

Dangiras Mačiulis, Rimvydas Petrauskas, and Darius Staliūnas (translated by Beata Piasecka), *Kto wygrał bitwę pod Grunwaldem: Tradycja grunwaldzka wśród narodów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej* [Who Won the Battle of Grunwald? Tradition of Grunwald among the Nations of Central and Eastern Europe] (Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej-Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2020), 360 pp.

This collective work by three historians from Lithuania (originally published in 2012) astonishingly shows us how a single event has been variously read, interpreted, represented, and appropriated. Their exhaustive research details the commemoration and oblivion of communities, that is, the collective memory of the Battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg/Žalgiris of 1410. The authors compare cases of nations and states in Central and Eastern Europe and their emigrant communities (mainly in the US), paying attention to correlations, co-references, and counterworks among them. Rimvydas Petrauskas examines the medieval and early modern periods, Darius Staliūnas explores the long nineteenth century, and Dangiras Mačiulis addresses the short twentieth century, from the First World War to the Soviet collapse. They discuss how the battle was appropriated through the centuries by various interests and isms, investigating historical studies, literature, monuments, ceremonies, paintings, operas, movies, awards and decorations, stamps, and names of various institutions and organizations, with abundant photographs. Who won and contributed most to the battle's victory—Poles, Lithuanians, or the people of Rus' (later understood as Russians or Belarussians)? Jagiełło/Jogaila, Witold/Vytautas, or Lingwen Olgierdowicz/Lengvenis Algirdaitis/Lugven Olgerdovich? Did Lithuanians flee from the battlefield, as narrated by a chronicler Jan Długosz, or was it a piece of their tactics? Who in the army remained during the battle? What role did the regiments from Smolensk play, and why did the allied forces not pursue the Teutonic order immediately?

Those who wanted to capitalize on the Grunwald image mirrored themselves in the battle and trivialized others' existence and contribution. Petrauskas illustrates that the battle's commemoration politics began in the Middle Ages. While the accounts of Długosz were the main information sources about the battle for a long time, the first interpretation of Lithuania (accurately, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL)) appeared in *Kronika Bychowca* in the first half of the sixteenth century. Particularly amid the disputes over the union of the Polish Kingdom and the GDL, nobles and dynasties highlighted their contribution to the victory. Royal Prussia celebrated the victory as liberation from the Teutonic order until the partitions of Poland. The Duchy of Prussia, as a secular state, shared the memory of victory against this order.

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed more frequent exploitation of the Battle of Grunwald. In opposition to Germany's anti-Polish movement, Grunwald was narrated and painted by famous Polish writers and painters such as Karol Szajnocha, Henryk Sienkiewicz, and Jan Matejko. The commemoration reached a climax when the quincentenary celebration took place in Kraków. Staliūnas argues that the Battle of Grunwald became one of the important *lieux de mémoire* of Poland for the first time. The Polish interpretation underlined Jagiełło's contribution to the victory as well as the Polish-Lithuanian union in the historical past and future independence.

The Lithuanian interpretation, influenced by Polish-language writers such as Teodor Narbutt and Adam Honory Kirkor, accentuated the Lithuanian contribution to the victory. Lithuanians celebrated the quincentenary in Lithuania and the US separately from Poles.

They criticized the Grunwald statue featuring Jagiełło in Kraków. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Vincas Pietaris and Vaclav Lastouski introduced the interpretation that dominates Lithuanian historiography today: the withdrawal from the battlefield was a tactic. The Belarussian interpretation, meanwhile, did not develop from this line, possibly due to potential rivalry over the common heritage of the GDL. Staliūnas shows an ambivalence of the Lithuanian predominant interpretation of the day that the victory gained by Vytautas led to Lithuania's dependence on Poland.

Mačiulis underscores the roles of communism and socialism in the politics of the memory of Grunwald. In the interwar period, Germany grandly celebrated the victory at Tannenberg in 1914, overwriting the defeat in 1410. Poland protested, but the commemoration of Grunwald was sporadic and limited to a few groups. In interwar Lithuania, Grunwald was commemorated only as part of the cult of Vytautas. Meanwhile, the Russian pan-Slavic interpretation of Grunwald in the late nineteenth century became the foundation for Soviet ideologues. These views compared the Teutonic order's aggression with that of the Deutsche Reich of the First World War, the Nazis of the Second World War, and West Germany of the Cold War. They regarded the victory as gained by all Slavs including Czechoslovakians and Lithuanians but stressed the Russians' special role—the regiments from Smolensk led by Lugven or his son, Yurij. The anti-Nazi Soviet propaganda portraying its army and partisans as successors to the winners of Grunwald affected the Poles and Lithuanians under the Soviet influence, although the disagreement over who won the battle persisted.

The Soviet Grunwald commemoration in the military sphere and anti-imperialistic campaign affected postwar Poland, too. Poland frequently appropriated the memory of Grunwald: having acquired national nuances, it quickly entered the Polish national memory before the 550-year anniversary held in Grunwald coinciding with the great success of the movie *Krzyżacy*. Jagiełło was publicly commemorated, with his Grunwald monument rebuilt in Kraków. This was part of national communism in People's Poland.

In the Lithuanian SSR, Antanas Sniečkus dismissed the Grunwald commemoration as a bourgeois nationalistic practice even after Stalinism. Hence, the 550-year anniversary was not as grand, although Juozas Jurginis and Juozas Žiugžda asserted Lithuanian standpoints in historical works, and Vytautas Klova composed an opera on this battle, as a response to the Polish commemoration. While the Lithuanian commemoration was modest in comparison to Poland, it should be compared to other SSRs. Mačiulis shows that the Grunwald commemoration was generally weak in the Belarussian SSR. The Belarussians cautiously avoided a nationally framed history, with the GDL excluded as alien and the Second World War partisan legend surpassing.

With a meticulous focus on the commemoration and oblivion of the Battle of Grunwald, this book is also a tremendous contribution to the studies of collective memory and memory politics in general. While the authors illuminate its instrumentalization by a variety of actors in the political, ideological, and military spheres, one could additionally analyze appropriations and exploitations in terms of artistic, plastic, and visual representations, such as the motif of two swords of the battle and the composition of the battlefield as seen in Matejko's painting; they easily go beyond political and ideological boundaries and national antagonism. The Grunwald monument with Jagiełło in Kraków and the statue of Vytautas in Panemunė (rebuilt in the central part of Kaunas in 1990) involve a politically contrasting connotation but a similar structure and design: both stand on a quadrilateral pedestal on which there are figures symbolizing the peoples

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under his reign. The demise of the Soviet and socialist regimes became part of history for the peoples in Central and Eastern Europe, leading their collective memories to a new phase. Amid open conversations about their national past and discoveries of their important glorious events, the commemoration of the Battle of Grunwald still persists, although its place in each people's collective memory is apparently somewhat shrinking. Matejko's *Battle of Grunwald* was exhibited in Lithuania for the first time in 1999. The 600th anniversary was accompanied by international joint research projects within that part of Europe. Differences in evaluation and interpretation notwithstanding, interaction, mutual reference, and appropriation of controversial historical events will continue to be dynamic in the foreseeable future.

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