Piotr Rudkouski*

Beyond Litvinism: a comparative analysis of the GDL in the Lithuanian and Belarusian historical narratives[1]

Poza litwinizmem: analiza porównawcza WKL w litewskiej i białoruskiej narracji historycznej

ABSTRACT:

This paper examines the "Litvinism" controversy, a persistent source of tension in Lithuanian-Belarusian relations centred on competing interpretations of the shared history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). The study undertakes a comparative analysis of influential historical narratives from both Lithuania and Belarus, drawing from a wide range of sources, including academic publications, textbooks, Wikipedia articles, and YouTube content. The research methodology identifies and systematically compares eight core thematic points of contention: the GDL's political structure, its ethnic nature, the framing of its Slavic element and chancery language, the nature of its territorial expansion, the foundation of Vilnius, the interpretation of historical Lithuania's names, and the geographical location of historical Lithuania. The analysis shows that Lithuanians and Belarusians hold deeply entrenched, often divergent views on the history of the GDL. The points of convergence are relatively scarce; however, they seem to offer a real chance for conversation and finding some common ground.

---

* Piotr Rudkouski – PhD, Vice Chief Editor of "Free Belarus Journal", ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8527-9121, e-mail: Piotr.rudkouski@gmail.com

STRESZCZENIE:

Spór wokół „litwinizmu" staje się coraz bardziej odczuwalny w relacjach litewsko-białoruskich. Artykuł sięga do źródeł tego konfliktu, analizując wpływowe narracje historyczne dotyczące Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. W badaniu wykorzystano szerokie spektrum materiałów, w tym publikacje akademickie, podręczniki, artykuły z Wikipedii oraz materiały z YouTube – zarówno po stronie białoruskiej, jak i litewskiej. Zastosowana metodologia badawcza identyfikuje i systematycznie porównuje stanowiska w ośmiu kluczowych obszarach: strukturze politycznej WKL, jego charakterze etnicznym, roli elementu słowiańskiego i języka kancelaryjnego, charakterze ekspansji terytorialnej, kwestii założenia Wilna, interpretacji historycznych nazw Litwy oraz geograficznej lokalizacji historycznej Litwy. Analiza pokazuje, że Litwini i Białorusini mają głęboko zakorzenione, często rozbieżne wizje dziejów WKL. Punkty zbieżne są stosunkowo nieliczne, jednak oferują realną szansę na dialog i wypracowanie wspólnej płaszczyzny.

Introduction

The dispute over "Litvinism" – the Belarusian interpretation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's history – emerged in the 1990s[2], but remained a niche issue until it gained political traction in Lithuania from the 2010s. A flashpoint came in August 2013, when Belarus premiered the ballet *Vitaut*, sparking

---

[2] E. Gudavičius, *Following the Tracks of a Myth…*, "Lithuanian Historical Studies" 1996, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 38–58; V. Venckūnas, *Tomas Baranauskas: Litvinistams svarbiausia turėti gražią istoriją, kuri galėtų sutelkti tautą*, Bernardinai.lt, 29 September 2012, https://www.bernardinai.lt/2012-09-29-tomas-baranauskas-litvinistams-svarbiausia-tureti-grazia-istorija-kuri-galetu-sutelkti-tauta/ [30.07.2025]; V. Vileita, *Between Securitization and Integration of Competing Historical Narratives: Lithuanian Responses to Belarusian 'Litvinism'*, Master's thesis, Vilnius University, Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Eastern European and Russian Studies, Vilnius, 8 January 2022, https://epublications.vu.lt/object/elaba%3A192958065/index.html [30.07.2025]; *"Літвінізм" з беларускай і літоўскай перспектывы*, "Гадавік Цэнтра Беларускіх Студыяў" [*"Litvinizm" z belaruskaj i litoŭskaj pierspektyvy*, "Hadavik Centra Belaruskikh Studyjaŭ"] 2024, no. 10.

outrage in Lithuania[3]. After Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, Lithuanian commentators compared Litvinism to Moscow's historical narratives[4].

The debate later subsided until, in August 2023, in Vilnius, a Belarusian confronted a retired Lithuanian officer, claiming that Vilnius and eastern Lithuania "belong to Belarus"[5]. In response, some politicians proposed criminalising "Litvinist advocacy", while activists suggested banning Belarusians from using the *Pahonia* (*Vytis*) coat of arms – a Belarusian independence symbol for over a century[6].

In July 2025, politician Vytautas Sinica criticised Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and called for closing her Vilnius office over her alleged failure to "adequately condemn" Litvinism[7]. Weeks later, around 50 protesters gathered outside the Foreign Ministry to oppose funding for her office[8].

These developments illustrate the dispute's persistence and its potential to spill into broader political conflicts. Against this backdrop, this paper explores the narratives that fuel competing interpretations of GDL history. While such an inquiry cannot, by itself, resolve the controversy, pinpointing its root causes is essential.

This article takes a descriptive approach, outlining how Lithuanian and Belarusian publications present the GDL, identifying the main points of confrontation, and highlighting possible areas of convergence. It is structured

---

[3]   *Baltarusijos baletas gviešiasi Vytauto Didžiojo*, Delfi, 27 August 2013, https://www
      .delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/baltarusijos-baletas-gviesiasi-vytauto-didziojo.d?id=6216
      8637 [30.07.2025].

[4]   D. Pancerovas, *Ar perrašinėjamos istorijos pasakų įkvėpta Baltarusija gali kėsintis į
      Rytų Lietuvą?*, 15min.lt, 1 October 2014, https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/istorija
      /ar-perrasinejamos-istorijos-pasaku-ikvepta-baltarusija-gali-kesintis-i-rytu-lietuva-582
      -456877 [30.07.2025].

[5]   *Bare su baltarusiu į konfliktą įsivėlęs Antanaitis: jis aiškino, kad Vilnius priklauso Baltarusijai*, Delfi, 8 August 2023, https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/bare-su
      -baltarusiu-i-konflikta-isiveles-antanaitis-jis-aiskino-kad-vilnius-priklauso-baltarusijai
      -94142867 [30.07.2025].

[6]   *Viešas laiškas*, Vilnius, 25 February 2025, https://docs.google.com/document
      /d/1RVcLaLAJHZRmdn6gYZT2ad-2dcDAogJ3/edit?tab=t.o [30.07.2025].

[7]   *Seimo nario V. Sinicos pranešimas: prašoma panaikinti akreditaciją S. Cichanouskajos atstovybei*, BNS, 22 July 2025, https://sc.bns.lt/view/item/seimo-nario-v-sinicos-pranesimas
      -prasoma-panaikinti-akreditacija-s-cichanouskajos-atstovybei-511481 [30.07.2025].

[8]   *Vilniuje – pusšimčio žmonių protestas prieš Sviatlanos Cichanouskajos biurą: 'Lauk iš Lietuvos'*, TV3, 8 August 2025, https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/vilniuje-pussimcio-zmoniu
      -protestas-pries-sviatlanos-cichanouskajos-biura-lauk-is-lietuvos-n1442257 [9.08.2025].

in two main sections. The first outlines the methodology, including topic se-lection, the criteria for selecting publications to be analysed, and the study's limitations. The second presents the data and assesses the potential compa-tibility – or irreconcilability – of the narratives. The conclusion summari-ses the findings and outlines their implications for Lithuanian–Belarusian dialogue on their shared historical heritage.

1. Methodology

Methodologically, the article uses a comparative qualitative content analysis supplemented by descriptive quantitative indicators, applied to a purposi-ve corpus of Lithuanian and Belarusian publications on the GDL. After re-constructing how each source conceptualises key aspects of the GDL, these positions are coded into a limited number of categories and their distribu-tion within and between the two corpora is described. This understanding of content analysis corresponds to Klaus Krippendorff's classic definition of it as a "systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic mat-ter," which combines qualitative interpretation with limited quantification[9].

In what follows, we first identify the main issues at the centre of the Litvi-nism debate. We then outline the criteria for selecting the publications under examination and clarify the methodology used in their analysis.

Core issues in the Litvinism debate

The following eight thematic categories capture the primary points of con-tention in Lithuanian and Belarusian interpretations of GDL history. These categories emerged from preliminary analysis of the scholarly and popular discourse surrounding this controversy.

---

[9]   Cf. K. Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 4th ed., Los Angeles 2019.

#1. GDL: the type of polity.

This category concerns how different sources characterise the fundamental political organisation of the Grand Duchy. Three basic interpretations are relevant here:

a. The GDL was an empire, with clear hierarchical relationships between dominant and subordinate groups.
b. It operated as a federation or partnership arrangement between relatively equal constituent groups.
c. It was simply a "state" (without any further specifications).

#2. The ethnic/national nature of the GDL.

This category addresses competing claims about the ethnic composition and leadership of the Grand Duchy. The terms "Lithuanian" and "Belarusian" in this context refer specifically to instances where the language and surrounding context suggest direct continuity between historical ethnic formations and their modern national counterparts – that is, where it is implied that present-day national identities can be meaningfully traced back to specific historical occurrences within the GDL. Here, we distinguish four basic stances:

a. The GDL was multi-ethnic, yet fundamentally Lithuanian at its core.
b. It was multi-ethnic, yet fundamentally Belarusian at its core.
c. It was multi-ethnic, with a dual Lithuanian–Belarusian core in which neither group held clear predominance.
d. Other interpretations that do not conform to any of the above concepts.

#3. How is the Slavic element in GDL framed or interpreted?

This category concerns how different sources identify and characterise the Slavic populations within the GDL. We recognise three essential stances in this context:

a. The Slavic element is interpreted as Belarusian, proto-Belarusian, or Old Belarusian.
b. It is framed as "Russian" (*рускія, rusy, русские*) – the use of terms implies association with modern Russia and Russians.
c. It is consistently historicised through terms like "Rusyn", "Ruthenian", or "East Slavonic" to avoid associations with any contemporary nation.

#4. How is the chancery language of GDL framed or interpreted?

This category deals with how sources characterise the official written language of the Grand Duchy. As in #3, we distinguish three basic stances:

a. The chancery language of GDL is interpreted as Belarusian or Old Belarusian.

b. It is framed as "Russian" (*рускі*, *rusų*, *русский*), with the choice of terms implying an association with the modern Russian language.

c. It is consistently historicised – for example, by being referred to as "Ruthenian", "rusėnų", or "East Slavonic" – to avoid associating it with any modern nation.

Methodological note regarding #3 and #4. In both (3) and (4), option (a) generally poses no problems for identification. The main difficulties arise with option (b) and distinguishing it from option (c). A key issue lies in the use of terms such as *рускі*, *rusų*, or *русский*. In historical sources, *русский* (with various spellings) often referred to Slavic groups within the GDL. However, in contemporary contexts, these terms can evoke associations with modern Russia.

The critical question, therefore, is whether an author explicitly signals a historical meaning. For example, a clarification such as: "In this work, we use the word 'Russian' in a purely historical sense" helps prevent misinterpretation. The absence of such clarifications is interpreted as implying an association with modern Russia.

#5. The nature of the GDL expansion.

This category concerns competing narratives about how the Grand Duchy acquired its territories. Three stances are identified:

a. The Lithuanians conquered the lands of the Slavs (Belarusians) – implying an asymmetry in which the Lithuanians were the conquerors and the Slavs the conquered.

b. The Belarusians (however named) conquered the lands of the Lithuanians (or their Baltic ancestors), implying the opposite asymmetry – with the Belarusians as the conquerors and the Lithuanians as the conquered.

c. The expansion of the GDL was a result of alliance-building between Lithuanians and Belarusians (*resp.* Slavic peoples of the GDL).

Methodological note. For cases (5a) and (5b), it is important that the identity of "conqueror" is framed in a way that suggests a direct continuity – between historical Lithuanians and modern Lithuanians in (5a), and between

the Slavs of the GDL and present-day Belarusians in (5b). In actual texts, this continuity may be implied in various ways. In Lithuanian-language materials, it is typically conveyed through the unqualified use of the word "lietuvis" (and its derivatives), without any indication of its potential equivocality. A similar cue applies to the use of "Lithuanian" in English-language texts reflecting the Lithuanian perspective.

In texts written from a Belarusian point of view, the main markers suggesting continuity are the terms "Belarusians" or "Litvins" when used in reference to the Slavic population of the GDL, and if it is employed in a way that implies that Litvins were primarily or exclusively the ancestors of present-day Belarusians.

In case (5c), the need to establish direct continuity is less critical, since when an alliance is implied, whether or not there is a direct historical link becomes a secondary concern.

#6. Foundation of Vilnius (Vilnia).

This category addresses competing claims about the origins of the GDL's most important city. Here, the following options have been distinguished:
a. Vilnius was founded by Lithuanians.
b. It was founded by Belarusians or proto-Belarusian Slavic people (e.g., Kryvichs).
c. An alternative version is presented, or judgement is deliberately suspended.

#7. The interpretation of L–T–V terms.

As is often the case with historical ethnonyms, politonyms, or geographical names, neither the spelling nor the precise referent of terms like "Litua" or "litvin" was standardised or unequivocal. In historical sources, the name of Lithuania appears in a wide range of variants – such as "Litua", "Литъва", "Литва", "Lituania", "Lettowen", "Litwa", and "Lietuwa"[10] – and these terms (including their corresponding demonyms) were used to refer to different, though overlapping, entities.

However, modern national narratives, both Belarusian and Lithuanian, often exhibit a tendency toward retrospective "univocalisation" – that is, the

---

[10] Cf. T. Baranauskas, *On the Origin of the Name of Lithuania*, "Lituanus" 2009, vol. 55, no. 3, pp. 28–36; *Name of Lithuania*, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Name_of _Lithuania [30.07.2025].

retroactive interpretation of these terms as if they referred consistently to a single national entity. In Lithuanian historiography, for instance, such terms are sometimes treated as essentially denoting a Lithuanian entity, with non-Lithuanian uses considered secondary or applied by extension. Similarly, in some Belarusian interpretations, they are read as denoting primarily a (proto-)Belarusian reality, with other applications seen as extensions of this core meaning.

To avoid delving into the etymology and semantic nuances of historical names for Lithuania – which lie beyond the scope of this investigation – we will employ the umbrella term "LTV terms". This label is deliberately coined to capture the three consonants (L, T, and V) common to both Lithuanian ("**Lietuva**", "**lietuviai**") and Belarusian ("**Litva**", "**litvin**", "**litoviec**") renderings. It serves as a neutral shorthand for referring to all historical variants of the name Lithuania and its associated demonyms, without presupposing any specific ethnic or linguistic origin.

Thus, category 7 concerns how sources interpret key terms from historical documents, and here, three stances are identified:

a. L-T-V terms predominantly denote Lithuanians, their state, or their culture, with implied direct continuity to present-day Lithuanians. Any supra-ethnic usage was secondary and derived from the primary Lithuanian ethnic meaning.

b. These terms predominantly denote the Slavic population of the GDL, their state, or their culture, with implied direct continuity to present-day Belarusians.

c. These terms primarily denote political entities, populations, or territories in a supra-ethnic or trans-ethnic sense.

#8. The location of historical Lithuania.

Lastly, we will explore how representatives of the two nations address the issue of historical Lithuania's location. Again, three stances are distinguished here:

a. Historical Lithuania was located within ethnically Lithuanian lands, roughly corresponding to present-day Lithuania and possibly including western Belarus.

b. It was situated within ethnically Slavic (proto-Belarusian) territory, roughly corresponding to present-day Belarus and possibly including the Vilnius region.

c. Other geographic frameworks.

Source selection

First, it is important to distinguish the selection principles used in this study from the principle of representativeness as understood in quantitative sociological surveys. Publications such as books, conceptual articles, or educational textbooks are complex intellectual artefacts; their selection does not constitute – and indeed cannot constitute – a sociological sample. The number of sources is meant simply to increase the likelihood of capturing a diversity of perspectives but should not be treated as reflecting the quantitative distribution of opinions in society or in the scholarly community.

That said, the selected sources fall into three categories: (a) Authoritative publications – popular-academic or educational in nature – that form the basis of institutional knowledge; (b) Wikipedia articles – their importance lies both in their perceived authoritativeness and in the fact that Google's algorithm often prioritises them in search results; (c) YouTube materials – selected based on perceived authority (e.g., "professor", "doctor") and popularity, measured by high view counts.

Materials intended primarily as polemics were excluded from analysis. However, materials containing occasional polemical elements were included when polemic was not their dominant purpose.

In selecting the sources, the focus was on the post-independence period (approximately 1989 to the present). However, to trace contemporary narratives to their origins, some earlier formative works that have been reissued were also included. In Lithuania, this includes Adolfas Šapoka's *History of Lithuania*; in Belarus, Vladimir Picheta's early 20th-century work, which remains influential. Additionally, two works by non-Lithuanians – the German scholar Jozef Pfitzner's 1989 study on Vytautas and the British historian Stephen C. Rowell's *Lithuania Ascending* (1994) – were included, as they have significantly shaped contemporary perspectives in Lithuania.

In the Belarusian case, the analysis focuses on two main spheres of discourse: (a) narratives emerging within Belarusian opposition circles; and (b) narratives developed in state academic institutions up to 2020 and in projects that retained some autonomy from the regime's ideological control. Works produced in line with – or heavily influenced by – the official state ideology of Belarus were excluded from analysis[11].

---

[11]   The author has devoted a separate study in Belarusian to this topic: П. Рудкоўскі, *ВКЛ у ідэалагічным дыскурсе беларускага рэжыму*, [in:] А. Нікжантайціс (ed.), *Літва –*

2. Data presentation and analysis

This section presents the empirical findings from the analysis of Lithuanian and Belarusian sources across the eight thematic categories outlined in the methodology.

For each of the eight topics, the data will first be presented in a table indicating the number of sources in which a given message appears, accompanied by abbreviated references to the respective publications. The following remarks explain how to read the data in the tables:

- A complete list of abbreviations and their explanations is provided at the end of the paper (Analysed publications and corresponding abbreviations).
- In cases where certain positions on an issue are unspecified, the number of such instances is subtracted from the total number of reviewed publications. For example, if one publication is unspecified out of a total of twenty, the relevant case will be shown as 10 out of 19.
- If there were significant doubts about whether a source was appropriately classified, the abbreviation of that source is presented *in italics*.

GDL: Type of polity

Table 1 presents data on how the selected Lithuanian and Belarusian sources conceptualise the fundamental political structure of the GDL.

Table 1. Conceptualisation of the GDL as a polity

Concept	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
Empire	**4/18** (LI 2013, SR 1994, SS 2011, ZN 2018)	**0/19**
Federation / Partnership	**4/18** (EG 1999, JP 1989, TB 2000, YouTu-be-MK)	**10/19** (AKr 1998, AKr 2013, AKr 2017, ENC 2005, HB 2008, VB 2006, VP 2003, WI-KI-by-n, YouTube-HZP, YouTube-ZBH-1)
Just a state	**10/18** (AG 1989, AS 1989, EG 1996, L-8 2014, LS 2016, RK 2022, WIKI-lt, YouTube-LDK, YouTube-VD, ZZ 2013)	**9/19** (AA 2009, AB 2008, AKl 2008, MY 2000, US 2001, WIKI-by-t, YouTube--ZBH-2, ZP 2005, ZS 2009)
Unspecified	–	*1/19* *(AK 2008)*

Lithuanian perspective

As we see, three views appear here. The most prevalent is the "just a state" view, which sometimes depicts GDL as a Lithuanian-led polity (e.g., AS 1989; L-8 2014). A minority presents it as a "Lithuanian empire" (ZN 2018; SR 1994; SS 2011). An equally common federal model frames it as a partnership, often still highlighting Lithuanian dominance, as in EG 1999's "dualistic state" of pagan elites over Orthodox populations.

Belarusian perspective

Belarusian sources broadly support models stressing shared governance and ethnic partnership. The dominant "federation model", in works like ENC 2005 and Kraŭcevič 1998, 2013, 2017, depicts an equal Lithuanian–Belarusian union with cultural autonomy, administrative integration, and high status for the old Belarusian language and nobility. Nearly half adopt a "just a state" stance, describing the GDL simply as a "state" while assuming Belarusian participation in governance. None label it an empire, even when highlighting proto-Belarusian roles in state formation.

In summary, while many describe the GDL simply as a "state", its core structure is contested. The Lithuanian narrative often implies Lithuanian primacy, with some framing it as a "Lithuanian empire". The Belarusian narrative, though belaruso-centric in parts, avoids any "Belarusian empire" notion, portraying coexistence instead as a federation or leaving it undefined without further conceptual framing.

The ethnic/national nature of GDL

For a start, let us have a look at Table 2, which presents data on how the selected Lithuanian and Belarusian publications frame the ethnic or national nature of the GDL.

Table 2. Ethnic/national nature of the GDL

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
The core was Lithuanian	**15/18** (AG 1989, AS 1989, EG 1996, JP 1989, L-8 2014, LI 2013, SS 2011, SR 1994, TB 2000, WIKI-lt, YouTube-LDK, YouTube-MK, YouTube-VD, ZN 2018, ZZ 2013)	**0/20**
The core was Belarusian	**0/18**	**13/20** (AA 2009, AB 2008, AKr 1998, AKr 2013, AKr 2017, ENC 2005, MY 2000, US 2001, WIKI-by-t, YouTube-ZBH-1, YouTube-ZBH-2, ZP 2005, ZS 2009)
Bi-ethnic core	**3/18** (EG 1999, LS 2016, RK 2022)	**5/20** (AK 2008, HB 2008, VB 2006, WIKI-by-n, YouTube-HZP)
Other	–	**2/20** (Akl 2008, VP 2003)

Lithuanian perspective

The Lithuanian side overwhelmingly depicts the GDL as ethnically Lithuanian at its core, a view entrenched in scholarship (AG 1989, SR 1994, ZN 2018), reference works (SS 2011), and textbooks (L-8 2014). This framing stresses a "Lithuanian ruling element" governing Slavic lands. A minority "bi-ethnic" perspective (3 out of 18) appears to offer greater potential for dialogue.

Belarusian perspective

The Belarusian narrative is more fragmented yet shows a majority view, with 13 of 20 sources claiming the GDL's core was (Old) Belarusian, as in MY 2000's tellingly titled *Belarusian state: Grand Duchy of Lithuania*. This interpretation, found in the AKr series and ENC 2005, often defines "Litva" as a Baltic-Slavic contact zone that ultimately became Belarusian, exemplified in YouTube-ZBH-2's assertion that "Litva was […] a land of Baltic-Slavic contacts" which "became a Belarusian ethnic territory". A minority "bi-ethnic" stance (5/20) parallels the Lithuanian case but can privilege Belarusian contributions, as in YouTube-HZP, where Kraŭcevič, describing the Battle of Grunwald, claims Belarusian forces played a far greater role than their ethnic Lithuanian counterparts.

In summary, the key incompatibility is between two mutually exclusive claims: "the core was Lithuanian" versus "the core was Belarusian", a zero-sum contest over the GDL's identity. The "bi-ethnic" model offers more potential for dialogue, though each side applies its own national lens – Lithuanians

stressing asymmetry with a senior partner, Belarusians extolling their role. These differences, however, appear less fundamental and more easily bridged.

Slavic component and chancery language

The Slavic element of the GDL and its chancery language are best understood as intertwined phenomena. The following section presents how these issues are framed in Lithuanian and Belarusian sources (cf. Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3. How the Slavic element of the GDL is framed

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
"Belarusian"	**5/18** (AS 1989, EG 1999, RK 2022, YouTube–LDK, ZZ 2013)	**17/20** (AA 2009, AB 2008, AKr 1998, AKr 2013, AKr 2017, Akl 2008, ENC 2005, HB 2008, MY 2000, US 2001, VB 2006, WIKI-by-t, YouTube-HZP, YouTube–ZBH-1, YouTube-ZBH-2, ZP 2005, ZS 2009)
"Russian"	**2/18** (AG 1989, EG 1996)	**1/20** (VP 2003)
Historicised	**11/18** (JP 1989, LI 2013, L-8 2014, LS 2016, SS 2011, SR 1994, TB 2000, WIKI-lt, YouTube-MK, YouTube-VD, ZN 2018)	**2/20** (AK 2008, WIKI-by-n)

Table 4. How the chancery language of the GDL is framed

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=15)	Belarusian sources (N=17)
"(Old) Belarusian"	**3/15** (AS 1989, EG 1999, RK 2022)	**16/17** (AA 2009, AB 2008, AK 2008, AKr 1998, AKr 2013, AKr 2017, ENC 2005, HB 2008, MY 2000, US 2001, VB 2006, WIKI-by-n, WIKI-by-t, YouTube-ZBH-1, YouTube-ZBH-2, ZS 2009)
"Russian"	**2/15** EG 1996, SR 1994	**1/17** (VP 2003)
Historicised	**10/15** AG 1989, JP 1989, LI 2013, L-8 2014, LS 2016, SS 2011, TB 2000, WIKI-lt, ZN 2018, ZZ 2013	**0/17**
Unspecified	*3/18* *YouTube-LDK, YouTube-MK, YouTube-VD*	*3/20* *(Akl 2008, YouTube-HZP, ZP 2005)*

Lithuanian perspective

Lithuanian sources often frame the Slavic element and chancery language in a historicised manner. They tend to refer to the East Slavs collectively as "Ruthenians" (*rusėnai*) and to the chancery language as "Chancery Slavonic" or a "Church Slavonic derivative" (AG 1989; LS 2016). This dual terminology, found in flagship works (SS 2011; ZN 2018), reinforces the notion of a Ruthenian identity for the Slavic component of the GDL – an identity that only later diversified into modern Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Russian.

A minority of Lithuanian publications (EG 1999; RK 2022; YouTube LDK) instead use "Belarusian" (*baltarusiai* or *gudai*) for both the population and the language.

Belarusian perspective

Belarusian historiography and media present a nearly monolithic picture: the GDL's East Slavs are proto-Belarusians, and its chancery language is (Old) Belarusian. In monographs (AKr 1998; AKr 2017) and encyclopaedias (ENC 2005), the dual claim functions as two sides of the same coin – ethnic identity and administrative tongue merge into a continuous Belarusian lineage. Popular YouTube channels (ZBH1; ZBH2; ZS 2009) reinforce this, narrating GDL institutions, law codes, and diplomatic correspondence as first expressions of Belarusian nationhood through both people and language.

To sum up, both sides agree that the GDL's eastern lands were East Slavic. Some Lithuanian historians refer to the GDL chancery language as "Old Belarusian", while some Belarusian scholars accept the term "Ruthenian". A balanced view would use "Ruthenian" for precision, recognising its evolution into modern Belarusian identity, but this would require Lithuanian scholars to historicise notions like the "Lithuanian state", "territory" and "nation" – a shift unlikely given current conceptualisations in most sources.

Nature of expansion

One of the most contested aspects of the GDL historiography is the nature of its territorial expansion into East Slavic lands. Lithuanian and Belarusian sources offer starkly divergent interpretations – ranging from military conquest to political alliance.

Table 5. The nature of the GDL expansion

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
Lithuanians conquered (proto)Belarusians	**15/17** (AG 1989, AS 1989, EG 1996, EG 1999, JP 1989, L–8 2014, LI 2013, SR 1994, SS 2011, TB 2000, WIKI–lt, YouTube––LDK, YouTube–MK, YouTube–VD[12], ZZ 2013)	**1/17** (VP 2003)
(Proto)Belarusians conquered Lithuanians	**0/17**	**3/17** *AA 2009*, MY 2000, *YouTube–ZBH–1*
Result of alliance-building	**2/17** (LS 2016, RK 2022)	**13/17** (AB 2008, AK 2008, AKr 1998, AKr 2013, AKr 2017, ENC 2005, HB 2008, VB 2006, WIKI–by–n, WIKI–by–t, YouTube–HZP, YouTube–ZBH–2, ZS 2009)
Unspecified	*1/18* *(ZN 2018)*	*3/20* *(AKl 2008, US 2001, ZP 2005)*

Lithuanian perspective

The dominant Lithuanian narrative portrays the GDL's creation as a military and political conquest by Lithuanians over (proto)Belarusian lands. This view frames Lithuanians as a militarily superior "warrior nation"[13] asserting its political dominance in the polity.

Belarusian perspective

The prevailing Belarusian perspective, represented in 13 out of 17 sources – including the national encyclopaedia (ENC 2005) – depicts the GDL as the outcome of alliance-building or federation. This interpretation stresses a more balanced Slavic-Baltic partnership. A minority view (3 out of 17 sources) posits a form of Belarusian-led conquest. However, apart from one source (MY 2000), where a full-scale conquest is implied, the remaining sources describe this dynamic more as a "cultural conquest", in which a more developed Slavic culture gradually assimilated the Baltic tribes.

To sum up, there is a significant tension between Lithuanian and Belarusian narratives on this issue. The interpretations of Lithuanian military

---

[12] While the word "conquest" is not explicitly used to describe the formation of the state, the narrative implies a political and military dominance of the Lithuanian dynasty over the Slavic territories.

[13] Cf. "The Lithuanians were long renowned for their bravery. Soon they became, one might say, a nation of warriors" – ZZ 2013, p. 101.

conquest versus Belarusian voluntary alliance are mutually exclusive – let alone the opposing claims of Lithuanian versus Belarusian conquest. The only realistic path toward reconciliation lies in a shift within the Lithuanian narrative toward an alliance-building model, which is already quite prevalent among Belarusians.

Foundation of Vilnius

A glance at Lithuanian and Belarusian sources shows sharply divided, though not entirely uniform, national narratives on the issue of Vilnius's foundation – see Table 6.

Table 6. Who founded Vilnius?

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
Founded by Lithuanians	**14/15** (*AG 1989*[14], AS 1989, EG 1996, EG 1999, *JP 1989*[15], L–8 2014, LI 2013, SR 1994, SS 2011, TB 2000, WIKI–lt, YouTube–LDK, YouTube–VD, ZZ 2013)	**1/12** (HB 2008)
Founded by proto–Belarusians	**0/15**	**9/12** (*AA 2009*[16], AKr 1998, AKr 2013, MY 2000, *WIKI–by–t*[17], YouTube–ZBH–1, YouTube–ZBH–2, *ZP 2005*[18], ZS 2009)
Other	**1/15** (RK 2022[19])	**2/12** (AB 2008, ENC 2005)
Unspecified	*3/18 (LS 2016, YouTube–MK, ZN 2018)*	*8/20 (AK 2008, AKl 2008, AKr 2017, US 2001, VB 2006, VP 2003, WIKI–by–n, YouTube–HZP)*

---

[14] Rather implicitly.

[15] Tacitly. The book does not engage in a debate over the foundation of Vilnius. It operates on the assumption that Vilnius is the historical capital of the Lithuanian rulers and the centre of the Lithuanian ethnic core.

[16] Only implicitly. The author does not explicitly state who founded Vilnius. However, it strongly emphasises the city's Belarusian character and dominance throughout the GDL's history

[17] Only implicitly.

[18] Only implicitly. The text does not describe the founding act, but its position is unequivocal. "Vilnia" is listed among the "sacral symbols of the [Belarusian] nation" (p. 18).

[19] The narrative reframes the question from "who founded it?" to "whose city was it?", and the answer provided is that it was a multi-ethnic centre for both peoples.

Lithuanian perspective

Most Lithuanian sources (14/15) present Vilnius as founded by Lithuanians, treating this as self-evident across academia, textbooks, and Wikipedia. Only RK 2022 departs, suggesting a multi-ethnic origin.

Belarusian perspective

A plurality (9/12) credits proto-Belarusians (Kryvichs). Two sources (ENC 2005, AKl 2008) instead describe a multi-ethnic founding.

In summary, the dominant claims – "founded by Lithuanians" versus "founded by proto-Belarusians" – remain incompatible. Yet multi-ethnic interpretations, such as RK 2022, offer rare common ground within the shared heritage of the GDL.

The interpretation of L–T–V terms

Let us look at Table 7, which summarises how Lithuanian and Belarusian sources interpret L-T-V terms.

Table 7. What do L–T–V terms denote?

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
Mainly denote (ethnic) Lithuanians	**9/18** (AG 1989, AS 1989, EG 1996, JP 1989, TB 2000, WIKI–lt, YouTube–LDK, YouTube–MK, YouTube–VD)	**2/20** (AKl 2008, VP 2003)
Mainly denote Slavs of the GDL (proto–Belarusians)	–	**8/20** (AA 2009, AB 2008, AKr 2017, MY 2000, US 2001, VB 2006, ZP 2005, ZS 2009)
Trans–ethnic or supra–ethnic	**(9/18)** EG 1999, LI 2013, L–8 2014, LS 2016, RK 2022, SR 1994, SS 2011, ZN 2018, ZZ 2013	**(10/20)** AK 2008, AKr 1998, AKr 2013, ENC 2005, HB 2008, WIKI–by–n, WIKI–by–t, YouTube–HZP, YouTube–ZBH–1, YouTube–ZBH–2

Lithuanian perspective

Lithuanian publications, as selected in this research, are evenly split. Half (9/18) argue for a primary Lithuanian-ethnic meaning, L-T-V as something with a specific Baltic-Lithuanian core elite and origin (JP 1989, TB 2000). The other half, including recent academic works (LS 2016, RK 2022), adopts a non-ethnic or "trans-ethnic" interpretation, emphasising a fluid political identity.

Belarusian perspective

Belarusian scholarship leans heavily against a purely Baltic-Lithuanian definition. The most common view (10/20), supported by weighty sources such as an encyclopaedia (ENC 2005), is a trans-ethnic or supra-ethnic political interpretation. A significant minority, however, (8/20) argue that the terms mainly denoted the GDL's Slavs (proto-Belarusians), a view popular in the 2000s.

Disagreement is moderate: Lithuanians stress a Baltic identity, Belarusians a proto-Belarusian one, both differing from a supra- or trans-ethnic view. This latter interpretation – jointly supported by 19 sources – frames L-T-V as a pre-modern politonym encompassing Baltic and Slavic groups, reflecting the Grand Duchy's multi-ethnic character. It offers the clearest common ground, gaining traction among academics in both countries and challenging narrow ethnic claims.

The location of historical Lithuania

Table 8 presents a synopsis of how differing views on the issue are distributed.

Table 8. Where was historical Lithuania situated?

Option	Lithuanian sources (N=18)	Belarusian sources (N=20)
Within ethnically Lithuanian territory	**17/18** (AG 1989, AS 1989, EG 1996, EG 1999, JP 1989, L–8 2014, LI 2013, SR 1994, SS 2011, TB 2000, WIKI–lt, YouTube––LDK, YouTube–MK, YouTube–VD, ZN 2018, ZZ 2013)	**1/19** (VP 2003)
Within ethnically (proto) Belarusian territory	–	**16/19** (AA 2009, AB 2008, AKl 2008, AKr 1998, AKr 2013, AKr 2017, ENC 2005, MY 2000, US 2001, VB 2006, WIKI–by––n, WIKI–by–t, YouTube–ZBH–1, YouTube–ZBH–2, ZP 2005, ZS 2009)
Other	**1/18** (RK 2022)	**2/19** (AK 2008, HB 2008)
Unspecified	–	**1/20** (YouTube–HZP)

Lithuanian perspective

Lithuanian sources (17 out of 18) overwhelmingly locate the historical core of Lithuania within the ethnically Lithuanian lands. They typically frame this by distinguishing "Lithuania proper" from the vast Slavic regions that the GDL came to control later (e.g., SR 1994). This interpretation is consistently supported across a wide range of authoritative materials, from academic histories (AS 1989) to contemporary school textbooks (L-8 2014).

Belarusian perspective.

Most Belarusian sources (16 out of 19) identify this heartland as being within Belarusian ethnic areas, specifically present-day Belarus and southeastern Lithuania. Encyclopaedic entries (e.g., ENC 2005) cite historical maps marking a region called "LITVA" (*Лiтва*) located in the area surrounding modern-day Navahrudak, suggesting that this was the original Lithuanian centre.

To sum up, dominant Lithuanian and Belarusian narratives are incompatible, each claiming the Grand Duchy's ethnic and territorial origins. The core dispute – whose ancestors shaped historical Lithuania – remains unresolved within national frameworks. Still, a small space for reconciliation exists: one Lithuanian source (RK 2022) proposes a "bi-ethnic" core, while two Belarusian works (AK 2008, HB 2008) also reject mono-ethnic origins. These minority perspectives offer a path toward a more balanced interpretation of the GDL's formative identity.

Conclusion

This article has aimed to provide a descriptive account of the prevailing Belarusian and Lithuanian narratives regarding the origins and identity of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Rather than adjudicating between competing claims, the intention was to illuminate how each national historiography constructs its understanding of the GDL's historical core, highlighting both the stark incompatibilities and the modest avenues for dialogue that exist. Table 9 presents a summary of the findings.

Table 9. Summarising the Belarusian and Lithuanian narratives on the GDL

Topic	Belarusian narratives (predominant)	Lithuanian narratives (predominant)
1. Type of polity	Split between federation/partnership and composite feudal state with Belarusian character; "empire" avoided.	Mostly composite/feudal monarchy; a minority see an empire (during expansion) or federation/partnership.
2. Ethnic/National nature	Multi–ethnic, core seen as Belarusian (Slavic Litvins); minority: bi–ethnic core.	Multi–ethnic, core seen as Lithuanian (*lietuvių*); small minority: bi–ethnic or political nation.
3. Slavic element	Slavs identified as (Old) Belarusian.	Slavs framed as Ruthenians/East Slavs, common ancestors; minority: Belarusian ("gudai").
4. Chancery language	Almost always (Old) Belarusian.	Mostly "Chancery Slavonic" or "Ruthenian" (*rusėnų*); minority: "(Old) Belarusian".
5. Expansion nature	Mainly alliance–building; minority: cultural conquest by (proto)Belarusians.	Mainly Lithuanian conquest of Slavic lands, stressing dominance.
6. Foundation of Vilnius	Majority: proto–Belarusian/Kryvich origin or early Slavic character.	Nearly unanimous: Baltic–Lithuanian foundation, linked to Gediminas.
7. Terms ("Litva", etc.)	Polysemic; mainly trans–ethnic/political, secondary: Slavic–specific.	Polysemic; split between Baltic–ethnic origin (political meaning later) and trans–ethnic.
8. Historical Litva	Mostly in modern Belarus (Upper Neman/Navahrudak), Vilnius in the core.	Mostly in modern Lithuania (*Aukštaitija*); some note the cross–border extent.

As reflected in the above table, the analysis suggests that the two national perspectives significantly differ on a number of key issues. The most significant points of contention lie in the foundational identity of the GDL. The Lithuanian narrative predominantly presents it as an ethnically Lithuanian state that conquered and administered Slavic lands, with its heartland and capital, Vilnius, being fundamentally Lithuanian. Conversely, the Belarusian narrative frames the GDL as a proto-Belarusian state, either through alliance or cultural dominance, situating historical Lithuania and the origins of Vilnius within Belarusian territory.

These competing claims create a zero-sum struggle over historical legitimacy, a conflict intensified by contemporary political tensions. The Lithuanian interpretation of military conquest is fundamentally at odds with the Belarusian emphasis on federation and alliance-building. Similarly, the question of the GDL's ethnic core – whether Lithuanian, Belarusian, or bi-ethnic – remains a major point of division.

Despite this stark opposition, the analysis also uncovers a narrow but crucial space for reconciliation. A growing minority of academic voices in both nations challenges the rigid, mono-ethnic frameworks of the 20th century. The promotion of a trans-ethnic or supra-ethnic understanding of

GDL identity, which acknowledges the political and multi-ethnic character of the duchy over modern national concepts, offers the most promising path forward. Concepts such as a "bi-ethnic core" and a shared, multi-ethnic heritage for Vilnius, though not yet mainstream, provide a foundation for a more nuanced and conciliatory dialogue, moving beyond the incompatible claims that currently define the debate.

References

Analysed publications and corresponding abbreviations

Lithuanian publications

Books and articles

AG 1989 – Gumuliauskas A., *Besidomintiems Lietuvos istorija*, Vilnius 1989.

AS 1989 – Šapoka A., *Lietuvos istorija*, Vilnius 1989 (orig. 1936).

EG 1996 – Gudavičius E., *Following the Tracks of a Myth*, "Lithuanian Historical Studies" 1996, vol. 1, pp. 38–58, DOI: 10.30965/25386565-00101003.

EG 1999 – Gudavičius E., *Lietuvos istorija. T.1: Nuo seniausių laikų iki 1569 metų*, Vilnius 1999.

JP 1989 – Pficneris J., *Didysis Lietuvos kunigaikštis Vytautas kaip politikas*, Vilnius 1989.

LI 2013 – Eidintas A. et al., *Lietuvos istorija*, Vilnius 2013.

L-8 2014 – Kapleris I. et al., *Laikas 8. Istorijos vadovėlis, I–II d.*, Vilnius 2014.

LS 2016 – Šedvydis L., *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės valdančiojo elito rengimas viešajam valstybės gyvenimui XVI a. – XVII a. viduryje*, doctoral thesis, Humanities, History (05 H), Kaunas 2016.

RK 2022 – Kamuntavičius R., *Gudijos istorija – pirmoji Baltarusijos istorija lietuvių kalba*, Vilnius 2022.

SR 1994 – Rowell S.C., *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345*, Cambridge 1994.

SS 2011 – Sužiedėlis S. (ed.), *Historical Dictionary of Lithuania*, Lanham 2011.

TB 2000 – Baranauskas T., *Lietuvos valstybės ištakos*, Vilnius 2000.

ZN 2018 – Norkus Z., *An Unproclaimed Empire: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the Viewpoint of Comparative Historical Sociology of Empires*, Abingdon 2018.

ZZ 2013 – Zinkevičius Z., *The Lithuanians: Praeities didybė ir sunykimas*, Vilnius 2013.

YouTube

YouTube-LDK – *Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė | Pakilimas ir žlugimas*, Įdomioji Dokumentika, 28 December 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= Mhpgpq5ZjDo.

YouTube-MK – *Įdomioji Lietuvos istorija – Mindaugo Karalystė – Krikščioniška Lietuvos valstybė 1253–1263*, Remi eShark, 11 January 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuC8_LjPFaI.

YouTube-VD – *Vytautas Didysis*, laikraštis *Šviesa*, 29 February 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5sKlAQvsCE.

Wikipedia

WIKI-lt – *Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė*, https://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lietuvos _Did%C5%BEioji_Kunigaik%C5%A1tyst%C4%97 [26.06.2025].

Belarusian publications

Books and articles

AA 2009 – Astapenka A., *I hdie zaradilisia i uskormleny sut' pa bozie: Dosled belaruskaha natsyyanalizmu*, Saint Petersburg 2009.

AB 2008 – Butevich A., *Raskidanae hniazdo kryvitskai slavy: Nezvychainaja vandrouka pa Krewskikh murakh*, Minsk 2008.

AK 2008 – Katliarchuk A., *U cieniu Polshchy i Rasei: Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje i Shvetsija u chase jeurapejskaha kryzisu siaredziny XVII st.*, "ARCHE" 2008, no. 7–8.

AKl 2008 – Klinau A., *Malaja padaroznaja knizhka pa Horadzie Sonca*, Minsk 2008.

AKr 1998 – Krautsevich A., *Stvarenne Vialikaha Kniastva Litouskaha*, Minsk 1998.

AKr 2013 – Krautsevich A., *Historyja Vialikaha Kniastva Litouskaha, 1248–1341 h.*, Hrodna–Wrocław 2013.

AKr 2017 – Krautsevich A., *Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje u jeurapejskaj i belaruskaj historyi*, Ostrogorski Academy, 2017.

ENC 2005 –Pashkou H. et al. (eds.), *Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje: Entsyklapedyja: u 2 t.*, 2nd ed., Minsk 2005.

HB 2008 – *Historyja Belarusi ŭ 6 t.*, vol. 2: Ju. Bokhan, H. Halechanka (eds.), *Belarus' u peryjad VKL*, Minsk 2008.

MY 2000 – Jermalovich M., *Belaruskaja dziarzhava: Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje*, Minsk 2000.

US 2001 – Sviazhynski U., *Problema idientyfikatsyi afitsyjnaj movy Vialikaha Kniastva Litouskaha*, [in:] *Metriciana: dasledavanni i matyjalny Metryki Vialikaha Kniastva Litouskaha*, vol. 1, Minsk 2001, pp. 109–136.

VB 2006 – Belazarovich V.A., *Histaryjahrafija historyi Belarusi*, Hrodna 2006.

VP 2003 – Picheta V., *Istoryja belorusskogo naroda*, Minsk 2003 (orig. 1910, 1918–1920).

ZP 2005 – Pazniak Z., *Belaruska-Rasejskaja vajna. Belarus is an Eastern Outpost*, Warsaw–New York–Vilnius 2005.

ZS 2009 – Sićka Z., *Utrop Litvy. Da 1000 ch uhodkaŭ zhadki taponim a "Litva" ŭ Kviedlinburhskich analach*, Baranavichy 2009.

YouTube

YouTube-HZP – *Historyja pad znakam Pahoni*, Belsat News:

Vitaut, 1 September 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVvNs3120Kg.

Hrunvald, 2 October 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DL30GpVDvE4.

YouTube-ZBH-1 – *Zahadki belaruskaj historyi*, BELSAT HISTORY:

 Čamu paliaki ŭ Litvie havoriać pa-belarusku?, 16 February 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOGqEkjSiYA.

 Ci byla b Belarus' biez Vilni?, 5 February 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIXfM9B5E0g.

 Vilnia jak našaia stalica, 14 January 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIjsg9xeSRA.

YouTube-ZBH-2 – *Zahadki belaruskaj historyi*, BELSAT HISTORY:

Histaryčnaja Litva, 18 December 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0STm_Z8gYw.

Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje – Belarus' ci Lietuva?, 13 May 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p06B19M7QQE.

Wikipedia

WIKI-by-n – *Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje*, https://be.wikipedia.org/wiki/Вялікае_Княства_Літоўскае [26.06.2025].

WIKI-by-t – *Vialikaje Kniastva Litouskaje*, https://be-tarask.wikipedia.org/wiki/Вялікае_Княства_Літоўскае [26.06.2025].

Secondary literature and media reports

Baranauskas T., *On the Origin of the Name of Lithuania*, "Lituanus" 2009, vol, 55, no. 3, pp. 28–36.

Bare su baltarusiu į konfliktą įsivėlęs Antanaitis: jis aiškino, kad Vilnius priklauso Baltarusijai, Delfi, 8 August 2023, https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/bare-su-baltarusiu-i-konflikta-isiveles-antanaitis-jis-aiskino-kad-vilnius-priklauso-baltarusijai-94142867.

Baltarusijos baletas gviešiasi Vytauto Didžiojo, Delfi, 27 August 2013, https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/baltarusijos-baletas-gviesiasi-vytauto-didziojo.d?id=62168637.

Frost R., *Book Review: Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345, by Stephen C. Rowell (Cambridge, 1994)*, "Slavonic and East European Review" 1995, vol. 73, pp. 536–538.

Gudavičius E., *Following the Tracks of a Myth…*, "Lithuanian Historical Studies" 1996, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 38–58.

Gutauskaitė I., *Europarlamentaras Auštrevičius: Lietuvos institucijos turėjo anksčiau pradėti domėtis Karač*, Delfi, 27 August 2023, https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/europarlamentaras-austrevicius-lietuvos-institucijos-turejo-anksciau-pradeti-dometis-karac-94311485.

Krippendorff K., *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 4th ed., Los Angeles 2019.

Lithuania, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithuania.

"Litvinizm" z belaruskaj i litoŭskaj pierspektyvy, "Hadavik Centra Belaruskich Studyjaŭ" 2024, no. 10.

Mickūnaitė G., *Making A Great Ruler: Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania*, 1st ed., Central European University Press, 2006, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctv10tq6g2.

Name of Lithuania, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Name_of_Lithuania.

Pancerovas D., *Ar perrašinėjamos istorijos pasakų įkvėpta Baltarusija gali kėsintis į Rytų Lietuvą?*, 15min.lt, 1 October 2014, https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/istorija/ar-perrasinejamos-istorijos-pasaku-ikvepta-baltarusija-gali-kesintis-i-rytu-lietuva-582-456877.

Seimo nario V. Sinicos pranešimas: prašoma panaikinti akreditaciją S. Cichanouskajos atstovybei, BNS, 22 July 2025, https://sc.bns.lt/view/item/seimo-nario-v-sinicos-pranesimas-prasoma-panaikinti-akreditacija-s-cichanouskajos-atstovybei-511481.

Rudkouski P., *VKŁ u idealahičnym dyskurse belaruskaha režymu*, [in:] A. Nikžentaitis (ed.), *Litva – Belarus': dyjaloh pra minulae*, Vilnius 2023.

Venckūnas V., *Tomas Baranauskas: Litvinistams svarbiausia turėti gražią istoriją, kuri galėtų sutelkti tautą*, Bernardinai.lt, 29 September 2012, https://www.bernardinai.lt/2012-09-29-tomas-baranauskas-litvinistams-svarbiausia-tureti-grazia-istorija-kuri-galetu-sutelkti-tauta/.

Viešas laiškas, Vilnius, 25 February 2025, https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RVcLaLAJHZRmdn6gYZT2ad-2dcDAogJ3/edit?tab=t.0.

Vileita V., *Between Securitization and Integration of Competing Historical Narratives: Lithuanian Responses to Belarusian 'Litvinism'*, master's thesis, Vilnius University, Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Eastern European and Russian Studies, Vilnius, 8 January 2022, https://epublications.vu.lt/object/elaba%3A192958065/index.html.

Vilniuje – puššimčio žmonių protestas prieš Sviatlanos Cichanouskajos biurą: 'Lauk iš Lietuvos', TV3, 8 August 2025, https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/vilniuje-pussimcio-zmoniu-protestas-pries-sviatlanos-cichanouskajos-biura-lauk-is-lietuvos-n1442257.