

VYTAS JANKAUSKAS

RENAISSANCE HISTORIAN AND POET MACIEJ STRYJKOWSKI AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO LITHUANIAN SUNG FOLKLORE*

Abstract. Maciej Strykowski is a well-known historian and poet of the Renaissance, but one aspect of his work has remained underexplored – namely, his material on Lithuanian folklore. Strykowski adapted authentic 16th century Lithuanian military-historical folklore in his historiographical works. Its elements are included in his works *O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach, sprawach rycerskich i domowych sławnego narodu litewskiego, żemojdzkiego i ruskiego* and *Kronice Polskiej, Litewskiej, Żmudzkiej i wszystkiej Rusi*. While ritual folklore has attracted the attention of researchers, Lithuanian military and historical songs recorded by Strykowski, although noted, have hardly been researched. This article analyses several manifestations of such folklore. The material recorded by Strykowski brings new insights and allows us to expand our knowledge of the events recorded in the legendary part of *Kroniki litewskie*. At the same time, the article discusses the authenticity of the sources Strykowski drew on, using the example of songs of a military and historical character concerning the Giedroyc family, confirming that folklore of a military-historical nature existed in Lithuania before the 16th century.

Keywords: Maciej Strykowski; folklore; history; literature; Šventaragis; Daumantas; Dukes Giedraičiai

RENASANSOWY HISTORYK I POETA, MACIEJ STRYJKOWSKI I JEGO ZWIĄZEK Z LITEWSKIM FOLKLOREM ŚPIEWANYM

Abstrakt. Maciej Strykowski to dobrze znany historyk i poeta epoki renesansu, jednak jeden aspekt jego twórczości pozostał niedoceniony – chodzi tu o materiały dotyczące folkloru litewskiego. Strykowski adaptował w swoich pracach historiograficznych autentyczny szesnastowieczny litewski folklor wojskowo-historyczny. Jego elementy zawarte są w dziełach *O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach, sprawach rycerskich i domowych sławnego narodu litewskiego*,

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żemojdzkiego i ruskiego oraz *Kronice Polskiej, Litewskiej, Żmudzkiej i wszystkiej Rusi*. O ile folklor obrzędowy zwracał uwagę badaczy, o tyle utrwalone przez Strykowskiego pieśni litewskie o charakterze militarnym i historycznym, choć zauważone, nie były prawie w ogóle badawczo eksplorowane. Niniejszy artykuł analizuje kilka przejawów takiego folkloru. Materiał utrwalony przez Strykowskiego wnosi nowe ujęcia i pozwala na poszerzenie wiedzy o wydarzeniach zapisanych w legendarnej części *Kronik litewskich*. Artykuł mówi zarazem o autentyczności źródeł, z których czerpał Strykowski na przykładzie pieśni o charakterze wojskowym i historycznym dotyczących rodziny Giedroyciów, potwierdzając, że na Litwie przed XVI wiekiem istniał folklor o charakterze militarno-historycznym.

Słowa kluczowe: Maciej Strykowski; folklore; historia; literatura; Šventaragis; Daumantas; księżta Giedroyc

Maciej Strykowski's Chronicle, first published in Königsberg in 1582,¹ cannot be overestimated when it comes to the development of Lithuanian historiography, literature and folklore. For a long time, together with Albert Kojałowicz-Wijuk's *History of Lithuania*, which appeared in the middle of the 17th century,² it was the main work that shaped the imagination of early Lithuanian history. Until the emergence of critical historiography in the 19th century and attempts to work with texts, which began to appear in increasing numbers in various publications, Strykowski and Kojałowicz's concepts dominated the knowledge of history. We must therefore acknowledge that this is one of the most important authors in Lithuanian historiography. Unfortunately, this aspect has not been fully understood in Lithuania. Strykowski, who processed various historical sources and became the author of one of the first conceptually complete and first printed histories of Lithuania, has not yet received much coherent attention and full academic publication in Lithuania. Although the first volume of his Chronicle had already been prepared and annotated in the Lithuanian scholarly press,³ it never appeared due to the serious illness and death of the main editor, Eglė Patiejūnienė.⁴

¹ Maciej Strykowski, *Ktora przedtym nigdy światła ne widziała. Kronika Polska Litewska / □modzka / i wszystkiej Rusi Kijowskiej / Moskiewskiej / Siewierskiej / Wolhińskiej / Podolskiej / Podgórskiej / Podlaskiej / etc. [...]* (Królewiec, 1582).

² Albertus Wijuk Kojałowicz, *Historiae Lituanæ Pars prior, De Rebus Lituanorum Ante susceptam Christianam Religionem, conjunctionemque Magni Lituanie Ducatus cum Regno Poloniae Libri Novem* (Gdańsk, 1650).

³ Eglė Patiejūnienė, "Trys Motiejaus Strijkovskio Kronikos vertimo ištraukos," *Senoji Lietuvos literatūra* 33 (Vilnius: Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas, 2012), 216.

⁴ Ona Daukšienė, "In memoriam Eglė Patiejūnienė (1964–2017)," *Archivum Lithuanicum* 19 (2017): 393–98.

Maciej Strykowski was a Renaissance historian and poet who had his own historiographical vision and he pursued it. As a man of universality, he not only creatively processed the sources available to him but also developed his own Renaissance way of speaking. In writing history, he sought to visit the lands about which he provides information. The historiographical consensus is that he was proficient in the Lithuanian language, so he not only used the sources available to him to write his history but also integrated some of the motifs of sung folklore into his chronicle. It is the analysis of the context of these motifs that is the main aim of this work.

The biography and work of Maciej Strykowski have been the subject of research since the emergence of professional humanities. Studies of the 19th and 20th centuries can be qualified as a classic, as they have been repeatedly discussed in the works of authors from the disciplines of history, literature and ethnology. The contemporary studies that can be mentioned (which also include a bibliography of previous research on Strykowski) cover a wide field of interest, but one should single out the fundamental research carried out by Julia Radziszewska, Zbysław Wajtkowiak, Jan Jurkiewicz, Aleh Dziarnowicz, Darius Kuolys, Sigitas Narbutas, Eglė Patiejūnienė, Christine Watson.⁵ These are fundamental works in the exploration of the cultural, social, and political outlook on Maciej Strykowski.

If we talk about Lithuanian historiography, we can distinguish general works devoted to the development of Lithuanian literature and history, which

⁵ Julia Radziszewska, *Maciej Strykowski: historyk-poeta z epoki Odrodzenia* (Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, 1978); Zbysław Wajtkowiak, *Maciej Strykowski, dziejopis Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. Kalendarium życia i działalności* (Poznań: UAM, 1990); Jan Jurkiewicz, "Goci-Cymbrowie w koncepcji litewskich pradziejów Macieja Strykowskiego," in *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės istorijos atodangos. Profesoriaus Mečislovo Jučo 90-mečio jubiliejui skirtas mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys*, ed. Vydas Dolinskas, Rimvydas Petrauskas, and Edmundas Rimša (Vilnius: Nacionalinis Muziejus LDK Valdovų Rūmai, 2016); Aleh Dziarnovich, "'Nevjadomy Strykovski': gistoryja rukapisu paemy 'Bitva pad Ulaj' (1564) sa zboraw Puszkinskaga domu w Sankt-Petjarburze," *Studia Historica Europae Orientalis* 3 (2010): 221–44; Darius Kuolys, *Asmuo, tauta, valstybė Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės istorinėje literatūroje: renesansas ir barokas* (Vilnius: Mokslo ir Enciklopedijų Leidykla, 1992); Sigitas Narbutas, "Motiejaus Strijkovskio istoriografijos poveikis ir raida," in *Senosios Lietuvos literatūra, 1253-1795*, ed. Sigitas Narbutas (Vilnius: Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas, 2011); Narbutas, "Motiejus Strijkovskis," in *Senosios Lietuvos literatūra, 1253-1795*, ed. Sigitas Narbutas (Vilnius: Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas, 2011); Patiejūnienė, "Trys Motiejaus"; Patiejūnienė, "Nepelnytai užmirštas Motiejaus Strijkovskio kūrinys," *Žmogus ir žodis* 15 no. 2 (2013); Christine Watson, *Tradition and Translation: Maciej Strykowski's Polish Chronicle in Seventeenth-Century Russian Manuscripts* (PhD diss., Uppsala University, 2012), etc.

in one way or another have touched upon the work of Maciej Strykowski.⁶ However, most of the Lithuanian literature in the humanities deals only with narrow aspects of activity of Maciej Strykowski, which allow us to get acquainted with his work and to better understand individual aspects of his work. A few typical examples can be mentioned (the list could be continued, but this is not the purpose of this paper). In Lithuanian historiography, the question of the historicity of Maciej Strykowski's Chronicle has been discussed,⁷ he has been presented as a creator of the Renaissance,⁸ the representation of the phenomenon of chivalry in Maciej Strykowski's works⁹ has been analysed, as well as other works. Among the specialised works, it is necessary to single out particularly important studies in Lithuanian ethnology and folklore studies devoted to the analysis and verification of the data presented by Maciej Strykowski. One of the most important of these works was an article by Ambraziejus Jonynas, devoted to folklore motifs in Strykowski's chronicle. His analysis and verification of the data showed that Strykowski's data on Lithuanian folklore are correct and reliable.¹⁰ Important was the work of Gintaras Beresnevičius, which presented the pantheon of Lithuanian gods in Strykowski's work,¹¹ and the work of Elvyra Usačiovaitė on Lithuanian sacrifices in Strykowski's Chronicle.¹² It is important to note that the Lithuanian ethnologists and folklorists trust the data of Maciej Strykowski, find it credible, and incorporate it into their investigations.

Maciej Strykowski was a 16th-century erudite who not only wrote history and literature, and has been described as a coryphaeus with an excellent knowledge of ancient historiography, but his works are also very important sources in at least a few fields. In addition to the Chronicle, several of his

⁶ Eugenija Ulčinaite and Albinas Jovaišas, *Lietuvių literatūros istorija: XIII–XVIII amžius* (Vilnius: Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas, 2003), 108–17.

⁷ Romas Batūra, "Lietuvos metraščių legendinės dalies ir strijkovskio M. 'Kronikos' istoriškumo klausimu," *Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijos darbai, serija A 2* (1966): 265–83.

⁸ Vanda Zaborskaitė, "Renesanso kultūros apraiškos M. Strijkovskio 'Kronikoje'," *Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijos darbai, serija A 2* (1965): 73–90.

⁹ Jūratė Kiaupienė, "Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės riterio vaizdinys Motiejaus Strykovskio tekstuose," *Kultūrų sankirtos: skiriama dr. Ingės Lukšaitės 60-mečiui*, ed. Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė, Edmundas Rimša, and Jolita Sarcevičienė (Vilnius: Diemedis, 2000), 117–41.

¹⁰ Ambraziejus Jonynas, "Lietuvių folkloras M. Strijkovskio 'Kronikoje'," in *Literatūra ir kalba*, vol. 13, *Lietuvių poetikos tyrinėjimai* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1974), 239–76.

¹¹ Gintaras Beresnevičius, "M. Strijkovskio 'Kronikos' lietuvių dievų sąrašas," *Metai*, nos. 8–9 (2006): 127–45.

¹² Elvyra Usačiovaitė, "Motiejus Strijkovskis apie lietuvių pagonybę: aukojimas dievams," in *Kultūrologija*, vol. 18, *Istorinės vietos, atmintys, tapatumai* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Kultūros Tyrimų Institutas, 2010), 107–39.

works are known in the historiographical sphere: *Goniec cnothy*,¹³ *O wolności Korony Polskiej*,¹⁴ and a previously unknown and published work discovered in the twentieth century, *O początkach*.¹⁵ Of these, the Chronicle and *O początkach* are the most important for us, as they contain texts in Lithuanian which Strykowski identifies as songs. This raises difficult questions as to whether folklore has been used or whether these are still elements of Strykowski's work integrated into the text, albeit written in Lithuanian.

Ethnological and literary studies have discussed these questions in various ways. One may mention the article by Ambraziejus Jonynas, in which he, after analysing and comparing the material used by Strykowski, argued that insofar as it is verifiable, it is reliable. However, he did not take a clear position on the interpolation of texts of a historical military nature, as there was no possibility of verifying them and no corresponding texts were available.¹⁶ Literary scholars are ambivalent about these texts. Some of them consider them reliable and argue that they reveal the one of the oldest Lithuanian folklore.¹⁷ However, there are also sceptical opinions on the matter.¹⁸ The greatest difficulty in assessing such intertexts by Strykowski is the lack of primary analysis: neither the contexts of the written texts, nor the content, nor the linguistic have been analysed. Therefore, these questions can be summarised as being addressed by intuition, using preconceptions rather than research methodology.

One of the most important aspects of Strykowski's works is his use of Lithuanian folklore. It can be divided into several groups. First of all, there is mythological and religious folklore, which is easy enough to identify by comparing the song fragments recorded by him in the 16th century with the folklore material he collected in the 19th and 20th centuries. The correlations are very obvious and there are no major questions here, since we have parallel

¹³ Maciej Strykowski, *Goniec cnothy / do prawych slachciczow / przez Matysa Strykowinsa uczyniony / w ktorym są przykłady piękne / spraw mężow zacnych / postęпки Sarmatow y krolow polskich / księztw litewskich y ich narodu sławnego wywody [...]* (Kraków, 1574).

¹⁴ Maciej Strykowski, *O wolności Korony Polskiej / y Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego / a o srogim zniewoleniu inszych krolestw pod tyrańskim jarzmem / Tureckim [...]* (Kraków, 1575).

¹⁵ Maciej Strykowski, *O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach, sprawach rycerskich i domowych sławnego narodu litewskiego, żemojdzkiego i ruskiego [...]*, ed. Julia Radziszewska (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1978).

¹⁶ Jonynas, "Lietuvių folkloras," 239–76.

¹⁷ Eugenija Ulčínaitė and Albinas Jovaišas, *Lietuvių literatūros istorija*, 108–17.

¹⁸ Eglė Patiejūnienė, "Narsus mėginimas sukurti vientisą senosios literatūros vaizdą (rec.): Eugenija Ulčínaitė, Albinas Jovaišas, *Lietuvių literatūros istorija: XIII–XVIII amžius*, redaktorius Mikas Vaicekuskas, Vilnius: Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas, 2003, 524 p.: iliustr.," *Senoji Lietuvos literatūra* 19 (Vilnius: Lietuvių Literatūros ir Tautosakos Institutas, 2003), 299.

texts. It is much more difficult with historical folklore, which is analysed out of context. Although Strykowski mentions the existence of songs about the Pojāta character,¹⁹ he does not quote them, so we cannot verify this claim. This problem has long been pointed out,²⁰ so we must admit that it is not easily solved.

The few fragments of Lithuanian songs also require a comment. In *O początkach*, Strykowski reproduces the following quotation, which is contained in a fragment of the story of duke Šventaragis:²¹

Kunigos Suntorogos Wakies Musiei iodos
Geros buhai rycerzos musiei lenkos godos.

When trying to look at the reconstructed text, it must be emphasised that the ending of the adjectives and the nouns in the first declination are identical in the reconstruction, so there are no major problems, at least here. We have the characteristic rhyming scheme of Lithuanian songs, “juodus / gudus”, which is in line with the rhyming principles of Lithuanian singing folklore. Trying to reconstruct the singing itself without the melody is difficult, as the lengthening or shortening of syllables may have influenced the form of performance, but it is also possible. The most questionable is the atypical use of the vernacular “Wakies” – “vokiečius”. Its shortening in this song does not seem natural, the aim is to replace a three-syllable word with a two-syllable word.

A much more complex issue concerns the person of Šventaragis himself, and the way he is presented in this song. First of all, it should be noted that Strykowski no longer quotes this song when writing the chronicle. This is not an accidental matter, because in describing the reign of the legendary duke Šventaragis, he notes that this was a peaceful period in Lithuanian history. This is dissonant with the militaristic nature of the song. The question of the legendary duke Šventaragis is complex. In the 15th century, the name was still used in Lithuanian names and is recorded in sources.²² Cult sites were also named after Šventaragis, which also correlates with the legend of this duke.²³

¹⁹ Maciej Strykowski, *Kronika Polska, Litewska, Żmudzka i wszystkiej Rusi*, vol. 1 (Warszawa, 1846), 245.

²⁰ Aleksander Brückner, *Starożytna Litwa. Ludy i bogi. Szkice mitologiczne i historyczne* (Warszawa: K. Kowalewski, 1904).

²¹ Strykowski, *O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach*, 208.

²² Lina Anužytė, ed., *Lietuvos Metrika*, Book 4, 1479–1491 (Vilnius: Lietuvos Istorijos Institutas, 2004), 36.

²³ Vyintas Vaitkevičius, “Bandydas atkurti Šventaragio mitą,” *Būdas*, no. 5 (2023): 13.

What kind of Šventaragis do we see in the chronicles of Lithuania? The story of Šventaragis is rather short, with more mythological elements than historical ones.²⁴ However, it cannot be excluded that the legend records primarily the accomplishment of a religious reform. Trying to date this reform is a thankless task, since it can be dated both in the 5th–6th centuries, when burial customs were changing in Lithuania, based on archaeological data,²⁵ and in the 13th century, when state-supported cult centres were being established and the shrines of Šventaragis coincides with the centres of the functioning of the state.²⁶ This is a very complex question, since it needs to be resolved not only on the basis of the historical data, but also by trying to discern a correlation of the spread of power and the dispersion of the shrine, which reflected this.

²⁴ Nikolay Ulashchik, ed., *Polnoye sobraniye russkikh letopisey*. Vol. 35, *Letopisi belorussko-litovskiy* (Moskva: Nauka, 1980), 178: “Po smierci Rinkoltovei panovie, žaluiacz pana swego przirodzonego, i wzięli sobie hospodarem wielkiego xiędza litewskiego i zmodskiego, sina Vtenus-sovego s Kitaurussa, Swintoroha. I malo panovawssi Swintorohu na Nouogrodku i na ruskich zamkach, i ociecz iego, xiądz wielki litewski i zmodski vmrze Vtenus, i sin iego Swintorog po smierci oycza swego pocznie panovac na Wielkim xiąstwie Litewskim, Żmodskim, Nouogrodskim i Ruskim; i vrodzi Swintorog sina Skirmunta. I obierze sobie wielki xiądz Swintorog mieszcze na pusci barzo czudne podle rzeki Vielyey, gdzie rzeka Vilna wpada w Vielyą, i prosił sina swego Skirmunta, a na tim mieszczyw bilo zgłiszczcze vcziniono, gdzie bi go vmarlego spalono. I prikazal sinv swemu, abi go po smierci na tim mieszczyw, gdzie bi go szegl, wszitkich xiążąt litewskih i znamienitich boyar palono bilo, aże bi nigdzie indziej ciała vmarlich nie bili ższone, tilko tam, bo i przet tim żegali ciała vmarlich na tim mieszczyw, ktori gdzie vmrze. I prikazawssi ti slova sinu swoiemv Skirmuntv, wielki xiądz Swintorog i vmrze. Wielki xiądz Skirmunt został po oyczv swim na Wielkim xiąstwie Litewskim, Żmodskim i Ruskim, podług oycza swego prikazania, na tim mieszczyw na vscie rzeki Vilni, gdzie w Vielyą wpadiva, vczinil zhłiszczcze. Tam że żżegl oycza swego i konia iego, na ktorim ieżdżival, i szatą iego, którą noszival, i miłosnika iego, na ktorego on bil laskaw, sokola i charta iego żżegl. I od tich czasow xiąża wielci litewsci i boyare ciała ich tam palili, a dla tego to mieszcze od tich czasow przezvano Swintoroga, na ymię tego wielkiego xiędza. A kiedi ktorego wielkiego xiędza litewskiego abo pana spalono ciała ich, tegdi kładli przī nich pasnokti risie abo niedźwiedzie dla tego, isz viarą tą mieli, isz sądni dzien miał bić, i tam O znamionovali sobie, isz bi bog miał przidz i siedzieć na gorze visokiey, i sądzić živich i martwich, na którą gorą będzie trudno wnić krom tich pasnoktow risich abo niedźwiedzich, i dla tego ti pasnokti kładly vedla ich, na ktorich mieli na tą gorą lesć i na sąd do boga idz. A tak, aczkolwie poganie bili, a wżdi sobie znamionovaly w boga iednego vierzali, isz sądni dzien miał przid i vierzili zmartwiwstacz, iednego boga, ktori ma przidz sądzicz živich i martwich. I panuiąci wielkiemu xiędzvi Skirmuntu, zebrali się muże lathihola, ktorzi siedzieli nat brzegiem morskim, oceanem morzem, i szli w ziemią Zmodską, i szkodi wielkie poczynili, i krwie rozlianie, i lvdzi zmodskich od nich wiele sginąlo. I xiądz Skirmunt, zebrawssi się s siłami swemi, i poydziena nich w ziemią ich samich, i ich poscinal, i inssich w polon viviodl, i ziemią ich pustą vczinil. I w ten czas po vigechaniv xiędza wielkiego Skirmunta z ziemi Lathiholskiey, prziszli niemci z za morza do tei ziemi Lathiholskiey, i tą ziemią osiedli, i pany lathiholskiemi zostali, i nazvaii się ifflanti.”

²⁵ Gintaras Beresnevičius, *Baltų religinės reformos* (Kaunas: Taura, 1995).

²⁶ Daiva Vaitkevičienė and Vyktas Vaitkevičius, “XIII a. Lietuvos valstybinės religijos bruožai,” *Lietuvos Archeologija* 21 (2001): 311–13.

The fact that the process of the creation of the Lithuanian state was complex and began before the state was formed can be demonstrated in a mixed way through socio-political processes.

When describing the spread of the Šventaragis shrines, Daiva Vaitkevičienė and Vyckintas Vaitkevičius pointed out the correlations with the dispersion of the Leičiai layer.²⁷ The emergence of this layer dates back to the 12th century. These were specific people subordinate to the ruler, whom he could settle in the newly conquered territories that were not subject to his control. Later, in the 13th–14th centuries, the rulers settled them in the newly occupied lands of Ruthenia: in Novahrudek, Volhynia, and the land of Kiev. Leičiai served the ruler by fulfilling specific political, social and economic functions.²⁸ The temples of the Šventaragis were created where these people were located,²⁹ so it can be said that the Šventaragis' temples marked the growth of the ruling family's power and the expansion of the territory under its control (which is, by the way, also illustrated by the founding of Vilnius, and its association with the legend of the Šventaragis – we have a model of the spread of the ruler's power, not only by establishing a temple, but also creating the narrative connects of them).

However, Strykowski's passage about the Šventaragis also raises other questions. If the legend of the founding of Vilnius, the legend of the reform of Šventaragis, also belongs to the oral tradition,³⁰ but we can question how it was recorded, Strykowski's data have great value. These fragments are described as an epic narrative.³¹ On closer inspection, we can speak of the fact that it is not only a coincidence of place that is recorded here, but also a certain cycle of narratives of duke Šventaragis. Strykowski's data would indicate that the Šventaragis cycle may have been still functioning in a sung form at the end of the sixteenth century, which would suggest a sung epic similar to the Ruthenian bylina tradition³² or the South Slavic sung epic tradition.³³

²⁷ Vaitkevičienė and Vaitkevičius, 317–19.

²⁸ Artūras Dubonis, *Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio leičiai. Iš Lietuvos ankstyvųjų valstybinių struktūrų praeities* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Istorijos Instituto Leidykla, 1998).

²⁹ Vaitkevičienė and Vaitkevičius, "XIII a. Lietuvos valstybinės," 317–19.

³⁰ Kęstutis Gudmantas, "Valdovo ir dinastijos įvaizdžiai vėlyvuosiuose metraščiuose," *Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis* 65–66 (2012): 56.

³¹ Alfredas Bumblauskas, *Senosios Lietuvos istorija, 1009 – 1795* (Vilnius: R. Paknio Leidykla, 2007), 104.

³² Boris Aleksandrovich Rybakov, *Drevnyaya Rus'. Skazaniya. Byliny. Letopisi* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk CCCP, 1963).

³³ Robert Auty, "Serbo-Croat," in *Traditions of Heroic and Epic Poetry*, ed. Arthur T. Hatto, vol. 1, *The Traditions*, (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1980), 196–210.

In this case, what we have here is that Strykowski's information allows us to speak of a broader tradition of the legendary duke Šventaragis. It has been pointed out in historiography that Šventaragis appears in the chronicles only to establish a cult and to die.³⁴ In this case we also have a military component. This would mean that the Šventaragis cycle was used to the extent that it was necessary to form the text of the Lithuanian chronicles, but that some of the material was not used, as is typical of medieval chronicles.

Strykowski's passage suggests that all the neighbours – the Germans, the Ruthenians and the Poles – were named as enemies of pagan Lithuania. These are certainly realities of the 16th century that must be taken into account when Strykowski could have taken this song from folklore. Ruthenia was one of the most constant geopolitical factors influencing Lithuania's environment,³⁵ and the border between Lithuania and Ruthenia has been mentioned since the first mention of Lithuania,³⁶ so this element is not too problematic. The Polish factor in the Lithuanian geopolitical field began to be firmly established from the beginning of the thirteenth century,³⁷ but often in Polish chronicles Lithuanians were seen as Prussians in the overall Baltic massif, even in the middle of the thirteenth century, and so under the earlier mentions of Prussians in Poland we can also look for the results of a joint activity of Prussians and Lithuanians, or just Lithuanians who were confused in with the Prussians.³⁸ Thus, in this regard, we have no firm dating. The German question is the most complex and deserves a separate discussion. The Germans began to emerge in the Baltic region in the last quarter of the 12th century, when the first missions began to operate on the lower Daugava if they did not operate near the factories.³⁹ Thus, we would have a limit to the chronology: such a text corresponds to the realities of the end of the 12th century at the latest. However, the mention of the Germans as they were mentioned in Strykowski's account leads to some observations.

³⁴ Gintaras Beresnevičius, *Palemono mazgas: Palemono legendos periferinis turinys. Religinė istorinė studija* (Vilnius: Sapnų Sala, 2003), 46–51; Beresnevičius, *Baltų religinės reformos*, 135–42.

³⁵ Zenonas Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija iki Vytauto Didžiojo mirties* (Roma: Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akademija, 1978), 3.

³⁶ Inga Lieonavičiūtė, "Annales Quedlinburgensis," in *1009 metai: Šv. Brunono Kverfurtiečio misija*, ed. Inga Leonavičiūtė (Vilnius: Aidai, 2006), 73.

³⁷ Grzegorz Błaszczyk, *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich od czasów najdawniejszych do współczesności*, vol. 1, *Trudne początki* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1998), 33–34.

³⁸ Edvardas Gudavičius, *Lietuvos europėjimo keliais* (Vilnius: Aidai, 2002).

³⁹ *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum germanicarum in usum scholarum*, vol. 31, *Heinrici*, 2.

First of all, it should be noted that the number of syllables has been changed by shortening the vernacular. The knowledge of historical grammar is limited in this case, but it is possible that in the overall Baltic array the archaic German name could have been shorter, close to the current Latvian name **vacis*.⁴⁰ The name used by Strykowski is not out of context, but rather indicative of the archaic form of the language and indicative of the peculiarities of the development of Lithuanian. It is equally important to note another element of this problem. Of all the nations, only the Germans received the epithet “black”. It is an epithet denoting the colour black, usually expressing a negative attitude of the speaker towards the object. This is entirely consistent with the folkloric image of the German. An analysis of the image of Germans in Lithuanian folklore has shown that it is extremely negative. The worst image of the German is associated with the oldest war songs, which reflect the military aspects of the relationship.⁴¹ Thus, it also correlates with other folklore information.

However, it should be noted that folklore is not static, but could often change and adapt to new existing conditions. Therefore, the German folk-name used may have been superseded by some other folk-name, possibly synonymous. In Lithuanian, German also has synonyms. One of the synonyms is Prussian.⁴² If we try to put Prussian in the place of German, the rhyming couplet would look more natural. Such a change would also reflect historical processes: when the German colonisation of Prussia became more widespread in the fourteenth century, such a change in the song, reflecting the new realities, could have occurred quite naturally.

All this shows that Strykowski’s song about the legendary duke Šventaragis is fully in line with the cultural context, and that the epithets used in it correlate with other folkloric images. Possible variations are a natural feature of folklore development. Therefore, there is no stronger argument to doubt the authenticity of this song. It is also important that the information provided by Strykowski extends our knowledge of the epic cycle of the legendary duke Šventaragis, opening up new motifs.

Another concentrate of Strykowski’s Lithuanian folklore is contained in his Chronicle. In one place, there is both a song excerpt about Duke Daumantas, “Dowmantas, Dowmantas Gedrotos Kunigos, labos Rajtos luguje,” and a

⁴⁰ Alvydas Butkus and Stefano M. Lanza, “Patriotizmas pseudomokslo pakuotėje,” *Voruta* 17, no. 6 (2012): 10.

⁴¹ Laimutė Anglickienė, “Vokietis lietuvių tautosakoje,” *Liaudies kultūra*, no. 2 (2000): 25–27.

⁴² Jonas Kruopas, ed., *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*, vol. 10 (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1976), 826.

Lithuanian translation of the song into Polish, “*Nie tak ci mi zamku żal, jako mężnych rycerzów w ogniu gorających.*”⁴³ These two fragments are to be interpreted differently. The second passage is not a problem and has been recorded as functioning in Lithuanian folklore. The refrain mentions the person Sudaitis (son of Sudas) and it is one of the most archaic Lithuanian war songs known today.⁴⁴ The song about duke Daumantas is much more difficult to assess.

The name Daumantas was common in the Lithuanian ducal strata (and not only there). In the 13th century, we know of at least two Daumantas: the assassin of Mindaugas and later Duke of Pskov (who died in 1299), and the ruler of Lithuania, who died in 1285.⁴⁵ In the Svirskiai family, the name Daumantas also appeared in the fifteenth-century.⁴⁶ This was probably the same Daumantas who later moved to the land of Kiev, and started the family of the dukes of Domant-Moshansky.⁴⁷ There was also a tradition of descent from Daumantas in the family of the Giedraičiai dukes.⁴⁸ We can definitely say that although this name is not recorded in the Gediminas dynasty, it was popular in Lithuania in the 13th and 15th centuries.

It should be noted that Strykowski is not referring to the history of Lithuania in the broadest sense when he renders these songs, but in this case he is referring to the tradition and the historical knowledge of the Giedraičiai dukes. Both Dukes Daumantas and Gurdas Ginvilaitis, who lost their castle and soldiers, are associated with the Giedraičiai family.⁴⁹ This is quite natural, because while writing the Chronicle, Strykowski was under the patronage from the Giedraičiai family – Bishop of Samogitia Merkelis Giedraitis, who at the time was patronizing and encouraging him to write the Chronicle.⁵⁰ Thus, Strykowski certainly had an informant who could tell to Strykowski information about the Giedraičiai family history. Comparing Strykowski’s texts, the knowledge of the Chronicle text is undoubtedly the broadest, which shows that his field of information was also expanding.

⁴³ Strykowski, *Kronika Polska, Litewska, Żmudzka*, 320.

⁴⁴ Danutė Krištopaitė, *Lietuvių liaudies karinės-istorinės dainos: feodalizmo epocha* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1965), 35.

⁴⁵ Tomas Baranauskas, *Lietuvos valstybės ištakos* (Vilnius: Vaga, 2000), 153.

⁴⁶ Jan Tęgowski, *Rodowód kniaziów Świrskich do końca XVI wieku* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2011), 153.

⁴⁷ Vytas Jankauskas, *Kunigaikščiai Svirskiai XIV-XVI a.: nuo gentinės aristokratijos iki LDK politinės tautos* (Kaunas: Spalvų Kvartetas, 2016), 98–100.

⁴⁸ Józef Wolff, *Kniazowie litewsko-ruscy od końca czternastego wieku* (Warszawa: Jacek Badowski, 1895), 98.

⁴⁹ Strykowski, *Kronika Polska, Litewska, Żmudzka*, 320.

⁵⁰ Wojtkowiak, *Maciej Strykowski, dziejopis*, 136–40.

It may be noted that such preservation of historical memory was typical of ducal families in 16th-century Lithuania. The example of the Svirskiai dukes confirms this data. Strykowski's possible informant from among the dukes Svirskiai, Jakūbas Aleksandraitis Svirskis, also provided fragmentary information about his family ancestors.⁵¹ The same can be said about other families: a study of the genealogical memory of the Goštautas family showed that it is also fragmentary when it comes to memory issues from earlier times.⁵² As we go further back in time, it becomes more and more inaccurate when it comes to events older than the third generation. And the example of the Goštautas family illustrates this once again: the oldest history of the Goštautas family resembles more a legend than a retelling of historical events.

The example of the dukes of Alšėniškiai (Holszansky) is special in this context. Although it has been analysed in many aspects, it can be briefly referred to. The legendary part of the Chronicles of Lithuania is very prominent in the family of the dukes Alšėniškiai. It is so important that Bishop of Vilnius Povilas Alšėniškis was considered to be one of the sponsors of the Chronicles of Lithuania.⁵³ Although it is currently believed that this was the creation of Albertas Goštautas' environment,⁵⁴ a reservation must also be made here: Albertas Goštautas' mother was descended from the Alšėniškiai family.⁵⁵ What do we have in the legendary part of the Chronicles of Lithuania? One of the arriving Roman families, the nobles of the Kentauras (Hypocentaur) coat of arms, allied themselves with the ruling dynasty. The whole story of the Kentauras family is a legendary story of the family of the Alšėniškiai dukes. Its historical reliability is complicated, but as an indicator, it can function. In Lithuania, the princely families kept a certain historical memory of their ancestors. Here we can go back to the information provided by the dukes Giedraičiai and Strykowski about them. It is the fragmentary nature of the

⁵¹ Jankauskas, *Kunigaikščiai Svirskiai*, 189–94.

⁵² Rimvydas Petrauskas, "Atrandant protėvius: genealoginio mąstymo prielaidos ir užuomazgos Lietuvoje XIV–XVI a. viduryje," in *Ministri historiae: Pagalbiniai istorijos mokslai Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės tyrimuose. Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys, skirtas d. Edmundo Rimšos 65-mečio sukakčiai*, ed. Zigmantas Kiaupa and Jolita Sarcevičienė (Vilnius: Lietuvos Istorijos Institutas, 2013), 53–55.

⁵³ Mečislovas Jučas, *Lietuvos metraščiai* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1968), 105–18.

⁵⁴ Kęstutis Gudmantas, "Hipotetinė „Aleksandro istorija“ ir kai kurie ginčytini Bychoveco kronikos genezės klausimai," in *Lietuvos didysis kunigaikštis Aleksandras ir jo epocha*, sudar. Daiva Steponavičienė (Vilnius: Vilniaus Pilių Valstybinio Kultūrinio Rezervato Direkcija, 2007), 199–209.

⁵⁵ Petrauskas, "Atrandant protėvius," 243.

information, its inconsistency and the fact that the individuals were not connected in a genealogical line that shows that Strykowski's data were authentic, indicating that he took information from the family history. This also confirms that Lithuania before the 16th century had a folklore of military and historical themes concerning specific individuals, recounting their exploits and heroising them (the case of Duke Sudaitis is very important). These song quotations, as well as other references by Strykowski to songs of a historical nature, demonstrate the expanding knowledge of Lithuania's cultural field.

In an attempt to summarise the above data, it can be stated that Strykowski used authentic Lithuanian songs of military and historical nature, which conveyed the exploits of heroes of the past. The nature of the songs has a clear military aspect and relates to the military activities of dukes in the past. Strykowski's data show that this genre was highly developed and elaborated, and that it reflected the characters in the legendary part of the Lithuanian chronicles. The preservation of such information was primarily concerned with the history of the family and the honouring of the family heroes. It is very likely that certain songs functioned in cycles and formed various components of stories, as we can see from the example of the legendary duke Šventaragis.

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