

## 12th CONFERENCE OF THE COMMISSION FOR LITHUANIAN STUDIES

The 12th conference of the Commission for Lithuanian Studies was held at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences on September 30 and October 1, 2003. It was attended by Lithuanian, Polish and Russian researchers. The scholarly part of the conference was opened by Stanisław Aleksandrowicz (Copernicus University, Toruń) who presented the development of Polish and Lithuanian cartographies in the 16th and early 17th centuries and their influence on European cartography. He spoke of the maps of Sarmatia, Poland and Lithuania published by Bernard Wapowski in the 1520s and 1530s, drawing attention to the fact that they were used by West European cartographers up to the middle of the 18th century. He stressed the merits of Tomasz Makowski's map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania made at the beginning of the 17th century. The paper read by Jan Jurkiewicz (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) dealt with the genesis of the legend which maintained that the Lithuanians were descendants of the Romans or, to be more exact, that the Romans had arrived in Lithuania and merged into the local society. He pointed out that there were periods when the legend was extremely popular and periods when its attractiveness faded. In this context he drew attention to the fact that the interpretation of the legend varied; there were times when it was thought to have an anti-Polish meaning, and times when it was regarded as anti-Russian. Daiva Narbutienė (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Vilnius) discussed Latin literature published in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 16th–18th centuries.

In the discussion that followed attention was focused on how to treat the multilingual achievements of the multinational Grand Duchy, in other words, whether these achievements can be divided, and if they can, which part should be regarded as the heritage of each of the states that are derived from the Grand Duchy, i.e. Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine and which part should be viewed as Poland's heritage. The first day of the debates ended with a sensational paper by Edmundas Rimša (Institute of Lithuania's History, Vilnius) who discussed one Ruthenian and two Latin seals (only one has been known so far). His analysis of the seals led him to the conclusion that sphragistic art experienced a radical change at the Lithuanian court in 1380 (the date of the Latin seal). It ceased to be representative of East Byzantine or Ruthenian culture and became part of Latin culture.

The first paper on the second day was read by Antanas Tyla (Institute of Lithuania's History, Vilnius) who depicted the decisions which the General Congress of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania took after Sigismund III's death (1632) in order to ensure internal and external security. His analysis of how these decisions were accepted by the dietines led to a discussion on the functioning of society during an *interregnum*. Lidia Korczak (Jagiellonian University, Cracow) discussed the activity of the Lithuanian diplomatic service in the first half of the 16th century. She proposed that Lithuanian–Polish relations should be examined through the prism of diplomatic activity, especially the division of diplomatic tasks between the two countries. Aiste Palušytė (Institute of Culture, Philosophy

and Art, Vilnius) spoke about relations between magnates and craftsmen in royal towns, taking Krzysztof Radziwiłł's relations with craftsmen in Vilnius as an example. In the discussion that followed attention was drawn to the fact that very little is still known about the consequences which the construction of magnatial palaces had for the country's economy and about the sources that would be useful in this kind of research. Iwona Wierzchowiecka (Szczecin University) devoted her paper to the marshals of the Tribunal (Supreme Court) of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 18th century. Ramune Šmigielškyte (Institute of Lithuania's History, Vilnius) depicted the history of the Lithuanian General Confederation in 1792–1793. Her paper was very well received and became the starting point for a discussion on the motives behind a society's behaviour, the role of ideology and also of conformism. The last speaker was Tamara Bairašauskalte (Institute of Lithuania's History, Vilnius) who presented the personality of Michał Józef Romer, one of the most prominent persons of the Lithuanian region in the first quarter of the 19th century. What drew the listeners' attention was her theory that the aim of the tsarist authorities' nationality policy was to unify nations, not to denationalise them. Bairašauskalte said that the upper strata of the Lithuanian society were willing to co-operate with the administration, that is, with the Russian state.

The participants in the conference put forward proposals for the subjects of papers on Lithuania's history and Polish–Lithuanian relations to be delivered at next year's conference. Further proposals may be sent to the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

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