**The Genealogy of Conflict in a Modernising Society. The Case of Lithuania (19th–20th centuries)**

The modernisation of society does not necessarily imply smooth, focused movement towards progress. More often than not, it is accompanied by social, ethnic, political and cultural conflicts, and tensions caused by phenomena in modernisation (urbanisation, industrialisation, secularisation, new ideologies [nationalism, socialism, etc], mass literacy, mass culture, etc), and by the change of political regimes. Society was also transformed by different kind of reforms, such as the abolition of serfdom, and the granting of freedom of speech and voting rights.

Earlier research have allowed for the distinction of fundamental conflicts in a modernising society. Deepening social differentiation, individualisation, the rationalisation of manufacturing, and other factors, resulted in the erosion of traditional social bonds, which led to the emergence of tensions between the old and the new value systems. An autonomous civil society begins to form in the political, economic and private spheres, which cooperates, contradicts or searches for a compromise with traditional institutions. As the traditional agrarian society disintegrates, social, inter-ethnic and inter-confessional tensions increase, and ethno-nationalist sentiments form and strengthen. The government’s nationality policies change, sometimes leading to extreme forms of violence. Wars and revolutions also have an impact on society’s behaviour. Violence often becomes a daily event, one that does not disappear even in postwar society, thus forming a cycle of violence. The appearance, manifestation and potential solutions to such conflicts have not been well researched in Lithuanian historiography.

The ambition of this long-term programme is to identify and investigate the main conflicts that influenced the development of society while Lithuania was undergoing modernisation under different political conditions: the Russian Empire, the creation of a nation-state, and the two occupying regimes.

This programme has the following objectives:

1. To research ethnic conflicts in a modernising society during the change of political regimes, revolutions and wars.

2. To examine social, political and value-oriented conflicts/tensions, and their solutions in relation to the transforming societal structure.

3. To study the strategies implemented by various political regimes in the fields of culture and education that were aimed at cultural homogenisation/segregation, and society’s reactions to these policies.