

*Modification of Simonas Daukantas (1793–1864) own prestandard Lithuanian orthography*

Simonas Daukantas (1793–1864) was one of the most important figures in the Lithuanian national movement of the nineteenth century. Before the recent switch of Lithuanian currency from the 'litas' to the 'euro', the portrait of Daukantas decorated the 100-litas bill of Lithuanian currency.

Daukantas worked in various fields: history, lexicography, grammar, folklore, and agriculture. He lived before the emergence of standard modern Lithuanian in the 1880s. Initially, he employed more or less traditional orthography as used by many Lithuanian Lowlanders (inhabitants of the region of Lithuania known as *Žemaitija* 'Lowland'). Beginning in 1827–1828, however, he began modifying that orthography, and he continued transforming it for decades thereafter. Orthographic variations in his writings are surprisingly striking. For instance, Daukantas used at least six different graphemes (<i>, <y>, <e>, <ę>, <î>, <ĩ>) for a short vowel [ɐ] of his own North Lowland Lithuanian dialect.

I based my research on materials that I gathered from Daukantas's multiple surviving manuscripts and some of his published books. I present insights into several periods of Daukantas's orthography. Mainly, I focus on the orthographic variations found in one of his most voluminous manuscripts: *History of Lithuania* (written in 1831–1834), which consists of over 1,100 pages of very small handwritten script. In a sense this manuscript is a laboratory for the analysis of Daukantas's orthographic thought and skills.

The orthography that appealed to Daukantas at that time was the Lithuanian orthography of East Prussia, which was based on the West Highland Lithuanian dialect. But this orthography did not fit his own very different North Lowland Lithuanian dialect. Daukantas managed to incorporate certain elements of East Prussian orthography into his writings, but he often adapted or altered them in doing so.

Taking an historical sociolinguistic perspective provides us with the opportunity to discuss the phenomena of skill versus innovation, inertia versus conscious choice, markedness versus lack of markedness, and the parallel reinvention of abandoned features.