SUMMARY. It seems the need to explore the transformation of post-communist Lithuania is expired since the achieved membership in the EU and NATO is considered to be the firm evidence of successful post-communist transition. At the same time, Lithuania has seemingly entrenched its geopolitical orientation that has been based on the national narrative of “belonging to Europe”. Nevertheless, some socio-economical, political and cultural tendencies that have emerged in the last decade newly let to raise the question of national narrative. The elites’ consolidation in apparently consolidated democracy that produce the socio-economical discrepancies, a low political confidence of citizens and huge rate of emigration a normal condition in after-post-communist period? Or whether some features of postmodern society like consumerism, political skepticism, or simulation of social contract do not contribute to the natural fragmentation of the national narrative? Anyway, this is not without consequences for the success or failure of the national narrative, because since Sąjūdis times, both the “narrator” (the state, elites) and the “listener” (society, citizens) have changed significantly.

KEYWORDS: post-communist Lithuania, post-communism, postmodern society, post-communist national identity, after-post-communism, national narrative.

INTRODUCTION. AFTER-POST COMMUNISM: DEMOCRACY WITHOUT CITIZENS?

According to the general idea of modernization theory, the major factor in changing social and political conditions of society was a formation of industrial capitalism. Classical sociology and its successors, theories of late modernity or postmodernity, started from economy as the original power for social, political and cultural transformations (K. Marx, M. Weber, E. Durkheim, T. Parsons, D. Bell, R. Inglehart,
A. Giddens, U. Beck). Its legacy is still providing a huge conceptual framework for understanding the new phenomenon of social change like in the post-communist states after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The theory of modernization and its various branches indicated direct causal relationship between industrial capitalism and democratic reforms. To put it roughly, if free market and industrialization become predominant in the state, sooner or later democratic institutions will emerge. This has precisely happened in the Western nation-states during the 19th-20th centuries. Some authors noted social and cultural backgrounds for democratization. Seymour Martin Lipset stressed social preconditions like high level of income, education, and middle class formation as pivotal factors. Ronald Inglehart noted the shift in cultural attitudes: when democratic institutions follow industrialization, they both initiate the change in popular beliefs making them more secular, individualistic, and liberal what reinforces back the legitimacy of industrial capitalism and democratic rules and practices. Daniel Bell focused on the cultural contradiction of capitalism when rational, disciplined, self-restricted, and calculating profit capitalist activity starting from the first half of the 20th century faced its unintended cultural product: irrational, disintegrated, counter-moral, and self-denying trends in Western culture.

A dominant neoliberal approach in the post-communist studies repeated this traditional understanding of social change. The strong link between market reforms and liberal democracy was stated again and became something like normative standard for evaluating the final condition the states in transition were trying to achieve. Studies on post-communist change essentially focused on the two fundamental problems: which is the best way – shock therapy or incremental method – for implementing economical and political reforms that will take the minimum social costs? Which conditions or factors are the most important? A wide range of comparative analyses on transitional states revealed various factors such like the role of former nomenclature, anti-communist revolution, inherited industrial structural conditions at the start of reforms, Western country at neighborhood, or even the existence of cultural, social traditions before the Soviet rule. All these are

2 Lipset, 1976.
3 Inglehart, 1997.
4 Bell, 2003.
5 As one famous expert in post-communist studies stated, there is “... strong correlation between political freedom and economic liberalization, and it has persisted. ... all the nine Central and Eastern European countries are both the most reformed and the most democratic countries, whereas the nonreformers – Belarus, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – are the most authoritarian” (Aslund 2013: 245).
6 Norkus, 2008.
fused into multiple causal and explanatory analysis of reform success or failure in the post-communist states.

From the already established point of view, post-communist transition in the Baltic States is over. Lithuania is usually grouped with other eight Central Eastern European countries and treated as a successful example of post-communist transition according to the two basic criteria of transition – the liberalization of market and the establishment of democratic rule.7

According to several authors, in Lithuania, neoliberal ideology promoting free market and democratic institutions as imitation to the Western standard, and seen as the self-sufficient engines for social life improvement stabilized (Maldeikienė 2013, Rubavičius 2010b). As a result of such imitation, without civil engagement, political trust, social justice, civil demands protecting public sphere, and without the strategic politics of national culture, a state gradually becomes elitist oriented. The socio-economic trends seem to prove it with all cruelty. The success of the post-communist transition is becoming a past, since new challenges arise in the contemporary society. As M.Mandelbaum profoundly noted, “the postcommunist countries suffer not from oppressive but from unaccountable government. The chief problem they face is not tyranny but larceny, not autocracy but kleptocracy”8.

Actually, it can be agreed with Vaclav Havel that there is a need to move from post-communism as earlier from communism, but what can be met there – the after-post-communism? The problem now is not a successful functioning of formal institutions of free market and democratic representation. The major problem in the after-post-communism is how to bring citizens back to the political community. As Exkiert and Foa say on the post-communist countries, “the picture that arises from the literature is one ‘of democracies without citizens’, in that political elites have succeeded in protecting basic civic rights and implementing democratic procedures, rule of law, and multiparty system competition, but failed to enhance social cohesion and voluntary activity at the grassroots level, or increase popular support for the institutions of representative democracy”9.

For a long time, the Lithuanian national political narrative has been formulated around the civilizational distinction of belonging to Europe (the Western world) and moving away from the historical enemy, Russia. The singing revolution and independence restoration proceeded with the idea of return to Europe.

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7 Aslund, 2013: 246.
8 Mandelbaum, 1996: 5-6.
9 Exkiert and Foa, 2011: 2.
The research on public discourse has revealed that the same tendency is persistent even after the state has got the membership in the European Union.10

The article tries to identify the socio-economical and political characteristics of the contemporary Lithuanian society and analyze specific cultural features, following D. Bell’s reference to postindustrial or postmodern culture and society. The task is to find out the contemporary social conditions for the national narrative construction. It is questioned if some post-soviet trends led to certain new economical-social-political-cultural constellation which might determine the construction of national political narratives in a certain way. If the transition in CEU countries is over, how to understand economical, social, political, and cultural developments that are going on in an already consolidated democracy – Lithuania?

RESULT OF POST-COMMUNIST TRANSFORMATION: “TWO LITHUANIAS”?

Usually, several key-factors which have played a negative role in the socio-economical development of Lithuania in the time of transition are distinguished.

The law of land property restitution led to move real estate from one geographical area to another across the country. This opened a huge sphere for corruption and mostly benefited those who were at power of that time. At the same time, people’s trust of political institutions and even of politics in general reduced. The law was issued at the ruling time of the former nomenklatura (1992-1996, the excommunist party LDDP), but the process was not abandoned in the next ruling period (1996-2000) by the successor party of Sąjūdis – the conservatives.

The privatization by checks was another even bigger key-factor for the economical-social development of the state and society since it was the main method of the state industries privatization. The liberation of destructive creation (J. Schumpeter) which would successfully break trough collective ownership to free market relationships failed because the biggest industries appeared in the hands of those new capitalists who never pursued the vision of sustainable business running. Rather, it opened the gates for a short-term extraction of the enterprises, often pledging them to the banks and getting money for further “investments“; thus leaving entire industries and thousands of workers in straight bankruptcy. As one participant of those processes has said privately, “there was no state at that time; therefore, you should have used the situation”.

10 Švarplys, 2012. Especially a steady landmark of danger of Russia – even being within the EU and NATO Lithuanian political narrative is ready to continue to stress the threat of Russia, and Europe as “home sphere” (with some new criticall attitudes).
The state underwent two big economic crises in the last decade of the previous century. The bank crisis in 1994-1995 left many people without their savings and only financial injection of the Western financial institutions helped to stabilize the public finances of the state. The economical crisis of Russia in 1998 insulted Lithuania’s export industry which reduced the income of the population.

All these economical social turbulences were accompanied by the radical shifting of the people’s political attitudes. Political right (the Conservative party) that was a successor of Sąjūdis – the leading force for independence in 1988-1990, was thrown out of Seimas in 1992 elections mostly because of the severe economical conditions (especially very harmful economic blockade of 74 days from the Soviet Union in 1990). The newly come to power ex-communists lost the election in 1996 to the same Conservatives.

Starting with 2000, we see two trends: the stable growth of GNP (until the financial crisis in 2008), and the emerging new populist parties which are present at Seimas in each next election until now. “New Union” came to Seimas in 2000 (11 seats), “Order and Justice” (11 seats to its broader coalition) and “Labour Party” (39 seats) – in 2004, “Nation Resurrection Party” – in 2008 (16 seats), “Brave Road” – in 2012 (7 seats).

The firm tendency for a new populist party to emerge in each parliamentary election and even to participate in a governmental coalition may suggest a deep distance between the old, so-called traditional parties of the 90’s (the Conservatives and LDDP – later, the social democrats) and the needs of the masses. The fact of the permanent popularity of the populist parties probably evidences that the people no longer trust the political party system they have lived in since the restoration of independence.

The trend of popular opinion shows extremely low trust in the Parliament and other political institutions in recent years:


As seen in the data of Eurostats, from 2005 till 2012, Lithuania has permanently

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13 Eurobarometer 72, 2009.
14 Eurobarometer 68, 2007.
been among the states in which there is the biggest difference in received income in the poorest and the richest parts (both of 20%) of society. In 2010, in Lithuania, the difference was the highest (7,3) from all member states of the EU. At the same year, in Lithuania, there was the highest gap in the risk of poverty – people below the threshold of poverty (60% income median) in Lithuania received 32,6% less income. In other words, the poorest people in Lithuania got the minimum income comparing with the other poorest people across the EU countries.

The data from the recent eight years confirms that in the Lithuanian society, a huge socio-economical difference has developed between the richest and the poorest people. The condition of the poorest part of the society is one of the worst comparing with the other EU countries’ poorest people.

Probably this is a social basis for the new populist parties that have been emerging since 2000. Deep social stratification tends to lead to the search of the new political solutions that people do not see in the traditional parties which left people feeling underrepresented.

Emigration is another phenomenon which witnesses highly negative condition within the state. Lithuania suffers from the statistically highest emigration flow in the whole European Union. “According to the Population Census data (2011), around 769 thousand people or one fifth of the population have left the country since independence in 1990.”

In sum, socio-economic and political division between the rich and the poor, low trust in political institutions, and huge emigration flow – all these characteristics witness the separation between the two Lithuanias. The elites’ Lithuania moves away from the masses’ Lithuania and this forces to rethink whether the social and political trust might be achieved through the traditional channels as parliamentary elections or public sphere.

Moreover, there are other unfavorable conditions that even harden the possibilities for the national trust. Now, we can return to the postmodern approach and try to identify what cultural-social features do affect the new economical-social reality.

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18 Ibid.
Right after the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1989, Zygmunt Bauman initiated an interesting discussion about how to understand the change and what the forthcoming transformation in the states of the Soviet bloc would bring in social and cultural terms. According to him, communism prospered by the Soviet Union “was thoroughly modern in its passionate conviction that good society can be only a society carefully designed, rationally managed and thoroughly industrialized. … Communism was modernity at its most determined mood and most decisive posture.” According to Bauman, the post-modern motives of individualistic celebration for the better life was something that participated in the erosion of the Soviet rule itself. “In fact, what enraged the rebels against communist command economy and what eventually brought the communism down was not the envious comparison with the productive successes of the capitalist neighbors, but the enticing and alluring spectacle of the lavish consumption enjoyed across the border under capitalist auspices. It was the post-modern, narcissistic culture of self-enhancement, self-enjoyment, instant gratification and life defined in terms of consumer styles that finally exposed the obsolescence of ‘steel-per-head’ philosophy stubbornly preached and practiced under communism.”

Referring to the idea that the Soviet regime was stuck on the dictatorship over the needs (Feher, Heller and Markus) and on fighting with the individualistic Western culture, Bauman anticipated the expansion, cultivation and celebration of the needs. Actually, what we saw in the “wild capitalism” stage – the first decade of the newly introduced free market – was selfish individualistic fight for the personal better life never seen before. When economical, social and political system was consolidated, we started to witness the same logic of the Western consumerist society: the more the economy expands, the more needs it creates, the less moral and cultural restraints are left.

Some counterarguments to Bauman’s idea on the post-communism and the post-modernity as mutually supporting forces could be found, as Leslie Holmes showed. However, Bauman’s view is unusual and adds useful elements to the mainstream analysis of the neoliberal institutional approach.

Communism shared all the basic premises of the Enlightenment, the ideological cradle of modernity: rationality, secularism, voluntarism, the social re-engineering
of society, progressive human development, and teleological view of social reforms. However, the Western modernity failed or faced serious social and cultural contradictions. The inhuman control and treatment of the people as the economical-social resources through administrative and bureaucratic structures inspired the cultural discontent of capitalism. Post-modern culture arose as objection to the unlimited power of capitalism and its cultural-moral principles that grounded the industrial structure of society: the roles of genders, family, labor and capital, morality and culture.

Is this something we can expect in the contemporary Lithuanian society, especially in a state of being fully integrated to the EU and NATO? That is, sharing the same open possibilities of free movement, getting a job, making social contacts, and experiencing the global cultural impacts. Bauman rightly noticed the already-present post-modern cultural and social motives in the times of transition. Now, when Lithuania has been enjoying the advantages of being a part of the Western society, similar social, cultural patterns probably have to follow after legal and political adoption of the European rules and norms. If institutional neo-liberal approach confirms Lithuania, as well as other post-communist states the EU members, as the successful examples of the post-communist transition that achieved condition of consolidated democracy, maybe a postmodern approach may shed some new light to the analysis? What other postmodern features can we notice in the Lithuanian political-social trends? What impact may it have to the national political identity?

AFTER POST-COMMUNISM: SEARCHING POSTMODERNITY IN LITHUANIAN CONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACY

There are some other features that we may attribute to the postmodern social development in Lithuania: political skepticism and irony, sexual liberation discourse in public sphere, simulation of political moral order, failure of teleological belief in permanent advanced development, and celebration of pop culture.

POLITICAL IRONY

Political irony and skepticism emerges in postindustrial society as a reflection of a moral distance between the high politics and people’s needs. It can be understood as a reaction to inadequate politics and artificial political-moral vocabulary.

Bell, 2003.
Since the politicians are lying in the name of truth and with serious claim to solve real problems which have permanently and consciously not being solved, there is no other way to society than to react with a skeptical irony. Modern belief that all social problems can be solved through political activism and true ideology failed. Partly because they were solved in terms of elimination of real poverty, partly because of the social action fragmented from collective-national needs to individualistic, sub-groups needs – all that led the Western society’s condition to turn from industrial needs of survival to cultural needs of self-expression (Giddens 1991, Beck 1992, Inglehart 1997, Beck, Giddens, Lash 1994). Political irony in postmodern society is not a linear direct approach to make fun on stupid acts or talk-nonsense of politicians, it is rather an attempt to somehow fill in an asymmetrical (ontological) gap – inadequacy between the political action and the moral order of society. Therefore, political irony is a self-learning and cognition of political reality understanding that essentially nothing real is left in the relationships between the political field and society. Political irony and postmodern skepticism may flourish in such social environment where personal projections of life and self-construction of identity are not strictly dependant on the will and actions of the politicians.

The best example of such political irony can be found in “Bicycle News” – a political humor TV show running for 20 years. “Bicycle News” distanced itself from serving the interests of one political party or power, since each politician could become the object of the show regardless of party affiliation. They turned out of the direct engagement with the political field, but since TV show is enormously popular, the politicians need them in order to be visible for the audience. “Bicycle News” subtly evades offensive jokes on the politicians thus successfully balancing the social needs to learn the politics with the needs of the politicians to maintain the ties with the society as electorate. The significance of “Bicycle News” is that this political learning is going on through irony thus creating a new attitude to politics – the high politics is not serious, but distanced from the realm of social life.

One of the leaders of “Bicycle News” creative group, Vytautas Šerėnas, participated as a candidate in the Presidential elections in 2002 and ranked fourth receiving 7,75% votes. As another leading member of this humorist group later confessed, they were seriously afraid when they saw the first voting results coming. The political experts then sarcastically joked that the Lithuanians do not understand humour. However, quite a contrary conclusion can be made: society exactly understands humour i.e., the political field simply lost its significance to society and deserves just an ironical attitude.
The effect of the postmodern political irony should not be exaggerated, but together with an extremely low political trust and socio-economical discrepancy we’ve already discussed above, it may serve as a complementary reference to understand the after-post-communist condition.

**SEXUAL LIBERATION DISCOURSE**

Women emancipation movement, the human rights of homosexuals, queer politics, liberal treatment and tolerance of the ‘Other’ is a constitutive part the Western postindustrial society. Lithuania did not participate in the emancipator movements of sexual behavior, since it was occupied by the Soviet Union where ‘there was no sex’ (according to the famous official slogan) and homosexual relations were criminally charged. As a result, in the sociological surveys, the Lithuanian society usually presents homophobic attitudes in comparison to the Western countries.

However, some trends of liberal emancipation culture might be recently found in the Lithuanian society. First, since 2010, a public demonstration for homosexual and other sexual minorities’ rights called ‘Baltic pride’ has been taking place in Vilnius. Such campaigns were forbidden by the local government authorities in almost all Eastern European countries, including Lithuania. A mayor of Vilnius in 2008 said “until I am a mayor the sexual minorities will not be advertised”. However, the situation has gradually been changing and now the demonstration receives increasing attention from the European Union officials, human rights activists and local politicians, though it remains highly controversial in society.

The next contributing factor for the sexual minorities’ rights is public debate that is sustained by some young generation intellectuals who have a permanent tribune in the largest internet portal of Lithuania, delfi.lt. Their argument usually is constructed against the values, politics and practices of traditional society thus challenging those ideological and social forces which not too long ago played a pivotal role in the independence restoration of the state from the Soviet rule. Most of them belong to the leftist movement NK95 (‘New Left 95’) established in 2007, which proclaimed “a moral and political war for sexism and homophobia” in one of the thesis of their manifesto. The ideas of sexual non-discrimination are supported by several famous politicians, including the members of Seimas, who have an open access and are welcomed by the mass media to spread their ideas to public.

In general, the Lithuanian society has not experienced a wide-range social-

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24 Internet access: <http://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/imbrasas-gejams-vietos-nera-56-672>.
cultural movement of sexual liberation as the Western societies. What counter-cultural revolution has done in 60’s and 70’s is now mostly institutionalized by legal, political and cultural systems which are defended by the doctrine of human rights and political correctness. Following these Western processes we’re probably not supposed to expect a striking social-cultural movement in Lithuania. Instead, the legal, normative, and intellectual standards are now being introduced for the defense of LGBT rights by the political and culturally liberal elites and this can be noted as a delayed postmodernity. The fact that the defense of sexual liberal rights is initiated primarily by the political and intellectual elite conduces to the next clash between the elite trying to pursue the European standards and the masses who still share the traditional moral attitudes.

SIMULATION AND MANIPULATION

By the terms ‘simulacra’ and ‘simulation’ French philosopher Jean Baudrillard meant a fundamental social and cognitive shift in the Western society. Approaching the same phenomenon as observed by A. Giddens, U. Beck, Z. Bauman, R. Inglehart or, earlier, by Th. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, H. Marcuse, A. Gramsci and many others, Baudrillard claims the loss of reality and truth. It means that the social contact between the capital/power and society collapsed finally (if it was ever linked to it) and now political and moral order only hides the impossibility to know the real constellations for human exploitation. Now truth, morality, justice, political representation, sustainable development or other cognitive codes of modernity are just simulation that hides any possibility to know the truth. “The simulacrum is never what hides the truth – it is truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is true”.

Capital and power needs to dissimulate itself through moral superstructure in order to acquire and sustain its force.

This approach to postmodern condition states the inadequacy in the relationship between the society and power. Traditional moral vocabulary of modern political, gender, and individual emancipation surrendered to the new capital-power union that makes new liberating moves impossible. As A. Gramsci would say, now capital celebrates the active consent of the workers through cultural hegemony. Or, as M. Edelman would add, now democratic participation becomes a political spectacle where political symbolism replaces the non-existence of the real political representation. This can be exactly applied to postcommunist states when we’re continuing to ask what comes after postcommunism?

In Lithuania, there have been several politically significant scandals in the last decade which have not revealed amorality of political power by facts, but have established completely abnormal situation as normal, standard and worthy to forget. All they indicated the signs of broken social contract between the political power and society, and all of them were adjusted by moral and political codes of the modern state. In Baudrillard’s words, the political moral order was simulated.

The pedophilia scandal (2009-2012) was first time since the independence fight in 1988-1990 that raised enormous social-civil dissatisfaction and mistrust of the official state authorities. The coming information about the factual circumstances from that case was so contradictory that it was impossible to make a coherent version of truth. This compromised official legal authorities which finally dismissed any charges to the suspects turning all the contradictory allegations on the person (father) who earlier addressed to legal authorities his need to explore the potential sexual abuse of his daughter. All the events in these years were incited by the mass media, TV and newspapers, which mostly supported the official version of the case. Some of them, not marginal but the leading ones, distinguished themselves by a primitive manipulation of public opinion thus adding just more doubts about the already controversial case. Finally, the official moral and legal order were forcibly established by the state institutions at the expense of society’s civil demands to find out the truth.

Other political scandals, such as the Financial Crimes Investigation Service scandal in 2012 (related to the National Security Department scandal in 2006-2008), and other stories associated with the work of General Prosecution and NSD went in a similar pattern: the controversial and disputable circumstances were regulated and oppressed by the authorities of state institution and by the moral principles of the state of rule of law.

The political language of modernity (institutional hierarchy and authority, the rule of law, and the morality of the state) was applied in all cases to renew the social contract with the people when it was shattered. However, the actual inconsistency between the official political language and the social moral demands for justice and truth is the best evidence of the same political simulation that Baudrillard and others have noticed. By these scandals, the Lithuanian society experienced the postmodern political condition when the political authorities were not just lying and committing secret amoral actions, but all the situations were so highly tangled and confused that it was impossible to discover truth and justice. Instead of this, the modern political moral language was used to justify the authority of the state, thereby, simulating social contract with the people. All this contributed again to the widening gap between the ruling elite and the masses.
Other features of postmodernity, such as disbelief in the teleological view for the advanced social development and massive celebration of pop-culture, also can be found in the Lithuanian society. With the latest financial crisis that came with the euro-zone crisis and initiated the crash of real-estate market in Lithuania, in 2009, many hopes that “we’ll live better tomorrow and even better after tomorrow” collapsed. In place of permanent increasing of welfare, today’s society is learning how to live in “permanent economical crisis” (V. Rubavičius27).

On the effect of pop-culture on human condition cherished by the modern technologies (the Screen) probably the best was said by Arvydas Šliogeris, one of the most famous philosophers in contemporary Lithuania. According to him, “As any ideology, the ideology of Screen directly or secretly seeks only one goal – to enslave a person; … A surplus of the Screen information destroys a person’s soul, demoralizes, cuts the ground from under person’s feet, makes a person into a cosmic or global trump who has no homeland and roots, who has lost civil responsibility, the feeling of honour, affection, loyalty, who do not care about social or moral obligations and who becomes a slave of lowest instincts and an accumulation physiological processes and reactions”28. Entertainment, luxury, the propaganda of pornography and violence and other factors are held the key pseudo-values leading to the demoralization of political community and the erosion of civil responsibilities. In times of massive flow of information, the Lithuanian society simply entered into open global pop-cultural exchange that inevitably affects moral, cultural, and social attitudes of the people. The postmodern substitution of the real political conflict by the massive pop-cultural images leads to the political hegemony through cultural means.

What can these social-cultural trends that Lithuanian society has faced after the post-communist transition say to the common national narrative?

LITHUANIA: WHAT KIND OF NATIONAL NARRATIVE IN ELITIST STATE?

It is commonly agreed that the ‘singing revolution’ was rooted in the collective Lithuanian identity to ‘return to Europe’ from the Soviet occupation. Strong national European identity which was deeply associated with the sovereignty and independence of the state was a primary motive to formulate the state’s geopolitical orientation as well as the national narrative of cultural and political belonging. The accordance between the main geopolitical national attitudes of the elites and

27 Rubavičius, 2010a: 16.
the public was evidently expressed in the massive meetings during the peaceful resistance time of Sąjūdis, by the confirmation of Constitution by referendum on the 25th of October, 1992, and later on (to a lesser extent), by the referendum regarding the membership in the European Union on the 10th-11th of May, in 2003.

The membership in the European Union was firm evidence that the post-communist transition is over, since only the states that fully correspond to the democratic standards may achieve such status. Continuing classical sociological approach to look at economical, social, political, and cultural conditions of society in order to understand a social change, the analysis revealed some tendencies of contemporary Lithuanian society. The socio-economical characteristics indicate a gap between the rich and the poor parts of society which is among the biggest in the European Union. This is accompanied by still new populist party rise in each Parliamentary elections, extremely low political trust in the political institutions, and statistically huge emigration flow. Together with these negative phenomena, some features of postmodern society emerge that have a two-side effect. On the one hand, they contribute to the further deepening gap between the elite-driven course from the masses demands; on the other hand, the postmodern tendency witnesses a natural estrangement between the social realm and the political reality. The dominance of pop-culture, political irony and skepticism, simulation of moral-political vocabulary and social contract – all this lead to the fragmentation of modern political process into the atomized worlds of individual or social-cultural groups’ interests.

I claim that old national geopolitical narrative ‘to Europe against Russia’ is now outweighed or at least complemented by a more important distinction, namely, the formation of the ‘winning’ and the ‘loosing’ parts of society with the relevant political attitudes and moral outlooks. The virtual and the real confrontation can be named as modernist versus traditionalist, liberal versus nationalist, pro-European versus Eurosceptical, etc.

In such social-political environment, the previous national political identity cannot remain the same. The national political-cultural narrative is now incapable to enjoy the same massive support of the people as it was during the time of liberation from the Soviet empire in 1988-1992. The traditional landmarks of geopolitical national narrative – Russia and Europe (West) – now embrace not just ‘outside’ geopolitical identity of the state (as it was earlier), but rather hides the alienation of state power from the civic demands ‘inside’ the state. The socio-economical and political inconsistency between those who benefited from the post-soviet neo-liberal transformations and those (majority) who left outside the opportunities to lift up the quality of life, now weakens the previous strength of the national public
narrative. Moreover, the rising features of postmodern society naturally contribute to a distance. The after-post-communist consolidation of democracy is now going along with the inner dissolution at least in some socio-economic, political and civil trends and this makes the old national public narrative more limited, less adequate and less coherent. Without the restoration of political trust, without bringing the citizens back to the governing of the state, the national political narrative becomes open only to the elite demands thus risking to stay just another simulation.

Andrius Švarplys

KAS PASAKOJA KAM? EKONOMINĖS, POLITINĖS IR KULTŪRINĖS SĄLYGOS NACIONALINIAM NARATYVIUI LIETUVOJE PO POKOMUNISTINIŲ TRANSFORMACIJŲ

SANTRAUKA. Poreikis tyrinėti pokomunistinę Lietuvos transformaciją tarsi pasibaigęs, nes įstojus į ES ir NATO laikoma, kad šalis sėkmingai užbaigė ekonominį, politinį ir socialinį perėjimą iš sovietinės tvarkos į demokratiškos santvarką. Lietuva, regis, galutinai įtvirtino savo geopolitinę orientaciją, kuri buvo sėkmingai grindžiama „priklausymo Europai“ nacionalinio naratyvo. Tačiau paskutiniame dešimtmečyje išrastųjusios kai kurios socioekonominės, politinės ir kultūrinės visuomenės charakteristikos iš naujo kelia nacionalinio naratyvo adekvatumo klausimą.

Ar konsoliduotoje demokratijoje įsitvirtinusi elitų konsolidacija, produkuojanti plačios visuomenės socioekonominį atitolimą, itin žemą piliečių pasitikėjimą, didžiulę emigraciją, ir yra normali visuomenės būsena įveikus pokomunistines turbulencijas? Ar tam tikri postmodernios visuomenės bruožai, kaip vartotojiškas gyvenimo projektas, politinis skepticizmas ar socialinis kontraktų tapymas negali prie natūralios nacionalinio naratyvo fragmentacijos? Kad ir kaip būtų, tai negali neturėti pasekmių nacionalinio naratyvo sėkmei ar nesėkmei, nes nuo sąjūdžio laikų pastebimai pasikeitė „pastakotojas“ (valstybė, elitai), tiek „klausytojas“ (visuomenė, piliečiai).

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: pokomunistinė Lietuva, pokomunizmas, postmoderni visuomenė, pokomunistinė nacionalinė tapatybė, nacionalinis naratyvas.

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