FROM "RUSSIAN" TO "POLISH":

Vilna-Wilno 1900-1925

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Executive Summary

During the first two and a half decades of the twentieth century huge changes took place in the city known by Russians and Jews as Vilna, by Poles as Wilno, and by Lithuanians as Vilnius. In this paper I will view these changes through a single axis, so to speak, that of Poles vs. Russians. To be sure, in 1900 neither Poles nor Jews made up the largest ethnic group in Vilnius (I will use the present-day name of the city for simplicity) but by 1925 at least arguably Poles had achieved a plurality among the city's ethnic groups. Population statistics tell only one side of the story, however. For the purposes of this paper the rhetoric of national possession, will feature prominently. After all, neither Lithuanians nor Russians were ever more than approximately 20% of the population (even by the most generous estimates) in this period but both groups at certain points made claims for Vilnius/Vilna as "their own." The arguments various ethnic groups used to buttress their claims to the city will for the purposes of this essay outweigh the statistical realities. Nor will the Jewish community in the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," as the city was called, get their due here.[1] While both Russians and Poles (and Lithuanians) acknowledged the large numbers of Jews in the city, neither seemed to consider the Jewish presence as essential to the character of the city. For both, the real issue was which culture dominated on Bolshaia/Wielka (now Pilies/Didžioji) and Georgievskii/Mickiewicza (now Gedimino). This striving for cultural hegemony will be the central focus of this paper.

Vilna at the Turn of the Century

In 1897 a thorough and scientific census of the entire Russian Empire was carried out, the first and only of its kind before the Soviet era. According to this census, no one ethnic group dominated in Vilnius. But we need to tease the ethnic figures out of statistics that specify only religion or native tongue. By religion the city's population broke down into 23.6% Orthodox Christians, 36.9% Catholics, and 41.3% Jews (with assorted Muslims, Karaites, Lutherans, and even two Mennonites as well). By native tongue, Yiddish enjoyed a strong plurality with 40.0% of all inhabitants, followed by Polish (30.9%), Russian (20.0%), Belarusian (4.2%), and Lithuanian (2.1%).[0]

To be sure, these figures are far from unimpeachable. When in doubt, census-takers often erred in favor of Russian over other ethnicities. More fundamentally, into what category should one place, for example, an individual born into a Lithuanian family but educated at the (Polish-dominated) Catholic seminary to become a priest? Lithuanians would consistently argue – with some justification – that their numbers were considerably greater than these statistics would suggest. On another point, the seemingly impressive Russian minority of 20% almost certainly did not reflect the face of the city. Many of these Russians were soldiers and bureaucrats who called Vilna home only for a short period of time, as the dominance of males in this group (almost double the number of women) shows. Still, the 1897 census gives us a general picture of the ethnic makeup of this medium-sized provincial town.[3]

Despite the relatively small number of ethnic Russians in the town in the first decade of the 20th century, many physical aspects of the city emphasized its Russianness. Immediately adjacent to the city's imposing Catholic cathedral was a monument to Catherine II erected in

1904.[4] The monument was designed by the Vilna native sculptor Mark Antokolskii.[5] As one of

the architects (or, at the very least, active participants) of the Partitions of Poland, Catherine

epitomized for Poles the rapacious destruction of their homeland. For patriotic Russians,

however, the "regaining" of "ancient Russian lands" under Catherine was a clear case of

historical justice.[6] The monument to Catherine thus not only honored the heroine of Russian

expansion, it also served as a concrete physical reminder to Vilna's Polish residents of their

historical loss.[7]

Such reminders of Russian culture and power were not rare in Vilna. A bust of

Aleksandr Pushkin stood on the other side of the cathedral square from the Catherine monument,

just below Castle Hill. A five minute walk away, in front of the governor general's palace, stood

the imposing monument to Count M. N. Murav'ev, who was if anything polarized Polish-

Russian opinions even more than Catherine. As the man who crushed the Polish Insurrection of

1863, Murav'ev was cordially detested by Poles. For official Russia, however, Murav'ev was a

hero who had defended state order with sometimes cruel but necessary measures.[8]

One way or the other, the presence of a huge monument in the center of town further

underscored Russian predominance.[9] Furthermore, street signs were in Russian and even shops

were required to have Russian signs or at least to have Russian inscriptions at least as large as

those in other languages. Officially the public speaking of Polish was not allowed – at least so

Poles later recalled – but in fact plenty of Polish could be heard in Vilna, though rather less in

government offices.[10]

While less than a quarter of Vilna's population belonged to the Orthodox faith, the city

had numerous impressive Orthodox churches. After the crushing of the 1863 Polish

Insurrection, the Russian authorities had worked to strengthen the position of Orthodoxy in the city. Formerly Catholic or Uniate churches like the Basilian monastery and St. Kazimir were re-christened as Orthodox churches (Sviato-troitskii monastyr' and Kafedral'nyi sobor vo imia sv. Nikolia Chudotvortsa, respectively).[11] Entirely new Orthodox churches were also built, including St. Paraskeva (Piatnitskaia) downtown, St. Alexander Nevsky in the New Town (1898), and Znamenskaia church (1903) just across the river Nerys from the termination of the elegant new boulevard, Georg'evskii Prospekt.[12]

All three of these Orthodox churches occupied "strategic" spots. Piatnitskaia stood (and stands) on a busy commercial street half-way between Castle Hill and the Catholic site Ostra Brama (where the miracle-working icon is now displayed). St. Alexander Nevsky is located on high ground in a new residential neighborhood, easily seen on the horizon from different parts of the city. Finally, the Znamenskaia Orthodox church was placed precisely across from the termination of Georg'evskii Prospekt, a kind of counterweight to the Catholic cathedral at the other end of that boulevard. In other words, while Catholic churches continued to predominate in Vilna, the presence of Orthodoxy could not be ignored.

For all the Russian architectural monuments, signs, and claims by Russian patriots that "Vil'na has become a Russian city not only by geographical location but in its internal life,"[13] everyone knew that the city's Russian veneer was thin and fragile. The governor general of the Northwest region reported in 1899 that Poles dominated organs of urban self-government in

Vilna and elsewhere.[14] Similarly, a year later the governor of Vilna province complained that the Vilna Land Bank was controlled by Poles, while the Vilna Catholic Seminary was a hotbed

of Polish-Catholic fanaticism.[15]

In 1903 a new governor, Count Konstantin Palen, portrayed the local Russian population as isolated, weak, and surrounded by hostile forces. Russian officials, Palen emphasized, remained "unfortunately entirely alien from local society. At the same time local Russians and the government itself was challenged by revolutionaries: Russian, Lithuanian, Polish, and "the most serious and zealous" – the Jewish Bund.[16] On the eve of the Russo-Japanese war, the Russian position in Vilna thus appeared stable on the surface, but was seriously threatened on a deeper level.

While this paper will not treat Jewish Vilna in any depth, it will not do to leave out entirely the city's largest single ethno-religious group. Around the turn of the century Vilna enjoyed an honored position as a center of Jewish religious study and publishing. In 1900 most Vilna Jews remained Orthodox, traditional, and Yiddish-speaking (96.9% native speakers in 1897).[17] Jewish Vilna had become a bit of a traditional backwater, overshadowed by the more dynamic communities in Odessa, Warsaw, even St. Petersburg. But Jewish life in Vilna had also not stood still. In 1903 a grand new synagogue in the Moorish style was built on the edge of the Jewish quarter.[18] Here more "respectable" Jews could worship in sumptuous surroundings, avoiding the grime and ruckus of the Old Synagogue. However, even here Orthodoxy was maintained; religious reform had few adherents among Vilna's Jews.

While reform had made little progress, out-and-out rejection of Jewish religious norms was not rare among Vilna's youth. In 1897 the Jewish "Bund," the first Jewish socialist party, had been founded in the city, and by 1905 it is estimated that one quarter of the city's Jewish workers were members of that party.[19] Long before this, the Russian authorities had uncovered

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"illegal circles" of "socialist-revolutionary" Jewish youth, for example in 1875 at the Jewish teachers' institute.[20]   But those were schoolboy affairs compared to the Bund which quickly spread "revolutionary propaganda" among the town's workers – almost a dozen brochures were confiscated by local authorities by 1898.[21]   Four years later, a Bund sympathizer Hirsh Lekert fired two shots at the detested Vilna governor, Victor von Wahl. Despite the governor's minor wounds, Lekert was tried and executed a mere three weeks later.[22]   Political Zionism was also gaining strength in Vilna. Theodor Herzl visited Vilna in 1903 and was greeted as "king of the Jews."[23]   At the same time St. Petersburg sent out a circular warning local authorities to keep a close watch on Zionist activities which it considered "in contradiction with principle of the Russian state idea."[24]   Among Jews, as in the rest of the population, old traditions were being challenged by new, even revolutionary, ideas. These ideas would burst onto the public stage in 1905.

1905 in Vilna

When the Japanese navy unexpectedly attacked the Russian military base on the Liaodong peninsula, Port Arthur, on January 27, 1904, Russia was caught unawares. Word of the Russian defeat quickly reached Vilna and initially, at least according to the provincial governor, caused an upsurge of patriotism.[25] Even leaders of local Polish society, wrote the governor, publicly volunteering to help the war effort. We may be sure, however, that many Vilna Poles – like their compatriots in Warsaw – welcomed the war primarily as a chance to weaken Russia's grip on her Polish subjects.

But the war, except for those drafted and sent east, was far away. Social tensions at

home were running high, in particular because of an economic downturn. Several socialist

parties, first among them the Jewish Bund, were active in the city, taking advantage of economic

and social distress to organize workers. Already in 1901 workers had attempted to celebrate the

International Workers' holiday on May 1, causing the authorities considerable annoyance.

Police quickly intervened, but not before workers (again led by the Bund) had marched from

cathedral square up Bol'shaia Street.[26]

In 1902 and 1903 a number of strikes broke out, partly on economic grounds but always

with political overtones. On March 2, 1903 a demonstration "celebrated" the 22nd anniversary of

the assassination of Alexander II.[27] After the beginning of the war, matters went from bad to

worse. Despite certain government concessions, such as the abolition of the restriction on

publishing Lithuanian in Latin letters,[28] unrest continued. The city's trams went on strike, May

Day was celebrated in a particularly open way and the authorities expressed concern that only

increased security measures would allow them to keep order.[29] In short, already in 1904 the city

seemed ripe for major social upheaval.[30]

Social tensions, inter-ethnic frictions, and disgust with a government not only repressive

but apparently incompetent on the battlefield all exploded into revolution in January 1905. A

peaceful demonstration in Petersburg on Sunday, 9 January (old style) 1905 was shot upon by

bloodthirsty or more likely panicked troops. Whatever the actual causes for the massacre, news

of "Bloody Sunday" spread rapidly across the empire, bringing demonstrations, strikes, and

violence in its wake.[31]

News of the outrage reached Vilna the following evening and from the 11th officials were telegraphing to St. Petersburg about strikes in the city.[32] Describing these events a month later, the Vilna governor reported that strikes began on the 11th and grew stronger in the next three days. Over a hundred "agitators" were arrested, but by January 16 "the normal rhythm of life had been re-established."[33] Unfortunately for the Russian authorities the calm of late January was only apparent.

In fact, throughout 1905 and 1906 demonstrations, strikes, and violence raged in the city. Besides social and political issues like better wages and reform of the political system, agitators demanded ethnic-national rights for non-Russians. Even amidst the disturbances, bureaucrats in Petersburg were reviewing restrictions on national minorities, including the Poles and Jews.[34] As we have seen, Lithuanians had only in 1904 regained the right (denied them for nearly forty years) to publish material in their language using Latin letters. The government did offer certain concessions, a consultative legislature (the so-called "Bulygin Duma") and religious toleration that included the possibility of leaving Orthodoxy for other Christian religions, but all of this was rather petty compared to slogans offered by radicals.

Lithuanians by ethnicity made up a tiny percentage of Vilna's population, but the recently-founded Lithuanian Social Democratic (LSDP) party was active in the city.[35] It should be noted that this party did not always clearly differentiate between ethnic and geographical "Lithuanians" (the latter would include anyone resident in the region). After all, an ethnic Polish schoolboy from Vilna who was later to gain fame in Soviet history, one Feliks Dzierżyński, belonged initially to the LSDP.[36] Still, it seems fair to say that the LSDP played a modest role in Vilna during 1905, overshadowed by the Polish PPS, the Polish-Jewish SDKPiL, and especially

the Jewish Bund. Besides those groups, the Russian Social Democratic Party had cells in the city, whose activities were almost inevitably emphasized in the works of Soviet historians.[37]

The real revolutionary star of 1905 in Vilna, however, was the Bund. The Jewish socialist party had been founded in the city only eight years earlier but enjoyed broad support among Jewish workers. As Soviet historians, following Lenin himself, like to point out, Jewish workers were concentrated in small and medium-sized enterprises, thus are perhaps more properly designed "artisans" than factory workers.

Be that as it may, Jewish workers were numerous, well organized, and militant in 1905. Actual party affiliations are neither easy to determine nor particularly important (at least for our purposes). Jews were in any case highly visible among the organizers, marchers, and arrested.[38] To take just one instance, among the killed and wounded demonstrators after police fired into a crowd on Zaval'naia (Pylimo) in late October, the major of names appear to be Jewish: Kremer, Rozenshtein, Kats, Margolis.[39]

Amid the revolutionary disturbances, a major event in the history of the Lithuanian national movement took place in Vilna in late 1905: the "Great Conference of Vilnius." The single most important figure at this meeting of some two thousand in Vilnius (for them!) in late 1905 was certainly the energetic and cantankerous Dr. Jonas Basanavičius, one of the fathers of Lithuanian nationalism.[40] Basanavičius, a writer and ethnographer, returned in summer 1905 to Vilnius after nearly a quarter century abroad.[41] By 1905 the city could boast of a Lithuanian-language daily, *Vilniaus Žinios,* which published on 11 November 1905 Basanavičius's call for an assembly (*Seimas*) of representatives of the Lithuanian people.

This assembly convened on December 4, 1905 at the Vilnius town hall. As was expected, the Lithuanian social democrats refused to take part in this bourgeois affair of middle-class notables and priests, though in the end some socialists did, in fact, take part in the discussions.[42] In the end the assembly reached important decisions on Lithuanian autonomy, schools, and the church. These decisions were published in *Vilniaus Žinios* on December 7.

Despite some revolutionary rhetoric ("a happier life can be had only by winning the struggle against the old order"), the actual demands were rather more cautious. All Lithuanians should work together, regardless of class or party affiliation, to achieve autonomy within a new, reformed federal Russia. In order to bring this autonomy about, Lithuanians in Kaunas, Vilnius, and Gardinas (Grodno) provinces should refuse to serve in the army, keep their children from attending school, and withhold all taxes from the government. "Purely national" schools should replace the present ones, and all inhabitants should be taught in their "native tongue" (understood in the context to be Lithuanian but never stated).

Even more controversially, "since in Lithuanian churches of the Vilnius bishopric the Polish language is used in prayers for political purposes" the assembly wishes all "fighting Lithuanians" success against the polonizing priests and called for the use of Lithuanian in these churches.[43] Economics or relations with the Jews were not mentioned. Despite limiting their demands to only autonomy within Russia, the Lithuanian patriots hereby set themselves up against both the Russian government (as it was presently constituted) and the present Polish-dominated hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the region. These two forces would prove formidable foes indeed in the next decade.

The end of the war with Japan and the return of troops from Manchuria allowed the

tsarist regime to put down the revolution and re-establish order. Few of the demands of 1905 were fulfilled, but the Russian Empire had undergone a fundamental change. Censorship was considerably lightened, Yiddish newspapers (not allowed earlier) now flourished, and even the undemocratically elected Duma provided a forum for political discussion.

By 1907 outwardly Vilna city and province were again quiet. In Vilna governor D. Liubimov's report of that year, revolutionaries or strikes are not even mentioned. Rather, Liubimov concentrated on the pernicious effect of the Catholic clergy and Poles. The governor remarked that at the present time "The term 'Pole' in Vilna province has lost its ethnographic character and become almost exclusively a political term [i.e., for opposition to the government]." As for Lithuanians, they were more interested in fighting the Poles than the

Russians. The only loyal ethnic group, wrote Liubimov, were the backward Belarusian peasants who should be encouraged to develop their Belarusian national consciousness.[44] Within the city of Vilna, the governor must have thought, loyal elements were rare indeed.

World War I

World War I erupted in early August 1914 and soon trains full of soldiers and materiel were streaming through the city, which was located on the main railway connecting the Russian interior with Warsaw. Despite initial gains, in early September the Russian army was stunned by a massive defeat at Tannenberg. From that point onward territory of the Russian Empire, including Vilna, was threatened by the German army's advance. Warsaw was taken on 5 August

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1915 (new style); Vilna was the next city in line.

After the fall of Warsaw the Russian authorities allowed the creation of a municipal militia (previously they had been unwilling to arm the local population), and various "enlistment centers" were opened in the city, with Jews and Poles volunteering separately. However, this militia was never used against the Germans. Instead, the Russian forces – and much of the Russian population – simply withdrew from the city. The scale of their withdrawal may be seen in the fact that they even took the monuments to Murav'ev and Catherine along with them. The teacher and Bundist Hirsz Abramowicz recalled that on the eve of Yom Kippur, 17 September, "it was quite apparent that the last of the Russian military divisions were leaving Vilna."[45] And sure enough the next morning, on the holiest day in the Jewish year, German troops began entering the city.

Almost instantly, the city shed any pretense of "Russianness." Major monuments dedicated to showing Russian domination were carted off with the retreating troops, many street signs were torn down or defaced, and shop signs painted over or removed their Russian component. The German commander immediately appealed to the Poles of the city, calling it "the pearl in the glorious Kingdom of Poland," proclaiming its liberation from the Russian yoke and making vague promises about future freedom. This appeal specifically declared that "The German Kaiser wishes you to know that He is not fighting against you [Poles] but only against your enemies, the Russians." Further, "The German army has warm sympathy for the population of Poland, subjected to such difficult trials."[46] Thus from the start the German occupiers portrayed themselves as restorers of the Polish Kingdom and friends of the Poles.

For Jews the arrival of the German army was also on the whole welcome. The Russian

military had shown itself prone to blame any failures or reversals on Jews, and to treat Jews with disdain and brutality.[47] The Germans, it was thought, would be more considerate and "orderly" than their Russian counterparts. In fact, the German military was hardly more friendly towards Jews and Jewish interests than the Russians.

In an effort to assure grain supplies for the troops, the German authorities forbade trade in grain, thereby depriving many Jews of their livelihood. Requisitions, strict measures against smuggling, and forced labor levies all soured Jewish attitudes toward the German occupiers.[48] By 1916 stern announcements in Yiddish (as well as Polish, Lithuanian, and German) threatened residents with deportation, confiscation, and even shooting for transgressions against German regulations.[49] By 1917 Germans occupiers and the occupied peoples were all in rather desperate straits, short of food and heating fuel, with no end to the war in sight.[50]

Germans not only established their administrative center in Vilna, they also set up schools (in German for Jews, claiming that Yiddish was merely corrupt German) and publishing, including a daily newspaper. In 1916 the *Wilnaer Zeitung* published an informal guidebook to Vilna which was so popular that it was published as a booklet and went through three printings before war's end. The author, apparently a German soldier, describes Vilna in condescending but not-altogether-negative terms.

At first, the author writes, Vilna appears to be only a confused mish-mash of small streets lacking any kind of order or coherence. The only street with "big city character" is George's Street (today's Gedimino) and otherwise the town resembles Nürnberg or Rothenberg with its

narrow streets. The town's "German Street" (Vokiečių) was full of signs "in the most

impossible German offering the broadest possible array of items for sale." Though not

mentioned specifically, the signs were almost certainly the work of Vilna's Jewish merchants.[51]

Similarly the scene in front of the railway station where travelers are accosted by individuals

with Yiddish accents ("schennes Zimmer?") offering meals and lodging."[52]

The Jewish part of town ("Ghetto") is also described in some detail. "As on an island in

the sea the people of Israel live on their own streets, just like long ago, in the middle of the large

city Vilna." Tradition and piety predominate in this "city within a city." A description of the

crowded, narrow, and not particularly hygienic conditions in this quarter merits quotation:

> A dark cloud appears to hover over these roofs, no matter what the weather.
> Walking in these gloomy streets arouses claustrophobia in a western person [i.e.,
> a German]. All senses rebel against the stroller's impressions. The eye sees
> misery, the ear hears dissonant sounds, and the nose – oh the nose! – the nose has
> very good reason to feel personally insulted.[53]

Endless numbers of tiny stores line the streets, offering everything possible for sale.

Everywhere one looks there are hawkers and children under foot. Only on shabbes do the stores

close and the hubbub on the street die down. But finding the Great Synagogue is no easy matter

as "it hides itself" amid a warren of little streets and tiny courtyards, each harboring another

small prayer house. Here, within a few steps all the necessities of Jewish life are available:

places to buy and sell, places to pray, a bathhouse, and a large library (the famous Straszun library).[54] Even in the middle of World War I, apparently, many aspects of Jewish life continued little changed in Vilna.

By 1917 most of Vilna's inhabitants were going hungry.[55] Mortality rates shot up, especially among the youngest and oldest parts of the population.[56] While the general population declined, Jews on the whole fared worse than Poles: a census carried out by the Germans in 1916/1917 showed 54% Poles, 41% Jews, and only 2.1% Lithuanians in the city.[57] Banditry increased, and it appeared that all semblance of law and order was breaking down. The German authorities seemed entirely incapable of dealing with the situation and were certainly not helped by the terrible harvest of 1916/17.

At the very least, Vilna had hoped that the Germans would succeed in maintaining order, but by late 1917 and 1918 chaos and lawlessness gave the lie to any pretense of German *Ordnung*.[58] Of course nobody could know how desperate the Germans' situation really was. Despite the Russian revolution and harsh treaty of Brest-Litovsk in spring 1918, life did not improve in Vilna. The German capitulation of November 1918 translated into chaos in Vilna.[59] At the end of 1918 all was in flux. The old order had been swept away, but no new structures had yet appeared to take its place. The next three years were to be among the most chaotic and violent of Vilna's history.

Contested City, 1918-1922

At the end of 1917 the Bolshevik revolution shook Russia, knocking it out of the war. But even before the November 1917 communist revolution, Lithuanian patriots had gathered in

Vilna and organized the Taryba ("council") as a first step toward national independence. The

Taryba declared independence under German auspices on December 11, 1917, though on

February 16, 1918 the Lithuanians repudiated the very close ties with Germany set down in the

first declaration. In July a German prince, Wilhelm von Urbach, was invited to take the

Lithuanian throne as Mindaugas II, an offer accepted by Wilhelm but later withdrawn by the

Taryba in early November.

The 11 November 1918 armistice, with its harsh terms for Germany, made it clear that

the allied powers would dominate post-war Europe. At the same time, Lenin and the Bolsheviks

repudiated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (signed March 1918) in the wake of the armistice. In late

December 1918 the Germans began to leave Vilna and the Red Army moved westward in an

attempt to regain lands given up at Brest-Litovsk, including Vilna. On January 2, 1919 Polish

military forces (*samoobrona*) within the city took control, causing the Lithuanian Taryba to

withdraw to Kaunas. Thus in early 1919 the city was – for the moment – Polish.[60]

At the same time, the sympathizers of the Bolshevik revolution were organizing in Vilna.

The first congress of the Lithuanian Communist party took place in early October 1918 in

Vilnius and in December 1918 elections for the Vilnius Soviet of Workers' Deputies took place.

It is telling that the soviet members were divided almost equally between communists (and

"sympathizers"), that is, those who wanted a closer alignment with Soviet Russia, and more

independent socialists. Ninety-six members of this first Vilna soviet belonged in the first pro-

Bolshevik group while the Jewish Bund elected sixty deputies, the Menshevik Internationalists

twenty-two, and the Lithuanian Social Democrats fifteen.

The socialists went on to form the "Provisional Revolutionary Workers' and Poor Peasants' Government of Lithuania" on 8 December 1918 in Vilna (interestingly, among the governments' eight "ministers" were four Lithuanians, two Poles, and two Jews, including Semen Dimanshtein, later to gain fame as a nationality specialist in the USSR and still later purged by Stalin.[61] Just as Poles – now the majority of the city's population – were about to grab power of the city, both a Lithuanian government and an organ of Soviet power were active in Vilna.[62]

The year 1919 was if anything even more confused, chaotic, and desperate than the last year of the war. Writing the following year, the long-time Vilna resident and Zionist Haikl Lunsky called 1919 a year of hunger and epidemics. During the war, Lunsky noted, there were tears among those who lost relatives in action but in 1919 the misery settled on all inhabitants of the city, so heavily that no one had tears left to shed.[63] One of the causes of the economic distress was the unsettled situation of the city. As we have seen, on 2 January 1919 Polish "self defense" took over in Vilna. Two days later, the Red Army marched in. Communist rule lasted just a bit over three months; Polish troops led by local boy Józef Piłsudski "liberated" the city on April 19, 1919.[64]

Meanwhile the Lithuanians entered into negotiations with Moscow, hoping to gain control over Vilnius by diplomacy. Indeed, on July 12, 1920 Soviet Russia and Lithuania signed a treaty in which Moscow recognized Lithuania's right to Vilna and other territories currently occupied by the Poles. At the same time the Lithuanians attempted to take back the city with

military force, achieving this end mere days later.[65]

The Lithuanian hold on Vilnius was tenuous, however, and in many ways dependent on their Russian ally, whose troops passed through the city on their way to attack Warsaw in August 1920. As is well known, Warsaw (and, to believe some Polish commentators, western civilization) was saved by the "miracle on the Vistula" in late August 1920. The over-extended Red Army collapsed and retreated in disorder, and Lenin abruptly sued for peace. The Treaty of Riga between Poland and Soviet Russia was signed 18 March 1921, depriving Lithuania of any further practical assistance from Moscow (though the Russians continued to support Lithuania's claim for Vilnius).

Just as the Red Army in Poland was disintegrating (August - September 1920), the Lithuanian government was setting up shop in Vilna. Trains from Lithuania began to arrive in Vilna in late August and the Lithuanian post office and other government offices were set up around the same time. Even some foreign embassies (Estonia and Germany, for example) opened in the "Lithuanian capital."[66]

For Warsaw, the situation was intolerable. Fearful that the Lithuanian government would succeed in gaining the support of the western powers to retain the city, the Warsaw government engineered a "rebellion" to re-establish Polish control. On October 9, 1920 general Lucjan Żeligowski occupied Vilna and declared the Vilna region (much more heavily Lithuanian and Belarusian than the city itself) a new independent state: "Central Lithuania" (*Litwa środkowa*).[67] Warsaw declared itself uninvolved and neutral in this conflict, but it was an open secret that in fact Żeligowski was little more than Piłsudski's agent. Despite this, the Lithuanian government was unsuccessful in persuading the League of Nations or western powers to put significant

pressure on Poland to give back the city.[68]

Żeligowski and Co. claimed merely to be carrying out the "will of the [Polish] people" in protecting them against the machinations of foreign states. But clearly "Central Lithuania" could not last. The "middle-Lithuanian" authorities proposed a plebiscite to decide the city's fate. It was obvious that Poles would favor incorporation into Poland, but what the large Jewish community? Jews had been disturbed by pogroms carried out by Polish soldiers (even though condemned by Piłsudski himself) and in many cases favorably impressed by the new Lithuanian government's treatment of its Jewish minority.[69]

Both the authorities of "Central Lithuania" and the newly-created Lithuanian government now "temporarily" in Kaunas went out of their way to woo the Jews. Jews noted with interest and sympathy the creation of a ministry for Jewish affairs in Kaunas and the Lithuanians' granting of broad autonomy to Jewish communities.[70] In Vilna itself the Polish authorities did what they could to convince Jews that the upcoming elections would be democratic and fair. Jewish parties were initially divided on the election, the Bund favoring participation. In the end, however, most Jews decided to abstain from voting. The three mainly-Jewish (over 75%) electoral districts registered a voter turnout of between ten and fifty percent (compared with over 90% in the fifty mainly-Polish districts.[71] In the city of Vilna itself, of nearly 80,000 voters just over half went to the polls. Those abstaining were probably mostly Jews.[72] It came as no surprise that the delegates elected voted overwhelmingly to ask for Central Lithuania's incorporation into Poland, which occurred very rapidly in 1922.[73] Despite Lithuanian anger and Jewish misgivings, Vilna was now officially transformed into Wilno, a Polish city.

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Making Wilno Polish, 1920-1925

As we have seen, already during World War I a majority – if barely – of Vilna's
population had declared themselves of Polish ethnicity. In the 1920s and '30s the Polish
authorities would do all they could to encourage the further development of "Polishness"
(*polskość*) in Vilna. These efforts could be seen already in 1920. Already in August 1919
Mikola Biržiška complained that in Vilna all street signs were in Polish while in Kaunas, the
"provisional" Lithuanian capital, such signs appeared in Lithuanian, Polish, and Yiddish.[74]
While Biržiška certainly was no great friend of the Poles (or, at least, of Polish pretensions to
Wilno), he is usually a reliable witness. In any case, after Żeligowski's occupation every effort
was made to emphasize the Polish "face" of the city. The main thoroughfare in the newer part of
town which the Germans had called St. Georg (simply a translation of the Russian name,
Georgievskaia), was now re-christened after the Polish national bard, Mickiewicz. Similarly
"Grosse [Strasse]" (once Bol'shaia) became Wielka, and Peschanaia ("Sand"), "Lubelska"
(celebrating the union between Poland and Lithuania in 1569).[75] to name just a few.

Of far greater import than street and shops signs was the re-opening of a Polish university
in Vilna. The university of Vilna had been the second oldest university in Poland (and one of the
most venerable in the Russian Empire) before it was closed down after the Polish Insurrection of
1830-1.[76] The resurrection of the university – as a *Polish* university – was an action endowed
with enormous symbolic value for Poles and non-Poles alike.[77] The university was restored in

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the midst of the chaotic year 1919 by a decree issued by Piłsudski on 28 August 1919, and a ceremonial re-opening of the university, attended by local political and ecclesiastical authorities, took place on 11 October of the same year.[78] The university was re-established in its old building (where the library and philology faculty of Vilnius university are today located) but with a new name: Uniwersytet Stefana Batorego. Bathory (to use the more common Hungarian spelling favored by English-language scholars) ruled over the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth soon after the Union of Lublin and was the official founder of Vilna university in 1579.

During the interwar period, Stefan Bathory University ("USB," to use the Polish acronym) was a central cultural institution of the city. In particular Poles recall it with great fondness as a place of serious scholarly work, cultural development, and inter-ethnic toleration.[79] Not everyone agrees with this assessment. As Czesław Miłosz has recently pointed out, while antisemitism at the university became much worse in the 1930s, already in 1922 there were calls for a *numerus clausus* limiting the number of Jewish students.[80] In the 1920s, however, Jews made up a sizeable contingent of total students at the university, around 20% or more and steadily increasing until the 1930/1931 academic year (1192 students or 35.5% of total enrollment) and thereafter falling off rapidly, down to only 400 Jewish students in 1938/39.[81]

Despite the city's political incorporation into Poland, Vilna's Lithuanian community did its best to maintain and improve its own position. The Polish government did not officially forbid the use of Lithuanian or publishing in that language, but its disapproval was palpable. There were Lithuanian schools in the city, but these were poorly funded. Only one Lithuanian-language secondary school existed.[82] For most outsiders, however, it was difficult to see any Lithuanian presence in Vilna at all. For example, a German visitor of the early 1930s wrote

dismissively of Lithuanian claims on the city and described the Jewish, White Russian, Tatar and Karaite communities in Vilna, but not the Lithuanian.[83]

While the Poles strove to establish the Polish-ness of Vilna once and for all, the Lithuanian government adamantly refused to accept the *status quo*. Indeed, the status of Vilna was the number one reason that no diplomatic relations whatsoever existed between the two countries until the eve of World War I.[84] In the 1920s Kaunas made every effort to regain Vilna and even when the Great Powers showed themselves uninterested in (indeed, irritated by) this insistent attitude, the Lithuanian republic would not give up.[85] Throughout the interwar period a series of Lithuanian constitutions retained the statement that Vilna remained Lithuania's capital (remarkably, this was the case even for the constitution of 12 May 1938, adopted **after** the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Poland).[86]

After 1922 Vilna may have been officially incorporated into Poland, but the Lithuanian-Polish polemics over the city continued. Literally dozens of pamphlets and books arguing each side's case appeared in the 1920s and 1930s.[87] The Poles stressed the present-day ethnic makeup of the city while Lithuanians relied on historical and legal arguments. Perhaps most interesting among this entire literature is an exchange of articles in *Le Monde Slave* in 1925 and 1926. An article by the Polish writer and diplomat Leon Wasilewski entitled "Wilno and Polish civilization" was counted by "Vilna and European civilization" by the poet and eccentric (and non-Lithuanian speaker) Oskar Miłosz.[88] The refusal of the two governments to compromise on

Vilnius-Wilno weakened both countries in the interwar period. When Lithuanians finally received their "historic and eternal capital" after the destruction of Poland by the Nazis, the city came to Lithuania as a "gift" from the USSR. As subsequent events were to demonstrate, it was a poisonous gift indeed.

ENDNOTES

1. For a short excursion through Jewish Vilna, see Theodore Weeks, "The Transformation of Jewish Vilna, 1881-1939" in Leonard J. Greenspoon et al., eds., *Studies in Jewish Civilization 16: The Jews of Eastern Europe* (Omaha: Creighton University Press, forthcoming).

2. *Pervaia vseobschaia perepis' naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii. tom 4: Vilenskaia guberniia* (St. Petersburg: MVD, 1899), tetrad' 3, tables XIII and XIV. The total population of the city in 1897 was 154,532. For "Lithuanian" I added together "litovskii" and "zhudskii" entries.

3. To put Vil'na in perspective, in 1910 it was the fourteenth largest city of the Russian Empire, with a population of 192,746 (immediately behind Tashkent with 200,191). Michael F. Hamm, ed., *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986), p. 3.

4. On the monument from a Polish point of view, see "Pomnik Katarzyny II w Wilnie," *Kraj*, vol. 23, no. 38 (17/30 September 1904), pp. 18-19. This account reflects the cautious attitude of the so-called *ugodowcy* who strove for reconciliation between Poles and Russians.

5. Antokolskii was born into a poor Jewish family in Vilna and became possibly the best-known "Russian" sculptor of the later 19th century. On him from a Vilna Jewish perspective, see Hirsz Abramowicz, *Profiles of a Lost World: Memoirs of East European Jewish Life before World War II*, trans. Eva Zeitlin Dobkin (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1999), pp. 251-9.

6. For the Russian-national interpretation of the incorporation of this territory (including the city of Vilna) into Russia, see P. N. Batiushkov, *Belorussiia i Litva: Istoricheskie sud'by Severo-Zapadnago kraia* (St. Petersburg: "Obshchestvennaia pol'za," 1890), pp. 314-350.

7. On the monument and Catherine's importance for the Northwestern provinces (the region, roughly Lithuania and Belarus, where Vilna was located), see A. Vinogradov, *Pamiatnik Imperatritse Ekaterine II v g. Vil'ne* (Vil'na: Vilen'skii Vestnik, 1902).

8. On the monument, see Theodore R. Weeks, "Monuments and Memory: Immortalizing Count M. N. Muraviev in Vilna, 1898." <u>Nationalities Papers</u>, vol. 27, no. 4 (December 1999), 551-564.

9. A. A. Vinogradov, *Putevoditel' po gorodu Vil'ne i ego okrestnostiam*, 2nd ed. (Vil'na: Tip. Shtaba Vilenskogo voennogo okruga, 1908), pp. 192-5.

10. Wanda Dobaczewska, *Wilno i Wileńszczyzna w latach 1863-1914* (Wilno, 1938).

11. A. Vinogradov, *Pravoslavnye sviatyni* (Vil'na: Gubernskaia tipografiia, 1906), pp. 8-13, 16-19.

12. Vinogradov, *Putevoditel'*, pp. 154, 160-1.

13. F. Dobrianskii, *Staria ia novaia Vil'na*, 3rd ed. (Vil'na: Syrkin, 1904), p. 120.

14. Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA), f. 1282, op. 3, 1900, d. 355, l. 6v-7.

15. RGIA, f. 1282, op. 3, 1901, d. 455, ll. 10-11.

16. RGIA, f. 1284, op. 194, 1904, d. 52, ll. 3-6.

17. *Pervaia vseobschaia perepis' naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii. tom 4: Vilenskaia guberniia* (St. Petersburg: MVD, 1899), tetrad' 3, tables XIII and XIV. Of 63,841 Jews by religion in Vilna, 61,847 gave Yiddish as their native tongue. 2322 Jews in Vilna *province* claimed to be native speakers of Russian, while only 209 Jews in the province gave Polish as their mother

tongue.

18. This is the only presently functioning synagogue in Vilnius, the so-called "Choral Synagogue" known in Hebrew as "Taharat ha-Kodesh." G. Agranovskii and I. Guzenberg, *Litovskii Ierusalim. Kratkii putevoditel' po pamiatnym mestam evreiskoi istorii I kul'tury v Vil'niuse* (Vilnius: Lituanus, 1992), p. 35.

19. Henri Minczeles, *Vilna, Wilno, Vilnius: La Jérusalem de Lituanie* (Paris: Editions la découverte, 1993), pp. 92-93; Gottfried Schramm, "Wilna und die Entstehung eines ostjüdischen Sozialismus 1870-1900" in Shulamit Volkov, ed., *Deutsche Juden und die Moderne* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1994), pp. 129-140.

20. LVIA, f. 378, PS 1875, b. 193.

21. LVIA, f. 446, ap. 1, b. 249.

22. Minczeles, *Vilna*, pp. 99-100. For a more personal account, see Abramowicz, *Profiles*, pp. 132-142 and "Der heroisher akt fun Hirsh Lekert" in G. Aronson et al., *Di geshikhte fun Bund* (NY: Farlag unzer tsayt, 1960), vol. 1, pp. 231-241. Lekert's assassination attempt occurred on May 6, 1902 (old style); he was hung on May 28.

23. Minczeles, *Vilna*, pp. 97-98; Pinchas Kon, *Geheimberichte über Herzls Besuch in Wilno im Jahre 1903* (Vienna, 1928).

24. RGIA, f. 1284, op. 190, 1903, d. 101, l. 1.

25. RGIA, f. 1284, op. 194, 1905, d. 79, l. 14.

26. Lithuanian State Historical Archive, Vilnius (LVIA), f. 446, ap. 1, b. 332, priedai Nr. 1 and 2; f. 378, ap. 30, PS 1901, b. 2, l. 191-3; f. 446, ap. 1, b. 331, l. 3-4.

27. LVIA, f. 378, ap. 30, PS 1902, b. 19, l. 11; LVIA, ap. 31, PS 1903, b. 13; *ibid.*, b. 90.

28. LVIA, f.. 378, ap. 33, PS 1905, b. 25, l. 11.

29. LVIA, f. 378, ap. 31, PS 1903, b. 59, ll. 13-14; f. 420, ap. 2, b. 1708; *ibid.*, b. 1710; f. 378, ap. 32, PS 1904, b. 30, l. 60.

30. In general on the situation on the eve of 1905, see Vytautas Merkys, *Darbininkų judėjimas Vilniuje 1905-1907 m. revoliucijos išvakarė* (Vilnius: Politinės ir mokslinės literatūros leidykla, 1957). Despite this work's age and obvious political "slant," it contains much useful information on this under-researched period.

31. On Bloody Sunday and in general on revolutionary events throughout the Empire, see Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988), esp. vol. 1, pp. 74-101.

32. Juozas Jurginis, *1905 met ų revoliucijos įvykiai Vilniuje* (Vilnius: Valstybinė Politinės ir Mokslinės Literatūros Leidykla, 1958), p. 22.

33. Vilna Governor graf Palen report to St. Petersburg, 12 February 1905, in Iu. I. Zhiugzhda et al., eds., *Revoliutsiia 1905-1907 gg. v Litve. Dokumenty i materialy* (Vilnius: Gos. Izd. Poit. i Nauchn. Literatury, 1961), pp. 26-28. The original of this document is in LVIA, f. 380, op. 60, d. 466, ll. 48-50.

34. The deliberations of these committees regarding restrictions on Poles can be found in RGIA, f. 1276, op. 1, 1905, d. 106 ("Po voprosu ob otmene ogranichenii v pravakh pol'skogo naseleniia v Zapadnykh guberniiakh.").

35. For a statement of the LSDP's demands issued in 1905, see *Revoliuciia 1905-1907 gg. Va Litve*, pp. 165-171.

36. Leonas Sabaliunas, *Lithuanian Social Democracy in Perspective 1893-1914* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1990), p. 23.

37. The Zhiugzhda et al. document collection contains several RSDRP documents, including one calling for a boycott of the Bulygin Duma, dated 10 August 1905. *Revoliutsiia 1905-1907 gg. v Litve*, pp. 143-4.

38. In general on Vilna Jews in the 1905 revolution, from a Zionist point of view, see Israel Klausner, *Yerushalayim deLita: Dorot aharonim* (Jerusalem: Bet lohmei hagetot, 1983), pp. 31-54.

39. "Spisok ubitykh ia ranenykh demostrantov na Zaval'noi ulitse v gor. Vil'nius 21 oktiabria 1905 g." in *Revoliutsiia 1905-1907 gg.*, p. 187.

40. Basanavičius's importance for Lithuanians is reflected in his presence on the present-day fifty litas bill.

41. Jonas Basanavičius (J. S-lius, pseud.), *Iš didžiojo Vilniaus Seimo istorijos* (Vilnius: "Ruch," 1925), p. 3.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-21. A translation of these decisions can be found in Jonas Dainauskas, "Prelude to Independence: The Great Conference of Vilnius, 1905" *Lituanus*, vol. 11, no. 4 (Winter, 1965), pp. 56-7.

44. RGIA, f. 1284, op. 194, 1908, d. 66, ll. 5-6, 9-10.

45. Abramowicz, *Profiles of a Lost World*, pp. 177-8.

46. Document dated 18 September 1915 in Stefan Glaser, *Okupacja niemiecka na Litwie w latach 1915-1918. Stosunki prawne* (Lwów: Nakładem Redacji 'Wschodu,' 1929), pp. 159-160.

47. On the mistreatment of Jews by the Russian army, see Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1999), pp. 17-23 and *passim*; and Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003), pp. 137-150.

48. Abramowicz, *Profiles*, pp. 182-208. It should be noted that Abramowicz wrote these memoirs ("The Germans in World War I") immediately after the war; his memory is not here clouded by later horrors. This section originally published in Zalmen Reisen, ed., *Pinnkes far der geshikhte fun Vilne in di yorn fun milkhome un okupatsye* (Vilna: S. Ansky Historical-Ethnographical Society, 1922).

49. For a reproduction of one such announcement (dated 17 September 1916) in Yiddish, see Leizer Ran, *Yerushalayim deLita* (New York: Laureate Press, 1974), vol. 1, p. 21. The following pages show further such orders, including one for forced labor, along with bread cards, German-issued documents, and an announcement of a "gala service" in the Choral Synagogue to celebrate Kaiser Wilhelm's birthday in 1917.

50. In general on conditions in Vilna during World War I, see J. Jurginis, V. Merkys, A. Tautavičius, *Vilniaus miesto istorija nuo seniausių laikų iki Spalio revoliucijos* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1968), pp. 374-381.

51. Paul Monty, *Wanderstunden in Wilna*, 3d edition (Vilna: Verlag der Wilnaer Zeitung, 1918), pp. 9, 17, 19.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 61-67.

55. An excellent source on daily life in Vilna during the war is the diary of Lithuanian writer and historian, Petras

Klimas, *Dienoraštis 1915.XII.1 - 1919.I.19* (Chicago: Am&M Publications, 1988). On the situation in 1916 and 1917 see Liūdas Gira, "Vilniaus gyvenimas po vokiečiais," *Mūsų senovė* vol. 1, no. 2 (1921), pp. 21-38 and no. 3 (1922), pp. 410-424.

56. According to Minczeles, mortality rates went up from 292 in 1916 to 548 in 1917 among those under five years of age, and from 227 to 621 among those 61 to 70 years old. Minczles, *Vilna*, p. 135.

57. Figure quoted in Piotr Łossowski, "Das Wilna-Problem in der polnischen Aussenpolitik 1918-1939" in *Zwischen Staatsnation und Minderheit. Litauen, das Memelland und das Wilnagebiet in der Zwischenkriegzeit*, special issue of *Nordost-Archiv. Zeitschrift für Regionalgeschichte*, vol. 2/1993, no. 2, p. 279. For more detail see Michał Brensztejn, *Spisy ludności Wilna za okupacji niemieckiej od d. 1 Listopada 1915 r.* (Warsaw, 1919).

58. Vejas G. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 181-184.

59. On the chaotic month of November 1918 in *Oberost* (which included the Lithuanian lands and Vilna), see *ibid*., pp. 214-9.

60. For a handy chronology of the very confusing events of 1918-1920 involving Lithuania (and Vilna), see Alfred Erich Senn, *The Emergence of Modern Lithuania* (New York: Columbia UP, 1959), pp. 233-5. Despite its title, this book is essentially an account of this period.

61. B. Vaitkevičius and Z. Vasiliauskas, *Lithuania in 1918-1919. First Soviets* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1979), pp. 38-40, 56-60.

62. On this period (1918-1920) from the Lithuanian point of view, see the articles in Eugenijus Manelis and Romaldas Samavičius, eds., *Vilniaus miesto istorijos skaitinai* (Vilnius: Vilniaus knyga, 2001), pp. 496-565.

63. Haikl Lunsky. *Me-hageto havilnai: tipusim ve-tslalim* (Vilna: Agudat ha-sofrim veha-zhurnalistim ha'ivriyim veVilna, 1921), pp. 5-7.

64. Edward Małachowski, *Wilno 1919.IV.19 - 1934. Wydawnictwo poświęcone 15-ej Rocznicy odzyskania Wilna* (Wilno: Politechnika robotnicza, 1934), esp. pp. 7-10. For more detail on this period, see Bolesław Waligóra, *Walka o Wilno. Okupacja Litwy i Białorusi w 1918-1919 roku przez Rosję Sowiecką* (Wilno: Wydaw. Zarz. Miejsk., 1938) and Tadeusz Piskor, *Wyprawa Wileńska* (Warsaw: Księgarnia wojskowa, 1919).

65. Mykolas Biržiška, *Dėl mūsų sostinės (Iš Vilniaus darbo atsiminimų). II. Nuo 1919 m. liepos 1 d. ligi 1920 m. spalio 9 d.* (London: Nida Press, 1962), p. 182.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 211-8.

67. On Żeligowski's taking of the city from a very pro-Polish point of view, see Bolesław Waligóra, *Zajęcie Wilna przez Gen. Żeligowskiego* (Warsaw: Wojskowe biuro historyczne, 1930).

68. Piotr Łossowski, *Stosunki polsko-litewskie w latach 1918-1920* (Warsaw: Książka I Wiedza, 1966), pp. 319-367; anger against Żeligowski and the general apathy of the western powers is reflected in the contemporary articles collected in Mich. Biržiszka [Mykolas Biržiška], *Na posterunku wileńskim* (Wilno: "Głos Litwy," 1922), vol. 4, pp. 59-94 [articles from October to December 1920].

69. On Jews in the newly-independent Lithuania, see Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars* (Bloomington, Indiana UP, 1983), pp. 217-225.

70. Solomonas Atamukas, *Lietuvos Žydų kelias. Nuo XIV amžiaus iki XX a. pabaigos* (Vilnius: Alma Littera, 2001), pp. 116-127.

71. *Wybory do sejmu w Wilnie 8 stycznia 1922. Oświetlenie akcji wyborczej i jej wyników na podstawie źródeł urzędowych* (Wilno: Wydawnictwo Generalnego Komisarjatu Wyborczego, 1922), p. 57. For more on the Jewish attitude toward the elections, see pp. 37-40 and 68-69.

72. Henri Minczeles, *Vilna, Wilno, Vilnius: La Jérusalem de Lituanie* (Paris: Editions la découverte, 1993), p. 161. The exact figures were 79,348 voters in a population of 129,954. 54.8% of voters actually took part in the elections, a percentage very close to that of Poles in the city (p. 104): 56.1%.

73. On the short-lived *sejm* that voted for the incorporation of "Central Lithuania" into Poland, but also on the elections and frictions between Poland and Lithuania over Wilno-Vilnius, see Aleksander Srebrakowski, *Sejm wileński 1922 roku. Idea ia jej realizacja* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1993).

74. Biržiška, *Na posterunku wileńskim*, p. 141 (originally an article in *Głos Litwy*, no. 71, 8 August 1919).

75. Čaplinskas, *Vilniaus gatvės*, pp.128, 168.

76. On the history of Vilnius/Wilno university which began in the 16th century as a Jesuit academy, see V. Merkys et al., *Vilniaus universiteto istorija* (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1976-9), 3 volumes; or for a shorter account, Marceli Kosman, *Uniwersytet Wilenλaaski 1579-1979* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1981).

77. On the great importance of universtities for the Lithuanian and Ukrainian national movements, see Darius Staliūnas, *Visuomenė be universiteto? (Aukštosios mokyklos atkūrimo problema Lietuvoje: XIXa. vidurys - XXa. pradžia* (Vilnius: LII leidykla, 2000); and Paul Robert Magocsi, *National Cultures and University Chairs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

78. Ryszard Mienicki, "Uniwersytet Wileński" in Stanisław Kościałkowski et al., eds., *Wilno i ziemia wileńska: Zarys monograficzny* (Wilno: Wydawnictwo Wojewódzkiego komitetu regjonalnego, 1937), vol. 2, pp. 16-26.

79. See, for example, Wiktor Sukiennicki, *Legenda I rzeczywistość. Wspomnienia i uwagi o dwudziestu latach Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Wilnie* (Paris: Instytut Literacki, 1967); and Irena Sławińska, "Z życia naukowego akademików USB w Wilnie" in Elżbieta Feliksiak and Antoni Mironowicz, eds., *Wilno i kresy północno-wschodnie. Materiały II. Międzynarodowej Konferencji w Białymstoku* (Białystok: Towarzystwo Literackie im. Adama Mickiewicza, 1996), pp. 283-296.

80. Czesław Miłosz, *Wyprawa w dwudziestolecie* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2000), pp. 278-279. To prove his point, Miłosz quotes an article from *Przegląd Wileński* (17 December 1922) arguing against ND-inspired demands to limit Jewish enrollment at the university.

81. Klausner, *Yerushalayim deLita ... dorot aharonim*, pp. 288-289; and Ran, *Yerushalayim deLita*, vol. 2, p. 337. The exact figures given by Ran are (by academic year): 1919-1920 80 Jews, 448 non-Jews; 1920-21 131/609; 1921-22 370/1243; 1922-23 423/1617; 1923-24 510/1556; 1924-25 523/1563; 1925-26 626/1718; 1926-27 718/1903; 1927-28 871/1955; 1928-29 964/1951; 1929-30 1021/2051.

82. On Lithuanian life in Vilnius during the interwar, see Jeronimas Cicėnas, *Vilnius tarp audrų* (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1993); Mykolas Biržiška, *Vilniaus Golgota: Okupuotosios Lietuvos lietuvių darbo ir kančių 1919-1928 metų dienoraštis* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1992).

83. Marian Hepke, *Wilno. Stadt zwischen Ost und West. Reisebilder*, 2nd ed. (Bromberg: A. Dittmann, 1936). It must be said that Hepke appears to have been a great fan of Marshall Piłsudski.

84. Piotr Łossowski, *Stosunki polsko-litewskie 1921-1939* (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 1997).

85. Alfred Erich Senn, *The Great Powers, Lithuania, and the Vilna Question 1920-1928* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966).

86. Regina Žepkaitė, "Die fehlende Haupstadt: Litauens Politik im Zeichen der Wilnafrage" in *Nordost-Archiv*, vol. II/1993, no. 2, pp. 299-316.

87. See, for example, St. Bogorja, *Co każdy Polak powinien wiedzieć? (O Wileńszczyźnie)* (Wilno: Nakładem komitetu zjednoczenia kresów wschodnich z Rzecząpospolitą, 1921); *O Wilno. Memorjał delegacji polskiej przedłożony Konferencji brukselskiej* (Lwów: Komitet dni wileńskich, 1921); *Poland and Lithuania. The Question of Wilno* (Warsaw: Straż kresowa, 1921); Vytautas Bičiūnas, *Tiesa apie Vilnių* (Kaunas: Lietuvos Šaulių sąjungos leidinys, 1931); Fernand Chapentier du Moriez, *Wilno: La Lithuanie et la Pologne, la Bretagne et la France* (Paris: Société générale d'Imperimerie, 1922); *Conflit Polono-Lithuanien: Question de Vilna 1918-1924* (Kaunas: Ministère des affaires étrangères, 1924).

88. Leon Wasilewski, "Wilno et la civilisation polonaise," *Le Monde Slave*, vol. 2 , no. 9 (September 1925), pp. 335-347; Oskar Miłosz, "Vilna et la civilisation européenne, " " *Le Monde Slave*, vol. 3 , no. 8 (August 1926), pp. 215-229.