Poland to agree before the end of the war³². It seems that in the presence of a Europe divided by the Soviets and the Nazis, the President rethought established solutions. In other words, Stalinist terror and dramatic destiny brought those who had been harmed closer together. The creation of nationalist states, which provoked the discord between the neighbours, now seemed to be a decision that lacked foresight and that determined the disappearance of both Lithuania and Poland from the political map of Europe. This conversation with the Poles might have marked a completely different perspective in the relationship between Lithuania and Poland. Which broader conceptions did the President have in mind? Seven months after the conversation in Lisbon, an article appeared in the Polish press, an interview with A. Smetona titled “An every day independent Polish courier in Argentina”³³. A. Smetona talked about possible closer relations between Lithuania and Poland in the future and viewed the Polish-Lithuanian union positively because it could ensure a common strong state³⁴.

This information shocked the Lithuanian exile Catholic press. The daily newspaper “Draugas” reprinted the above-mentioned article in parts and questioned with irony and resentment why Poland needed Lithuania so much. Maybe would it be enough if it “gave” or “borrowed” one more Pilsudski?³⁵ There was an internal struggle among Lithuanians in exile and one of the most important reproaches against A. Smetona was his favourable attitude towards the Poles. The Polish representative of the government-in-exile M. Arciszewski noted according to the information he had that Smetona’s wish to have a closer relationship betwe-

31 «S. Tyszkiewicz’iaus ataskaita apie pasikalbėjimą su A. Smetona». 1941 01 20 in *Darbai ir Dienos*, Kaunas, 2009, No. 52, p. 248.

32 Tarka, K., *op. cit.*, p. 72.

33 M. Arciszewski laiškas Lenkijos Respublikos pasiuntinybei Buenos Aires, 1941 11 11, *AAN (Archiwum Akt Nowych)*, AIH (Akta Instytutu Hoovera), MSZ (Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych), b. 199, p. 493.

34 “Draugo” straipsnio “Prezidentas Smetona turės pasiaiškinti” vertimas į lenkų kalbą. 1941 11 06, *AAN*, AIH, MSZ, b. 199, pp. 494–496.

35 *Op. cit.*, pp. 494–496.

en the states was viewed negatively in Lithuanian society³⁶. Just as before the war, the Polish factor played a very important role in forming a favourable and unfavourable image of a person in the country. Being pro-Polish contributed to the latter.

Looking towards a future relationship with Lithuanians, the government-in-exile paid attention to two factors: the favour of President A. Smetona and the aggression of Stalinist Soviet Union. It was believed that after the occupation in 1940, the Lithuanians understood very well that the USSR was not their partner and their ally and that the only way to survive was to have a union with Poland. The programs for how to do this changed according to the circumstances and were dictated by events of the war³⁷. However, the Poles themselves viewed Germany as their main enemy. After the Wehrmacht's attack on the Soviets in 1941, the USSR became an ally of Britain and France. On July 30, the so-called Sikorski–Majski agreement was signed³⁸. In addition to this agreement, a military agreement was added on August 14, which allowed the organization of a Polish army in the USSR territory³⁹. These agreements complicated Lithuanian-Polish negotiations because the latter focused on the Soviets, while Lithuanians paid more attention to Germany, which had allowed the formation of a temporary government at the beginning of USSR-German war.

In early 1942, negotiations between the Lithuanians and the Poles revived. This was influenced by more information about negotiations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union and a lack of clarity as to whether the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR would be acknowledged. The latter pressed the West to acknowledge the borders that were in place before the war with Germany. Poland understood the consequences of this acknowledgement to Lithuania and supported the Lithuanians. Negotiations were held in London, Washington, Bern and the Vatican⁴⁰. Negotiations were complicated by the absence of a clear political centre that could represent the Lithuanian state in emigration, by the Vilnius question and by information about the participation of Lithuanians in persecuting Poles. However, when General W. Sikorski, the head of the Polish government, died in a tragic accident in July 1943, Polish foreign policy began to be destined by current events, foremost, by the relationship of Poland and the Soviet Union. The question of Lithuania was put aside.

5. Recognition

Until the end of the war, Poland viewed Germany as its biggest enemy; however, the events of 1943 started changing some conceptions and opinions about the Soviets. Until this time they were allies and fought against a common enemy;

36 M. Arciszewski laiškas Lenkijos Respublikos ambasadai Vašingtone, 1941 11 07, AAN, AIH, MSZ, b. 199, p. 524.

37 Projekt memorandum w sprawie Litwy, 1941, AAN, AIH, S. Mikołajczyk Papers, b. 37, p. 595; Slaptas St. Hempel raportas apie pasikalbėjimą su P. Klimu, Groswald ir Lepik, 1941 10 07, AAN, AIH, MSZ, b. 4, p. 696; Taktyka w sprawie litewskiej, 1941 12 17, AAN, AIH, MSZ, b. 4, p. 911.

38 W. Sikorski was the head of the Polish exile government in London, while I. Majski was the USSA ambassador in London

39 Eugeniusz Duraczyński, *Układ Sikorski – Majski. Wybór dokumentów*. Warszawa, 1990, pp. 79–80.

40 Krzysztof Tarka, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–123.

but in April 1943 the Poles felt that they were betrayed. On April 13, Berlin radio announced information about massive burial sites of Polish officers in Katyn. It was maintained that they were killed by the Soviets in April, 1940. The Soviet Union denied this and maintained that the Germans killed them in the winter of 1941. Polish writer Józef Mackiewicz, who participated in the exhumation, described the views the following way:

<...>Doctor Wodzinski continued examining the corpses and, in my presence, once, three, five times pulled the newspapers from the pockets of the corpses with the dates of April-May of 1940. Then I understood an undeniable fact. <...> Such an amount of newspapers would not have remained in the pockets of the prisoners, as the Soviet version claimed, if they had been alive in August 1941. <...> keeping old newspapers would be nonsense, an absurdity, especially keeping in mind everyday world events"⁴¹.

The facts showed that Stalin had the Polish prisoners of war liquidated calmly. More than four thousand officers were killed by a single bullet to the heads. Twice that many just disappeared in Russia. When the Polish government-in-exile started talking about these crimes publicly, the USSR immediately broke diplomatic relations. A couple of months later, after W. Siokorski's death, Stanisław Mikołajczyk became the Prime Minister and attempted to normalise relations with the Soviets. The conceptions of Central East Europe federation or confederation, created earlier, were put aside⁴². The Poles imagined that the Baltic States would inevitably have to participate in a Central East Europe union; therefore, discussing this question publicly might seem to Stalin as a pretension to his territories.

Postwar destinies were different for Lithuania and Poland. The first one was incorporated into the Soviet Union. Its representatives might have disappeared from the political game if the greatest countries had acknowledged the incorporation. This did not happen and Lithuania had support in the West until 1990. Poland preserved a nominal sovereignty but remained under direct Soviet rule. The influence of Polish diplomats on any event in Europe was very restricted. Their government-in-exile lost previous partners. Former allies even did not communicate with it. The international isolation of the government-in-exile began. When the Eastern front was coming back to Germany, Poland and some Lithuanians imagined that they would have a part in the European political game. In 1941 President A. Smetona expressed his admiration for the status and significance of the London government as one of the allies, something which Lithuania could not boast of during the whole period of the war. However, the game moved in another direction. In February 1945, in Yalta, the destiny of Poland was decided without taking into consideration the will of Poles in emigration. Later on Polish emigres would call it one more division of the Republic. The new Polish-USSR border was established at the conference and the subordination of the Warsaw government to Moscow was acknowledged. The head of the government-in-exile S. Mikołajczyk came back to Poland. On July 5, 1945, British ambassador Owen O'Malley and the USA *charge d'affair* Rudolph Schoenfeld announced after they came to the residency of the government in London that they recognized the government operating in Poland. The same evening, the Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Tarnowski got an official note from the White House, in which the Polish go-

41 «Dym nad Katyniem» in *Lwów i Wiłno*, 1947 01 19, No. 10.

42 Krzysztof Tarka, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-147.

vernment in Warsaw was recognized⁴³. Finally, the People's Republic of Poland was accepted into the United Nations Organization.

That the allies did not question the agreements reached in Yalta was more painful for the Poles than the fact that Poland was lost to the Soviets. The Yalta agreements were viewed as right and unquestionable in the West⁴⁴. The Polish government-in-exile felt absolutely betrayed by the allies.

Moreover, the situation in the country was not joyful. After coming back to Poland, S. Mikołajczyk expected to represent the opposition against the communists and to start creating the future of the homeland after winning a legal election. The Polish government-in-exile sought to regain the former eastern territories with Lvov and Vilnius. This meant that the pre-war Polish-USSR borders were discussed. It was expected that the Soviet army would have to leave the territory of Poland and then free elections would take place. All political Polish parties working in emigration held to these ideas, no matter how they viewed the situation in the country itself⁴⁵. However, reality was terrible. Poland was destroyed, humiliated and unrecognizable on the map. It lost its Eastern territories to Soviet Lithuania, Belorussia and Ukraine, but it received some German territories in the West as compensation. Along with adjusting to this situation, it was trying to restore its economy, at the same time carrying out ethnic cleansing of the south-eastern territories. The Soviets used the greatest Polish nationalists without any scruple in order to create a new Poland. The best example of this is Stanisław Grabski. He helped to establish the interwar borders of Poland and, in 1924, he was a devoted planner of a policy of national assimilation. After World War II, his devotion went to the communist side. Stalin used him as a well-known authority of the Polish right. The latter also used Stalin to create his plans for a "nation state"⁴⁶. After the war, Polish communists and nationalists agreed that the nation exists in the people themselves; therefore, in order to avoid conflict, it is simply necessary to move the people. In the Poland of that time, which had obtained new territories, this plan could actually be implemented. Since the interwar period, the biggest conflicts were between the Poles and the Ukrainians, S. Grabski suggested to Stalin their overall relocation and devised a programme to carry this out⁴⁷. The price of massive Polish and Ukrainian relocation was thousands of victims, hundreds of thousands of deportations with the result of the creation of the new, compact, national Polish state governed by the communists, which matched their policy with the East. In this way Stalinism used nationalists in order to implement the plan of Yalta. The aim justified all means.

6. Speaking

In 1947 Europe was destroyed and humiliated. Its Eastern part was occupied by Stalin's army. In the West the chaos was greatly increased by masses of peo-

43 Andrzej Friszke, *Życie polityczni emigracji*, Warszawa, 1999, pp. 23–28; Paweł Machcewicz, *Emigracja w polityce międzynarodowej*, Warszawa, 1999, pp. 7–20.

44 Krzysztof Tarka, *op. cit.*, p.16.

45 Rafał Habielski, *Emigracja*, Warszawa, 1995, p. 12.

46 Timothy Snyder, *op.cit.*, p. 204.

47 Timothy Snyder, *op.cit.*, p. 205.

ple in refugee camps, which were filled with those who had fled from the Eastern territories. Germany tried to rise from the ruins. Eastern and Central Europe was shocked by the decisions of the great countries after the last meeting of the allies. The ceding of former territories to the Soviets and, in the Lithuanian case, direct subordination of countries was perceived as a betrayal. Therefore, the only hope to change the situation was a new conflict between the West and the Soviet Union. Both Polish and Lithuanian emigres were waiting for a new war. In the same year, S. Mikołajczyk fled from Poland to the USA. He was threatened with death after the communists won fraudulent elections. Therefore, he emigrated to the West in order to tell the world what was happening behind the Iron Curtain. Such individual escapes happened, however, they were not common. As Denis de Rougemont wrote in his article in the Lithuanian emigrants' magazine *Aidai*,

"We all have to admit that Europe is ill. The first impression that we get analysing it may be described in the following words: while observing it you can feel that it lost the war. <...>Before this war Europe was an intensive fireplace, the glow of which spreaded into all continents. Then everybody was shocked by Valery's phrase that Europe is a small Asian peninsula. Nowadays, when you look from America and, in my opinion, from Russia, Europe seems to be smaller than it really is. It is physically pressed by two huge empires, the enormous shadows of which fall on it, tattered and nibbled, morally closed up in itself. Even more, for the sake of two empires, it denied its ambitions, dreams and certain convictions, which previously were used to describe its genius"⁴⁸

At this time and in these circumstances, a monthly magazine "Kultura" appeared, edited by Jerzy Giedroyc. The magazine not only reflected the period very well but also became an oracle, predicting the future of the whole region.

During the war, Poland lost more than 20 per cent of the country's residents, including millions of Jews who were killed, and 47 per cent of its pre-war territory to the Soviet Union. Lithuania regained Vilnius and a part of the territory that was promised in Riga in 1920, but it did not participate in the political game of the world. Emigres from both countries were not satisfied with the existing conditions. In various conversations, the diplomats of both countries exchanged opinions and agreed that cooperation was the only way to a better future. The ideas of a Central East Europe federation were reborn. However, the possibilities of agreement were complicated by the fact that Lithuanian emigres were very heterogeneous. The Polish emigres were more numerous and also faced these difficulties, which often became a problem. The Polish emigration was subdivided into "impregnable" London and "Kultura," which was open for contact with the home country and was more sophisticated⁴⁹ The war and the post-war situation of Europe emphasised the lack of strategy in creating a clear relationship between the Poles and their Eastern neighbours. Polish emigres throughout the world were concerned with the borders of the new state. However, the majority did not question the necessity to get back the pre-war borders of the country. This goal was maintained by the Polish government-in-exile. Lithuanians also understood the need to negotiate with their neighbours, but they never even considered the possibility of giving Vilnius back to the Poles. Thus the Poles had to resign themselves to the loss of territories.

When it became clear that Poland was in the Soviet sphere of influence and its Eastern border had been moved to the West, its enemies were re-evaluated. Divided Germany now seemed menacing, as long as it might want to regain the

⁴⁸ Denis de Rougemont, "Europa Serga", in *Aidai*, 1947 05, No. 2.

⁴⁹ Iwona Hofman, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

lost territories up to the Oder-Neisse line if the geopolitical situation in Europe were to change⁵⁰. However, despite the political, religious, ideological or national convictions of the Lithuanian and Polish emigres (except communists), all of them were unified by hostility to communism. The Soviets remained enemy number 1 among Lithuanian and Polish emigres until 1990.

But let us come back to “Kultura”. Why is it distinctive?

J. Giedroyc was a Lithuanian Pole, originating from Minsk. Throughout his life, he admired J. Pilsudski and his nostalgic vision of a multinational Poland. He was opposed to blind nationalism, as well as to communism. J. Giedroyc expected that the new Poland would be something absolutely different and that preparation for it should start immediately. In emigration he attempted to influence the country rather than create an alternative state in the West. This was the main difference between him and other emigres. The goal was defined as living in the country, and this became the main orientation of the monthly magazine⁵¹.

J. Giedroyc and his co-workers imagined that one day the Soviet Union would collapse. As a consequence, quite a complicated situation would result in Central East Europe, and this should be thought through in advance. After regaining independence, the Soviet republics would be eager to change the borders agreed to in Yalta; therefore, it was necessary to think about the perspectives of Poland. The novelty of the editor's ideas was that he viewed the territories given to the Soviet Union as open to debate. At a suitable time they could become parts of independent Lithuania, Belorussia and Ukraine. J. Giedroyc imagined that the mission of “Kultura” was to break various stereotypes prevalent for centuries, to contemplate the past, to learn from mistakes and to acquaint the Polish emigration with the aims of the neighbouring countries. The members of “Kultura” understood that only after accepting the present territorial dependence and resigning itself with the loss of Vilnius and Lvov would the future Poland be able to form normal contact with its neighbours. Otherwise, the situation after World War I would easily be repeated when the debated territories complicated developing relations, split the region and finally ended in their division. This time the situation possibly could be even more complicated, as Soviet Lithuania, Ukraine and Belorussia tried to integrate the newly acquired territories.

In his autobiography, Giedroyc remembered that “*one of the most important Kultura publications was the one where we announced the letter by priest Majewski on this question. Later Kultura accepted the considered position that Lvov had to be Ukrainian and Vilnius Lithuanian*”⁵².

Józef Majewski's letter to the editors was only a couple pages long, but it evoked a huge reaction. In several days the editors received many letters that demanded a retraction of the printed information. Because of this text, forty readers dropped subscriptions to the journal. However, new readers found this edition. A large number of them were Ukrainians, who started learning Polish in order to be able to read the mentioned text⁵³. What was so special about J. Majewski's letter?

Reporting on a Polish emigre that was held in the USA, J. Majewski was dissatisfied with the following ideas: “we'll demand the recognition of the border up to the Oder and Neisse and a border with Lvov and Vilnius in the East, as well as

50 Cat., «Stanisław Mikołajczyk», in *Lwów i Wilno*, 1946 11 17, No. 2, p. 1.

51 Jerzy Giedroyc, *Autobiografia na cztery ręce*, Warszawa, 1994, pp. 152–153.

52 Jerzy Giedroyc, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

53 Andrzej S. Kowalczyk, *Giedroyc i “Kultura”*, Wrocław, 1999, p. 150.

Western Prussians”⁵⁴. These plans seemed absolutely unreal to the author of the letter, especially taking into consideration the political situation of the time. Therefore, J. Majewski explained his vision:

“Vilnius in the North and Lvov in the South, these cities “open to Polishness” caused us the most problems and enemies. Yes, as we, the Poles, have the right to Wrocław, Szczecin or Gdansk, the Lithuanians behave correctly trying to regain Vilnius and the Ukrainians Lvov. <...> Lithuanians will never forget Vilnius and we’ll never agree with each other as long as we don’t give this Vilnius to them. On the other hand, Ukrainians will never present us Lvov. After the end of the last war, the Eastern parts were totally “cleansed” of Poles. When we approach World War III and the destruction of the Soviet Union, our appetite for Vilnius and Lvov will be satisfied. <...> Then our neighbours from the East and from the North will award us with trust”⁵⁵.

The reaction to this letter demonstrated that this question was very controversial among the Polish emigres. The editors decided to present their opinions. J. Giedroyc wrote a letter to J. Mieroszewski in London asking not only to comment on J. Majewski’s letter but also to write a response to everyone who was dissatisfied with the dissemination of these ideas. In the letter to his colleague, he was asked to write about “free speech”⁵⁶ and that various opinions may be presented in the publication. The editors did not intend to change this principle. In the same letter, J. Giedroyc encouraged his colleague to use the situation and to formulate the exact point of view of the journal towards Vilnius and Lvov. J. Mieroszewski fulfilled the editor’s request. In January of the next year, “Kultura” published the editors’ response to the situation, which explained that Poland could only become total independence in a Europe joined by strong federal connections. Ukraine, Belorussia and all the countries that had independence until World War II would have to participate in this federation. The freedom of these now-occupied countries is now very important for Poland. And good relations with its neighbours is possible only by not looking back⁵⁷. This point of view was “different from most Polish emigration because it emphasised new ideas. They actually won. Contemporary Polish-Lithuanian relations are based on this conception. He managed to reeducate the Polish political class”⁵⁸.

How did the Lithuanian emigration react to that?

Despite the fact that all hatred in Lithuanian exile was directed towards the Soviets and Lithuanian representatives had meetings with the Poles, Lithuanian society had not forgotten the pervasive idea during the interwar period that a Pole is a cunning enemy. Just by looking through the pages of the 1951 Lithuanian editions of “Elta”, one forms the opinion that all Polish speeches related to Lithuania were observed and reported. “The old pre-war Poland from Daugava to Lvov is much more valuable for the Polish. It seems that the Polish government-in-exile keeps to this opinion in London as well”⁵⁹. In the next number of the same journal, the plan of “the great Poland” can be found. It is written there: “In 1918 and 1939 Poland collapsed, in the emigrants’ opinion, because it was too weak and too small; therefore, they want to enlarge it sufficiently to counterbalance the in-

54 Józef Majewski, «List do redakcji», in *Kultura*, 1952, No. 11 (61).

55 Józef Majewski, *op. cit.*

56 [76 laiškas Drogi panie] Jerzy Giedroyc – Juliusz Mieroszewski. *Listy 1949 – 1956*, Warszawa, 1999, p. 242.

57 «Nieporozumienie czy tani patriotyzm? Nota redakcji», in *Kultura*, 1953, No. 1 (63).

58 Interview with Tomas Venclova (b. 1937), 2008 12 06, New Haven.

59 «Aktualėja R.Vokietijos–Lenkijos sienų klausimas», in *Elta*, 1951 03 16, No. 6 (93).

fluence of the Germans and the Soviets"⁶⁰. Similar notes in the press complicated the formation of a warmer mutual relationship. Patriotic Lithuanians started joining such organizations as "Lithuanian Union of Vilnius Region", the aim of which was

"to remain vigilant in guarding of Vilnius region, to try to stop the pretensions of Polish and Belorussian organizations and individuals towards the Vilnius region, to observe their actions through the press and to join the fight in other ways for the reestablishment of Lithuanian sovereignty"⁶¹.

Similar ideas expressing pre-war antipathies were quite a common phenomenon among Lithuanians. Therefore, the new vision of the future relationship expressed by J. Giedroyc had to be accepted much more favourably. Even though there were not many contacts between the Lithuanian emigration and "Kultura", today the question arises as to how much the Lithuanian emigres read this publication. Now it can be stated that it had a great impact on cooperation between the states.

"Kultura" not only wrote about the neighbouring countries to acquainted readers with their situations, but also they themselves could publish articles in the magazine. The editor evaluated the debt of the Poles, lasting for several hundreds of years, to their neighbours in the East and their scornful point of view towards ethnic minorities⁶². Various writers, poets, and publicists from the Eastern part usually found space in the pages of the publication. This was the only way to join forces and Poland could become the mediator between the East and the West. As G. Pomian claims, because of this possibility, the Poles themselves should get acquainted with various opinions, which were formed according to various stereotypes. This was quite often very difficult for the Poles to understand. Discussions with the Ukrainians were especially based on emotion. However, with the help of such contributors as Józef Łobodowski, Borys Lewicki and Bohdan Osadczyk, the mutual understanding between the Ukrainians and the Poles gradually acquired different forms⁶³.

"Kultura" published news from the occupied countries. First, information was provided about what happened in communist Poland and an attempt was made to understand the Stalinist communist regime. Almost regularly, the so-called chronicles for different countries, which provided compact information about the most important events, were published. Beginning in 1974, these news reports were also published from Lithuania. It was possible to find out about the activities of Lithuanian dissidents, about arrests and other forms of repression used by the authorities, about the position of the church, persecution of intellectuals, violation of human rights, political and social everyday life⁶⁴. Under the protection of J. Giedroyc, the book *The Captive Mind* by Czesław Miłosz, who fled Warsaw to Paris in 1950, was printed. The book was written when Miłosz was living in Paris and was essentially inspired by their conversations. At first, *The Captive Mind* was published in "Kultura" and the French journal "Preuves." In

60 «"Didžiosios Lenkijos" planas», in *Elta*, 1951 09 14, No. 17 (104).

61 «[Be pavadinimo]» in *Elta*, 1951 05 15, No. 10 (97).

62 Iwona Hofman, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

63 Grażyna Pomian, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

64 Edmund Jakubowski wrote about it since 1974 in every second number under the nickname of Edmund Żagiel

1953 it was printed as a separate book and was published in Polish⁶⁵. In the same year, it was published in French with an introduction by Karl Jespers. After that, it was translated into English, German, Spanish, Italian and Swedish. *The Captive Mind* was constructed from separate texts, and tried to show how the regime affected the countries occupied by the Soviets. Miłosz introduces the borrowed concept of “Ketman” in order to reveal the political consciousness of the time. The essence of “Ketman” in People’s Democracies is acting, the aim of which is to show yourself as loyal to the regime; however, this loyalty is only an act with the goal of protecting yourself. After a period of time, such a person intermingles with his/her role so well that only the person who behaves the same way can recognise the deception. *The Captive Mind* made the West rethink what was happening behind the Iron Curtains and how they understood the phenomenon of totalitarianism. Remembering his life in the West, Professor of Lithuanian literature Bronius Vaškėlis said that:

*“this book changed his point of view towards cultural and literary life beyond the Iron Curtain. Until that time, he did not understand Lithuanian writers who joined the process of sovietisation. The arguments by Cz. Miłosz convinced him that the writer in this system, which tries to implant the cult of “the new person” and to overwhelm minds, is a victim rather than a traitor”*⁶⁶.

All the activities of J. Giedroyc showed that he learned from history and tried to repeat the things that he could not do during the interwar period in emigration after the war. He understood that territorial conflicts destroy the safety of the whole region. He started educating the new Polish generation in such a way that these disagreements would not be repeated in the future. The events after 1990 showed that the Poles learned the lessons of J. Giedroyc. Only time will show whether the future generations will learn from the classical textbook “Kultura”.

7. Conclusion

Stalin’s regime and his foreign policy left a deep scar in the memories of Lithuanians and Poles and changed their geopolitical imagination. The Lithuanian-Polish conflict over Vilnius, which began after World War I, not only destroyed the diplomatic relations between the two countries and provoked hatred directed towards ethnic minorities during the interwar period, but also pushed Lithuania to the cunning protection of Stalinist Soviet Union.

The beginning of World War II made Lithuanians and Poles rethink their relationship. The division of Europe by the Soviet Union and Germany showed that countries created on the narrow base of nationalism and primitive egoism were a mistake and undermined the safety of the region.

In the presence of a real threat, the representatives of Lithuanian and Polish emigres started meeting intensively and raised the questions of possible unions, federations and borders. However, the main point of disagreement remained the question of Vilnius and the surrounding region. Neither of the parties intended to give it up. The end of World War II placed Lithuania and Poland in the Soviet

⁶⁵ Jerzy Giedroyc – Czesław Miłosz. Listy 1952–1963, Warszawa, 2008.

⁶⁶ Leonas Gudaitis, «Nuo Kauno iki Šetenių», in *“Darbų ir Dienų”*, Kaunas, 1998, No. 7 (16), p. 3.

zone. Only the forms of statehood were different. Both sides felt hopelessly betrayed by the West. In order for the West to understand the situation, Poles and Lithuanians attempted to reveal the real face of communism.

Understanding the lessons of history and trying not to repeat previous mistakes, the journal "Kultura" started changing Polish attitudes towards neighbouring countries. The political strategy of J. Giedroyc was to stop national conflicts over the contested territories and to provide the possibility for cooperation. The experiences of Polish and Lithuanian emigrants and intellectual attempts to recognise the essence of Stalin's policy helped people in the West to understand it.

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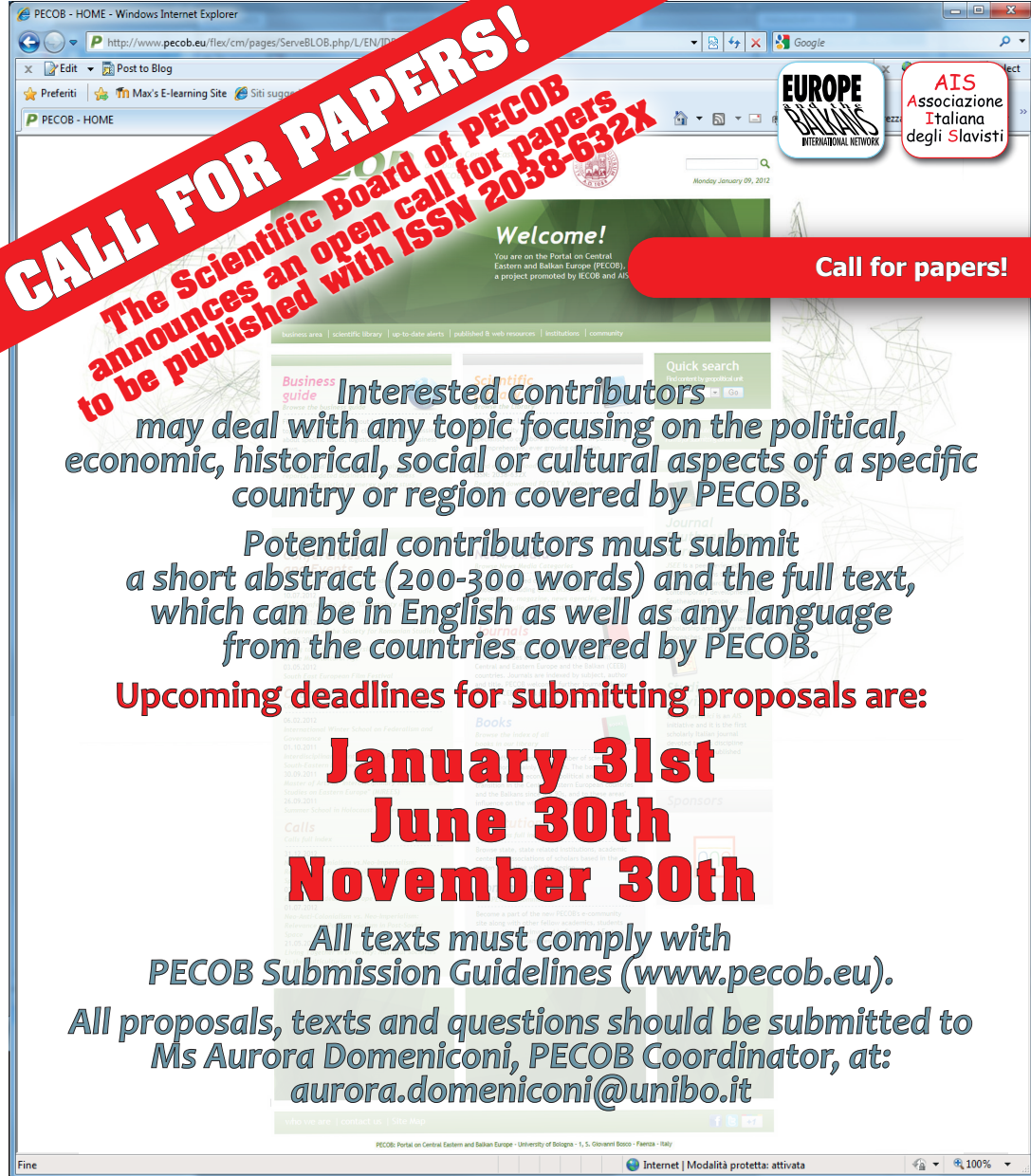
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