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The Influence of Clandestine Standard Lithuanian in the Latin Alphabet on the Official Lithuanian in Cyrillic Letters (1864–1904)

Lithuania was ruled by the Russian empire from 1795 to 1915. The Russian authorities were very upset by the insurrection against Russia which took place in Poland and Lithuania in 1863. The authorities decided that they could reduce the Polish cultural influence among Lithuanians by prohibiting the usage of the so-called “Polish” (Latin) script. They did not want to accept the existing Lithuanian tradition of printing in the Latin alphabet (or in Gothic type), a tradition which had existed since 1547. Instead of the traditional “Polish” (Latin) script they offered their own Cyrillic alphabet and launched the production of Lithuanian Cyrillic books at their own expense. This prohibition lasted from 1864 till 1904.

The objective of my article is to prove the presence of the linguistic influence of clandestine (underground, illegal, banned, secret) Standard Lithuanian in the Latin script on the books printed in Cyrillic letters during the years of prohibition (1864–1904). In my earlier articles on the development of Lithuanian Cyrillic orthography I have singled out four periods in its evolution and have analyzed the initial models of Russian alphabet adaptation for Lithuanian in the years 1864–1866. Daiva Litvinskaitė has analyzed the orthography of one Lithuanian book in Cyrillic letters.

1. Before the Emergence of Standard Lithuanian

At the time when the Latin letters were prohibited (1864), there was no single Lithuanian standard yet. Those Russian functionaries, who endeavored to establish the Cyrillic letters, occasionally employed this fact to bolster their argument. According to them, since Lithuanian was merely a group of dialects, the Russian script should help shaping norms of Lithuanian, it would make the language uniform. Mikhail Dobilov points out that “Evolution from dialects to a more or less uniform language was characterized [by the functionaries] as a civilizing influence of the [Russian] government. In 1864 N. Novikov

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1. I want to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. William R. Schmalstieg who edited the style of this article.
believed that the introduction of the Russian alphabet implied a certain standardization for Lithuanian\textsuperscript{5} (Translations by Giedrius Subačius)

Even if no single Standard Lithuanian had emerged before 1864 there were certain major tendencies in the standardization of Lithuanian in Latin letters. Linguistic peculiarities of Lowland Lithuanian dialects (in western and northwestern Lithuania) and Highland dialects of central Lithuania were often dominant in texts just before 1864. The center of the Lowland Diocese and the capital city Vilnius were the major locations of Lithuanian editorial activities (printing was carried out in Vilnius alone). In 1864, however, these activities were abruptly stopped. After the Polish-Lithuanian insurrection in 1863 against Russia the Lowland diocesan center was moved to Kaunas – far away from the Lowland dialect speaking territory, and deep into the territory of Highland Lithuanians. Thus, along with the prohibition on Latin letters the Lowlanders lost their center, which had been a vital force for the development of the written variety in their dialect/s.

One more variety of written Lithuanian in Gothic (and sometimes in Latin) letters was developing in East Prussia. The Prussian tradition of publishing Lithuanian books in the local southwestern Highland Lithuanian dialect had lasted about 300 years, and those publications were always beyond the range of the Russian tsar. So that was the only tradition that kept on developing after all other varieties in Lithuania were completely stopped.

In 1856 there was a very influential grammar of Lithuanian \textit{Litauische Grammatik} (further: SchlG) published in Prague by August Schleicher. Being a German linguist he had gone to live in East Prussia among Lithuanians. He both analyzed the spoken Lithuanian language, and studied the written tradition of East Prussian Lithuanians. His grammar was based on this Eastern Prussian Lithuanian written tradition; he kept many orthographic and phonetic features found in Lithuanian texts of that region. Schleicher published his grammar in Latin letters, however (in contrast to many other East Prussian Lithuanian texts printed in Gothic type).

Nobody considered Schleicher’s work to be a grammar of Standard Lithuanian. Still it was very well known and many Lithuanians who participated in the production of illegal Lithuanian books in the Latin script eagerly used it.

East Prussian Lithuanian linguistic norms were exerting influence on some Cyrillic Lithuanian texts. For example, Jonas Juška’s \textit{Lithuanian Folk Songs} (1867) was in a sense a revolutionary publication in the context of other Lithuanian Cyrillic publications during the years 1864–1867. Mostly under the influence of the East Prussian Lithuanian texts Juška introduced many non-Russian orthographic features.

To demonstrate here the influence of the East Prussian Lithuanian tradition I will compare Juška’s Lithuanian Cyrillic orthography to that of Schleicher’s grammar. Juška

was well aware of this grammar; he had himself reviewed it very favorably a year after its publication.6

(1) Juška’s `<ę>` was modeled upon East Prussian `<ę`; cf. Дўяк 'three' (SchlG дўя 267 ‘idem’); ґрэйўгэць 36 ‘the fast ones; acc. pl.’ (SchlG гэйўгэць 208 ‘the good ones; acc. pl.’); жаляўгэ 37 ~ жаляўгэ ‘to become, to appear green’ (SchlG жаляўгэ 161 ‘idem’); Ѧўдак 13 ~ жуодас ‘black’ (SchlG жуодас 306 ‘idem’); Мён 5 ~ мену ‘moon’ (SchlG мену 263 ‘idem’).

(2) `<ę` was accepted from East Prussian `<ę`; cf. Жіпрыўгэлі 9 ~ жіпрыўгэлі ‘little horse; voc. sg.’ (SchlG жіпрыўгэлі 313 ‘little horse; nom. sg.’); моринелі 11 ~ моринелі ‘mummy, little mother’ (SchlG моринелі 316 ‘idem’); Ǽ곑Appear 10 ~ тэўгэлі ‘daddy, little father; voc. sg.’ (SchlG тэўгэлі 288 ‘of father’).

(3) `<ę` was accepted from East Prussian and Lithuanian (maybe even Serbian) `<ę`; cf. жэйноўгэ 21 ~ жэйноўгэ ‘the young one; voc. sg.’ (SchlG жэйноўгэ 290 ‘ox; acc. sg.’); жытэ 37 ~ жытэ ‘to sit’ (SchlG жытэ 249 ‘I was hanging’).

(4) `<ę` was accepted from East Prussian and Lithuanian `<ę`; cf. Анг 16 ~ анг ‘that one; acc. sg.’ (SchlG анг 195 ‘idem’); Ауцирғэ 8 ~ ауцирғэ ‘high; acc. sg.’ (SchlG ауцирғэ 203 ‘idem’); Вайниқэ 6, вайниқэ 7 ~ вайниқэ ‘wreath; acc. sg.’ (SchlG вайниқэ 322 ‘idem’); Жікгэ 7, 8 ~ жікгэ ‘horse; acc. sg.’ (SchlG жікгэ 216 ‘idem’); къэйяя 37 ~ сэдэйяу ‘I was sitting’ (SchlG къэйяя 59 ‘idem’).

(5) `<ę` was accepted from East Prussian and Lithuanian `<ę`; cf. Кыкўжанғэ 41 ~ кукўжанғэ ‘one which cuckoos; acc. sg.’ (SchlG къэйяя 216 ‘idem’); тыйэн 36 ~ ten ‘there’ (SchlG тыйэн 249 ‘I was hanging’).

(6) `<ę` was accepted from East Prussian `<ę`; cf. Акменелі 34 ~ акменелі ‘little stone; acc. sg.’ (SchlG акмэнелі 191 ‘stone; acc. sg.’); бэрнушелі 34 ~ бэрнушелі ‘little lad; acc. sg.’ (SchlG бэрнушелі 332 ‘idem’); Ѧбролі 7 ~ Ѧбролі ‘to brother’ (SchlG ћбролі 330 ‘to the city’); jъмэй 16 ~ jъмэй ‘trod in’ (SchlG jъмэй 327 ‘to come in’); калнілі 8 ~ калнілі ‘little hill; acc. sg.’ (SchlG калнілі 182 ‘scythe; acc. sg.’); нъ 10 ~ нъ ‘this; acc. sg.’ (SchlG нъ 326 ‘idem’).

(7) `<ę` was accepted from East Prussian `<ę`; cf. Пакаў 34 ~ пакаў ‘room; acc. sg.’ (SchlG пакаў 190 ‘sky; heaven; acc. sg.’); салдэ 16 ~ салдэ ‘sweet; acc. sg.’ (SchlG салдэ 205 ‘nice; acc. sg.’).

All these (and many more) features were absent from the Russian Cyrillic alphabet which was promoted by the Russian functionaries in Lithuania for the Lithuanian script.

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Obviously Juška was strongly influenced by the traditions of Lithuanian texts in Eastern Prussia and in Lithuania. This took place even before Standard Lithuanian emerged.

2. Standard Lithuanian

Also in 1876 in Halle Friedrich Kuršaitis (Kurschat) published his *Grammatik der Littauischen Sprache* (further: KršG). This was the most exhaustive Lithuanian grammar ever written. Kuršaitis also based his norms mostly on the writings of East Prussia (the southwestern Highland Lithuanian dialect). Kuršaitis intended his grammar, though, for Lithuanians in Lithuania as well (he traveled throughout Lithuania to get acquainted with the linguistic data there). His grammar was printed in Latin letters too as was Schleicher’s – not only to follow in the footsteps of Schleicher’s grammar but to match the tradition of Lithuanians in Lithuania as well. Kuršaitis’s grammar was also very influential and had many followers. For instance, the editors of the famous newspaper *Aušra* (1883–1886), printed in East Prussia, were clearly inclined to follow the norms of Kuršaitis’ grammar.

On the other hand, linguists have often pointed out the connection of the newspaper *Aušra* with the emergence of modern Standard Lithuanian. For example, Petras Jonikas claimed that the southwestern Highland dialect became the obvious basis for Standard Lithuanian in the first Lithuanian national newspaper *Aušra*, which was intended for all Lithuanians. Zigmas Zinkevičius also was of the opinion that “The evident distinctive and generally accepted date is 1883 – the appearance of the first Lithuanian national newspaper; it is crucial in the determination of the emergence of the modern standard language.”

Literary activists of that time also understood that Standard Lithuanian (the so-called *common language*) was created by that time. For example, in his letter of December 23, 1885 to Rev. Aleksandras Burba, Serafinas Laurynas Kušeliauskas admonished that “one has to adopt the common language when writing for Highland and Lowland Lithuanians”.

This means that by 1885 we have proof that Lithuanians were certain about the emergence of Standard Lithuanian in Latin script, event if it was carried out by means of clandestine publications. The tradition of printing in the Southwestern Highland Lithuanian dialect in East Prussia ultimately produced modern Standard Lithuanian. Nineteen years after the initiation of the prohibition this prohibited Standard Lithuanian was perceptibly and palpably evident.

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3. After the Emergence of Standard Lithuanian

3.1. Eduardas Volteris, 1887

One more significant exception in the philological history of the Lithuanian Cyrillic script after Juška’s book was Eduardas Volteris’ *Divine Liturgy* (1887). He also introduced a great number of changes in the process of adaptation of the Russian alphabet for Lithuanian. Some orthographical features coincided with those used by Juška twenty years before; for example:

(1) `<ѣ>`: ୩ඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඵඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔඔператор් මුහුණු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්यොනු න්යොනු න්যොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්যොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න්යොනු න් yaml -attr 18 ~ atleidimo ‘of forgiveness; gen. sg.’; Պուսկերչեռ 20 ~ priskelkime ‘(we) will resurrect’; պեխկանյ 18 ~ reikalų ‘of affairs; gen. pl.’ [Exceptions occur but they are very rare; cf. այսին 18 ~ aukštai ‘high’; պրայրեն 18 ~ drauge ‘together’; կարբու 18 ~ katu ‘(with) which one; instr. sg.’]
So obviously Volteris attempted to introduce certain orthographic features generally of Latin-script based Lithuanian texts and of clandestine Standard Lithuanian in particular. Those attempts were a big step away from the Russian orthography.

3.2. Translation of Julius Schiekopp’s grammar, 1891

In 1879 Julius Schiekopp published a Lithuanian grammar *Litauičhe Elementarė Grammatik* (further – SchiekG) in Tilsit (East Prussia). He did not write an original grammar, he only shortened and adapted the grammar of Kuršaitis to meet the teaching goals in Eastern Prussian schools. This grammar of Schiekopp’s was translated into Russian (ЛИТОВСКАЯ ГРАММАТИКА, 1891) by Jan Pajevski, who rendered Lithuanian words and forms in Cyrillic letters as well. So actually the Lithuanian grammatical data were originally from Kuršaitis’ grammar. Changing those Kuršaitis’ (Schiekopp’s) words into Cyrillic letters Pajevski also adopted some of their orthographic features that were not present in Russian alphabet:

(1) <̃: կելմուսե 10 ~ kelmuose ‘in stumps’ (cf. SchiekG kelmūsė 5); մենու 41 ~ mėnų ‘month’ (cf. SchiekG mėnū 17); մինկստուու 76 ~ minkštuoju ‘(with) the soft one’ (cf. SchiekG minkštütų 30); կյալյե 96 ~ suolouose ‘in benches’ (cf. SchiekG sölūše 38).

(2) <̄: կեն 11 ~ vėjas ‘wind’ (cf. SchiekG véjas 5); իսկավեջևս 20 ~ iškavėjės ‘traitor’ (cf. SchiekG iskavejėjys 9); սեյերա 12 ~ sėjėras ‘sower’ (cf. SchiekG sejėjas 6); տենար 12 ~ tėvas ‘father’ (cf. SchiekG téwas 6). Of importance here is the fact, that Schiekopp did not use the letter <̄> at all (in contrast to his prototype Kuršaitis’ grammar). Pajevski reinstituted the letter <̄> as it was used in Kuršaitis’ original grammar and in Standard Lithuanian. In other words, the norm of the clandestine standard was strong enough to encourage Pajevski to accept the letter <̄> into Cyrillic.

(3) <̂: արկլյե 19 ~ arklyje ‘in the horse’ (cf. SchiekG arklyjè 8); բայէրաս 16 ~ bajoras ‘nobleman’ (cf. SchiekG bajòras 7); ջոյե 75 ~ joje ‘in her’ (cf. SchiekG jojè 28); ջոմարկաս 18 ~ jomarkas ‘market’ (cf. SchiekG jòmarkas 8).

(4) The letter <̊> was also used to signify the standard Lithuanian sound [e] but not the Russian sound; cf. բերուցար 140 ~ bečžianu ‘I would disseminate’ (cf. SchiekG bečžianu 56); թոջո անգեջեր 5 ~ tojè paciøjė dienojė ‘in the same day’ (cf. SchiekG tojè pacziøjė dienojė 3). The letter <̊> was present in both the Latin and the Cyrillic alphabets, but it had a different phonetic meaning in each alphabet. Pajevski took the meaning from the Latin alphabet (from clandestine Standard Lithuanian) and transferred it to his Cyrillic text. So the letter <̊> here appears as a wolf in sheep’s clothing. The influence of clandestine Standard Lithuanian seems indubitable here.

Moreover, in Pajevski’s version of Lithuanian Cyrillic the Lithuanian intonations were marked the same way as they were, for instance, in Kuršaitis’ grammar. It means all three diacritical marks for intonations were transferred into Pajevski’s Cyrillic (in contrast to the

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one in Volteris’ *Divine Liturgy*). We can surmise that the engraving and molding of these special Cyrillic diacritical types required special effort and expense.

– `<` for an ascending intonation: べ瑷даво 138 ~ べ瑷даво ‘used to disseminate’ (cf. SchiekG べ瑷даво 56); วกپالالمグ 5 ~ วกپالالمグ ‘brat’ (cf. SchiekG วกپالالمグ 3); งาจดจกย 11 ~ งาจดจกย ‘for the rooster; dat. sg.;’ (cf. SchiekG งาจดจกย 5); งocrineh 10 ~ งocrineh ‘of guests; gen. pl.’ (cf. SchiekG งocrineh 5).

– `>` for a descending intonation: บูдать่ 125 ~ บูдать่ ‘I used to be’ (cf. SchiekG บูださい 50); เกล่่ามั่ง 10 ~ เกล่่ามั่ง ‘for stumps’ (cf. SchiekG เกล่่ามั่ง 5); คุนิคส์ 13 ~ คุนิคส์ ‘priest’ (cf. SchiekG คุนิคส์ 6); งาจีดงะย 139 ~ ลาิก์ดาแว 1 ‘I used to keep’ (cf. SchiekG ลาิก์ดาแว 56).

– `<` for a short accented syllable: งร่าสีส์ 76 ~ งร่าสีส์ ‘the good one’ (cf. SchiekG งร่าสีส์ 31); ดีวีดีชิมท์ 92 ~ ดีวีดีชิมท์ ‘twenty’ (cf. SchiekG ดีวีดีชิมท์ 37); เขย่่ย์ 124 ~ เขย่่ย์ ‘I am’ (cf. SchiekG เขย่่ย์ 50); งะดจงก่อ 11 ~ งะดจงก่อ ‘(with a) word; instr. sg.’

Pajevski’s grammar was the third Lithuanian Cyrillic book containing numerous evident traces of Latin-script based Lithuanian or Standard Lithuanian texts. And this was intended to be used in schools at least in part of the Lithuanian speaking territory, thus, it was a convenient tool for disseminating the linguistic norms.

3.3. *Holy History, 1896*

There were several more books in Cyrillic script that imitated the features of clandestine Standard Lithuanian. Russian functionaries could not easily discern this influence since most of them did not read Lithuanian. And to discover this just by reading would not suffice; it would require doing the research.

To discuss just one more example let’s take the book *Holy History*, which had been originally printed in Latin letters in 1860, and was re-published in Cyrillic script in 1896. This book and almost all other Cyrillic publications that were affected by the Lithuanian standard used the abovementioned letters `<` and `>` and also rejected the frequent Russian letters `<ё>` and `<ъ>`, and `<ш>` (<ё> had no phonetic value and `<ш>` had no equivalent sound in Standard Lithuanian).

But there were many more things than only the letters that were changed. Along with the orthographic features many linguistic peculiarities were modified too, according to the model of clandestine Standard Lithuanian. The original 1860 edition in pre-standard Lithuanian contained many Lowland Lithuanian (western and northwestern Lithuania) dialectal features. But they were almost completely eliminated in the 1896 Cyrillic edition and were replaced with the southwestern Highland (or standard) features. In the following examples a pre-standard Lowland form is given on the left side and the Highland form influenced by the clandestine standard on the right (phonetic or morphological differences are outlined in bold-faced letters here):

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12 Cf. ibidem, p. 196.
There should remain no doubt about the influence of clandestine Standard Lithuanian in Latin letters on this 1896 *Holy History* Lithuanian text in Cyrillic.

4. Conclusion

In 1864 on introducing the Russian letters for Lithuanian certain Russian functionaries were inclined to believe that the Russian alphabet would bring some standardization for Lithuanian. But the Russian functionaries that planned the standardization in Cyrillic were not insightful enough to foresee that opposite would happen.

Paradoxically, during the prohibition of the Latin script the clandestine Lithuanian standard was developed through the texts, written in Lithuania and abroad, but printed only abroad (mostly in East Prussia and in the United States) and smuggled (back) to Lithuania.
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for distribution. Clandestine Standard Lithuanian became powerful enough to penetrate the official texts in Cyrillic. Thus, even in the environment of the illegal development the Latin-script based written Lithuanian achieved the status of a standard language and had an evident effect on the books in Cyrillic-Lithuanian script. This influence became more and more conspicuous in the later phases of the ban on Latin letters.

The denunciation of the prohibition was a sign of the tense political situation in the Empire, but it also was a result of “the lost battle” of the Russian alphabet against the clandestine one. Clandestine Standard Lithuanian had triumphed over the attempts at a different official standard in Cyrillic even before the ban was lifted.

Generally, there was no strong intellectual potential to work on Cyrillic Lithuanian. Most of the texts after approximately 1890 were only printed outside Lithuania (in Warsaw, Poland, which was also a part of the Russian Empire at the time). Even some Lithuanians that were in favor of the Cyrillic script might have felt as if they were “forgotten” – nobody cared enough to prepare books in Cyrillic for them in numbers that would enable more or less effective competition. Nor did anybody bother to change the policy of prohibition when it was understood that the prohibition was a failure. The clandestine standard started to absorb and finally swallowed up those weakening attempts to make a separate standard in Cyrillic letters. Only a very insignificant number of Lithuanian Cyrillic books was published in the last years before the abolishment of the prohibition.

Sources:


