

The shaping of civic environmental attitudes and activism in Lithuania – a ‘hybrid’ social identity in response to risk¹

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This paper sociologically explores several theses notable in the eco-modernist literature, particularly the claim that, compared to the consensus-oriented environmental reforms of the 1990s, the early environmentalism (of the 1970s) has been antagonistic (or rather critical) as regards attitudes and self-identity of environmentalists vis-à-vis other social actors and institutions, especially industrialists and public authorities. Based on empirical evidence and research into environmentalism in Lithuania since the emergence of first formally established green clubs like *Atgaja (Revival)* 20 years ago, in 1987, this article indicates that there has been neither a clear-cut conflict nor consensus among various categories of actors during various periods of time. By contrast, environmental attitudes and activism in Lithuania in the 1980s as well as 1990s is characterized by a mixed – a “hybrid” type – of relationships among the green movement and industrialists as well as public authorities, which is reflected in the public discourse and particular environmental actions.

Key words: environmental attitudes, civic activism, Lithuania, ecological modernization, hybrid social identity

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

One of the most important claims in the eco-modernist doctrine is a shift from the command-and-control type policy making to the one based on trust, tolerance and dialogue (Mol 1995; Hajer 1995). Eco-modernists believe in a shift to *dialogue and consensus* as opposed to social and institutional antagonism fostered by the ecological degradation of modern society. The shift from antagonism to dialogue is expressed through eco-modernist concepts of social partnership and shared responsibility. It essentially accepts the need for more accountability and public participation, for new arrangements for project / decision appraisal allowing involvement of various “stakeholders”. In this respect, eco-modernist ideology departs from conflict-theory approaches based on belief in knowledge and expertise of (elite) specialists who are expected to find the best solutions to environmental problems. Some authors see ecological modernization as institutional learning, whereas others perceive it as another swift of technocrats holding political and economic power and aiming to create illusion in society that gradual environmentally-informed institutional reforms are feasible, and this is the way out of deepening ecological

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crisis. Therefore, it seems relevant to look for the conceptualization of modern society that allows capturing structural tensions in normalized practices and interactions between various societal domains that shape the public discourse and environmental reform.

FIG. 1. Analytical framework: cultural tensions between policy domains

Domain	Bureaucratic	Economic	Academic	Civic
Doctrine	order	growth	enlightenment	democracy
Steering mechanism	planning	commercial	peer review	assessment
Ethos	formalistic	entrepreneurial	scientific	participatory

Sources: Jamison (1997), Rinkevičius (2000: 168).

Each policy domain, it is argued, is characterized by different cultural traits. On the most general level, those four domains are distinguished on the basis of different doctrines. In terms of goals and procedures (the way of working) these domains are characterized by different prevailing steering mechanisms. They might also be characterized by different ethos reflecting certain dominant values and beliefs inherent in particular institutional environments. Such an analytical approach is in various ways similar to the distinction that Weber (1930) has made between politically- and economically-oriented behaviour in his classical work *Economy and Society*. Weber's sociology of politics is based on a distinction between the essence of economy and polity which is conditioned by the subjective meaning of human behaviour. Economically-oriented behaviour is basically shaped by the search of satisfaction of personal needs and wishes associated with benefit and making a profit, whereas politically-oriented behaviour is characterized by efforts of a person or group to rule other people. For our analytical purposes, awareness of certain inherent social controversy is the most important aspect in the reading of Weber's classical distinction between economic and political orientations of human behaviour as well as contemporary distinctions between "ideal" policy cultures or societal domains. Such a conceptualization opens up new perspective from which ecological modernization can be analyzed.

ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES AND CIVIC ACTIVISM IN LITHUANIA UNDER TOTALITARIANISM

In this section, it is aimed at getting a deeper insight into the civic domain, exploring various aspects related to people's environmental attitudes, values and nature protection activities in the Soviet times, trying to compare them with the traits of environmentalism in the western countries. An important aspect of this analysis is to diagnose what is the Soviet heritage in terms of people's attitudes, beliefs and expectation, and what its implications are for environmentally-informed transformations and cultural tensions in the Lithuanian society approaching the 21st century.

The Soviet era in Lithuania can be characterized as a period of colonization of other spheres of society by the bureaucratic domain. This pattern is identifiable in most social structures, although the prevailing ideology emphasized the development of collective, democratic rule by the working people. Oppression by the totalitarian state and its bureaucracy had the most significant impact upon the civic domain in the former Soviet block countries.

"The social doctrine which existed in the Soviet times was a collective one; however, people had to look for the ways to survive individually, to find their own place in this pseudo-collective society. Any kind of collective action would not be possible, because all the collective

ideas were prescribed and controlled “from the top”. One of the most serious problems of the post-soviet countries has evolved from this – society is short of real, creative individualism [...] which would enrich, educate an active citizen who is responsible for his (her) decisions and thinking about the entire society”².

Political culture of the Lithuanian society under the Soviet rule might be characterized as a “double-faced”, having a facade and a latent side (Palidaukaitė 1996). Some scholars portray Lithuania of the 1970–80s as a country with a “practically totally demolished civic society” (Vardys 1993). A particular sphere of civic activism, namely environmental activism, is not an exception from this general pattern. Totalitarian regime blocked the emergence and penetration of environmentalism into the public discourse (Eder 1996: 204) till the years well into the *Perestroika*.

In the West, it was the extensive public environmental debates and active social movements – the civic domain – which emerged in the 1970s that carved out the way for spreading environmentalist attitudes and values in the society at large. Social movements created (temporary) public space (Jamison 1996) for spreading the seeds of environmentalism, based on the ecological critique, they widely propagated an idea of alternative society, articulated a new set of values and knowledge interests. By contrast, till the mid-1980s the Lithuanian society lived in the state of stagnation, at least on the face-side of social life.

In spite of this, important social and institutional changes, which indicate that there existed *latent environmentalism*, took place. It was different from the forms expressing social ecological anxiety like those embodied in environmental movements and movement organizations in the Western countries. This latent environmentalism, however, yielded particular fruits: Lithuania was the first republic in the USSR to establish the State Nature Protection Committee in 1957. Lithuania was also the first among the republics of the Soviet Union to pass the Law on Nature Protection in 1959. The Nature Protection Society was established in 1960. However, the latter public organization was “public” to the limited extent because the Soviet regime understandably allowed public organizations within strictly defined ideological and organizational boundaries. The National Park of Aukštaitija, three nature reserves as well as 174 landscape and 74 hunting reserves were established in Lithuania during the Soviet period. The state protection covered 194 parks, 546 old trees, 116 geological sites, 250 species of rare plants, all the songbirds. Other regulations concerning nature protection such as the Code of Land Protection (1970), the Code of Water Protection (1972), the Code of Forest Protection (1977) were adopted as well (Januskis 1990). Those institutional developments were not so much an achievement of the “system”, i. e. Soviet public authorities, but rather induced and catalyzed by outstanding personalities such as the chairman of the State Nature Protection Committee Mr. Viktoras Bergas. Those people were able to generate ideas, bridge networks among key-persons in the Soviet bureaucracy, and mobilize the necessary resources even in the years of deep totalitarian oppression³.

² Interview with the Polish professor A. Smolar (*Kauno diena*, 27 February 1997).

³ The issues which such policy entrepreneurs had to deal with can be illustrated by the case of the establishment of the National Park in Aukštaitija in 1968. The main “problem” in order to get all the permits needed for the establishment of this park was the word “national” in its official title. This word was unacceptable to the Soviet apparatus as reminding of Lithuania’s search to regain national sovereignty. It was suggested by the leaders of the Communist Party to exclude the word “national” from the official title of Aukštaitija Nature Reserve. Only communicative and “diplomatic” skills of Mr. Bergas helped convince that “national” is the way such parks are called all over the world and it has nothing to do with politics. This allowed keeping this word and establishing the park (*Lietuvos rytas*, 20 January 1996).

Understandably, it was difficult and even dangerous for any, even the bravest individual to resist drastic expansion of the Soviet industry which was rapidly penetrating all the cells of peasantry society often neglecting the dominant social and environmental values and demolishing traditional livelihood. However, there were environmental inspectors and other actors within the public administration who took the risk of suspending the construction of particular plants which were very important for the Soviet economy. For example, through such environmentally conscientious actions the construction of the oil refinery in Mažeikiai and electronics plant Nuklonas in Šiauliai was suspended⁴. The way environmental authorities developed in Lithuania in the Soviet times and the way they affected particular industrial and technological projects indicates that there was a certain common pro-environmental perspective shared by a number of people, decision-makers as well as common citizens. In a way such attitudes and actions can be interpreted as “anti-eco-modernist”, because they reflect a tendency not to seek environmentally benign industrial development but rather to sustain the Lithuanian society based on peasantry social structures, traditions and values. This can be illustrated by the citation from the memoirs about Mr. Viktoras Bergas, the chairman of the State Nature Protection Committee:

“[...] he bravely maintained: there is no need for the cotton mills, oil refineries, Lithuania – agricultural country. When it was planned to construct an oil plant nearby Jurbarkas, he was very resistant [...]: it will flood meadows and pollute the Nemunas River – where such a policy leads to?”⁵

The fact that today Lithuania has mainly food processing, textiles, wood and other industries with rare exceptions of heavy industry most probably has to do with the civic activity of ecologically and socially concerned individuals like Mr. Bergas who occupied important posts in the Soviet administrative structures at that time.

While analysing the civic environmental activism in the 1970–1980s, it is important to contextualize it and see not only the formal appearance but also those events or social practices which indicate the occurrence of latent forms of social activism that go beyond particular individuals or small groups of ecologically and socially concerned actors. The existence of broader latent civic activism in the early 1970s might be illustrated by the case of the underground almanac *Katalikų Bažnyčios kronika* (*the Catholic Chronicles*), which was compiled, edited, published and distributed through the network of underground actors (priests, writers and other intellectuals as well as common people in the cities and rural areas), closely affiliated with the Catholic Church. Mostly focused on the issues of human rights and, more generally, on social realities under the Soviet occupation of Lithuania, the *Catholic Chronicles* touched upon the traditional beliefs and values of the Lithuanians. In the *Chronicles*, the anti-human domination and brutal oppression by the totalitarian regime was often contrasted (sometimes with some nostalgia) vis-à-vis eco-centric (Arcadian) cosmology and livelihood of Lithuanian peasants who, albeit in poverty, used to live in peace and harmony with nature and each other before totalitarianism came.

There were also more visible forms of public voicing and civic activism; although in the 1970s they were not explicitly geared towards environmentalism. The most widely-echoed

⁴ Interview with Mr. K. Cechavičius (21 March 1996), one of the first public authorities in Lithuania who has kept this civic stand and “hybrid” identity through the last 3 decades.

⁵ Žemulis F. „Pirmasis Lietuvos gamtosaugos vadovas tapo legenda“ (The First Lithuanian Environmental Manager Became a Legend). *Lietuvos rytas*, 20 January 1996.

was the story of Romas Kalanta, a 19 year-old man who set himself on fire in front of the Kaunas Opera House nearby the headquarters of the Communist Party in May, 1972. Romas Kalanta left a farewell letter where he explained his conscientious self-extinction as a sign of protest against the Soviet totalitarian rule. Subsequently, wide public demonstrations and revolts began in Kaunas city, involving hundreds of mainly younger generation people: students, workers, artists. Those mass revolts were brutally oppressed by the Soviet power structures. Those participating in public protest actions shared non-conformist, anti-militarist, anti-elitist values and beliefs, i. e. the same value-orientations shared by those who actively participated in the western student revolts in the late 1960s, hippie flower power and other socio-cultural movements which paved the way for western environmentalism. There are no extensive empirical accounts so far of explicitly environmentalist social groupings or radically-oriented green grassroots activities to take place in Lithuania in the 1970s (like those “eco-druzina” type of groups as pointed by professor Yanitsky, 2000, in the case of Russia). However, looking deeper one might notice some important indications of latent social community and public-policy communication channels whereby governmental decision-makers received feed-back from what might be termed “the public”. The newly-emerged Lithuanian bureaucracy under the Soviets was still embedded in a society which did not entirely lose the Gemeinschaft-type Arcadian community. In the Soviet era this tradition was mixed-up with dominant technocratic ideology and bureaucratic organization of society. However, new bureaucrats kept close relations with their relatives, former fellow villagers or communities which they once belonged to. Therefore, many of those who stood behind environmentally-informed institutional innovations in the Soviet times shared eco-centric world views stemming from the traditional Lithuanian communal pantheist culture respecting the work and being *with* nature (Kavolis 1994; Rinkevičius 1998). This tradition is similar to the Arcadian as described by Worster (1977).

Those latent communication channels and information exchange among new party or bureaucratic elite and fellow-community members have resulted in a peculiar style of policy-making. On the facade side, it followed directives set top-down by central authorities in Moscow and Vilnius. On the latent side, it adjusted the course of industrialization, urbanization, development of important sectors of economy with respect to local social and natural circumstances.

Because of such “double-faced” policy culture, Lithuania avoided significant natural and social bifurcation which is visible in other former Soviet republics, for example, Belarus and the Ukraine. For instance, Lithuania avoided concentration of all the major industries in one or two biggest towns as it happened in Latvia. Instead, many new industrial enterprises emerged in local or regional towns enabling to employ former peasants from surrounding villages. In this way, disturbances of social community, people’s alienation from the former social and natural environment were less painful (Rinkevičius 1997). This also prevented rapid “russification” of the country, thus avoiding the destiny of other Soviet republics or particular urban areas suffering from complex issues of national minorities (although the continuum of nomenclature in the contemporary social structure is argued nowadays to be one of the major hindrances for more rapid social reforms).

This “double-faced” policy has led to moderate modernization of Lithuania with the prevailing light industry and a few exceptions of large chemical and electronics plants. Adjustment of industrialization and urbanization policies to local natural and social conditions, on the other hand, is not only a result of *latent* policy culture characterized by *informal* information

and communication among elite key-decision makers and local community members. There were also official Communist Party and governmental documents which reflect the existence of official, facade policies based on the preventive approach and precaution in industrial and other spheres of country's development. One example is the Decree Nr. 303 by the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party and the Council of Ministers on the Limitation of Industrial Development in Large Cities issued in 1981 (the era of deep stagnation). This and the related documents officially communicate a policy aimed at stopping industrial construction in the two major cities of Vilnius and Kaunas, reducing it significantly in the cities of Klaipėda, Kėdainiai, Mažeikiai, giving priority for industrial development in the then rural areas and small towns of Alytus, Telšiai, Tauragė, Ukmergė, Plungė. It was expected that this policy will help to avoid merging of industrial cities into agglomerations. Similarly to most policy documents and decisions, this decree was not accessible to the general public, common citizens, and there were no public discussions or scrutiny whatsoever. The contents of this decree as well as other documents indicates, however, that those who developed such policies had their own ways for exchange of information with rural communities, for learning about local social and natural circumstances, and taking them into account. Thereby industrial and S & T decisions allowed to not completely disturb the existing communities, not to cut people's roots and relationship with the social and natural environment.

These are just a few aspects of a complex process of Lithuania's modernization, "balancing" between the prevailing technocratic ideology, bureaucratic "command-and-control" decision-making style vis-à-vis deliberate, precautionary policy, taking into account local social values and environmental concern.

The broad social-environmental movement did emerge in Lithuania, however, only a few years before the collapse of the Soviet Union, i. e. about two decades later than the awakening of the environmental movement took place in the Western countries. We will analyse those processes later in the paper. Meanwhile we will address one question regarding the western environmentalism. This question is relevant for analysing the social activism in Lithuania in the 1970s and its off-spring into a broad social movement towards the end of the 1980s.

There seems to be an apparent disagreement among analysts of western environmentalism as regards the social antagonism of the movement. Some authors argue that the search for rapid transformations (break down) of dominant values and institutions, the call for alternative lifestyles and technologies, the ways in which environmentalists expressed their self-distinction among other members of western societies can be interpreted as predominantly antagonist. This is said about the attitudes of environmentalists to industrialists, political-economic elite and state bureaucracy, and about the course of environmentally-induced change they were advocating (Cotgrove 1982; Hajer 1995; Spaargaren 1997). By contrast, there are other, quite different views and interpretations of the western environmentalism in the 1970s, for instance, seeing it and influential environmentalist writings as articulating "a positive program of social ecology, rather than a depiction of doom and crisis" (Jamison 1996: 229).

In Lithuania, civic activism has been most often geared towards the protest against and critique of the Soviet totalitarian system, although this was as a rule wrapped into critique regarding particular social, economic, ecological issues. Therefore, certain antagonism has always been present in this civic activism. However, it was a different antagonism than that of the western environmentalists who were criticizing the material affluence and capitalist industrialism and addressed their critique to particular categories of actors: political elite and industrialists.

Quite on the contrary, material welfare and capitalist mode of production has never been a specific area of criticism or part of ideological platform on which civic environmental activism in Lithuania would be based. Moreover, the shortage of material goods was so common that the critique against affluent society, which was an important part of the western environmentalism in the 1970s (McCormick 1989), was totally irrelevant in the Soviet Union. This is an important dimension when researching the socio-historical preconditions for the possible diffusion of eco-modernist attitudes and values in the present-day Lithuania. Given the interpretation of eco-modernist beliefs and expectations as a faith in the “positive-sum game”⁶, the social activism in Lithuania in the 1970–1980s can be regarded as paving the way in favour of eco-modernist “win-win” attitudes and strategies rather than shaping people’s consciousness against such ideology.

CIVIC ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM IN THE ERA OF PERESTROIKA: CONVERGENCE OF ECO-CENTRIC AND TECHNO-CENTRIC APPROACHES

The civic domain in the Lithuanian society was traditionally weak and institutionally peripheral with regard to environmental and other spheres of policy making. Nevertheless, it began to gain strength and change the existing public-policy interface in the mid-1980s. The contribution by a group of intelligentsia representatives who were the first public tribunes to disseminate signals of the risk from irresponsible short-sighted science and technology decisions in society is known best of all.

In the fall of 1986, which was the time of early spring of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost*, a protest letter was published in the *Literaturnaya Gazyeta* in Moscow signed by some 20 outstanding Lithuanian and Russian writers, poets, actors, painters, composers, architects who warned about the threatening plans of top-bureaucracy in Moscow to start extraction of oil nearby the Curonian Spit, the most beautiful site of nature on the Baltic Sea coast. A few weeks later this protest letter was re-printed in the major Lithuanian cultural weekly *Literatūra ir menas*⁷.

It was the first publicly visible attempt of the kind to initiate societal debate and to influence environmental science and technology decisions which were otherwise likely to be made in a traditional way: without any public assessment or scrutiny. It was the first time when mass media were deployed by actors rooted in the civic domain to disseminate important message which induced social-environmental anxiety. Therefore, this case can be regarded as a gate to the new mode of public environmentally-concerned communication induced by the actors outside the bureaucratic domain.

The discourse which developed with the publishing of the protest letter involved various types of symbols, emblems, arguments. Some arguments were based on the lexicon characteristic of the Arcadian tradition: historical, cultural, mythological, poetic, moral, and deeply-emotional. The way in which the policy of oil extraction on the Baltic coast developed was interpreted as a symbol of socio-cultural irresponsibility and alienation between the “centre and periphery”. The entire letter was penetrated by some intrinsic intuited feeling of risk similar to that accentuated by the “risk society” theory (Beck 1992) emphasizing inherent threats in science and technology development which are not susceptible to precautionary, preventative

⁶ i. e. that the desired development of material welfare is intrinsically compatible with the protection of the environment.

⁷ Kiek gali kainuoti vieno munduro garbė? (How much could the honor cost?). *Literatūra ir menas*, 15 November 1986.

public scrutiny and control. It should be also noted that this letter was publicized about half a year after the Chernobyl catastrophe, and it added significantly to the growing public anxiety and mistrust of the advancement of science and technology in the former Soviet Union.

Besides Arcadian eco-centric type of language, this (discourse) coalition of intellectuals tried to phrase their arguments in the language that actors in the bureaucratic and economic domain were familiar with: rational, quantitative, and based on weighting economic and environmental costs and benefits.

“[...] when 5 thousand tons of crude oil will spill-off at once, the damage that follows shall be made for the state: 1) fines for pollution will amount to 155 million roubles 2) the fisheries will suffer from some 40 m roubles damage 3) damage for recreational coastal zone will amount to 38 m roubles 4) clean-up of the polluted territory will cost 49 m roubles. [...] All together such a spill-off would cost about 284 m roubles for the state”⁸.

In Lithuania it was probably for the first time that the environmental concern was expressed not only in cultural and moral terms prevailing in the 1960s and 1970s like “it will flood meadows and the Nemunas River”, or “it will pollute the Baltic Sea”. By contrast, the message was based on very concrete facts which were spelled out in a language that one would nowadays call the language of ecological modernization. One peculiar aspect of this letter is the fact that there was only one scientist among all the intellectuals who signed this letter. In order to argue about the environmental damage in cost-benefit terms (based on the eco-modernist belief that such assessment is viable in the first place), it was obviously necessary to involve some expert scientists, especially those who had access to important information which at that time was usurped by the central bureaucracy. This leads again to hypothesis about the existence of informal communication channels laid among environmentally-concerned actors encompassing various societal domains: the bureaucratic, the economic, the civic, and especially the academic one.

The protest letter also contained rather sharp statements of mistrust in the command-and-control system based upon directives from Moscow. The quest for de-centralization and de-hierarchization echoed with an ideology promulgated by environmentalists in the Western countries during the 1970s. The call for decentralization in environmental science and technology decision-making implied the call for more general decentralization from Moscow, and therefore was a very brave step even for a coalition of outstanding intellectuals.

“We thought such *foolishness* and *open crime* against nature is impossible in the *Republic of Lithuania* [my italics – L. R.]. First of all, because deep, nature-respecting customs have been blossoming here for many years, and the Lithuanian nation is especially unanimous and concordant implementing elementary unwritten laws of nature protection, however, in the given case everything depends not on the republic”⁹.

Thus, not only the call for precaution and deliberation in environmental science and technology policy was communicated to the public but also the need to increase national sovereignty was expressed in this letter and communicated publicly. This quotation reflects growing controversy in relations between the “centre and republic” as it was called in those times. Furthermore, the call for sovereignty was spelled out in a rational (although sharp) eco-modernist language: emphasizing the relevance of de-centralization for saving natural resources and avoiding environmental disasters.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *Literatūra ir menas*, 15 November 1986.

This was probably the first case when environmentally-concerned public information and communication was used for transmitting a politically significant message. As later events showed, this has led to civic awakening, formation of environmental as well as national revival movement. Since the date of publishing this protest letter, a mix of environmental concern and ideas of national sovereignty have remained a significant component of discursive strategies and actions deployed by movement organizations. The increase of civic activism was a very gradual process. There still existed strong totalitarian boundaries which kept policy-making relatively closed from democratic public scrutiny. Those boundaries were socially spanned only about two years later.

THE RISE OF THE GREEN MOVEMENT AND NEW FORMS OF CIVIC ACTIVISM

In 1988–1989, the re-awakening of civic society and steps towards re-constitution of the national sovereignty of Lithuania was closely inter-twined with the awakening and mobilization of the Lithuanian Green movement. Moreover, the off-spring of environmental movement in 1988 gave strong impetus for social mobilization against the entire Soviet totalitarian system. With regard to environmental science and technology policy, it might be argued that this movement opened up new avenues for changing, democratizing the public-policy interface. It disseminated signals promising the emergence of new types of dialogue, a belief in the constructive power of public participation, a promise of reshaping country's economic and technological development in new environmentally sound ways based on community, shared responsibility and wisdom of Arcadian tradition. At the same time, some of the movement's actions raised public concern and mistrust of laymen intervention in science and technology decisions.

Similarly, as in the West of the 1970s, the environmental movement in Lithuania initially propagated an ideology of "alternative technologies and alternative life styles". However, the term "alternative" did not have exactly the same meaning: the common denominator for "alternative" in the western world was a disillusion in dominant values, norms and institutions prevailing in industrial societies, whereas in Lithuania it also meant a protest against the Soviet totalitarian regime with its "imperialist" ideology (both in environmental as well as political sense). Therefore, in 1988–1989, the "alternativism" of the Lithuanian environmental movement was shared by much broader circles of society compared to certain western environmental movements of the 1970s. This shared environmental concern, expressed through various remarkable actions of public protest, strongly affected particular science and technology decisions. The most significant one was the stoppage of the construction of the 3rd bloc of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant¹⁰ as well as suspending of the construction at Kruonis Hydro-accumulation Power Plant, suspending of the development of oil-import terminal on the Baltic coast of Lithuania¹¹.

It has been argued that in the western countries during the up-swing of environmentalism in the 1970s, "alternative" aims and efforts of the greens were focused not (just) upon possible ways to influence particular environmental science and technology options and reshape them into what was called small-scale, appropriate, soft technology paths (Jamison 1996; Spaargaren 1997). Instead, efforts of environmentalists were geared towards self-expression, maintaining distinct self-identity among other members of society, a similar pattern observed in the western environmentalism (Hajer 1995). Communicative strategies and self-expression

¹⁰ This nuclear power plant has the same type reactor as in Chernobyl, only a more powerful one.

¹¹ Those cases were briefly illuminated in my earlier paper in *Pesto Series I* (1997).

of the Lithuanian greens were often tailored not for particular environmentally questionable science and technology policy options, but rather for propagating and preserving self-identity of a coalition of people with a supposedly “deeper” ecological consciousness, awareness and responsibility.

In terms of world views and cosmology, the “alternative” character of the Lithuanian greens can be illustrated by the following statement by one of the movement intellectuals expressing romantic, Arcadian approach to human-nature relations and framing a distinctive discourse coalition:

“[...] rational logical cognition is to be complemented by intuitive-meditative way of grasping the essence. According to dogmatic scientists, the greens are getting here into an ocean of mysticism, but in fact they just span the boundaries of categorical thinking. [...] We learn about the right livelihood not only from science and parties, but also from stars in the sky, folk songs, Čiurlionis’ paintings¹², and the eyes of a child” (Karalius 1990: 16).

The self-distinction of the greens among other members of society on a discursive level is strengthened by the ways they frame their action strategy. The latter can be illustrated by the following citation:

“In general, I also see the activity of the greens as a controlling one – controlling not only the Government or particular organizations, but nature protection in general. [...] the greens will cooperate but also control the situation as no other “public” controlling committee¹³ has ever done before” (Balbierius 1989).

Such statements by the leaders and ideologists of the Lithuanian green movement well reflect the direction of change in relations between the greens and the actors rooted in other domains that this social movement was promulgating in the early period of its development. The research into the ways in which the greens shaped public environmental discourse allows claiming that before the coming of the phase when environmentalism was “appropriated by the movement’s opponents” (Eder 1996: 203), first of all, there was a period when environmentalists themselves aimed at controlling the sphere of nature protection. The above citation highlights this tendency.

However, as noted in the introductory section, we also aim to show in this paper that besides social and institutional antagonism, there are numerous indications of a peculiar character of cultural politics, a mix of antagonism and cooperation, a multiple identity among the greens and industrialists as well as public authorities. For example, the first General Assembly of the Lithuanian green movement in October, 1988, took place in the premises of Kėdainiai Chemical Plant, one of the industrial companies in Lithuania which was very heavily attacked by the greens. This fact illuminates the existence of a certain informal communicative interface between the greens and industrialists, but also a tendency that industrialists, confronted by the pressure of environmentalists, preferred to help (or to please) the latter actors rather than to continue confrontation. Another reason for convening the general assembly in Kėdainiai instead of the major cities like Vilnius, Kaunas or Klaipėda was that the central authorities preferred to minimize the public influence of this new rapidly growing social move-

¹² Čiurlionis (1875–1911) is the most-famous Lithuanian painter and composer whose significance for the Lithuanian society and culture might be compared with that of Sibelius in Finland or Grieg in Norway.

¹³ The term “public controlling” committee is referring to a particular social institution within the Soviet command-and-control system that has performed the role of public inspection in various public spheres.

ment promulgating the “alternative” values, technologies, and life styles. As a consequence, the greens were informally suggested by the public authorities to convene their assembly in the geographical and political periphery, i. e. in Kėdainiai. As this case indicates, already back in 1988 there existed an informal interface between environmentalists, industrialists and state bureaucrats that allowed alleviating tensions and partially fulfilling (harmonizing) the interests of the actors rooted in different domains.

An example of a mixed cooperation-confrontation, pressure-dialogue between the greens and industrialists in shaping particular environmental science and technology options was the financial assistance, means of transport, and other support provided by the Jonava Fertilizers Plant *Azotas* for the ecological protest march organized by the green club *Atgaja* in 1988. Paradoxically, during this ecological protest march and on some later occasions the greens organized quite aggressive protest demonstrations against this plant, they actively disseminated information on serious negative environmental impact caused by *Azotas* upon humans and nature. Thus, again the industrialists who were fiercely criticized by the greens in the first place, were, on the other hand, providing material (and discursive) support for environmentalists.

The case of Kaunas city wastewater treatment plant is yet another example of the role of environmentalists in shaping environmental science and technology policy. In 1989, the greens undertook several trials to “diplomatically” foster central and local authorities to make the final decision regarding the type and location of the municipal sewerage treatment plant. Dissatisfied by the slow and bureaucratized response, the activists from the local green club *Atgaja* organized a hunger strike until the public authorities would select the site for the waste water treatment plant. The leader of this protest action was Saulius Gričius, who soon became a vice mayor of the city of Kaunas, the first green vice-major in Lithuania in charge of environmental protection and *inter alia* of the municipal wastewater treatment plant, which just a year ago was an object of quite radical, nonconformist environmental movement activism and pressure.

At the time when the greens held a hunger strike, they were not just movement activists but also formally employed as senior inspectors of the Kaunas Regional Nature Protection Committee. Thus the public-policy interface and public discourse regarding particular environmental science and technology options was dominated by “hybrid social activists” sharing a “multiple identity” as movement activists and civil servants employed by public authorities.

Various examples indicate that some industrialists as well as public authorities not simply reacted to pressure by the greens regarding particular environmental science and technology issues, but a public opinion has spread that environmentally sound science and technology decisions are *impossible without intervention by environmentalists*.

In spite of the evidence of mixed or “hybrid” cultural and institutional character of Lithuanian environmentalism, the pressure by the greens – the civic domain – was often conflicting, antagonistic with regard to actors rooted in the bureaucratic and economic domain¹⁴. This might be one of the reasons why there evolved relatively negative attitudes of various actors and groups to the public (laymen) participation in environmental science and technology policy.

¹⁴ In Lithuania this pattern is characterized by numerous cases, particularly the stoppage of construction at Kruonis Hydro-accumulation Power Plant and boycott of agricultural and food processing industry in the late 1980s.

One explanation could be that broad civic activity, collective mobilization and engagement in policy-making occurs only during structural shifts that are existentially important for society at large and embody fulfilment of long-sought aspirations. Such was the shift of the Lithuanian society towards re-establishing sovereign state and liberalization from the totalitarian regime. Thus, active public intervention in particular environmental science and technology policy options¹⁵ was just a way to express general protest against the existing system.

Later this stream of euphoria, self-confidence and faith in public participation slowed down among the common citizens and environmentalists. By that time the Lithuanian greens have created a temporary public space for communicating important message of environmental concern and deliberation in the society which shaped people's attitudes in general, and towards science and technology policy options in particular. Later, similarly as in the West, environmentalism in Lithuania has been gradually "appropriated by the movement's opponents" (Eder 1996: 203). Ideas and concern of the greens have been taken over to a certain extent by policy-makers, academicians and industrialists. For example, a message of the greens concerning the urgent need to construct wastewater treatment plants in major cities gradually reached the bureaucratic domain and was appropriated by the latter. The Government of Lithuania declared construction of sewage treatment plants in five major cities to be a national priority; it became one of the key-areas of the National Public Investment Program (PIP) adopted in 1994. The Ministry of Environmental Protection as well as particular municipalities allocated substantial part of available funds as well as the main share of foreign environmental aid for designing and construction of the wastewater treatment facilities. The greens and general public played very marginal role in influencing decisions concerning location, size, type of wastewater treatment plants, and concerning subsequent high costs which are to be born by every single user of water and sewerage in the years to come.

The appropriation of environmentalism from the greens by other societal domains and its implications for science and technology policy is closely related in Lithuania with the so-called phase / period of professionalization of environmental movement (Jamison 1996). For instance, in the early 1990s, the key-actors of environmental movement who earlier formed a core of the *Žemyna* green club¹⁶ in Vilnius, established an environmental consulting firm and a powerful joint venture, the *Baltic Consulting Group*, with the Danish company *Kroeger*, the Swedish firm *Rust* and the Finnish-Nordic environmental financing consortium *NEFCO*. The former movement activists got actively involved in designing sewage treatment plants as well as assessing, for example, contamination of the former Soviet military sites and the ways for their rehabilitation¹⁷. Thus, those areas which once were a major focus of the green critique and protest later became the areas where members of counter-movement found their new professional identity. Those and numerous other examples indicate the upswing of the phase of professionalization of the movement as well as its new profile in searching for its own niche in an emerging "environmental marketplace" (Eder 1996) that the movement once created.

The shift from the counter-movement to professional constructive participatory praxis was a gradual and complex process. Already in the early years of environmentalism in Lithu-

¹⁵ Briefly reviewed in my article in *Pesto Series I* (1997).

¹⁶ It was famous as an intellectual center generating green ideology in Lithuania, mobilizing public to confront *inter alia* the construction of the 3rd bloc of Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant.

¹⁷ Interviews with Mr. Artūras Abromavičius, director of the Baltic Consulting Group (May 1996), and Mr. Alvydas Karalius, Vilnius Municipality, both of whom are the former leaders of the greens club *Žemyna* (October, 1997).

ania, the movement was driven by dichotomous imperatives which can be characterized as professional knowledge vs. junior naive maximalism; democratic consensus-oriented approach vs. non-conformist, reactive approach, eco-centric vs. techno-centric approach. The protest of environmentalists concerning production of contaminated food (in 1989) can serve as an illustration of this complex profile of the greens integrating value and action orientations characteristic of not only the civic, but also of the academic and economic domains. This controversy can be illustrated by the following citation:

“In the fall of 1988, the Lithuanian greens announced an ultimatum after unsuccessful trials to reach agreement with the leaders of the Agro-industrial complex¹⁸. The greens [...] *condemn the pseudo-scientific* (my italics – L. R.) approach of the Agro-industrial Committee specialists [...]. We call everyone to express dissatisfaction by organizing *pickets* at the district Agro-industrial Committees. Bring vegetables and through them in piles which will be decorated with a slogan “Gobble alone!” [...] *You can’t milk the bureaucrats!* Although the quality of milk is worsening significantly, *Agrocrats* have used silos preservatives this year as well [...] The greens of Lithuania are calling everybody [...] to *boycott* milk products [...] Only *unanimous action* can shake the *agro-industrial lions* [...] Our *two-week fast* can make the *leaders of Agro-industrial monster descend down on earth from their thrones. Fast in the name of children!*” (Karalius, Lekevičius 1990: 25–26).

Italics illuminate the radical, non-conformist approach of the greens to particular environmental science and technology policies, decision-makers, and the communicative channels in which this message was disseminated in society. The approach based on questioning of the dominant values, calling for fundamental change of institutions and communicating this message by acts of public disobedience – pickets, boycotts, etc. – echoes with the New Environmentalism in the western countries of the 1970s (McCormick 1989).

However, our research suggests that such a public-policy interface had more dimensions than an antagonistic critique by environmentalists on the one side, and a reactive response by the bureaucrats or industrialists on the other. For example, the above mentioned ultimatum by the Lithuanian greens contained more than just radical (sometimes embarrassing) statements and slogans. In the same letter, the greens also argued and proposed: “food products for sale should contain certificates informing about the concentration of hazardous substances”; “price differentiation depending on environmental quality of products”; “production of high-quality fertilizers”; “application of agro-technical methods”¹⁹. This is just one of the numerous examples illustrating the mixed character – conflicting as well as constructive – of civic engagement in environmental science and technology policy. It also indicates that from the very beginning a kind of cultural mix – eco-centric as well as techno-centric (or eco-modernist) – is present in the discourse and action strategies of the Lithuanian green movement. Thus, in addition to radical and antagonist character, the greens were generating and disseminating ideas that are nowadays ascribed to the eco-modernist discourse: faith in individual ecological consciousness, responsibility and benign behaviour given the sufficient information and economic motivation, belief in the parallel change in the dominant technological and economic institutions.

¹⁸ Such was the name of the state committee in charge of agriculture and food processing in the Soviet times.

¹⁹ For entire text, see Karalius and Lekevičius (1990).

The tree of goals, argumentation and forms of activity of the greens as a social movement has changed considerably: individualization and rationalization takes over mass participation in the protest actions, the “alternative” and non-conformist ideology has been gradually replaced by the emphasis on daily saving of energy and material usage. Environmentalists in Kaunas actively propagate energy conservation and bio-transportation, especially the bicycling. The greens in Vilnius, as has been mentioned earlier, established a professional environmental consulting firm as a joint venture with Scandinavian colleagues; they are also employed and work on urban planning at Vilnius Municipality in cooperation with the Canadian Urban Institute. Leaders of the greens are invited to the sessions of the Parliament committees, boards and delegations formed by the Ministry of Environment and other public as well as private organizations.

Protests are changed by ecological, economical and technological innovation, rationalization. For instance, the green movement together with the Lithuanian Television initiated and has run for about five years a contest among households called “My house: ecology, economy, conservation”. This TV contest is sponsored by numerous industrial and commercial enterprises promoting heat isolation and insulation materials, and products and technologies improving environmental conditions and rational usage of natural resources by households. The greens in Klaipėda (members of the *Žvejonių* club) are actively involved in academic activities, they contribute (more by scientific knowledge than pickets or protests) in solving ecological problems of the Baltic Sea coast, are preparing projects of ecological education for schoolchildren. This work is performed not in a traditional “alarmist” way but with some entrepreneurial skills which is a characteristic feature of ecological modernization.

Changing content and forms of expression of the Lithuanian green movement reflects not only professionalization of the greens as a social movement but also a more general tendency of ecological modernization. There are several conclusions which can be drawn from the theoretical discussion and empirical evidence provided above, although the limited space allowed making it in a very fragmented way.

CONCLUSIONS

The first conclusion to draw is that the Lithuanian environmentalism is a much more culturally complex phenomenon than merely an expression of antagonist mistrust and critique against certain dominant social values (materialistic, hedonistic, individualistic) and social structures (furthering centralization, hierarchy and expert domination). Since the beginning of the movement it brought into ecological discourse certain modernist elements based on cost-benefit analysis, scientific knowledge, public information and communication with the actors rooted in the bureaucratic, economic and academic domains. The discursive and action strategies of the greens reflect the existence of mixed-type rationalistic, techno-economic as well as romantic and idealistic values, beliefs and expectations.

Lithuanian environmentalism can be also characterized not only by traditional public protest actions, but also by the informal as well as formal networks among the greens and industrialists, academicians, and public authorities. This is exemplified by informal information channels used by the greens in their actions and relations with the actors rooted in the economic, bureaucratic, and academic domain. This is also exemplified by various key-actors sharing a “double identity”: they were and are environmental activists while occupying important posts in the public authorities or academic organizations. The existence of informal

communication channels, public-policy interfaces and civilly active people with “double identity” is visible not only in the period of national liberation, but also in the era of Soviet totalitarianism and social stagnation.

A question arises of how the attitudes towards environmental protection based on rationality and techno-economic arguments go together with the Arcadian, romantic, not utilitarian attitudes and values? Is rationalism and maximalist romanticism compatible in ecological consciousness and development of ecological-social movement? Co-existence of such cultural and value-orientations is visible throughout the development of the Lithuanian greens.

Thus, the main conclusion of this paper is that the pursuit for small scale, appropriate technology and communal livelihood emphasized by the eco-centric doctrine is not internally contradictory with techno-economic and institutional reforms advocated by the doctrine of ecological modernization. Both ideological streams seem to co-exist in the discourse and actions of the Lithuanian greens in a meaningful way. Similarly, this movement can be characterized neither as solely antagonistic nor as consensus-oriented: the actual processes of social and institutional change indicate existence of a mixture of both tendencies, whereas depending on the case and the context, one tends to prevail over another.

Finally, the process of “appropriation” of environmentalism from the movement seems to be first preceded by another process, namely the greens aiming or claiming to become institutional leaders of societal greening. There is no clear empirical evidence of the tendency of “appropriation” in the case of Lithuanian environmentalism whereby initiative and responsibility for the greening of society would be taken over by the bureaucrats and economic entrepreneurs. Neither there is a clear tendency of institutional learning and closure in terms of reaching a consensus among actors rooted in different societal domains in terms of conceptualizing and putting into social practice particular ways towards sustainable development.

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Ekologinių požiūrių ir pilietinio aktyvumo formavimasis Lietuvoje: hibridiška atsako į riziką socialinė tapatybė

Santrauka

Sociologiškai gvildenami keli esminiai aplinkosauginės sociologijos, ypač ekomodernistinės teorijos teiginiai dėl ekologinių-socialinių judėjimų santykio ir nuostatų kitų visuomenės veikėjų bei institucijų atžvilgiu. Vienas tokių hipotetinių teiginių akcentuoja pokyčius nuo radikalios, kitų institucijų (ypač verslo ir valdžios) atžvilgiu ženkliai kritiško ar net antagonistinio socialinio-ekologinio judėjimo, kuris formavosi Vakarų šalyse 1970-aisiais, link ekologinių-institucinių reformų 1990-aisiais ir vėliau, grįstų socialinio dialogo bei partnerystės paieška darniam visuomenės vystymuisi. Grindžiant empiriniais duomenimis ir tyrimais, straipsnio autoriaus atliktais besigilinant į Lietuvos Žaliųjų judėjimo raidą, kurios institucinę raišką epitemizuoja šiemet dvidešimties metų sukaktį pažymintis pirmasis žaliųjų klubas – Kauno „Atgaja“, straipsnyje teigiama, jog minėta empirika nesudaro pagrindo patvirtinti hipotezės apie ekologinių-socialinių judėjimų antagonistines arba, priešingai, dialogu ir partneryste grindžiamas nuostatas kitų socialinių veikėjų bei institucijų atžvilgiu. Apibendrinus empirinę medžiagą, straipsnyje formuluojama išvada, kad Lietuvos Žaliųjų judėjimui įvairiais laikotarpiais būdinga mišri – „hibridinė“ – vertybinė ir socialinės veiksenos orientacija kitų veikėjų bei struktūrų – ypač pramonės, mokslo ir valdžios – atžvilgiu, kur radikali kritika ar gaivališkas idealizmas persipynę su ekomodernistine pasaulėžiūrai būdingomis racionalaus pasirinkimo nuostatomis.

Raktažodžiai: ekologiniai požiūriai ir rizikos suvokimas visuomenėje, socialinė tapatybė, pilietinis aktyvumas, Lietuva