LITUANUS

THE LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY VOLUME 61:2 (2015)

LITUANUS

THE LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
VOLUME 61:2, Summer 2015

Lituanus: The Lithuanian Quarterly (published since 1954) is a multi-disciplinary academic journal presenting and examining various aspects of Lithuanian culture and history. Authors are invited to submit scholarly articles, *belles lettres,* and art work. Manuscripts will be reviewed. Books are accepted for review purposes.

Opinions expressed in signed articles represent the views of their authors and do not necessarily reflect agreement on the part of the editors or the publisher.

For submission guidelines and editorial matters please contact the editors. For subscriptions, donations and other business matters contact the administration.

Editorial Office: editor@lituanus.org
Administration: admin@lituanus.org
Publisher: Lituanus Foundation, Inc., Giedrius Subačius, President
Address: 47 West Polk Street, Suite 100–300,
Chicago, IL 60605–2000 Phone 312/945-0697

Articles are archived and accessible at **www.lituanus.org** and in microform from University Microfilms (www.proquest.com/brand/umi.shtml). They are indexed in:
MLA International Bibliography; PAIS International;
International Political Science Abstracts; Historical Abstracts (EBSCO);
Linguistic Bibliography (Netherlands); Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts;
RILM Abstracts of Music Literature; Bibliography of the History of Art;
OCLC Article First.

Worldwide circulation per issue – 1,700 copies.
Individual subscriptions $30.00. Seniors/students $20.00.
Institutional print subscriptions $40.00. Electronic copy only $20.00.
 ISSN 0024–5089.
Printed by Kingery Printing Company, Henry Division, Henry, IL
Cover Design by Vincas Lukas.

Periodical non-profit postage paid at Chicago, IL and other locations.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to LITUANUS, 47 West Polk Street,
Suite 100-300, Chicago, IL 60605-2000

CONTENTS

Marcinkonys Church, one of the oldest surviving churches in Dzûkija. *See page 32.*

Two Patterns of Lithuanian-American Behavior: The Political Refugee and the Economic Immigrant

EGIDIJA RAMANAUSKAITĖ

Introduction

The cultural norms and customs of multicultural America are far different from those found in Lithuania. Immigrants' living histories show that they usually do not have enough knowledge about the target country and consequently encounter considerable adaptation problems.[1] Once in a new social environment, a person often notices that the environment communicates with him differently than he expected. This awareness arises when communicating at work, within an ethnic group, and in other public places. As George Herbert Mead pointed out, a person becomes aware of himself "by taking the attitudes of other individuals toward himself within a social environment or context of experience and behavior in which both he and they are involved."[2] These insights encouraged future social researchers to draw attention to the investigation of a person's behavior in their specific social environment, as well as to the development of symbolic meanings in the process of communication.

[1] See Danys, "The Emigrant Experience"; Kuzmickaitė, "The Adaptation of Recent Lithuanian Immigrants in Chicago."

[2] Mead, *Mind, Self and Society,* "The Self and an Organism," 138.

EGIDIJA RAMANAUSKAITĖ is a senior researcher at the Center for Cultural Studies at Vytautas Magnus University. She is the author of numerous publications on cultural group identity and migration issues.

The aim of this paper is to compare how the behaviors of individuals in two groups develop differently when their initial states at the time of arrival are different, comparing political refugees (the Lithuanians who came to the United States after World War II[3]) with economic immigrants (who arrived after 1990[4]). What are the new social environments they face, and what are the influences they experience? Research on the behaviors of political refugees and of economic emigrants in their social environments is important for the community to encourage people to weigh more seriously their decision to emigrate from their native country. The study may encourage those who still decide to leave to become better acquainted with the public customs, policy related to immigrants, possible working conditions, and other social environments of the country to which they want to go. This research might also help estimate the duration of life in exile.

The dynamic systems theory approach used for this analysis considers the behavior of the research subjects (an individual or a group) to be derived from a state transition function that characterizes identity. This function asserts that the state of the system at the next moment of time depends on its current state and on the current environment. Dynamic system theory suggests choosing a research system (individual or group), identifying its state, and identifying all other members of society with which the system interacts as the system's environment. The theory offers a framework for analyzing the selected system in relation to three components: the state of the system, the nature of the system's environment, and the influences be-

---

[3] Following the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, the U.S. accepted 30,000 Lithuanian World War II refugees. "Lithuanian Immigration."

[4] During the 1990s, over 10,000 Lithuanians arrived in the U.S.; most of them were economic migrants. U.S. Census Bureau, "People Born in Lithuania."

tween the system and its environment.[5] Change in a system state over time (when moving from one value to another), can arise of itself, or because of environmental influences, or because of both, giving rise to the behavior of the system.

Features specific to political refugees and to economic immigrants were selected from field research data and written sources. The written sources cover published interviews with displaced persons,[6] data from interviews published on the website of the Balzekas Museum, and from the official site of the Lithuanian-American Community, as well as data published in articles by Alfonsas Eidintas, Milda Danytė, Linas Saldukas, and others. The field research was performed at a Lithuanian Saturday school located in Illinois and was designed for analysis of the economic immigrants' behavior. Group conversations (of twelve people, including six teachers, two pupils, and four parents) were recorded, and activities of art groups and various Lithuanian organizations (Ateitininkai, Scouts, religious groups, and others) were observed.[7] The duration of the field research was three weeks in 2012. Additionally, a study by Daiva Kuzmickaitė on third-wave immigrants' adaptation in Chicago was found very useful. The identity of the economic immigrants was constructed using data only from those respondents of the third wave of immigration who were engaged in Lithuanian community activities, such as Lithuanian Saturday schools, art groups, and other organizations. Political refugees and economic immigrants often represent the middle and upper social strata of Lithuanian society.[8]

---

5 Vaišnys, et al., *Groups*, 24–27.

6 Anysienė, et al., *Manėm, kad greit grįšim*. The terms "displaced persons (DPs)" and "political refugees" are used interchangeably; "third wave of immigrants" and "economic immigrant" represent a similar usage.

7 Quotes from participants are indicated in the text by assumed first names only.

8 Kuzmickaitė, "The Adaptation. "

This paper 1) discusses the social environments that influenced the mentality of political refugees and economic immigrants, as well as their decision to depart from Lithuania; 2) analyzes changes in states related to influences from the environments of both groups; and 3) discusses identity issues. In conclusion, the behaviors of political refugees and economic immigrants are compared. The behavioral patterns of immigrants presented in this article can be useful when performing a broader and more comprehensive study.

Influences on the Mentality of Political Refugees

When Lithuania declared its independence in 1918, it emerged from several centuries of Russian rule. Its people were impoverished and illiterate. Moreover, the newly independent state had to create national government institutions. We are interested in what factors had formed the mental outlook of those political refugees who had been instrumental in building Lithuania. These political refugees had been among Lithuania's teachers, municipal and state government officials, clergy, professors, thinkers, writers, doctors, musicians, lawyers, businessmen, and successful farmers. Up-and-coming young Lithuanian intellectuals studied in Russia, Switzerland, and other foreign countries. After their return to Lithuania, they usually worked for local government structures and educational establishments, such as schools and universities. These individuals had an impact on their environment, and they themselves had experienced the influences of other supportive intellectuals who encouraged their creative activities.

The mental climate in independent Lithuania was not monolithic, but there was a strong unifying theme, as described by Antanas Maceina:

> A nation is always a community. But in order for it to experience itself as a community, a nation's members (...) must identify themselves as belonging to the larger community and interact based on this acknowledgement, in other words, they must perceive themselves as "individuals of the same nation." (...) The nationality principle changes how an individual views another person, it changes how people interact, and it influences the outward appearance of these interactions. (...) A national consciousness seeks to express its sense of community in a visible way.[9]

Interwar Lithuanian intellectuals defined themselves as members of a nation and matured in an intellectually critical and creative environment. The critical discourse on educational policy during this period is revealing of the intellectual environment.

In 1926, Kazys Pakštas (1893–1960), a professor and president of the Lithuanian Geographic Society, proposed that Lithuania's educational system be based on "cultural autonomy," which would allow Lithuania's minorities to develop their own educational content. This view was supported by the Catholic intellectuals, who opposed a hegemonic "national model" of educational reforms that could change whenever a new political party assumed power.[10] The "national model" of education, however, was proposed and implemented by the administration of President Antanas Smetona (1926–1940).[11] This model demanded that teachers take an oath of loyalty to the state and required content specified by the state. The Catholic intelligentsia openly opposed this position, and young Catholic intellectuals (Antanas Maceina,

---

[9] Maceina, *Tautinis auklėjimas*, 58.

[10] Mačiulis, "Kultūrinės autonomijos idėja," 91. (See also Pakštas, "Kultūrinės autonomijos problema," 451–452 and Šalkauskis, *Racionali mokyklų organizacijos sistema*, 22–23).

[11] Mačiulis, "Kaimo mokytojas," 3.

Stasys Šalkauskis, Pranas Dielininkaitis, and others) proposed instead New Humanism, a social and political organizational model that advocated the idea of civic-minded and politically aware individuals who would be active from a sense of responsibility for the welfare of their nation.[12]

Another factor in the formation of the mindset of Lithuanian political refugees was the organizations that became effective vehicles for leadership training. These organizations supported family values, were engaged in educational activities, and encouraged individuals to be creative and to act on behalf of their homeland. Especially active were the Catholic student organizations, such as Ateitininkai (1911–1940), Pavasarininkai (1907–1940), and others,[13] as well as various organizations of teachers, workers, businessmen, politicians, athletes, and numerous charitable organizations. All stressed the importance of education. Kęstutis Žemaitis, a priest and educator, wrote of the interwar Catholic Church "that even economic progress cannot exist without the professional and religious education of the individual."[14] Ateitininkai was the largest university student organization during the interwar period, and its leaders played an important role in the intellectual, educational, and social life of Lithuania. The creative spirit of the community was supported by the social and cultural activities of individuals. Unfortunately, all of these activities were stopped by war and emigration.

Influences that Formed the Mentality of Economic Emigrants

For the analysis of the mentality of the Lithuanian economic emigrants of the 1990s, we chose the influences of the

[12] Pruskus, "Naujojo humanizmo visuomenės," 349–407.

[13] For more information about Catholic student organizations see Žemaitis, "Tarpukario Lietuvos," 163–167.

[14] Ibid., 165.

intellectuals and organizations, as in the case of the aforementioned political refugees. The intellectual environment of the Soviet period differed from that of interwar Lithuania. People did not see the patriotic-minded individuals of the interwar period in their surroundings, because these individuals were deported to Siberia, had emigrated to the West, or lived a closed life. In some cases, parents hid their family's history of exile from their children, fearing possible tensions with the Soviet regime. Meanwhile, the schools and the media spread the Marxist-Leninist worldview and Lithuanian history, such as that offered in Adolfas Šapoka's book *Lietuvos istorija*, was replaced by Soviet Lithuanian history. The arts, especially movies, promoted the values of Soviet youth, proletarians, and collective farmers, as well as of the Soviet soldiers who, according to this version of history, liberated the country. Mass media promoted the idea of becoming a patriot of the Soviet homeland. Changes in morality were a phenomenon of Soviet society. The Lithuanian family lost its Lithuanian traditions and Catholic education. Some artists and academicians, however, engaged in intellectual resistance and sought possibilities for maintaining the spirit of the nation. These attempts were expressed through song festivals, reading between the lines of poetry, and especially through symbolism in theater presentations.

When analyzing the activities of the public organizations of Soviet times, it becomes evident that the interwar organizations disappeared, and youth organizations were replaced by the *Komjaunimas*, a Communist youth organization responsible for educating youth. An ideological one-party system unified thinking. Young people born in the Soviet period naturally adapted to this environment, but some were interested in Western youth culture and looked for fissures in the Iron Curtain. Lithuanian society gradually became alienated: some citizens collaborated with the Soviet government, others resisted politically and cul-

turally or lived a "double life." These different behaviors led to distrust and suspicion between members of society. It should be noted that these processes started during the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania and continued throughout the Soviet period.

Thus, the social environments of interwar Lithuania and the Soviet period had different influences on the community. The generation that created independent (interwar) Lithuania and remained in Lithuania after World War II was forced to live by values opposed to their own, while these same values were naturally absorbed by the younger generation of the Soviet period. The older generation's memory of Soviet repression affected public attitudes, and communist ideas in Lithuania met with heavy opposition, but the process left its imprint upon people's minds.

The Circumstances of the Political Refugees' Emigration

During the first occupation, the Soviets began a "cleansing" of Lithuanian society. Lithuanian intellectuals, especially politicians and educators, were arrested and deported en masse to Siberia.[15] Those who remained were isolated from all educational activities. Julius Šalkauskis, the son of the interwar philosopher Stasys Šalkauskis (1886–1941), remembers that "during the first Soviet occupation, neither my father nor my mother were accepted for any job. Father went to the Commissariat of Education several times (...), even offered to teach at the high school, because he could not dream of teaching at the University."[16] He was not employed, however, because of his "unacceptable worldview."

Historian Alfonsas Eidintas notes that at the end of the war (1944), when the front was retreating to the West, every-

[15] Lithuania was proclaimed a Soviet Republic in 1940. According to The Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuania, between June 15, 1940 and June 22, 1941, about 23,000 Lithuanian citizens were jailed, deported, or killed.

[16] Degutienė, "J. Šalkauskas," 72.

one had a choice: to leave or to stay in Lithuania. For the Lithuanian elite who, in difficult wartime conditions, had carried out Lithuanian educational activities, it was not safe to stay. Some future political refugees knew about the lists of people selected for deportation to Siberia compiled by the Soviet government before the start of the war.[17] In 1944, when the front line was moving to the east, part of Lithuania's population, avoiding potential new Soviet repression, left Lithuania. As noted by Raymond G. Krisčiunas, "The overwhelming majority chose to flee (...) because they had directly experienced the horrors of the first Soviet occupation (1940–41) and did not anticipate that the second occupation would be better. They fled, however, with every hope and intention of returning home after the defeat of Nazi Germany."[18]

A history of life in the DP camps shows that the elite who created independent interwar Lithuania tried to keep Lithuanian education and the community spirit alive.[19] Members of the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, which was established in 1943 during the Nazi occupation, continued its activities in the DP camps.

Despite limited resources, hardships and an uncertain fate, the Baltic DPs created a rich and varied cultural life in the camps. They established schools for children and adults; published newspapers and books; maintained religious worship; organized choirs, ensembles, and folk-art guilds; revived scouting and other fraternal activities disrupted by the war; and founded civic and political organizations to advocate for themselves and for their Soviet-occupied countrymen.[20]

---

[17] Eidintas, *Lithuanian Emigration*, 201, 206.
[18] Krisčiunas, "Emigrant Experience."
[19] Saldukas, "Culture in adversity."
[20] Etzwiler, "Semėnas Family Questionnaire Responses."

When the American government announced the Displaced Persons Act in 1948, a significant number of Lithuanian refugees emigrated to the U.S. As Krisčiunas pointed out, "the majority of the Lithuanian refugees had left Europe, with about half of the total group of 60,000 settling in the United States, thus at least partially realizing the goal of emigrating on a group basis."[21]

The Circumstances of Economic Emigration after 1990

In the late 1980s, political liberalization activities in society became extensive; and after more than forty years of the Soviet regime, Lithuania restored its independence in 1990. DPs participated in this process together with progressive Soviet Lithuanian intellectuals and political leaders. One of their valuable contributions was the restoration of Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, which implemented a model of higher education based on American universities. Vytautas Magnus University became the first independent academic institution in Lithuania. The Lithuanian Cultural Congress, held in Vilnius in May 1990, discussed the concepts of national culture, national identity, religious issues, national cultural strategy, and related topics.[22] Following the model of interwar Lithuanian education, the idea of a national school was revived.[23] However, the first years of the country's economic restructuring did not look very promising. In Lithuania, the period of 1990–1993 was marked by high inflation and economic recession.[24] The media reported the public mood regarding the economic difficulties of that

---

[21] Krisčiunas, "Emigrant Experience."

[22] Ozolas, et al. *Lietuvos kultūros kongresas.*

[23] The concept of a national school was developed by Dr. Meilė Lukšienė (1913–2009). It was based on the fundamental values of honesty, harmony, and national self-consciousness.

[24] Kuodis, "Lietuvos ekonomikos transformacija," 97–104. (See also Šimėnas, *Ekonomikos reforma Lietuvoje.*)

time. As the Lithuanian economist Eduardas Vilkas remembered: "First, it was an economic implosion, since conditions changed radically, along with commodity prices and the market (...). In winter of 1991, we lived without hot water and almost without heat because we did not have the means to buy gas and oil."[25]

The community demonstrated its solidarity when the Soviet Union carried out an economic blockade against Lithuania. However, the third wave of emigration began at the same time. As Kuzmickaitė pointed out in her research of Lithuanian immigrants to Chicago, "After Lithuania regained its independence in 1990, people were uncertain about their futures. This uncertainty was one of the most important factors that led them to leave their home country."[26]

Comparing the state of political refugees with that of economic emigrants, we see that the first were facing occupation and repression by the Soviet government, while the others left independent Lithuania because of economic uncertainty. It is not surprising political refugees sometimes find it hard to believe emigration increased when Lithuania regained its independence. We suggest the Iron Curtain went up in the minds of the generations that lived under the Soviet regime and this encouraged them to flee.

The Processes of Immigrants' Identity Formation in American Society

This section attempts to identify the processes of state transition in the two systems discussed—those of a political refugee and an economic immigrant—resulting from their initial states and from the experienced influences of their social environments. The circles in the graphs (Figures 1 and 2) represent the states

[25] Digrytė, "SSRS bandė susigrąžinti Lietuvą."
[26] Kuzmickaitė, "The Adaptation."

of the research subjects at a particular moment in time. An arc connecting two circles indicates the value of an environmental influence that induces the state to change. An arc that goes out of the circle and then returns to it means that, under the same value of the environmental influence, the state remains unchanged. In the graphs, we mentioned those influences observed by the researcher and/or identified by other researchers in their publications. In the graphs, we use the following symbols:

"u": environment, "s": state; numbers which follow "u" and "s" denote the sequence of the state transition over time.

Political Refugee

Figure 1. State transitions of political refugees under the influence of social environments over time

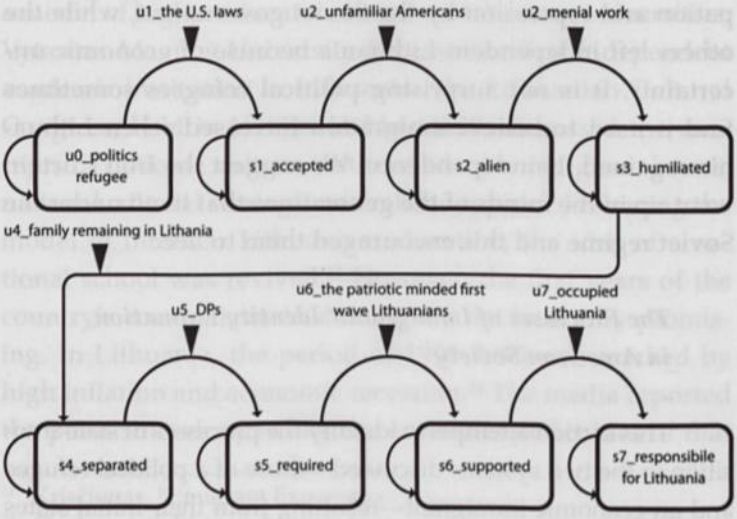


Figure 1 shows the state transition sequences (s0, s1...s7) that are related to the sequences of environmental influences (u1, u2...u7).

Political refugee

The initial state (s0), presented in Figure 1, marks the state of the agent at the time he or she came to the United States as a political refugee. As mentioned earlier, the arc that goes out of the state circle of political refugee and then returns to it means that, if in the next moment of time no new influences appear from the environment, the state remains unchanged.

Accepted

The arc drawn from state s0, *political refugee*, to state s1, *accepted*, means the political refugee comes to the United States lawfully, realizes he or she is accepted by the American government (u1), and is granted the rights of a U.S. citizen.

Alien

The arc, drawn from state s1, *accepted*, to state s2, *alien*, means the political refugee, under the influence of u2, *unfamiliar Americans*, experiences huge cultural differences. The quotations below disclose the state of the "alien" more clearly:

> Here, they usually find themselves in the cheaper dwelling areas of large cities. The Americans most of them meet are people of lower culture with little education. (...) Thus people from the upper and middle classes of the European countries find themselves forced into a lower-class environment in the United States. They do not find much in common with their neighbors at home and at work. [27]

> I met the Lithuanian-American family. Really nice, and very warm-hearted people. They brought me home and said: "Do you

[27] Gustaitis, "The Lithuanian Displaced Person."

want tea? Do you know what tea is?" I go back to my little room, lie down and cry bitterly. Where had I arrived? Why did I need to travel to that America? While those people—she was born in America, he arrived in America as a twelve- or thirteen-year-old from a really backward Lithuanian village of that time, it was still the Czarist era, where they really had not seen tea.[28]

During the first years of the political refugees' life in America, they depended highly on the Lithuanian-Americans who provided them temporary care (which was required by the Displaced Persons Act of 1948). There were many different experiences. The dominant experience, however, revealed significant differences in mentality. Rasa Gustaitis, who analyses the DPs' unique situation in the America of the 1950s, mentioned that "The new immigrants (DPs) did not naturally blend into the existing Lithuanian-American society or into their organizations. This is partially attributed to their refugee mentality and the hardships they faced getting established in the new country."[29]

Humiliated

Menial work (u3) was another environment encountered by the political refugee. Under the influence of this environment, the state of the refugee goes from s2, *alien*, to s3, *humiliated*. While describing the refugees' role in history, the Lithuanians in the Springfield website acknowledge that "most had to accept manual labor and factory positions once in the U.S., owing to language challenges and foreign degrees that were not recognized here, so they never worked as professionals

[28] Marija Paškevičienė, as quoted in Anysienė, et al., *Manėm, kad greit grįšim*, 211.

[29] Gustaitis, "The Lithuanian Displaced Person."

again."[30] The following quotation helps to take a closer look at the refugees' feelings.

> How did you succeed in adapting to the local circumstances? Probably with a lot of difficulty. Since our values were slightly different. Perhaps it was the work, to work in a factory. I wanted to be somewhat human, more than just [live] for work, when you wake up, go to the factory… You know you have to work, that you have no other choice. It was difficult. For me, books were important; it was important to go to the theater, to a concert. Where we lived, people weren't interested in those things.[31]

Separated from family

The arc that goes from state circle s3, *humiliated,* to state circle s4, *separated,* means a change in state under the influence of a DPs' family remaining in Lithuania (u4). For a number of years following emigration, the DPs did not have any information about their families or other relatives in Lithuania; their fates were unclear.

Required for his group

The arc that goes from state circle s4, *separated from family,* to state circle s5, *required for his group,* marks changes in the state of the agent who is influenced by positive attitudes towards him or her from other DPs (u5). The DP community perceived its mission as the liberation of Lithuania, and this encouraged everybody to work towards this goal. The following quotation represents activities by DP community members related to the preservation of the community and Lithuanian culture:

---

[30] "A Second Wave of Immigration," lines 25-29.

[31] Marija Paškevičienė, as quoted in Anysienė, et al., *Manėm, kad greit grįšim,* 212.

> My parents were very active in Lithuanian activities in Chicago. My father was a member of ALIAS [a Lithuanian engineers association], Lithuanian professors association, and several other organizations. My mother was a member of Lietuvos Dukterys, BALF [Baltic-American Freedom League], the Chicago Lithuanian Women's Club, *Draugas*, the Balzekas Museum and other organizations. They were supporters of children's charities and the Lithuanian Opera.[32]

Supported by the first wave of Lithuanian immigrants

The arc drawn from state circle s5, *required for his group*, to state circle s6, *supported*, indicates a change in the state of the agent while experiencing the support of the previous generation (first wave) of patriotic-minded Lithuanian immigrants (u6), who had created Lithuanian schools and parishes and published Lithuanian newspapers and books.[33] This infrastructure enabled further Lithuanian activities, which were significantly increased by the DP generation. The Lithuanian-American Community was established by DPs, "founded on the principles set forth in the 1949 Lithuanian Charter of the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, urging every Lithuanian to preserve and promulgate his or her cultural heritage, language and traditions and to preserve the existence of the Lithuanian nation for future generations."[34]

Responsible for Lithuania

The last environment of a political refugee shown in the first graph is u7, *occupied Lithuania*. This environment inspires the transition of state from s6, *supported*, to s7, *responsible for Lithuania*. As the aforementioned Lithuanian website indicates, most DPs were pro-

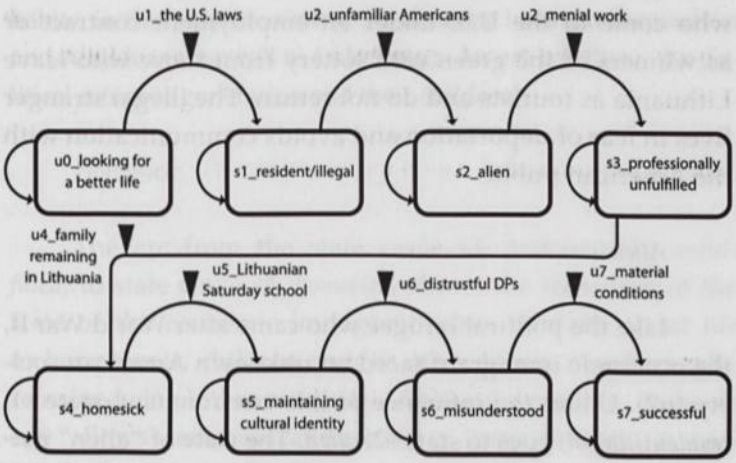
---

[32] Etzwiler, "Semėnas Family Questionnaire Responses."
[33] Eidintas, *Lithuanian Emigration*.
[34] Lithuanian-American Community, "Charter," lines 1-5.

fessionals and officials of formerly independent Lithuania and felt an obligation "to preserve Lithuanian identity and culture abroad while their homeland was wiped from the map." In the late 1980s, when the struggle for Lithuanian independence began, and after Lithuania gained its independence in 1990, members of the Lithuanian-American Community assisted with expertise in numerous ways: they served on the staff of the new Lithuanian Mission at the United Nations, made a great effort to foster Lithuania's membership in NATO, and performed many other political and cultural, as well as educational activities.[35] Therefore, we can conclude that occupied Lithuania encouraged political refugees to maintain their original state of responsibility for the liberation of Lithuania and remain committed to Lithuania. This explains their activities in exile.

The Economic Emigrant

Figure 2. State transitions of economic emigrants under the influence of social environments over time



[35] Lithuanian-American Community, "Overview," lines 1-6.

Figure 2 shows the state transition sequences (s0, s1... s7) that are related to the sequences of environmental influences (u1, u2... u7).

Looking for a better life

The initial state (s0), presented in Figure 2, marks the state of the agent at the time he or she came to the United States looking for a better life. The arc that goes out of the state circle of economic emigrant and then returns to it means that, if in the next moment of time no new influences appear from the environment, the state remains unchanged.

Resident/illegal

The arc drawn from state circle s0, *looking for a better life*, to state circle s1, *resident/illegal*, shows changes in the state of the economic immigrant under the influence of *U.S. laws* (u1). The quality of life differs for those Lithuanians who come to the U.S. under an employment contract or as winners of the green card lottery from those who leave Lithuania as tourists and do not return. The illegal stranger lives in fear of deportation and avoids communication with the American public.

Alien

Like the political refugee who came after World War II, the economic immigrant faced an unknown American society (u2). Under the influence of this environment, state s1, *resident/illegal*, goes to state s2, *alien*. The state of "alien" naturally arises on arrival because of insufficient knowledge of the English language and American culture. According to a second-wave immigrant who commented on the behavior of

third-wave immigrants, "they are not familiar with American values and, naturally, do not understand them." (Julija)

Professionally unfulfilled

The arc drawn from state circle s2, *alien*, to the state circle s3, *professionally unfulfilled*, expresses the state transition of the agent when he or she faces *a menial work* environment (u3).

Many Lithuanian professionals (educators, cultural workers, and engineers) who immigrated to the U.S. at the beginning of the 1990s were forced to take *menial work* as housekeepers, domestic servants, factory workers, unskilled construction laborers, and others. In most cases, many of them found themselves professionally and intellectually unfulfilled, because they were unable to practice their professions. This situation is similar to that of political refugees. The economic immigrants of the 1990s frequently worked at jobs that employed international groups of immigrants from Eastern Europe and other locations. While communicating within these groups over time, they adopt their habits, in this way increasing the distance between themselves and Americans, as well as Lithuanian- Americans (here, the political refugees generation and their children).

Homesick

The arc from the state circle s3, *professionally unfulfilled*, to state circle s4, *homesick*, shows the transition of the state of the economic immigrant when thinking about his or her parents, children and/or other family members who remained in Lithuania (u4). Although modern technology allows communication over a long distance, it cannot replace daily face-to-face communication. As per the third-wave immigrant, "The first four years, I could not find a place for myself and felt remorse for my abandoned

parents... And then, somehow, it all went away; now it seems that everything has to be just the way it is." (Kamilė)

Maintaining cultural identity

As in the case of a political refugee, an economic immigrant is looking for the cultural and social environment of his or her native community members who have had similar experiences in exile and engage in Lithuanian cultural activities. The arc drawn from state s4, *homesick,* to the state s5, *maintaining cultural identity,* indicates that the economic immigrant, under the influence of Lithuanian Saturday school (u5), meets his own cultural needs and is able to maintain a Lithuanian identity in his or her children. In addition, it should be noted that most of our research participants are Lithuanian professionals in culture and education. Thus teaching in a Saturday school satisfies their professional ambitions and also helps increase their self-esteem. As a teacher related, "In everyday life, we have to adapt to the environment, whereas the environment is following us here." (Alina) The quotation below shows the variety of activities the teachers and parents' committee members participate in:

> I work all week, come home at eight each night, wake up at six o'clock on Saturday morning, and go to school. (...) We take care of the school inventory, handle books and write texts in a school yearbook, organize the Christmas celebration, and so on. (...) Everyone is doing this here. (Kristina)

Parents were proud of their ability to donate their own finances for the school. A representative of the second-wave descendants, who was born and raised in America, pointed out that "Donating your money to educational, children's, and leisure organizations is characteristic of the whole Lithuanian-American community, because donations are a

part of American culture." Teachers told stories of their first years in the U.S. According to a discussion-group informant, "I was everywhere here; I wanted to be needed very much. [...] We brought everything here the best we could, both historical and current knowledge, and we have taught it in this school." (Alina) Maintaining an ethnic identity becomes an important value for the individual and group. As it was highlighted by a teacher, "Here in America, we will preserve the Lithuanian language and culture much longer than you will in Lithuania."

Misunderstood

While participating in a community of Lithuanian-Americans, an economic immigrant meets values developed by a generation of political refugees. The arc going from state circle s5, *maintaining his cultural identity,* to state circle s6, *misunderstood,* shows the state transition of our agent when he or she meets distrustful DPs (u6), who call the new immigrants *tarybukai* (Soviets). The respondents report an impression that, from their point of view, the DPs draw a line between themselves and the economic immigrants and force economic immigrants to experience exclusion. The following quotation describes the state of an economic immigrant related to this experience:

> I communicate with the *dipukė* (DP woman) who helped me very much. When I wanted to learn English, she drove me every time to the teacher, because it was a long way to walk. She was spending her time and did not receive payment of any kind from me. And despite the fact that she helped me so much, she used to say, "You're an *ateivė* (a stranger), and you will always be one." At first, I felt uncomfortable, but then I got used to it. (Martyna)

Successful

The last environment of an economic immigrant shown in the graph is material conditions (u7). Under the influence of this environment, the state of our agent moves from s6, *misunderstood,* to s7, *successful* (financially secure, able to support his or her family, and to see the world). It is equally important for economic immigrants to raise their social status in the eyes of acquaintances in the U.S. and those living in Lithuania, including relatives. Thus, the economic immigrants, even while experiencing negative influences from their social environment in exile, continue to operate in the direction of a better economic life.

Discussions on Identity

Dynamic systems theory is designed to find the patterns of behavior of the system in its environment. The state transition/identity function theoretically describes a complete set of the behaviors caused by all possible sequences of influences and all possible initial states. The state sequences of the agents, represented in this paper (Figures 1 and 2), are an approximation of reality, because they highlight only those states and influences observed by the researcher. If the researcher could explore the facts in more detail and review all potential values of the environmental variables, as well as associated values of the state variables in respect of time, the complexity of the cases would fully disclose the identity of the system concerned.

The application of dynamic systems theory can help us consider the possible behaviors of individuals or groups in various environments. For example, what changes would occur in the behavior of political refugees if they had not met like-minded individuals (other DPs) in their environment and/or

if the first wave of Lithuanians had not supported them? How would the behavior of political refugees change, if Lithuania regains its independence? (By the way, this state has been tested by time. Many DPs realized they had lost their mission in life when Lithuania regained its independence in 1990). How will the behavior of economic refugees change if their economic conditions are much worse than expected and if there are no like-minded individuals engaged in Lithuanian activities?

In addition, it would be important to consider how the initial states of political refugees and economic immigrants influence their decision to encourage their children to take care of their own and their children's ethnocultural identity. It is likely that children born in the United States, whose parents already speak English, spend more time in an American cultural environment—school, school friends, and leisure activities. In the future, will they be more willing to communicate with a local community or with an ethnic community? Throughout the history of Lithuanian immigration to the U.S., Lithuanian cultural and educational activities, supported by the new waves of immigrants, have taken place. What would happen to the current Lithuanian community through time if the immigration of Lithuanians to America stops?

Research on the states and environmental influence interactions over time explores the dynamics of identity. We can assume that, over a period of time (four to five years), our agents adapt to their environments so they become less sensitive to the negative influences of the environment and become increasingly involved in supportive environments. Other possible changes of behavior are related to newly emerging environments. For example, with time, immigrants get a chance to participate fully in the intellectual life of the country. This example is relevant to political refugees; but it can also be found among the latest economic immigrants, although much less frequently, perhaps because they have not been here long enough.

Conclusions

Political refugees and economic immigrants arrived in the United States with different initial states. Political refugees soon realized that they would be unable to return to occupied Lithuania and undertook the struggle for its liberation. Economic immigrants expected to create a better life for themselves and their families in America. It is likely that the initial states of the agents accorded with their further behavior in migration. Overcoming the complicated process of adaptation to a foreign community, the agents remain committed to their original purposes. Political refugees always remained committed to free occupied Lithuania and engaged in Lithuanian educational as well as political work. Economic immigrants usually seek to create material wealth, which would allow them to support their families and see the world.

In a hostile environment (encountering an unfamiliar society and menial work), the states of political refugees and economic immigrants are suppressed; they feel themselves alienated and humiliated, so they look for their native communities, where they meet people of the same fate (political refugees/DPs or economic immigrants).

Close circles of other political refugees or other economic immigrants become the environments that help our agents restore their state in the case of negative influences. During communication within these groups, their members manage to maintain their cultural identity and consequently help enhance their self-esteem.

The environment provided by political refugees and economic immigrants defines a wider native community that has played a significant role in the process of the adaptation of newcomers. Both were able to take advantage of Lithuanian cultural heritage in exile (Lithuanian organizations, the parish schools, museums, archives, and publications). However, economic immigrants and DPs faced different social conditions, as well as the different mentality of an earlier wave of immigrants. Owing to

the DPs' significant Lithuanian political and cultural activities, they managed to attract patriotically minded representatives of the first wave of immigrants, and the latter became supportive when realizing the goal of the liberation of occupied Lithuania. Economic immigrants experienced a lack of acceptance from the second wave of immigrants, and their integration into the Lithuanian-American community has not been so rapid.

Acknowledgment

The author thanks Elona and Rimas Vaišnys for their useful comments and intellectual support.

WORKS CITED

Anysienė, Dalia, Dalia Cidzikaitė, Laima Vanderstoep, eds. *Manėm, kad greit grįšim: 18 pokalbių apie pasitraukimą į Vakarus 1940–1944 m.* Vilnius: Aukso žuvys, 2014.

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, accessed June 15, 2014 at http://www.balzekasmuseum.org/Pages/displaced_persons.html

Bubnys, Arūnas. "Štuthofo koncentracijos stovykla ir Lietuviai," *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis*, 27, 2005. Online at http://archive.minfolit.lt/arch/501/634.pdf

Danys, Milda. "The Emigrant Experience: Contract Hiring of Displaced Persons in Canadian Domestic Employment, 1947–1950." *Lituanus*, 29 (2), Summer, 1983. Accessed June 15, 2014 at http://www.lituanus.org/1983_2/83_2_04.htm

Degutienė, Edita. "J. Šalkauskas: inteligentijos pesimizmas ir pasyvumas man nepriimtinas." *Kultūros barai*, 6, 2012. (Online: http://www.delfi.lt/news/ringas/lit/jsalkauskas-inteligentijos-pesimizmas-ir-pasyvumas-man-nepriimtinas.d?id=59099151#ixzz35aLLOAyH)

Digrytė, Eglė. "SSRS bandė susigrąžinti Lietuvą užsukusi benzino kranus," accessed June 15, 2014 at http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/ssrs-bande-susigrazinti-lietuva-uzsukusi-benzino-kranus.d?id=31233827

Eidintas, Alfonsas. *Lithuanian Emigration to the United States, 1868–1950.* Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2005.

Etzwiler, Nijolė Seménaitė. "Seménas Family Questionnaire Responses." Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, accessed June 15, 2014 at http://www.balzekasmuseum.org/Pages/displaced_persons.html

Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuania. "Lietuvos gyventojų netektys 1940–1986 ir 1991 metais," accessed August 23, 2014 at http ://genocid.lt/centras/lt/147/c/

Gustaitis, Rasa. "The Lithuanian Displaced Person in America," *Lituanus* 1 (6), February 1956. Online: http ://www.lituanus.org/1956/56_1_07Gustaitis.html

Krisčiunas, Raymond G. "Emigrant Experience: The Decision of Lithuanian Refugees to Emigrate, 1945–1950," *Lituanus*, 29 (2), Summer, 1983. Accessed June 15, 2014 at http://www.lituanus.org/1983_2/83_2_03.htm

Kuodis, Raimondas. "Lietuvos ekonomikos transformacija 1990–2008 metais: etapai ir pagrindinės ekonominės politikos klaidos," *Pinigų studijos*, 2, 2008. Accessed June 15, 2014 at http://neris.mii.lt/~ekonomika/Econlib/Kuodis_2009h.pdf

Kuzmickaitė, Daiva. "The Adaptation of Recent Lithuanian Immigrants in Chicago," *Lituanus* 46 (2), Summer, 2000. Accessed June 15, 2014 at http://www.lituanus.org/2000/00_2_05.htm

Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. "Charter," accessed June 12, 2014 at http://lithuanian-american.org/m/about-lac/rules-regulations/#charter.

_____. "Overview," accessed June 12, 2014 at http://lithuanian-american.org/m/about-lac/overview/

"Lithuanian Immigration," accessed August 22, 2014 at http: //northamericanimmigration.org/184-lithuanian-immigration.html.

Lithuanians in Springfield. "A Second Wave of Immigration: the 'DPs'," accessed June 15, 2014 at http://lithspringfield.com/an-indelible-role-in-our-history/lithuanian-local-history-2/a-second-wave-of-immigration/

Maceina, Antanas. *Tautinis auklėjimas.* Kaunas: Šviesos, 1934. Online: http: //maceina.lt/pdf/tautinisauklejimas.pdf

Mačiulis, Dangiras. "Kaimo mokytojas tarpukario Lietuvoje: Lojalus valdžiai ir autoritetas visuomenei," *Lituanistica*, 61 (1), 2005.

_____. "Kultūrinės autonomijos idėja ir katalikiško švietimo sistema tarpukario Lietuvoje (1918–1940)." *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis*, 35, 2011.

Mead, George Herbert. *Mind, Self and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* (in *Works of George Herbert Mead, Vol.1.*). Edited by Charles W. Morris. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1934. Online: http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Mead/pubs2/mindself/Mead_1934_18.html

Noreikaitė, Laura, and Žilvinas Švedkauskas. *Lietuvių studentų korporacijos tarpukariu*. Vilnius: Diemedžio leidykla, 2013.

Ozolas, Romualdas, et al. [Eds], *Lietuvos kultūros kongresas*. Vilnius: TEW, IMI, 1991.

Pakštas, Kazys. "Kultūrinės autonomijos problema," *Židinys* 5-6, 1926.

Pruskus, Valdas. "Naujojo humanizmo" visuomenės organizacijos modelis tarpukario Lietuvoje," *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis*, 22, 2003.

Saldukas, Linas. "Culture in Adversity: the Lithuanian DP Experience," *Lituanus* Vol. 52, (3), Fall 2006.

Šalkauskis, Stasys. *Racionali mokyklų organizacijos sistema*, Kaunas: Šviesos, 1927.

Šimėnas, Albertas. *Ekonomikos reforma Lietuvoje*. Vilnius: Pradai, 1996.

U.S. Census Bureau, "People Born in Lithuania," 2000 Census, accessed August 22, 2014 at http://www.census.gov/population/foreign/files/stp-159/STP-159-Lithuania.pdf.

Vaišnys, Rimas; Andrius Buivydas; Egidija Ramanauskaitė. "Groups in Theory and Practice," *Grupės ir aplinkos=Groups and Environments*, 2, 2010.

Žemaitis, Kęstutis. "Tarpukario Lietuvos katalikiškų organizacijų veikla (bendražmogiško, profesinio ir religinio ugdymo aspektai)." *Pedagogika*, 59, 2002.

The Religiosity of the Inhabitants of Dzūkija

AUŠRA KAIRAITYTĖ

Introduction

Research into religiosity in contemporary Lithuanian society began after 1990, after the Republic of Lithuania regained its independence. Before that, objective research was impossible because of policies carried out during the Soviet occupation. However, religiosity did not wither away during the years of Soviet occupation. On the contrary, religious individuals, although forced to conceal their religious identity, strove to make secret visits to important Catholic religious centers such as Šiluva. They went to important centers of folk piety (places connected with the Virgin Mary or Jesus Christ), and they performed other actions important to their personal religious life, such as secretly visiting churches, receiving the sacraments of baptism and marriage, etc. According to investigators and the people themselves, religiosity became stronger in the late twentieth century, after Lithuania regained its independence, but it is now beginning to change from the effects of secularization and integration into Western European culture. Despite this change in religiosity, it remains important in the personal and social life of today's people. The author investigated mani-

AUŠRA KAIRAITYTĖ has a Ph.D. in ethnology and currently has a postdoctoral fellowship at the Lithuanian Institute of History in Vilnius. Her research interests include the interaction of traditional and contemporary religiosity, Christian culture, religious experiences, and folk piety.

festations of religiosity and the cult of the saints in Dzūkija in 2013, and this investigation supports that conclusion.

The aim of this article is to examine the religiosity of Dzūkija's inhabitants through an analysis of the cults of the saints. To achieve this end, the article will consider: 1) how and which images of Christian saints appear in the religious worldview of the inhabitants studied, 2) what the inhabitants perceive the functions of the principal saints to be, and 3) what changes in religiosity have occurred during the period investigated (from the twentieth to the early twenty-first centuries).

The residents of Merkinė were not selected as the subjects of this study at random. Scholars who investigated Merkinė and its environs in the past have noted the special nature of this locality. Merkinė is a historically important center in southern Lithuania, and it retains a significant meaning in the consciousness of its inhabitants.[1] Those who have studied this area have noted that the Merkinė region of Dzūkija has an abundant material and spiritual cultural heritage, which includes archaic cultural elements, customs, and beliefs that have survived to the present day, as well as a consistent religious identity.[2] For these reasons, this locality was selected for the study of Dzūkija's religiosity.

The study was conducted using the ethnographic field research method. The author conducted a survey of respondents by using an ethnological questionnaire entitled "The Virgin Mary and the Saints in Lithuanian Culture," which the author created.[3] A total of twenty respondents were questioned. Sixteen were born and live permanently in Merkinė and its environs; four had moved to Merkinė from the Lazdijai, Druskininkai, and Alytus

---

[1] Ragauskaitė and Daugirdas, "Dzūkijos kultūrinis regionas."

[2] See Šaknys, "Merkinės apylinkės: kultūrų sąveika ir turizmas"; Svidinskaitė, "Religingumas, tapatumas ir istorinis laikas"; Paukštytė-Šaknienė, "Merkiniškių gimtuvės ir krikštynos: tradicinių kultūros elementų sklaida XX amžiuje."

[3] Kairaitytė, *Švč. Mergelė Marija ir šventieji Lietuvos kultūroje*.

districts, but have lived in Merkinė for about four decades. Most of those questioned were Catholic female inhabitants of Merkinė. Female respondents were selected because females are considered to be the ones principally responsible for creating and maintaining religious identity within the family.[4] The research covers the religious worldview mostly of the older generation, but it also discloses the attitude of the generation born in the 90s.[5] Teachers at the Merkinė Vincas Krėvė High School in the Varėna District, assisted by teacher Rita Černiauskienė, head of the Merkinė Youth Ethnocultural Club, helped with some of the questionnaires. The author's personal archive preserves the research data.

The material was summarized using the historical-comparative method. The author used Bronislava Kerbelytė's card index found in the Catalogue of Lithuanian Narrative Folklore at the Lithuanian Folklore Archives of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore (*Lietuvių tautosakos rankraštyno Lietuvių pasakojamosios tautosakos katalogas*, hereinafter the LTR). The work of several individuals, including Lithuanian folklorist Jonas Balys[6], as well as Balys Buračas,[7] Angelė Vyšniauskaitė,[8] and Juozas Kudirka,[9] provided much useful material about traditional customs and beliefs in Dzūkija and other regions of Lithuania, especially customs and beliefs connected with the veneration of saints. The Lithuanian writer Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, who lived in Merkinė, wrote stories about Merkinė and its environs.[10] It is worth mentioning that another significant source of material was Petras Zalanskas, from the

---

4 Svidinskaitė, "Religingumas, tapatumas ir istorinis laikas," 238.

5 Two respondents were born in the 20s, three in the 30s, seven in the 40s, two in the 60s, one in the 70s, four in the 90s.

6 Balys, *Lietuvių žemdirbystės papročiai ir tikėjimai*; Balys, *Raštai*, vol. 5, and others.

7 Buračas, *Lietuvos kaimo papročiai*.

8 Vyšniauskaitė, *Mūsų metai ir šventės*.

9 Kudirka, *Jurginės*.

10 Krėvė-Mickevičius, "Padavimai apie Liškiavą ir Merkinę."

village of Mardasavas in Dzūkija. His memoirs contain much material about folklore. The work of his granddaughter, Modesta Liugaitė, is also important. It contains discussions of the attitude of the residents of this village towards religion and discussions of their beliefs and religious customs.[11]

The monograph *Merkinė* includes some information about the spiritual and material culture of Merkinė, but Communist censorship made it impossible to thoroughly explore the topic of religiosity in this book.[12] This topic was discussed more extensively after the restoration of Lithuanian independence, when a more comprehensive investigation of religiosity began. Several important investigations connected with the religiosity of Dzūkija's inhabitants were conducted during this period. Danguolė Svidinskaitė investigated the religiosity of parishes in Merkinė and Liškiava. She focused on the creators of religious identity, on the personal relationship people have with religion, on the religiosity of the family and the local community, and on religious identity and its dynamics during different historical periods (pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet).[13] Žilvytis Šaknys discussed the cultural experiences of those living in the vicinity of Merkinė and manifestations of their religiosity (including the impressions people had of pilgrimages and the relationship local inhabitants have with pilgrims).[14] Rasa Paukštytė-Šaknienė has gained some acquaintance with religiosity in the vicinity of Merkinė through a study of the number of children baptized in the twentieth century.[15] Vita Ivanauskaitė investigated stories from Dzūkija connected with folk religiosity, particularly those that describe religious pic-

[11] Liugaitė, "Liaudies dainininko pasaulis. Petro Zalansko pasaulėjauta ir aplinka."
[12] Vėlius et al. (eds.), *Merkinė*.
[13] Svidinskaitė, "Religingumas, tapatumas ir istorinis laikas."
[14] Šaknys, "Merkinės apylinkės: kultūrų sąveika ir turizmas."
[15] Paukštytė-Šaknienė, "Merkiniškių gimtuvės ir krikštynos: tradicinių kultūros elementų sklaida XX amžiuje."

tures and speak of saints appearing in dreams.[16] Aside from these studies, images of Christian saints as manifestations of personal religiosity have not been investigated more thoroughly. Therefore, further investigation of religiosity in the selected region is needed to better understand the place of folk religiosity and piety in Lithuanian culture.

Religiosity and Reasons for Change as Seen by Respondents

The respondents reveal several problems related to the portrayal of saints recognized and canonized by the Catholic Church. One problem is how a respondent perceives his or her own religiosity and how he or she attempts to explain changes in the traditions and the religiosity of the community. Thus, how respondents react to questions and how they answer them is significant in attempting to understand what influence the Catholic faith has on a person's spiritual life. The responses reveal the respondent's worldview at the moment of response, and at the same time they reveal how Catholic saints are treated in Lithuanian culture. Thus, to address the goal of the study, I will first discuss briefly the environment surrounding the respondents, and then I shall examine concisely their attitudes towards religiosity and changes in religiosity.

All surveyed respondents stated they are religious, are believers, regularly attend a Catholic church, and obey all of God's commandments. One of the respondents stated she and her family are very religious:

> *Nuo mažų dienų... Mano motina, tėvas buvo labai religingi. Šventi žmonės. Mes visi ir mano vaikai visi su šliūbu. Visi buvo privesti pirmų komunijų.*

[16] Ivanauskaitė, "Folklorinės liaudiškojo pamaldumo raiškos: dzūkiškosios tikėjimo patirtys folkloristų akiratyje."

(From early days ... My mother and my father were very religious. They were holy people. All of us and all of our children have been married in church. All of us have received the sacrament of Holy Communion.)[17]

The respondents first acquired their knowledge of the lives and activities of the saints in childhood. Usually, parents and grandparents, who were religious themselves, supplied this knowledge and prepared them for First Communion. For instance:

Mano tėtis buvo labai religingas. Būdavo gegužinės pamaldos. Tėtė atsiklaupė ir mus suklupdo ir turim melstis. Visam gyvenimui viskas man taip ir liko.

(My father was very religious. There were services during the month of May. Father kneeled, and he told us to kneel, and we had to pray. All of this has remained with me my entire life.)[18]

The respondents later acquired knowledge by reading books, attending church, and listening to the radio:

Truputį teko [skaityti] apie motinos Teresės [gyvenimą], apie visus [šventuosius] truputį [skaičiau]. Iš evangelijos kažką žinai. Pasiskaitai, išgirsti. „Marijos radiją" klausau. Ypatingai gailestingumo vainikėlį stengiuosi kiekvieną dieną išklausyt per Marijos radiją.

(I [read] a little about Mother Teresa's [life], [read] a little about all [the saints]. You learn something from the Gospel. By reading, by listening. I listen to "Radio Maria." I particularly try to listen to the "Chaplet of Mercy" on "Radio Maria" every day.)[19]

---

[17] Respondent V. K., b. 1929 in Merkinė, Varėna District. The language of the cited respondents has not been edited or refined, and an effort has been made to maintain the dialect used.

[18] Respondent O. G., b. 1941 in Maksimonys village, Varėna District.

[19] Respondent E. S., b. 1939 in Kapčiamiestis town, Lazdijai District (She has lived in Merkinė since 1957.)

But their knowledge about the teachings of the Catholic faith is fairly superficial, as confirmed by the reflections of the individuals themselves. As one respondent stated, she attends church and listens to the sermons, but "does not delve" too deeply into it:

> *Lankai bažnyčią, klausai pamokslų. Bet aš nei Testamento [neskaitau], nei... Nesigilinu per daug.*

(I go to church, listen to the sermons. But [I do not read the New] Testament, nor... I do not delve too deeply into it.)[20]

Meanwhile, the younger residents of Merkinė acquire their knowledge of religion during religion lessons, preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation,[21] or youth outings on weekends.[22]

Today's religiosity differs from the religiosity of the interwar years. Danguolė Svidinskaitė, who has analyzed this topic more extensively, has observed that the pre-Soviet period is considered "the ideal of religiosity."[23] The respondents, many of whom were children during that time, perceive the religiosity of the people of the interwar period as ideal. They note that at that time people were especially religious and fervent believers: they treated church attendance, participation in religious feasts (*atlaidai*), observance of Christian customs, and compliance with canon law as manifestations of an ideal faith. The piety of parents, their religiosity, and the application of Christian values to real-life situations were considered important. But today, according to the respondents, the situation is not as good, because people no longer attend church. Some respondents note that, even in the Soviet era, when the authorities car-

[20] Respondent O. M., b. 1941 in Ilgininkai village, Varėna District.
[21] Respondent L. K., b. 1996 in Merkinė, Varėna District.
[22] Respondent B. E., b. 1995 in Merkinė, Varėna District.
[23] Svidinskaitė, "Religingumas, tapatumas ir istorinis laikas," 224.

ried out a program of forced secularization, people displayed greater religiosity:

> *Anksčiau žmonės visi tikėjo, vis ejo bažnyčion, meldėsi. Dabar yra žmonių visokių."*

(Previously, all people believed; they all went to church, prayed. Now there are all kinds of people.)[24]

In the end, the respondents attempted to supply their own reasons or insights into why people do not attend church. Some thought that whether or not a person attends church depends on the personality of the priest, his values, or even his character. Some thought a sensitive priest who displays an inner warmth is better able to attract the faithful to church than one not inclined to interact with people:

> *Žmonės kažkaip dabar labai nelanko bažnyčios. Bet čia gal priklauso ir nuo kunigo. Jei jisai jautrus, jis kitaip viską perduoda. Jeigu jis šilumą turi vidinę ir patraukia. [...] [Kunigas] turi bendraut. Turi būt kažkoks tai gerumas akyse, šiluma.*

(Now, for some reason, people do not attend church very much. But maybe it also depends on the priest. If he is sensitive, he conveys everything differently. If he has inner warmth and can attract. [...] [The priest] has to interact with people. There must be some sort of goodness in his eyes, warmth.)[25]

In traditional culture, shared community norms, faith, and a morality based on hierarchical principles have a very important place, and a clear reverential faith in God is what guides religious contemplation. Meanwhile, in the words of Dovilė Kulakauskienė, modern man feels a sense of communi-

[24] Respondent S. M., b. 1935 in Pagilšys village, Varėna District.
[25] Respondent O. M., b. 1941 in Ilgininkai village, Varėna District.

ty to be somewhat unnecessary and inclines towards individualism and a personal experience of God, while modern culture abounds in new ideas, questions, and interpretations.[26]

As has already been mentioned, the respondents noted that they are believers, but "believe in their own way," frequently expressing critical opinions about phenomena they do not understand. They do not avoid criticizing the clergy. They stress both their positive and negative qualities; and in this way, they show signs of secularization. Other characteristics of personal religiosity permit a distinction to be drawn between traditional and modern thinking. The research of Stanislovas Juknevičius emphasizes the importance of religious tradition, and he notes that inert religiosity predominates in Lithuania.[27] Despite changes in the religiosity dominant in contemporary society, traditional religious thinking, which is characterized by a belief and trust in the will of God and by treatment of the saints as intercessors between God and man, occupies an important place in the lives of the surveyed respondents.

The Main Saints

The cults of the saints were analyzed in order to study the religiosity of the inhabitants of Merkinė and its environs that developed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The analysis compared the features of the cults of the saints as encountered in traditional culture with those encountered today. The field research first attempted to determine which saints take precedence in the everyday lives of the inhabitants of the region. The inhabitants were asked to name the saints most important to them, the saints about whom they thought more frequently and who are closer to them or have some particular meaning or importance in their personal

[26] Kulakauskienė, "Tradicinė ir modernioji kultūra," 10.
[27] Juknevičius, "Tarp inercijos ir tradiciškumo," 43.

and spiritual lives. In addition, the respondents were asked to name the saints who are more prominent in the activities of the community. It should be noted that respondents also named God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Mary as the most important companions in their religious lives.[28] After the respondents' answers were summarized, it became clear that several saints occupy a particularly important place in the private and public lives of the respondents. The discussion below describes how these saints are viewed.

Saint Roch (Šventas Rokas)

Merkinė's inhabitants frequently mention Saint Roch.[29] Various sources state that Saint Roch was born in Montpellier in South France circa 1293 and lived until 1327. He traveled widely around Europe treating and nursing victims of plague and he is, therefore, considered a protector of the sick, especially of those with plague. People petition him to protect them from plague,

---

[28] Due to a lack of space in an article, there is no possibility of investigating the cult of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ or the phenomenon of the Merkinė pyramid more extensively.

[29] A. Vyšniauskaitė noted that praying to Saint Roch was especially characteristic of nineteenth-century Samogitia (Vyšniauskaitė, *Mūsų metai ir šventės*, 107). According to A. Motuzas, Saint Roch is especially venerated in Vilnius, Šaukėnai (Kelmė District), Kęstaičiai (Telšiai District), Daujėnai (Pasvalys District), Ylakiai (Skuodas District), Gardamas (Šilutė District), Gruzdžiai (Šiauliai District), Kražiai (Kelmė District), Lauksodis (Pakruojis District), Merkinė (Varėna District), Palanga (Kretinga District), Semeliškės (Trakai District), Surviliškis (Kėdainiai District), Sutkai (Šakiai District), Varniai (Telšiai District), and the independent Church of Saint Gertrude in the Marian monastery in Kaunas (Motuzas, "Švento Roko garbinimas Gruzdžiuose," 12). In folklore texts, it is possible to discover narratives about Saint Roch as a protector of the sick; for example, Saint Roch is considered an intercessor for the sick in Gruzdžiai (LTR 1516/86); and the miraculous statue of Saint Roch in the church of Rozalimas is visited by various sick people (Buračas, *Pasakojimai ir padavimai*, 255).

cholera, and other infectious diseases. Saint Roch has been recognized as a saint by the Church since the first half of the seventeenth century. It is thought the cult of Saint Roch reached Lithuania, Vilnius first of all, through Poland.[30]

Folklore texts and ethnographic materials attest to the spread of the cult of Saint Roch in Merkinė and to his connection with the plague that was widespread there. It is known Merkinė was devastated by wars and plague in the mid-seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[31] Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius has written about the events of this period; and in doing so, he used a folk narrative provided by J. Žekas from Gudakiemis village. The folk narrative begins fairly intriguingly with pagan gods. It relates that pagan gods were under the high altar of Merkinė's church, but were unable to leave because the Holy Sacrament was kept there. One night, thieves stole the Holy Sacrament. The next morning, the priests noticed that all the paintings of the saints had fallen down and those of pagan gods had taken their place. Earlier, the priests and the people had bricked up these paintings of pagan gods in the basement. The pagan gods punished the people for this desecration: People began to get sick, and a terrible plague appeared. But Saint Roch saved them, and now his miraculous picture hangs in Merkinė's church. The folk narrative adds that it is unclear where this painting of Saint Roch came from, but it mentions that a priest once dreamt that he needed to say Mass before a painting and then carry the painting around the city so the people would stop being sick. And so this is what he did, and the people stopped being sick.[32]

It is doubtful the narrator of a folk narrative recorded in the early twentieth century could have remembered "pagan times." A Romantic vision of Lithuania and an idealized desire to exalt Lithuania's pre-Christian culture, characteris-

[30] Motuzas, "Švento Roko garbinimas Gruzdžiuose," 13.
[31] Černiauskas (comp.), *Merkinės istorijos bruožai*, 168.
[32] Krėvė-Mickevičius, "Padavimai apie Liškiavą ir Merkinę," 332.

tics found in Vincas Krėvė's works, are perhaps the sources of this reference to "pagan gods." In addition, in constructing such a narrative, it is fairly easy to change the characters portrayed in the story.[33] Many scholars consider the folklore recorded by Krėvė to be more the creature of his folklore-influenced imagination than authentic folklore material.[34] Nevertheless, the part of Krėvė's folk narrative where he speaks of the actions the priest must undertake in order for people to stop being sick is more likely to be authentic. Other folklore narratives about dreams relate a similar story.[35]

The end of Vincas Krėvė's folk narrative notes that, once the people stopped suffering from plague, they began to celebrate the Feast of Saint Roch, and Merkinė parish has solemnly celebrated the Feast of Saint Roch ever since.[36] This last statement was confirmed by the 2013 research. When respondents were asked which feast was the most important and most solemn in Merkinė, the majority answered the Feast of Saint Roch, celebrated on August 16th. Other feasts celebrated are those of Saint George (April 23rd), Saint Anne (July 26th), and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15th). It is interesting that the parish church in the Merkinė Vicariate of the Diocese of Kaišiadorys is called the Church of the Assumption. It would be customary and natural for the titular feast to be the largest. However, as the respondents' answers demonstrate, the Feast of Saint Roch is more significant than that of the Assumption. The popularity of the Feast of Saint Roch may be explained by the

[33] See Kerbelytė, "Morė-deivė-laumė," *Lietuvininkų žodis*.

[34] More comprehensive information about the folklore activities of Vincas Krėvė, the features of the folklore he collected, and their evaluation can be found in the article by Vanda Daugirdaitė, "Ar jau įmintos visos Vinco Krėvės folklorinės veiklos mįslės?" (2007).

[35] Cf. Kairaitytė, "Religinės patirtys lietuvių folkloro naratyvuose"; Ivanauskaitė, "Folklorinės liaudiškojo pamaldumo raiškos: dzūkiškosios tikėjimo patirtys folkloristų akiratyje."

[36] Krėvė-Mickevičius, "Padavimai apie Liškiavą ir Merkinę," 332.

Zervynos

story of his life and the various functions assigned to him; even today images of Saint Roch are prevalent in Merkinė.

In an attempt to understand the functions of Saint Roch in the Catholic faith and in the worldview of parishioners, the respondents were asked which saint they associate with protection from plague and other infectious diseases. According to the data from the 2013 research, four of the twenty respondents indicated Saint Roch protects people from plague; one female, born in 1938, noted that today Saint Roch is considered to be the protector of those infected with AIDS and epidemic diseases. Another respondent indicated Saint Anthony protects people from plague.[37] Nevertheless, most of the surveyed respondents no longer associate Saint Roch with protection from plague, but treat him as an intercessor for those suffering from diseases in general and wishing to recover from them. They pray for health to be restored to a sick person during the Feast of Saint Roch or when the person is sick.

[37] Respondent G. Č., b. 1938 in Masališkės village, Varėna District.

The respondents' answers suggest the functions of Saint Roch have been adapted to the needs of today's society and to the diseases prevalent in it. The responses show individuals are not inclined to distinguish which diseases one saint or another can heal. The survey did not address the question whether the respondents believe saints in general can help people get better. However, the community studied has an affinity for Saint Roch, particularly because the Feast of Saint Roch is dedicated to people suffering from serious disease. Feasts also have other functions in the community: They help maintain kinship ties and they strengthen relations between the Church and parish communities. Additionally, the popularity of the Feast of Saint Roch can also be attributed to the fact that families often have members named after him:

> *Šv. Rokaus atlaidas. Kadangi šeimoj buvo Rokas, amžinatilsį, tai visa vyro giminė nuo seno, kiek aš marčiose atėjus, visi suvažiuoja per atlaidus Merkinėn, ir čia pas mus susirenka, ir tas Rokas atvažiuodavo, ir visi bažnyčion [eidavo], visi kapus lankydavo, ir visi melsdavosi. [...] Ir visi čia meldžiasi sveikatos. Visi sveikatos prašo. Visi eina per atlaidus čia. Jaunimas tai čia aplinkui daugiausiai pasirodyt rūbų ir pasivaikščiot, biški gal ir pasimeldžia, bet va vyresnio amžiaus žmonės... ir jaunų yra dabar... tai visi eina... ten yra Rokaus altorius šone kairėj, tai visi neša aukas ir visi meldžiasi visą laiką.*

(The religious Feast of Saint Roch. Because my family included a Rokas [Roch], may he rest in peace, all of the male relatives, for as long as I was there as a daughter-in-law, used to come; everyone would drive to Merkinė for the religious feast and gather there at our house; that Rokas used to come and everyone went to church [on foot], everyone used to visit the graves, and everyone used to pray. [...] And everyone here prays for health. Everyone asks for health. Everyone comes here during the religious feast. The young people come around here mostly to show off their

clothes and stroll around, and perhaps to pray a bit, but the older people ... and now there are young people too... everyone goes ... the altar to Saint Roch is there on the left side; everyone brings offerings, and everyone prays all the time.)[38]

This narrative about the Feast of Saint Roch perfectly illustrates the popularity of the cult of Saint Roch, explains aspects of his veneration and the reasons for it, and shows how the younger generation behaves.

The Feast of Saint Roch in Merkinė in 2002. (Photo by Žilvytis Šaknys)

Saint George (Šventas Jurgis)

Another saint, which residents of Merkinė mention often, is Saint George, the second patron saint of Lithuania. There is little historical information about Saint George. It is said he died circa 303, was a warrior, served in the Roman emperor's army, and was a Christian martyr killed in Palestine. All other

[38] Respondent M. P., b. 1947 in Kaženiai village, Lazdijai District. (She has lived in Merkinė since 1968.)

information about him comes from myths and legends that appeared in the sixth century.[39] Nevertheless, this saint has become the patron saint of many states and cities. His cult reached Lithuania through the Eastern Church.

In traditional Lithuanian culture, Saint George was assigned several functions. First of all, he was portrayed as a dragon slayer.[40] Lithuanian folklore includes the image of Saint George as dragon slayer, and the dragon can be understood metaphorically. For example, during the Feast of Saint George, a resident of the Dzūkija region of Lithuania told Buračas: "Saint George has to be fervently venerated so he will defeat the dragon of virulent diseases, famine, plague, and other bad things. Therefore, people used to be unsparing with their fruit, offerings, and prayers."[41] The horse of Saint George, according to the same respondent, symbolizes the power of nature and is the personification of snow or winter: Snow that falls during the Feast of Saint George is called "Saint George's white horse."[42]

According to traditional Lithuanian folklore and customs, Saint George is associated with the protection of domestic and wild animals, and the beginning of spring. Customs associated with the Feast of Saint George (April 23rd) and folklore data show Saint George to be a protector of animals. For example, it was thought that bringing eggs to church on Saint George's Day would guarantee the health of animals (LTR 6241/1151). Similarly, the residents of Liškiava, a village in the Varėna District, used to request that Masses be said to Saint George for the health of animals.[43]

---

[39] Delaney, *Dictionary of Saints*, 259.

[40] The image of Saint George as dragon slayer was recorded for the first time in the *Golden Legend*. It is thought this legend appeared no earlier than the twelfth century and became popular after its publication in hagiographic literature in the thirteenth century. (Delaney, 259).

[41] Buračas, *Lietuvos kaimo papročiai*, 241.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Balys, *Raštai*, vol. 2. 149.

When asked to describe Saint George, almost all respondents surveyed in 2013 described him as the protector of animals.[44] The Feast of Saint George is associated with the first day animals are let out to pasture, when certain rituals are performed:

> *Mama devyniasdešimt keturių metų numirė, tai jinai visąlaik pasakodavo, kad jau nuo seno per Jurgį [...] gyvulius išleisdavo. Jau po Jurgio leisdavo kap reikalas ganytis ganyklose. Dėdavo kiti po slenksčiu kiaušinį. Kiti išleisdavo gyvulius ir aprūkydavo su verbu šventytu.*

(Mama was ninety-four when she died; she always said it was the custom from long ago to let animals out to pasture for the first time on Saint George's Day [...]. After Saint George's Day, they could be let out to pasture freely. Some people used to place an egg under the threshold. Others used to let out the animals and bless them with smoke from a palm blessed on Palm Sunday.)[45]

The respondent, however, admitted she no longer follows these customs.

As has been mentioned, in the past Saint George was considered the protector of animals, especially of horses. Several surveyed respondents also noted Saint George's Day is "Horse Day,"

---

[44] One Merkinė resident, born in 1935, associated Saint George with the protection of dogs: *"Šv. Jurgis globotojas visokių gyvūnėlių. Aš nežinau ar visokių. Šunelių, man atrodo, globotojas šv. Jurgis. Pavaizduota, kad šventas Jurgis—gyvūnų globėjas"* (Saint George is the protector of all sorts of animals. I do not know whether he protects all animals. The protector of dogs, it seems to me, is Saint George. Saint George is depicted as the protector of animals.) (Respondent S. M., b. 1935 in Pagilšys village, Varėna District). It is possible the respondent has confused Saint George with Saint Roch, because in iconography Saint Roch is usually portrayed with a dog, which, together with a guardian angel, accompanied him on his trips.

[45] Respondent M. P., b. 1947 in Kaženiai village, Lazdijai District. (She has lived in Merkinė since 1968.)

a day when horses are not worked or harnessed.[46] A female born in Merkinė in 1928 associated an accident involving horses with someone who abolished the Feast of Saint George:

> *Ir dar atsimenu. Tėvulis pasakodavo. Buvo išnaikinį kunigas [šv. Jurgio] atlaidus. Ir tas kunigas [...] pjovė arkliais pievų—nuskindo arkliai Merky. Tai tadu vėl atnaujino atlaidus.*

(I still remember. My father used to tell it. The priest had abolished the feast [of Saint George]. And that priest [...] mowed the meadow with horses, and the horses drowned in the Merkys [River]. Then he reinstated the feast.)[47]

Other customs mentioned during field research include an offering for animals on the Feast of Saint George. Eggs are brought to church and placed on the altar on Saint George's Day.[48]

> *Tai, oi, ištisai kiaušinius nešdavo, aš matydavau, ir lašinius neša, kad padėtų, gyvulius globotų.*

(They always used to bring eggs; I would see that; and they also brought bacon, so he would help protect the animals.")[49]

One respondent noted that sheep had to first run past an egg placed under some straw, and only then would the people bring that egg (along with other eggs) to the altar.)[50] She also remembers:

> *būdavo toks krepšelis padėtas arba dėžė ir nešdavo kiaušinių, sūrį, kokio lašinuko, mėsos, kiti, jei neturi iš tų produktų, tai pinigėlių, bet jau visąlaik specialiai eidavo prie altoriaus ir pasimelsdavo.*

---

[46] Respondent D. C., b. 1948 in Dakučka village, Varėna District.
[47] Respondent B. A., b. 1928 in Pašilingė village, Varėna District.
[48] Respondent M. P., b. 1947 in Kaženiai village, Lazdijai District (She has lived in Merkinė since 1968.); respondent G. M., b. 1941 in Mikalavas village, Alytus District.
[49] Respondent O. M., b. 1941 in Ilgininkai village, Varėna District.
[50] Respondent B. A., b. 1928 in Pašilingė village, Varėna District.

(There used to be some kind of basket or box set out, and they used to bring eggs, cheese, some bacon, meat. Others, if they did not have those products, would bring money, but they always went specially to the altar and prayed.)[51]

The respondents gave different answers when asked about the last time foodstuffs were brought to church on Saint George's Day. Some said women still bring eggs to this day,[52] and the priest sets out a basket to collect food offerings;[53] others said people today offer only money.[54] These answers show changes in the tradition may depend on the needs of the community and the living circumstances in the village.

The respondents also shared recollections about the celebration of Saint George's Day on April 23rd. Saint George's Day is connected with a time of seasonal changes, and the respondents remembered that disturbing the soil on Saint George's Day was prohibited: "*Negalima žemės judinti su arkliais tą dieną — balandžio 23.*" (One could not plow the soil with horses on that day, April 23.)[55] Another folk narrative about Saint George's Day reveals changes in the tradition and an individual's distinct attitude that traditions must be maintained:

Šv. Jurgis yra globėjas visų gyvulių ir pavasarį ir visąlaik. Čia pas mus ūkin... Nežinau, kad gal visur, bet jau gink Dieve, per Jurgį žemės... nei sodindavo, nei kasdavo. Nes čia va kiek kas dirbįs ir susižeidį ir visa ko. Žodžiu, per Jurgį darbų, kad nebūtų žemės. Žemės ir su arkliais.

---

[51] Respondent M. P., b. 1947 in Kaženiai village, Lazdijai District. (She has lived in Merkinė since 1968.)

[52] Ibid.

[53] Respondent B. A., b. 1928 in Pašilingė village, Varėna District; respondent D. C., b. 1948 in Dakučka village, Varėna District; respondent E. S., b. 1939 in Kapčiamiestis town, Lazdijai District (She has lived in Merkinė since 1957.)

[54] Respondent B. A., b. 1928 in Pašilingė village, Varėna District; respondent E. S., b. 1939 in Kapčiamiestis town, Lazdijai District (She has lived in Merkinė since 1957.)

[55] Respondent D. C., b. 1948 in Dakučka village, Varėna District.

Bet nepaiso, su traktoriais... Mes asmeniškai tai nuo vaikystės, atsimenu, tai jokiu būdu per Jurgį.
Kl.: Taip ir laikėtės?
Ats.: Ir laikėmės, tos tradicijos ir po šiai dienai.

(Saint George is the patron of all animals during spring and all of the time. Here on our farm ... I do not know, perhaps everywhere, but God forbid, on Saint George's Day...no one planted nor dug up the soil. Because here you worked and got injured and everything else. In other words, on Saint George's Day no one was to work the soil. The soil or with horses. But now they don't care, they plow with tractors ... I remember personally, from childhood, we would never do that on Saint George's Day.

Questioner: And what do you do now?

Respondent: We followed those traditions in the past, and we still do to this day.)[56]

It is interesting that no respondent described Saint George as the protector of wolves. Although Lithuanian folklore (legends, stories) makes it fairly clear that Saint George is the protector of wolves. In Lithuanian legends, wolves are the hounds (LTR 1288/36) or borzois (LTR 1580/428) of Saint George, while Saint George is portrayed as a hunter (LTR 1405/157). In addition, the respondents did not mention the custom, characteristic of traditional culture, of walking through fields of grain on Saint George's Day.[57] On the other hand, some respondents looked upon Saint George as a martyr or as the second patron saint of Lithuania, which is consistent with a Christian outlook.[58]

---

[56] Respondent M. P., b. 1947 in Kaženiai village, Lazdijai District. (She has lived in Merkinė since 1968.)

[57] Kudirka, *Jurginės*, 10-13.

[58] Respondent G. Č., b. 1938 in Masališkės village, Varėna District; respondent O. M., b. 1957 in Mikniūnai village Varėna District

Saint Agatha (Šventa Agota)

Saint Agatha also has an important place in the religious worldview of Merkinė's residents. In traditional culture, Saint Agatha, like Saint Florian and Saint Lawrence, protects against fires.[59] The belief that saints can protect against fire exists even in the contemporary worldview of Merkinė's residents. The role of protector, especially against fire, has been bestowed on Saint Agatha and objects connected with her. Some respondents note that one must always have a slice of Agatha bread[60] and reverently keep it in the home the whole year, in a cabinet[61] or drawer, for example[62]. The slice of bread can be prepared so it will keep longer, i.e., by drying it in the oven to keep it from molding and then putting it aside,[63] or the slice of bread can be eaten after making the sign of the cross.[64]

A belief exists among Merkinė's residents that Saint Agatha directs fires away from residential buildings. Stories illustrate help received from Saint Agatha. According to the respondents, these events actually occurred to them or to those who told the stories, even though the events portrayed are incredible. For example:

Mes degėm, o kur buvo duonukė padėta ir liko nesudegta.

(Our [house] caught fire, but the spot where the bread had been placed remained unburnt.)[65]

Mano mama pasakojo ir daug kas tep sako, jei gaisras, Dzieve sergėk, tai tadu su toj Agotos duona tris kartus apeina aplink tų gaisrų ir meta ugnėn. Tai tadu nekrinta ugniai į šonus, bet tiesiai eina in viršų.

---

[59] Vyšniauskaitė, *Mūsų metai ir šventės*, 78-79, 105.
[60] Respondent V. K., b. 1929 in Merkinė, Varėna District.
[61] Respondent D. C., b. 1948 in Dakučka village, Varėna District.
[62] Respondent V. K., b. 1929 in Merkinė, Varėna District.
[63] Respondent B. A., b. 1928 in Pašilingė village, Varėna District.
[64] Respondent V. K., b. 1929 in Merkinė, Varėna District.
[65] Ibid.

(My Mama said, and so have many others, that if there is a fire, God forbid, they walk three times around the fire with that Agatha bread and throw it into the fire. Then the fire will not spread sideways, but go straight up.)[66]

According to other respondents, not only Agatha bread but also Agatha water protects against fires. One needs to sprinkle it everywhere and ask that the fire be directed in a different direction.[67] Or both bread and water are used together during the fire:

> *Čia už dviejų namų buvo kooperatyvo sandėlis. Ir gaisras buvo. O kaimynas statėsi namą, mama sakė, gal pusantro metro buvo nuo to pastato, kuris degė. Kunigo sesuo atsinešė Agotos duonos ir vandens. Pašlakstė. Gal ten gaisrininkai užgesino ir sako biskį čiut paruseno kampas namo, bet neužsidegė.* [...] *Ir aš visą laiką turiu tos Agotos vandens, o kaip iš tikrųjų* [...] *aš nežinau, bet va taip yra.*

(A cooperative warehouse stood two houses from here. And there was a fire. A neighbor had built a house, my Mama mama said, maybe a meter and a half from the building that was on fire. The priest's sister brought some Agatha bread and water. She sprinkled it about. Fire fighters put out the fire there; and they say a corner of the house was charred a bit, but it did not catch fire. [...] And I always have that Agatha water. What the truth is [...] I do not know, but that's the way it is.)[68]

Some respondents note that Agatha bread protects not only from fire, but also from other misfortunes, such as theft, accidents, attacks, diseases, and the evil eye. For this reason, it is still customary to carry a slice of Agatha bread in a purse or in a car, but the ones who follow these traditions are usually

[66] Respondent B. A., b. 1928 in Pašilingė village, Varėna District.
[67] Respondent O. G., b. 1941 in Maksimonys village, Varėna District.
[68] Respondent O. M., b. 1941 in Ilgininkai village, Varėna District.

mothers or grandmothers worried about the welfare and success of their children or grandchildren.

According to some respondents, the image of Saint Agatha embodies the saint's protective power, and is itself treated as a protector from fire. It is said that during a fire a small image of Saint Agatha deflects the fire: If you walk around the fire with such an image or with some Agatha bread, the fire stops spreading and calms down.[69] The picture in a way shows the fire where to go and directs it away from residential buildings:

Mama kalbėdavo, ten buvo miestelį taip: namas prie namo ir jau kada užsidegė vienas namas, visi galvojo, kad jau visa gatvė eis. Ir kažkas atnešė Agotos paveikslą, apnešė aplink visą namą ir pastatė link upės pusės ir vėjas pasisuko ir nunešė gaisrą. Neišdegė daugiau nieks, tiktai, kad sudegė tas namas.

(Mama used to say that this is how it was in the city: The houses were right next to each other; and when one house caught fire, everyone thought the whole block would catch fire. Someone would bring a picture of Saint Agatha, carry it around the whole house and place it facing the river, and the wind would turn and carry the fire away. No other house would catch fire, only that house would burn down.)[70]

Sometimes, the respondents' answers display some doubt about the power of Agatha bread; but, nonetheless, they act in accordance with tradition, or like other members of the community:

Nuo gaisro tai—šv. Agota aceit. Šv. Agota padeda su ta duona. O kaip čia yra? Aš tai tep galvoju, kad gal kažkas ir pasidaro, stebuklai koki,

[69] Respondent Z. S., b. 1963 in Druskininkai municipality (She lives in Merkinė, Varėna District).

[70] Respondent E. S., b. 1939 in Kapčiamiestis town, Lazdijai District (She has lived in Merkinė since 1957.)

o gal vėjo kryptis kaip būna, tai Dievulis nuveda in kitų pusį, bet ką čia žinai kaip čia būna. Jau tep visi sako, kad šventa Agota, nuo gaisro, šventų duonelį apsišventini. Indedu ir vaikam in mašinų, kad juos saugotų Dievulis, o kap čia yra, tai sunku pasakyt.

(From fire, well it is supposedly Saint Agatha. Saint Agatha helps with that bread. What about here? I think that maybe something happens, some sort of miracles; but maybe when the wind blows in one direction, God sends it away in a different direction; but who knows what the real situation is. Everyone says Saint Agatha protects from fire and you should have the bread blessed. I put it in the car for the children, so God will protect them, but what really happens is hard to say.)[71]

Saint Agatha is also portrayed as a Christian martyr, who was brutally tortured by her father. The respondents knew about Saint Agatha as a martyr from hymns, for example.[72] The surveyed respondents also indicated that other saints protect from fire, i.e., Saint Florian and Saint Lawrence. Saint Agatha, however, outranks the others as protector from fire and accidents because of the objects connected with her and their adaptation to everyday household situations.

Saint Anthony (Šventas Antanas)

Another saint prominent in the worldview of Merkinė's residents is Saint Anthony, whose feast is on June 13th. Saint Anthony is the patron saint of Padua, women, and fiancés; and he rescues people from ague, plague, and other diseases. His help is requested when something is lost.[73] Several Merkinė residents described Saint Anthony as a saint with great pow-

[71] Respondent S. M., b. 1935 in Pagilšys village, Varėna District.
[72] Respondent G. M., b. 1941 in Mikalavas village, Alytus District.
[73] *Krikščioniškosios ikonografijos žodynas*, 28.

er, who protects people during misfortune and is everyone's patron. He is invoked in the event of all sorts of misfortune.[74] Others pray to Saint Anthony as the "patron of the soul."[75] But usually, the power of recovering lost things is ascribed to Saint Anthony. People tell their family and friends about their experiences with lost things. The items lost, for the most part it seems, are very mundane (for example, a gold ring, a watch, keys, papers, or vehicle documents); but at the same time, are very important in a person's life.

When the normal daily rhythm is disrupted, i.e., when something is lost, a person is disoriented. Such a state forces him or her to undertake various measures to help regain the established routine. One of those measures, as respondents have stated, is praying to Saint Anthony. Some respondents, when asked what actions should be performed to recover a lost item, answer that one needs to say the Litany of Saint Anthony. Even those respondents who do not believe "this superstition," as they call it, report that, after they have said the aforementioned litany or prayer, have found the lost item:

> *Yra ta maldelė švento Antano, kad padėk susigrąžinti pamestus daiktus. Ir žinokit tikrai. [...] buvo mano auksinis žiedas, bet buvo laisvas. Ir aš maišydama tešlon ir suvertiau tvartan ir paskui po kiek čėso aš užsižiūrėjau, kad neturiu žiedo. Aš, žinok, eidama, Dieve, Dieve... Šventasis Antanai, būk geras. Ir a š taip va maldavau. Ir aš parėjus greičiau nulėkiau tvartan ir radau lovin tų žiedų.*

(There is a prayer to Saint Anthony—help me get back my lost things. And know this for a fact, [...] there was my gold ring, but it was loose. After mixing dough, I shuffled off towards the barn; and after some time, I saw that I did not have my ring. I, you know, while walking, "God, God ... Saint Anthony, be good

[74] Respondent V. K., b. 1929 in Merkinė, Varėna District.
[75] Respondent S. M., b. 1935 in Pagilšys village, Varėna District.

to me." And I prayed like that. And after coming back, I sped back to the barn and found that ring in the feed trough.)[76]

Traditional culture not only depicts Saint Anthony as one who helps recover lost things, but also as one who helps women find suitable husbands. According to traditional Lithuanian legends and customs, a girl who wants to get married must pray to Saint Anthony. In proverbs, he is called the "patron" of girls and, in some beliefs, the protector of children. By helping women find a suitable or desirable husband, Saint Anthony ensures a harmonious life. Such folk narratives are now also being recorded in other regions of Lithuania. However, a Merkinė resident born in 1941 mentioned charms associated with Saint Andrew's Day as helping to predict whether two people will become a couple.[77] Irena R. Merkienė studied the customs of the Feast of Saint Andrew. She has linked rituals practiced on that day with vestiges of female initiation rites.[78]

It is also worth mentioning that traditional Lithuanian folklore (legends, humorous tales), includes stories about Saint Anthony as the patron of protection from the thieves. Folk legends speak of people who pray to Saint Anthony after losing money or in cases of horse theft. But if they who prayed have made promises they have not kept, punishment is meted out. Legends of this nature illustrate the consequences of suitable and unsuitable behavior and allow one to understand that Saint Anthony punishes people for failing to keep their promises. Nevertheless, this latter image of Saint Anthony was not encountered during the 2013 field research.

---

[76] Respondent O. G., b. 1941 in Maksimonys village, Varėna District.
[77] Respondent G. M., b. 1941 in Mikalavas village, Alytus District.
[78] Merkienė, "Apaštalo Andriejaus šventės papročių savitumai. Baltų ir slavų merginų iniciacijų XIX a.–XX a. pirmojoje pusėje pėdsakai."

Conclusions

The ethnological research showed that religiosity and the cults of the saints remain important in the consciousness of the inhabitants of Merkinė and its environs. However, a change is noticeable in their attitude towards the functions and cults of the saints, and in their religiosity. The reasons for such a change can be traced to modern society, secularization, and individualistic thinking. Religious habits acquired in childhood or later by reading books, attending church, etc. help to maintain religiosity in contemporary society. However, traditional and modern thinking, as seen in the attitude of Merkinė's residents, also determines how the residents treat the cults of the saints.

The cult of Saint Roch, which formed and spread in Christian countries and includes such functions as protecting people from plague and other diseases, has a particular significance in the consciousness of Merkinė's residents at the present time, as does the celebration of the Feast of Saint Roch. Saint Roch can be considered a saint who occupies an exceptional place in the worldview of Merkinė's residents, especially during celebrations of the Feast of Saint Roch in this city.

For the inhabitants of Merkinė and its environs, Saint George continues to be seen as a protector of animals to this day, but the customs associated with Saint George's Day (bringing offerings to church on behalf of animals, a prohibition on disturbing the soil) are losing their meaning and are observed only in very rare instances. Meanwhile, other traditional characteristics of Saint George (such as being the protector of wild animals, especially wolves), are no longer mentioned. Thus, the altered realities of contemporary life affect the way in which Saint George is perceived and the way in which the customs of the Feast of Saint George are observed. On the other hand, there continues to be a strong belief among

Merkinė's residents in the protective powers of Saint Anthony as one able to help find lost things, as well as in the protective powers of Saint Lawrence, Saint Florian, and especially Saint Agatha. However, devotion to these saints and belief in the help they provide can be attributed to a simple human desire to ensure a safe life in various situations.

Folk narratives, such as stories about a fire being controlled thanks to Agatha bread or lost things being found thanks to Saint Anthony, ensure the successful continuation of traditions among members of the community. The narratives also help to explain events whose meaning and direction are perhaps not completely understood. The worldview of the people, which combines Christian and folk beliefs, customs, and various practices, gives meaning to the cults of the saints.

Note: The research was conducted in accordance with a postdoctoral project. The postdoctoral fellowship was funded by the European Union Structural Funds Project, Postdoctoral Fellowship Implementation in Lithuania, within the framework of the Measure for Enhancing Mobility of Scholars and Other Researchers and the Promotion of Student Research (VP1–3.1–ŠMM–01) of the Program of Human Resources Development Action Plan.

WORKS CITED

Balys, Jonas. *Lietuvių žemdirbystės papročiai ir tikėjimai.* Silver Spring, MD: Lietuvių tautosakos leidykla, 1986.

_____. *Raštai,* vol. 2. Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2000.

_____. *Raštai,* vol. 5. Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2004.

Buračas, Balys. *Lietuvos kaimo papročiai.* Vilnius: Mintis, 1993.

_____. *Pasakojimai ir padavimai.* Vilnius: Mintis, 1996.

Černiauskas, Algimantas, ed. *Merkinės istorijos bruožai*. Vilnius: LII leidykla, 2004.
Čiulba ulba sakalas: Petro Zalansko tautosakos ir atsiminimų rinktinė. 2–asis papild. leidimas. Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 2008.
Daugirdaitė, Vilma. "Ar jau įmintos visos Vinco Krėvės folklorinės veiklos mįslės," *Tautosakos darbai*, 34, (2007).
Delaney, John J. *Dictionary of Saints*. New York: Doubleday, 1980.
Ivanauskaitė, Vita. "Folklorinės liaudiškojo pamaldumo raiškos: dzūkiškosios tikėjimo patirtys folkloristų akiratyje," *Tautosakos darbai*, 36, 2008.
Juknevičius, Stanislovas. "Tarp inercijos ir tradiciškumo: lietuvių religingumas bruožai," *Kultūrologija*, 18, 2010.
Kairaitytė, Aušra. "Religinės patirtys lietuvių folkloro naratyvuose," *SOTER*, 43(71), 2012.
_____. *Švč. Mergelė Marija ir šventieji Lietuvos kultūroje*. Ethnological questionnaire, Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 2013.
Kerbelytė, Bronislava. "Morė-deivė-laumė," *Lietuvininkų žodis*, 1995.
Krėvė-Mickevičius, Vincas. "Padavimai apie Liškiavą ir Merkinę," *Tauta ir žodis*, 3, 1925.
Krikščioniškosios ikonografijos žodynas. Vilnius: Dailės akademijos leidykla, 1997.
Kudirka, Juozas. *Jurginės*. Kartotinis leidimas. Vilnius: ŽMŪM UAB "Informacijos ir leidybos centras," 1997.
Kulakauskienė, Dovilė. "Tradicinė ir modernioji kultūra: religinio mąstymo skleidimosi sąlygos," *Liaudies kultūra*, 6(99), 2004.
Liugaitė, Modesta. "Liaudies dainininko pasaulis. Petro Zalansko pasaulėjauta ir aplinka," *Tautosakos darbai*, 10(17), 1999.
Merkienė, Irena Regina. "Apaštalo Andriejaus šventės papročių savitumai. Baltų ir slavų merginų iniciacijų XIX a.–XX a. pirmojoje pusėje pėdsakai," *Lituanistica*, 4(48), 2001.
Motuzas, Alfonsas. "Švento Roko garbinimas Gruzdžiuose," *Žiemgala*, 2, 2010.
Paukštytė–Šaknienė, Rasa. "Merkiniškių gimtuvės ir krikštynos: tradicinių kultūros elementų sklaida XX amžiuje," *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis*, 21, 2002.
Ragauskaitė, Alma, and Daugirdas, Vidmantas. "Dzūkija kultūrinis regionas," *Annales Geographicae*, 43–44, 2010–2011.
Svidinskaitė, Danguolė. "Religingumas, tapatumas ir istorinis laikas," *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis*, 21, 2002.
Šaknys, Žilvytis. "Merkinės apylinkės: kultūrų sąveika ir turizmas," *Lietuvių katalikų mokslų akademijos metraštis*, 21, 2002.
Vėlius, Norbertas, et al. (eds.). *Merkinė*. Vilnius: Vaga, 1970.
Vyšniauskaitė, Angelė. *Mūsų metai ir šventės*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 1993.

Translator's Note on Silvija Lomsargytė-Pukienė's memoir

AL ZOLYNAS

Since Lithuania's second modern independence from the Soviet Union in 1990, numerous books, stories, essays, and poems have been published in Lithuanian (many also translated into English) on the heels of the new freedoms and in an attempt to redress the distortions of official Soviet history and to come to grips with a difficult past.

Silvija Lomsargytė-Pukienė's memoir, *The Parallels of Dita: Surviving Nazism and Communism in Lithuania,* more than holds its place in the list of published works looking back on the twentieth century. Narrated with deep emotion, perceptiveness, humor, and irony, this memoir captures the narrator's (Dita's) growth and development from innocence as a young girl growing up in Kaunas in the 1930s—then a prosperous European city in an independent nation—through the first Soviet occupation in 1940 soon to be followed by the Nazi takeover in 1941 and the return of the Soviets in 1944. Her adolescent and adult years under the Soviet regime follow.

A central drama in the narrative is the question of what happened to Silvija's (Dita's) loving father, a Jew, and how, as a little girl and teenager, she was carefully shielded from the knowledge of his tragic fate. Ironically, her stepfather, a Christian, also met with a tragic end.

Throughout the story, the reader vicariously experiences life as seen through Dita's eyes—her eyes as a girl, teenager, and young woman, and at a much further remove, as the now older

and wiser author, looking back on the happenings and sometimes unresolved emotions of a long, complex, and eventful life.

Seen more broadly, this memoir is part of the Lithuanian nation's attempt to understand itself and its place in the world—through reliving a deeply fraught chapter in history. It tells a powerful story with vivid, gripping details and events that provide catharsis for those who lived them, as well as speaks movingly to a new generation, not only of Lithuanians but of anyone willing to enter into the life of a small, generally unknown part of the world during its most difficult times. As serious and shattering as some of the subject matter is, the author takes us through it with grace, deeply felt emotion, and, finally, with a life-affirming sense of humor.

The excerpts from Silvija Lomsargyte-Pukiene's book follow the translator's note.

SILVIJA LOMSARGYTĖ-PUKIENĖ was born in Kaunas, Lithuania in 1933. She was educated in Kaunas and later in the Vilnius Pedagogical Institute, where she studied foreign languages, specializing in English. She worked as a journalist for the humorous and satirical journal, *Šluota* (The Broom) and then as a journalist for Lithuanian radio.

A life-long translator from English to Lithuanian, Ms. Lomsargytė-Pukienė has translated and had published works by numerous writers, including major fictional works of modern American and British writers like Hemingway, Dreiser, Cather, Greene, and Waugh.

AL ZOLYNAS is a poet and scholar born in Austria of Lithuanian parents in 1945. He holds degrees from the University of Illinois (BA) and the University of Utah (MA and PhD). He has published three books of poetry. Many of his poems have been translated into Lithuanian, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Polish—the last by Czesław Miłosz.

The Parallels of Dita: Surviving Nazism and Communism in Lithuania

SILVIJA LOMSARGYTĖ-PUKIENĖ

Original title in Lithuanian: ***Dita. Paraleles***
Published in Lithuania in 2014 by Jotema Press.
Written by Silvija Lomsargytė-Pukienė.
Translated by Al Zolynas.

Dedication: In memory of my father, Samuel.

Chapter 1 Freedom Avenue

"Search for your fortune every day," the old calendar urges.

"I'm searching, I'm searching," I say almost aloud, understanding less and less what that fortune may be the more I seek it.

Maybe someone can tell me what it is?

Many seek it, but no one seems to know what it is.

It can't be we search all our lives for what we don't know.

Over thirty years ago, returning late at night to my place in Vilnius (the first apartment I owned, though I was already in my late thirties), even as I was unlocking the door, I could hear chirping inside. Aha, it's already past midnight. I knew my children were sleeping peacefully.

"Perhaps I'm fortunate now," flashed through my mind.

A cricket lived behind our gas stove all winter long. He'd begin his chirping only after midnight, so as not to bother anyone. In the spring, he disappeared. In the summer, staying with relatives by the seaside, I ask:

"Could you please give me a cricket?"

At first they didn't understand what I wanted, as if they didn't hear me correctly.

Oh, those town folks, they'd say, and shrug their shoulders like the rational western Lithuanians—*lietuvininkai*—they knew themselves to be. They explained that in the modern-day village there are no more crickets, and if they were ever to come across one they'd kill it with boiling water. Just so its chirpings wouldn't interfere with anyone's sleep.

Instead of a cricket, they gifted me with an old horseshoe. A fairly beaten up and rusted one. Seems it had spent more than a winter or two mired in puddles and kicked along the paths of seaside villages. If you really need all of that good fortune, their looks seemed to say... but generally those kinds of superstitions are not good....

We nailed the horseshoe to the door on the stairway side, so the approaching good fortune would have no doubt on where to enter.

Well, come then.

And while it's coming, I'll return, for now, from where I came.

I return to Kaunas and to that time known as between-the-wars.

...Kaunas begins for me at the railroad station square, where the black carriages stand. The carriage drivers sit up high on their seats and together with their carriages are known as *ižvoščikai*. When it rains, they pull a rounded cover over the passengers, much like the roof over a child's stroller, only

larger. Passengers can cover their knees and laps with a black tarp that fastens along the sides. The carriage fits four or five passengers, much like a taxi today—except that half of them sit on a soft leather seat and the other half opposite on a hard fold-out bench. The horse clops apathetically along Kaunas's streets, many of which are still unpaved. Soon those *ižvoščikai* will no longer be needed, nor their sluggish horses with their randomly dropped "road apples."

On Vytautas Prospect, not far from the station, stands a policeman. And needless to say, he is tall. In those days, all policemen were tall. His uniform cap, adorned with a cockade, stretches him to an even greater height. He looks dignified and self-possessed, though undoubtedly he's an ordinary village boy, "not long off the plough."

It's hard to imagine Kaunas without Freedom Avenue. Starting from Vytautas Park's wooden gates it's a rather modest street, but from the *Soboras* (a real Kaunas old-timer would not refer to it as the Garrison Church or the Church of St. Michael the Archangel) to Vilnius Street, it's an avenue planted with many lime trees and sparkling with shopwindows everywhere. From the Agfa firm, Mama buys a modern camera with bellows and some film. Telefunken offers the latest radio sets. During Easter season, the firm's window displays chirp with little live yellow chicks. Arkus, the cloth merchant, has hired a little person for his shopwindow. He's a dressed-up little man of indeterminate age, with a face as wrinkled as a balled-up wad of paper, decked out in coat and tails and patent leather shoes. All day long, he'd clamber up and down and over the piles of cloth bolts.... I look at him, my nose pressed against the glass, and feel a little envious—how fine it must be for him there. From the Markus confectionary shop come the aromas of almond cakes and cinnamon buns... I'm most drawn by the Tilka chocolates and the ice cream. That prewar ice cream,

those variously colored balls, plopped on stemmed glass dishes. And of course you'd always get a glass of water! And almost on every corner were the white-robed sausage sellers. A serving would be laid out on a cardboard dish—a fried bun, a sausage, and a puddle of mustard. From a distance, I see a whole cloud of balloons. The man holding them on a stick seems as small as an ant. I choose a balloon with ears that remind me of Mickey Mouse.

The company Pienocentras (Milk Central) builds huge quarters on the corner of Freedom Avenue and Daukantas Street. In that building, there's an elevator and an elevator operator, still a rarity in those days, and fashionable apartments facing the busy street. On the other side, you have the movie theater Triumph (now the Mercury store).... "How small those people are, and they all go to the movies whenever they want to," I think to myself, looking down onto Freedom Avenue from the fifth floor of Mama's friend Nina's apartment.

In the Batia shoe store a true miracle—there's a little room containing a special box with a little window on the top and a hole in the bottom. You place your foot with the shoe you're trying on in the box through the hole, press a button, look through the window and know if the shoe's not too tight on your foot and fits you properly. For me, the distance from the hole to the little window is too far, and Mama has to be the one to determine whether a shoe fits me. What a pity I don't get to see my foot through that window.

In the bookstore, I see something terribly desirable—two little picture books. They're cut up so that one is in the form of a little girl, the other a bear cub. How I want them...

"Buy them for me," I ask.

Mama replies with a sacred phrase I can't stand, but one I'll hear many times and, later, one I'll repeat myself over and over, even to this very day:

"I don't have the money."

"Work a little, work a little more, and then you'll have some," my kids used to say.

"How can you have any, when the light is always on in your hallway," says my little grand-daughter when I refuse to buy her a stick-limbed Barbie doll.

...Christmas approaches. Lights twinkle along Freedom Avenue.

Lithuanian lass, daughter of open fields,
With your eyes the color of sky,
Lithuanian lass, I am your slave,
My heart belongs to you...

sings Danielius Dolskis, a star of Kaunas from that time, a Soviet Jewish immigrant who learned Lithuanian surprisingly quickly. I'm not there yet, and my future papa, as if winged, flies down Freedom Avenue towards my mother-to-be with a bouquet in his hand and a heart belonging to a *lietuvaitė* in his breast.

And later, there is me.

It's the last Sunday,
Today we'll separate...,

sings another star, a local one, Antanas Šabaniauskas.

The shopwindows compete with each other. Colored light runs through letters made out of wreathed and twisted glass tubes. It fills the tubes, then dies, then starts up again. A brand-new innovation. But how I want those books... I head home disappointed and sad. Fortunately, Christmas arrives soon, and Santa Claus makes me happy.

Money—the litas, the mark, the ruble, and again the litas—in our family at all times there was never enough.

In The Swans pharmacy on Daukantas Street, two white swans, one in each window, necks curved, look to right and left. Both the pharmacy and the two swans disappear during the second Soviet occupation. Many years later, I come across one in the Pharmacy Museum on Town Hall Square. It fills me with joy, like meeting up with a long-lost friend. Throughout my childhood, my pediatrician, Andrius Matulevičius, always recommended The Swans pharmacy. From there came a frighteningly large syringe and needle that he used to inoculate me in my rear end when I was sick with diphtheria.

Doctor Andrius Matulevičius was not a big believer in medicines. For minor illnesses, he'd recommend mashed bananas with orange juice. During the German occupation, when I'm seriously sick again, Mama, unable to find our good doctor, approached another well-known pediatrician, Vincas Tercijonas. But he won't make a house call unless you send a car for him. During those times, people were already starting to change.

I become feverish and delirious; Mama runs to a nearby physician, Vytautas Juškis, who specializes in skin and venereal diseases. He doesn't turn us away. He heals what comes before him—as he understands it. Juškis's house used to be one of the most modest on Vaižgantas Street.

...From The Swans pharmacy you can almost reach your hand over to the garden of the War Museum.

"Greetings, Sir," I politely address the "little person" statue, as I always do each time I come to the garden with its little fountain. The fountain's iron dwarf says nothing back. I know he only pretends to be grumpy. For so many years he's been tearing with his bare hands at the rock face from which spurts a fountain of water. Thousands of little girls have stood in front of that fountain. The worried little man tries to find me among those thousands. It's hard for him to remember—but he

does—the former days, when the fountain was beautiful with its golden fish, rather than filled with trash and dull coins. The little girl Dita marveled then at the little man's diligence.

Today, the old woman Dita looks at him with the same fearful respect. The garden and memorial have been recreated to look almost exactly the same as before. The Soviets had swept the grounds clean of all crosses, the piled-stone monuments, the altar, the Statue of Freedom. But they didn't touch the dwarf. Perhaps he didn't look threatening enough. He didn't stand for any ideas.

I still hadn't learned to read, but I knew where the busts of Maironis and Basanavičius were. And not only where they were, but also what they were. More or less—not yet having had my first lessons in patriotism. Those lessons were also on the modest covers of my school notebooks—as portraits of Vincas Kudirka, Žemaitė, the ruins of Trakai Castle... The covers were simple, single colored. Poor cousins to today's notebooks. Back then, no one made fun of the idea of patriotism, love of one's country, freedom, the tricolored national flag.

So, they swept it all away and not only from the surface. They dug out the remains of the Unknown Soldier, and no one knows where they put them. Later, not far from that spot, they buried the poet, Salomėja Nėris. Only after many years was she finally transferred to the Petrašiūnai Cemetery.

You could call those times the "excavation years." Historians and museum archivists, in restoring the statues and memorials of the War Museum grounds, searched everywhere for the Unknown Soldier's remains, but did not find them. Earlier, the Soviets were unable to find the bodies of Darius and Girėnas,* which had been secretly removed from their mausoleum and hidden away. Much later, after the nation regained independence, the responsible officials somehow allowed the nationally known priest and poet Ričardas Mikutavičius—killed by criminals—to be buried as an unknown person, with no hon-

ors. Eventually, his body was disinterred and reburied in the Petrašiūnai Cemetery next to Salomėja Nėris's grave. Now the two are side by side. Probably two of the most controversial, yet highly respected, people in Lithuania.

...The transfer of Salomėja Nėris's remains from the War Museum grounds doesn't happen right away. The planned ceremonies hit a snag and are postponed. It seems that the remains are not buried directly under the gravestone and monument. A fair amount of searching needs to take place and finally a lot of jackhammering at the concrete panel under which they're finally located. The remains are solemnly carried to Vytautas Church where, at that time, another poet, Ričardas Mikutavičius, is the parish priest.

The next day, the coffin is transported to the cemetery. But what happened the night before?

Father Ričardas comes from his nearby apartment, unlocks the church doors, and approaches the coffin. He lifts the coffin lid and, unseen by anyone, lays a rosary on the white bones of the poet. A rosary gotten from the very hands of the Pope.

"May all be forgiven you,"prays the priest, and all the dark vaulted space seems to look on approvingly.

"God has forgiven her all," says the priest to me in the ancient Vytautas Church, restored and decorated as a result of his attention and concern, when I arrive the next day with a microphone to interview him for the radio.

The bell clangs... My heart is pierced
By moaning, weeping...
Surely that's not my coffin they're carrying...
My days run forward happily!...

Nėris wrote this verse in 1921, when she was seventeen. And this, in 1944, a year before her death:

Unrested, without food or drink,—
The she-wolf stumbled through the fields.
Gripped by fear, the sick beast
Was called by the forest's green depths.

By dusk of velvet moss
She's lulled into eternal sleep...

If only my homeland would meet me like that!
How hard it is, how I pity myself.

These verses were not typical of the Salomėja whom some honored, others reviled. Nor for the Salomėja whose verses rang from the youthful lips of my generation, cultivated our literary taste, helped name those newly born feelings of love. Nor for the Salomėja who still echoes in my heart in the voice of my girlhood friend Rena.

...At the end of Freedom Avenue, a narrow archway lets you into a yard, where stands the small church of St. Gertrude. Most people call the place Šaritės (Charity) Church or just Šaritės. The church was first made note of in the beginning of the sixteenth century. At one point, alongside the church lived a group of nuns, the Sisters of Charity. The nunnery grounds stretched alongside the banks of the Nemunas to the Carmelite Church. The sisters used to grow vegetables and look after the poor. The prospering city's development swallowed the sisters' gardens and finally even the order itself. The church, undergoing renovation and "improvement," lost its Gothic appearance, its frescoes, its tapering windows.

Many had the habit, walking down Freedom Avenue, of turning into Šarites, kneeling, and asking for some small favor.

That short stay, you could say was like getting a little pet from the Almighty. A short stay—a small request, and a short thanks.

"Please, Dear Lord (*Dievuli*), let me meet up with Juozas."

"Thanks, Dear Lord, for helping me pass my exam."

...The Šarites churchyard is thick with green bushes and trees. Behind them hide two teenage girls who amidst coughs try to inhale the smoke of cheap Moka cigarettes. Those teenagers are the high-schoolers Dita and Protelė. The daughter of the composer Mikas Petrauskas lives on Kipras Petrauskas Street (named after his brother, a famous opera tenor) in the Petrauskas house, first floor. Neither for her nor for me is it necessary to walk to school via Freedom Avenue, but somehow we two always end up there. And we don't forget to stop by Šarites.

The Soviets convert the little church into a pharmaceutical warehouse. Garages sprout on the approaches to the church. Finally, they decide to expand the existing communist bureau for their local leaders, and within a few steps of the church they begin to erect an especially solid-looking building. Meant to stand for a thousand years—like that Reich of Hitler. The unwanted soil is carted out of town along with the bones and skulls of nuns who'd been buried there long ago.

Just before Lithuania's Independence,** when I arrived at Kaunas on a work assignment, I see such a sad scene at Šarites. I complain to the then Culture Fund's chairman, professor Česlovas Kudaba. But the professor is not omnipotent, and his eyes fill with sadness.

"I know," he says, "I've seen it. And I also spoke to the head of that office. The director first enquired who I thought I was and then said, 'For the sake of some old antique, no one is going to halt the building of a project already in progress.'"

The enlightened Česlovas Kudaba's memory will last a long time, but who will remember those functionaries? Even their surnames? During the independence movement—the very rebirth of the nation—the huge foundations were dismantled, the pits filled in and leveled. Šarites regained its original form and purpose. They repaired and restored it; only the central altar up to now remains as it was during the time of the church's use as a pharmaceuticals storehouse—beaten up, dirty, peeling. Strange. Between the newly cleaned walls, the altar still glows with the truest, purest light. Your eyes, having run through the small space of the church, stop on the altar and seem to see God's face there. At least for a short time, your heart is relieved and at peace. But the dish to take that feeling away is so shallow, and the drop in it is so tiny... Surely I'll spill it, won't be able to carry it. Truth be told, where am I to take it anyway?

Today's Freedom Avenue empties around nightfall, even though the shopwindows are twice as spacious as before and glow with sterile lights. In the years of my girlhood, the darkening avenue filled up with people, and you could meet anyone you wanted there. If you went up and down a few times between the Soboras and the Šarites gates it was called *šlifuoti*, or polishing. Freedom Avenue was "polished" by pupils, students, all sorts of folks of differing ages from all the various districts of Kaunas—Žaliakalnis, Šančiai, Šlabada, Senamiestis... Ah, if only they all could gather here now!

Afternoon. The start of summer. 1940. Freedom Avenue is full of people. They're not going anywhere. They stand on the sidewalks and look into the street. Down the avenue flows the stream of a dimly colored foreign army. At that time, I only sensed, but now well know, why my mother wept, why many people wept as they looked on at

the puffed up men in their strange uniforms. They did not yet resemble the short-statured brutes with Asiatic features and small-peaked caps who were to come later, the ones who within a year will stuff cattle wagons full of terrified Kaunas residents.

The smell of army boots and cheap soap overwhelms the aroma of cinnamon from Markus's confectionary.

I didn't know then what freedom smelled like. It was just there. As ordinary as air. You breathe it in—you breathe it out.

The Statue of Freedom still stood on the War Museum grounds.

Crying was not enough then. It was not enough to grasp that this was freedom's burial.

"What does it mean, CCCP?" I hear myself asking.

In Lithuanian, that would be SSSR—in English, USSR, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Not everyone wept.

"We met the Russians with flowers and song," remembered Cilė Žiburkienė, the granddaughter of Plungė's rabbi in 1944.***

"No, that was not an occupation," agrees Rachelė Margolis in that same book. Her parents were from Vilnius, and after the October Soviet revolution of 1917, they returned here from Russia. As she herself affirmed, "They ran from the Soviets."

Unanswered questions pour over me from Freedom Avenue's linden trees. "Why were the flowers and songs necessary, Cilė? If not an occupation, then what, Rachelė? And why did your parents flee the Soviets? Why was the Lithuanian army in shining readiness at that time, if not for defense? What price did Juozas Urbšys, the foreign affairs minister, have to pay for accepting the Soviet ultimatum?

Only eleven years in solitary in a Soviet cell for himself and solitary for his wife, Marija Masiotaitė, too?"

At the beginning of 1990, Juozas Urbšys inscribed his memoirs for me with a trembling hand. And "good wishes" above his signature to my children, Paulina Eglė and Martynas Žilvinas. He was ninety-four then. In a year he was dead. When I visited him, the former minister lived far from the center, in block housing, "near the tank," as kaunietės used to say. As angry fate had it, that tank stood for many years, not only as a monument but also as a stern warning, with its barrel pointing at the window of the foreign affairs minister of the "liberated" state. But there came a time when the tank, named the *Josef Stalin*, was hoisted up and carried away. A cross was erected in its place. One night, some unknown vandals knocked the cross down. Now, there's an entire hill of crosses there. They won't knock them down in one night.

After the war, it was fashionable to call Kaunas a city of speculators, swindlers, and scammers—without any subtlety of spirit. Even though the light of Maironis, and Vaižgantas, and Krėvė, and Putinas, and others, still shone over it, those who didn't want to see it didn't.

A certain science professor, after having listened to my many biting pronouncements about the city of Kaunas, finally unable to stand it any longer, asked me:

"Why do you so painfully love Kaunas?"

Then I really thought about it. "Why, indeed?"

Not only because it's my birthplace.

Here, the fountain's sullen dwarf still tears persistently at the rock face.

Here, Daddy and I walk down Freedom Avenue to the photo gallery Zinaida near the post office and get ourselves photographed in an embrace.

Here echo and fade the steps of my first love.

When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.
Proverbs 2, 10

A time to rend, a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.
Ecclesiastes 3, 7

* Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas, Lithuanian-American pilots, flew across the Atlantic in 1933, crashing and dying in Germany just short of their goal, Kaunas. The flight was a significant accomplishment in the history of aviation and stands as the first transatlantic airmail consignment.

** *Lithuania's Jews, 1918–1940. Echoes from a Lost World* (Lietuvos Žydai, 1918–1940. Prarasto pasaulio aidas). Edited by Ives Plasseraud and Henri Minczeles; translated by Elena Belskytė and Liucija Baranauskaitė. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2000.

*** The second Lithuanian independence, March 11, 1990—the Day of Restoration of Lithuanian Independence.

THE LOFT

MARKAS ZINGERIS

Jokūbas Krupnikas felt he had ended up in a blind alley. In a place dusty, sealed shut, reeking of mold. Life had boxed him into a corner that to him was like a coffin, set upright. And, actually, that was how years ago, when they had run out of space in the town's ancient cemetery, they had buried his dad, rest his soul, who had eyed the world as an anarchist, but, within his circle of friends, as a humorist, too, though he was an official candidate of the party whose chronic ailments made it gasp for air even as it clung to power. A high school principal, his talent for music and painting was never expressed, but crammed with all of his aspirations into the confines of a life that numbed his intellect and his emotions!

The cemetery office employee shrugged her shoulders: "Your dear father will just have to squeeze in. If you prefer—on the hillside, where it's sunny, and it won't get flooded from the rain." Those attending his dad's burial couldn't believe what they saw, when he was interred upright as though he were standing in front of his boss. And that was exactly the way, only worse—being buried *alive*, that Krupnikas the Younger began to feel thirty years after the death of the *elder* Krupnikas (his dad would've given him a jab in the side for aging him).

He was from the old crop of architecture "fac" students, who once were considered young and full of promise (the "promising" ones in time succumbed to drink), back then, night after night, ravenously devouring any and every bit of

the free word in cultural publications smuggled in from the West. They saw each other as geniuses, and some did have genuine talent, though most of the subjects they argued, their berets pulled down over one ear, were grasped only superficially by a generation interned by the regime on a reservation. In those days, his pals were wrapped up in themselves as they pursued something that was individual, unique. They believed that Le Corbusier—the creator of sunny architectural massifs, whose followers proliferated Vilnius's suburbs—had done more harm to Europe than had Goering's air force. And for decades they hung out in sidewalk cafes, mocking the old men with puffy faces who preached to them from tribunals. Fragments of a life of freedom in the West, studies, reproductions, notwithstanding their lying colors, were as essential to them as air to someone gasping for breath; they created illusions for themselves out of the air, and those illusions traced out for them the indelible lines of real life.

If he were to change the title of a popular film comedy of that time, he would call his contemporaries *Generation Y or Shurik's Adventures*. Nowadays, Krupnikas's *shuriks*, gray-haired old men, plodded down the slope of their years in the Berlins, Moscows, New Yorks, Tel Avivs of the world, from time to time attempting to look around, in case they might find some grain of rationality on the road behind them.

Behind them was a column of dust.

Once, when he was heading to the beach at a brisk pace along a street in Tel Aviv, he had found an album of black-and-white photographs, from somewhere in Eastern Europe in the seventies. Right in the street, next to a huge trash container, among plastic cups and empty bottles, litter left by the homeless: A boy in a Pioneer's neckerchief. A chorus, of young teachers or medical nurses. A suntanned and visibly happy couple with ice cream—Krupnikas could taste the flavor of *crème brulée* on his palate. The sea, but not this sea.

He brought the album back with him, but left it at the hotel, because it wouldn't fit in his luggage.

* * *

He lived with his wife, whom he called Tutė, a former medical nurse, content in her role as a homemaker, and his elderly mother. And these women had the ability to get into Krupnikas's head and to roil his emotions, and make him feel guilty and loutish; and they practically pushed him through the door to go and make some money. And these days, my fellow colleagues, clients have the taste of Stone Age men, though an imported toilet with a powerful flush action can make a homegrown moron dance around and squeal: "I'll be, you have to hand it to those Germans!" So, he was moonlighting and, actually, doing pretty well. But a month ago he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, a slow degenerative condition, that turned a man, as he himself described his situation, into a piss pants; and, damn it, it was especially bad at night! On a regular weekday, he got the little lab report from a regular "preventative checkup procedure" with his little test results, and the professor, after clearing his throat, muttered: "not good!...but this form is not one of the fatal ones... we'll have to operate in due time."

So much for that news, no chance that, in the remaining bits of his life, he'd flash across the world's skies, caught in the klieg lights of American adulation, like some flying saucer from Eastern Europe!

If he had to swear on his heart, even Tutė wasn't to his taste. Simply put, years ago he, a student, who would come by all sorts of prizes and awards through sheer perspiration, was stunned by a girl whom he had met next to the ice cream cart during an especially hot May. His compliments, as he recalled, were like words straight from Prof. Freud:

"You are my Bauhaus! Even with round balconies, like the temporary capital's Milk Center building."

"How dare you! I'm no Milk Center to you. Me–I'm a pearcock [*sic*]."

He loved her even for the way that she, a Russian speaker, would say *pearcock* [*sic*]. She would utter this word amplifying it with emotion and a beaming face, whose eyebrows were like those of a Byzantine Madonna. Round, of sturdy bones, which was surprising to those who glorify lean bodies; but pretty, with brown eyes that emanated warmth and a generous heart, built to the specifications of her Ukrainian ancestors, descended from landowners who raised herds of horses for the armies of the Poles, Lithuanians, and Cossacks in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. A broad-cheeked beauty, a soulful person, a Leo according to astrologists, in whom Jokūbas Krupnikas didn't believe, and yet—as he grew older, he had to admit—whose personality types, culled from the constellations, were as earthly as a potato in its skin.

To distance himself from the women and other psychological discomfort, he had moved up to the attic, which had been remodeled into a loft. The weather, as it were, was that of an idyllic fall, though it was December outside, and the sun, which called up countless memories of springtimes and fantastic lands he had visited, licked its broad tongue across the sheets of Whatman paper that bore imprints from the bottom of a coffee cup. Krupnikas's children, like his friends, were scattered throughout the world. Saška Garbanius, his classmate, who years ago had requested political asylum in the West, now designed villas in Mallorca and in Moscow's prestigious Rubliovka!

Another good friend from those days, Aliukas, who in Brooklyn had become *Rabbi Gedalia* (isn't life a circus, my friends?), had sent along his booklet on harmonious married life through a tourist visiting Vilnius. In the old days, he was crazed

with Cat Stevens songs, rebelled against the regime, was attracted to Zen. He was thrice divorced. Now he had become an Orthodox Jew—and not just anywhere, but on the East Coast of the U.S.A., in the citadel of cosmopolitanism—to explain the Sacred Texts, to safeguard the Great Dogmas. One other *shurik* of their group, Dalinskas—Dimka, an accordionist and seducer of the gals, nowadays a graying burgher, had taken up drawing and painting, and over the e-net would lob to his pal his latest series of works: a satyr with an erection, having leapt into a corner of the picture, observes the human comedy arrayed before his eyes. Dima was a professor of statistics at Humboldt University, and mathematics had been his predilection his entire life. Whenever Krupnikas took off to Berlin, the two of them would hightail it to the variety show (about escapes across the Wall during the Cold War) or to one of the hundred and fifty museums in Berlin; they'd pour their hearts out about family, wives, kids; and once, in Dimka's office, Krupnikas had seen that famous graphic of Life, known to their entire group. It was a small, framed drawing that showed how long he had to live, and even when one could expect Adomas Dalinskas to start to get senile (drawn along the edge of the graph paper were balloons and slippers).

There, where life's curve began to drop downward, was written: *Monasterium/EinesrRuhiges Selbstmord* (Monastery/A Peaceful Suicide).

Sundays the gentleman professor—bald, paunchy, but with the lively eyes of young Dimka the accordionist shining through his glasses—would play on the table utensils and chat away with a brown-haired freckle-face, who reminded you of a freshly peeled carrot, at the neighborhood's Fish Restaurant.

"*Seit bekannt* (make your acquaintance), Jokūbas, this is Rudolfas, my son. And this, Rudi, is Jokūbas; I used to call him *Jaška*, he's a friend from your father's younger days."

Rudi, as a child, with a tear-stained face, scampered along the twisting corridors of his father's workplaces or,

abandoned for days on end, moved around Monopoly game pieces in the apartments of his father's girlfriends, to whom Dima gave the dignified term *Lebensgefährte*—Life Partners. To Dima, the greatest achievement of his adult life was not his professorship or the artistic leanings that emerged during his retirement, not the karate belts or even the world-class firms, where his years smoldered away and where he had outdone even himself, but the reestablishment of a warm paternal bond with his offspring.

And there was this other *shurik*, Leo, a wedding musician in America, who years ago jazzed it up in a Kaunas night club. Nowadays, he lived on social welfare checks. From morning until night he'd transmit gallows humor over the worldwide net: "Have you heard this joke? If you've immigrated to the U.S. and don't have the address of Alcoholics Anonymous, Johnnie Walker will surely get you there!"

Life, it's an oddity, a show, a pun, a circus!

It's tragedy (Leo's wife became an alcoholic in the U.S.), which at the same time is black comedy.

* * *

In the snowless fields covered with grim brushwood, the crow calls rang out; and closer by, in the residential area, dogs yapped, their barking seeming to chip away the hoarfrost on the alders. Among the hills, the ice-laden lakes lay gray. He could see from his own attic the icy edge of the one next-door, dappled and wintry as his own tufted crest. In May, they'll operate or they'll say to him, as they did once to his dad: "Too late, Mister Krupnikas, and where were you before?"

He'll be gone, but the newspaper, filled with life's events, will still get carried along the fences by the wind. He had to piss badly. He swallowed a tablet, rocked on the tips of his toes over the toilet, just as Jews pray at the Wailing Wall. But

nothing came streaming out, he just felt a pain in his lower abdomen. So, why was it that he climbed up to the attic, he so proudly called a loft and a studio, to defend himself from the Human—neither Comic, nor Tragic—Kitchen, the human kitchen, when life, unembellished, is trivial and as hollow as a chicken bone. It was the end of life that he had begun to feel, contemplate, see, imagine; not like moviegoers, readers of novels and obituaries, not like criminologists or forensic medicine experts, but as his own irreversible, inevitable demise. It's here you experience a distressing sort of amazement, and the questions lining themselves up should have occurred to you, it seems, as life was dawning—or perhaps they had, but at the time, you see, among narcissists and poseurs, it was much simpler to answer them. You could croak *"Nevermore,"* like Poe's Raven, to young female bohemians over a glass of Riesling, quote the French, Germans, and Greeks.

What's life for? Why life? What's the point of life? And Krupnikas was amazed at how simple and clear those questions were.

How is it that, sooner or later, everything that within me rushes, moves, rolls comes up against a concluding period?

These were a Generation Y fool's questions to a rabbi or a priest.

These were Job's questions to the Lord.

* * *

Today, no less, he had also reached a "round" birthday, which dissipated in the glow of Chanukah and the approaching Christmas holidays. He'd have a few drinks and dispense with the pretensions—it's just a formality, it's just the solar or lunar calendar, but at Tutė's insistence, he would be celebrating it with her relatives and with friends, if any of them showed up.

The phone rang.

A personal call? A client? He composed himself.

But unexpectedly, while he was hunched over his moonlighting jobs in his "loft," he felt the weight lift and the space open up around him. He started to see not just the buildings and the light in the fields, and in people's houses, but also—his eyes brightened and the crooked crease between his eyebrows became smooth—he started to feel the person. He didn't get irritated, but, instead, he felt love for this client, Nakas or whatever his name was, because now, stunned by his diagnosis, he could clearly imagine how Mister Nakas's children would wrangle in the courts over his house after his death and how his remains would decay without leaving a trace in this life, as though he were a field mouse.

"No, the moles won't dig it up. Unfortunately, the marble from China hasn't been delivered yet."

But again the cell phone rang.

He heard a voice short of breath:

"You want an anecdote?"

He saw before him, in his imagination, the full smiling lips of Dimka, that lover of life.

"Give it to me! At least you won't be asking about my health."

"Abramovičius and Chaimovičius each have a store. In this place and the other are suits for the final journey. Abramovičius sells them for ten times more than Chaimovičius. A customer says to him, "But Chaimovičius will sell it to me for less." Abramovičius says back to him: "With Chaimovičius's suit, after ten days underground, you'll be left with a bare ass."

The two of them chuckled at something that wasn't very funny, but it was funny to them that they were both laughing—and also at Abramovičius—in the anecdote! Even in the ground, people believe you should be wearing your best

suit. His pals had read so many books, had lived through so many revolutions, and—in the case of Dimka and Aliukas—so many wives. Illusions and beliefs, histories and ideologies to them were just as unenduring as Chaimovičius's suit!

"So congratulations! You should know that on your birthday half of mankind sits down at the table. Jaška, your little fella, was still walking around under the table, when I left Lithuania. Don't you have a grandson yet?"

"Last fall, I was in Tel Aviv to visit Danas. He had just gotten married. But they're already expecting a child."

Krupnikas didn't have either money or a great spiritual legacy to leave his son; and so in Israel the young man rushed wholeheartedly into the Kabbalah and Judaism, similarly to Aliukas in Brooklyn. Danas chose Israel, arriving from the freethinking Krupnikas family and, striving to be an exemplary converted Jew, talked into it by a rabbi, got married.

"It's the pendulum of our life, Jaška, to and fro, to and fro. And how do you like my drawings?"

To him, the drawings seemed lascivious in an outmoded way. He wriggled out of a forthright critique:

"You, Dimka, have all sorts of talents. That's why your wife left you!"

"Ha, ha, ha," his pal laughed in a small screechy voice, as white-faced, overweight, brown-haired men sometimes laugh (though Dalinskas had been walking around for some time now with a naked head and graying temples). "In a word, my son has successfully defended his doctoral dissertation; forgive me, there's no way I can get out of it, tomorrow's the party. As they say in Yiddish, *byz hundert und cvancig*—may you live to be a hundred and twenty. And Saška—didn't he call you? Imagine, he was on his way to your birthday, and they took him off the train in Minsk. He didn't have a transit visa. He just had time to call to ask me if I was going, and his batteries went dead. Whatever the story,

he also sends his congratulations. Does Leo write you? When I was in Queens last time"—he began to talk in a whisper—"in his hallway, I stepped on a syringe; in the stairwell, on a rat. Jokūbas, all we have left is a statistical life..."

"Dima! To hell with statistics."

"In India, I hear, in these situations you go into a monastery. After a year's time, you come back to your kids and you catnap in the corner of the kitchen, until you kick the bucket."

"This recipe's not for me, Dima."

"But, Jaška, facts!"

"Let the facts go die."

Dimka sighed.

"My apartment in Berlin, Jokūbas, is your apartment; in our youth, you were *something else* to me..." And his voice recovered, "My old woman neighbor told me that after the war a French major had lived there and would bring up women more beautiful than Marlene Dietrich. German missies after the war would do it with you for a sandwich."

"I wouldn't take it, if they did it with you for a sandwich. Actually, do you have a life"—he got flustered, searching for the word and then remembered *Lebensgefährte*—"partner?"

"Klara, a writer. We have an intellectual relationship. Merkel Schmerkel, Grass Schmass. But I can't stand it when women come charging in to dust and rearrange books and papers. Everything gets confused for me, and life's hours pass in vain. And the other one, Marion, she's a kindergarten teacher for special-needs kids. With this one, we go at it like rabbits! In the summer, we all pedal our bikes to the lakes. On different days of the week, of course. I have three bikes in the cellar. It's good for the heart."

"You're already healthy as an ox!"

"Those like me collapse all of a sudden," reported Dima from the battlefront of his life. "Klara has her suspicions. She says, 'So, Adomas, who is it that rides around on the orange bike?'"

Drawing by Tadas Gindrėnas

Tutė was calling him downstairs. He as yet, almost a month after those tests, had not said anything to her. It was still not *that* time to open up about the state of his health; he could never find the right moment because of work and because of fear, and because he knew that he'd need to use subtle language you don't carry around with you in your pocket. All in all, will they find time before death to be together?

"It was nice to hear from you, Adomas. Say hello to Rudolfas."

"Give Tutė a kiss, Jokūbas! Tell her, it's a kiss from the pal of your youth, Dimka the accordionist."

* * *

He imagined Saška Garbanius in custody in Minsk, again finding himself, as in his young days, when he was ordered in by some KGB major, beneath Dzerzhinsky's portrait.

He also imagined Dimka Dalinskas in old age, his chest hair gray, in diapers, with sagging breasts, turned into an old woman, sitting on a high government bed and in a screeching voice begging the nurse for more morphine to numb the pain. He saw, too, Leo's inebriated wife Valė in Queens, watching a TV serial, a rat in her slipper.

He heard the women gabbing away on the first floor. He, stuck in Lithuania and in life, had reached sixty! He was not, after all, just Nakas's walls, nor some other sketched designs from which the sun was already receding, leaving behind the darkening coffee stains; he was not even just Tutė's longstanding spouse, Jokūbas Krupnikas. He was all of the above, but with a darkness, too, that did *not* come streaming out of a world where optimistic architects unroll a clear bright day for us.

Somewhere, he had read published predictions for the New Year that, after a million years, the Y chromosome would disappear from the human genome, and there would be no more mankind and, after that, the entire planet would be without life. If mankind were to become extinct, he would be most sad not for the Taj Mahals, built to suit a beauty's fancy, not for the pyramids or Parthenons, or the Eiffel Tower—but for the fact that, in the entire Universe for all time, love itself would be extinguished. In the postwar kitchen, beneath his palms, he felt the oilcloth that got sticky on summer days; and he saw a young woman, still merely a girl, liberated from Stutthof, the smile of her shining eyes enticing you to live, strive, embrace something that your grasp won't contain, but that will be like the midsummer sea, friendly and playful; as the smell of honey from the whitish flowers

of the coarse seashore grasses wafted over him, Krupnikas could even feel how the soles of his feet sizzled and—on the shadowy side of the dunes—cooled in the morning sand. He got a deeper sense of life not from the rolls of Whatman paper, not even from the dreams of his green youth, but from episodes that recurred nights and days, when your heart for no reason begins to pound, fearful that shadows from beyond have reached you and that your destiny has burned away like the stingy December sunlight on the windows of your studio. It's then you come to realize that you live, when you collect all of yourself from all times into your fist, like some trickling sand. Maybe he had done all right, when, unlike the lonely Dalinskas who emigrated in the eighties, he hadn't set off in hot pursuit of Berlin's young ladies, having left his son who-knows-where, and, filled up with beer, he hadn't sat at a sidewalk café hollering, *Welche Arsche, Mein Gott!* (My God, those asses!); and there was one pretty girl, with a small worn-out face, who had turned around to them to say in a half whisper: "The room is deluxe, the service—first class! A hundred Euros." (Dimka had trudged off with her, while Jokūbas, abashedly believing that there is something in this world you can count on, that spouses play by the rules, even here with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, had hoofed it back to the hotel with the strange name *Alter Adler*—The Old Eagle.) Maybe he had done all right, when he had married Tutė for *love;* so what if it's a word that's often used by people who lack talent; and so what if nowadays he's lonely even when he's with her, but, regardless, not like Dalinskas in Berlin, whose relationships sprout as quickly as an onion in a jar. So what if the beauty from his youth snored at night? He, after all, had been delirious that there was a Tutė in this world when he got married! This cancelled out the other days, when the family was like a business trying to avoid bankruptcy, and you wanted to take off to some Co-

pacabana somewhere under an assumed name to think up other illusions and, in pursuit of the greater Beauty of Life, to forget even Tutė—as you recharged your emotions and your blood began to flow faster.

* * *

And Tutė was calling him again to light the garlands he had strung outside around the windows, to bring in the pots of delicate foliage plants from the terrace for the night, and to uncork the champagne. There might be quite a few more people, from far and near, who over the years had accumulated in his life, calling him and dropping in. He climbed downstairs, put his arms around his wife toiling in the kitchen and kissed her plucked eyebrow. He then kissed his mother, whose wrinkles were as dry as the desert. She pecked at the shot glass of Russian vodka in front of her—lately the two women would have a drink in the morning and in the evening for "the heart." He quickly left the kitchen, so the women wouldn't have the chance to draw him into conversation and to dispel the thoughts he held inside.

He lit the lights and stepped twenty paces back from the house. All that'll remain of the entire house will be just dust. The word dust to the architect was a sweet one. Dust is eternal, out of it buildings rise again. He loved this house and the unenduring lives that passed through it, he heard his mother in the kitchen begin to sing a song of old Kaunas in a voice that clattered like aluminum plates in barracks or prisons, and Tutė broke into laughter.

Could this be all there is? A lot or a little?

Translated from the Lithuanian
by BIRUTĖ VAIČJURGIS ŠLEŽAS

BOOK REVIEWS

Margarita Balmaceda. Politics of Energy Dependency: Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania Between Domestic Oligarchs and Russian Pressure.

3rd rev. ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013, 464 pages.
ISBN: 978-1442645332

Margarita Balmaceda explores how three post-Soviet states—Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania—have managed their energy dependency on Russia in the period from their emergence as independent states in 1991 all the way through 2013. The book is an extension of her earlier work, which focused on Ukraine's failure to develop a coherent energy policy in the years 1995–2006.

This thoroughly researched work details how each of the three countries dealt with its energy dependency on Russia. In particular, the book focuses on articulation systems among the various interest groups that affect how each country handled its external dependency on Russian energy. Such analysis purposefully leaves Russian policy goals towards each of the countries out of the scope of investigation.

The three cases appear remarkably different. In Ukraine's case, management of energy dependency boils down to weak institutions, undermined by powerful business lobbies. These lobbies build political power on the back of energy rentals. They emerge as business-administrative groups capable of privatizing public policy. They become a defining feature of Ukraine. Balmaceda presents the situation with scientific detachment. However, the story could be retold as a thriller, featuring the most egregious theft, private interest masquerading as public concern, and the refined cynicism of the players.

The Belarus case is very different. Energy rentals derived from Russia were used to shore up the power of an authoritarian president, preventing the emergence of independent political actors. In the Ukraine, private economic interests used profits from energy rentals to build political power. As a result, a much larger share of energy rentals benefitted the wider Byelorussian society: They were channeled into either productive investments in oil refineries or unproductive subsidies for the inefficient agricultural sector. In Ukraine, public institutions were emasculated by the business-administrative groups that benefitted from energy rentals; in Belarus, they strengthened the presidential administration.

Lithuania went through several different phases in its management of energy dependency. The outcomes are less clear-cut. An early proactive period diversified oil supplies and culminated in the construction of the Butingė offshore oil terminal in the late nineties. Accommodation to Russian energy interests followed for a lengthy period, resulting in the sale of Lithuanian Gas to a consortium led by Gazprom. The third phase was triggered by a sharp rise in gas prices, starting in 2005. It culminated in a series of bold moves towards dismantling Gazprom's Lithuanian monopoly. These included implementation of the EU Third Energy Package, an antitrust investigation of the Gazprom monopoly by the European Commission, and the 2014 construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Klaipėda. The last project can be seen as a pinnacle of Lithuanian efforts to diversify its gas supply independent of the Russian economy. It receives no mention in Balmaceda's book, despite the fact that key decisions concerning its construction were taken in 2010–2, well within the purview of the book.

The author aims to determine how the internal politics of each country affect its management of energy dependence. The most interesting insights offered in the book are somewhat beside this focus. In particular, these three cases lead

to the conclusion that energy dependence became more entrenched the longer each country attempted to pay below-market prices for its energy, retained energy subsidies, subsidized household energy consumption with higher industrial tariffs, and bartered energy debts in exchange for key industrial assets. These were all opaque energy trading schemes that allowed intermediary companies or, in the case of Belarus, the presidential administration, to perpetuate the status quo, thereby preventing sustained diversification. Arguably, Lithuania made the most progress by replacing the aforementioned practices with tariffs that recovered costs, and it instituted transparent, state-regulated pricing policies in the late nineties. These efforts go a long way to explain why Lithuania was able to prevent entrenched energy trading groups from writing its energy policy. It eventually made the most progress in diversifying its energy supplies.

However, these conclusions come almost accidentally. Instead, the book aims to explain how domestic institutions and informal arrangements in each country influence its energy diversification efforts. The author sets up an analytical framework. Each country's political system, understood as a balancing mechanism between the executive and various interest groups, is an independent variable. These factors determine the different ways each of the countries manages its energy dependency. Balmaceda distinguishes between a centralized system with a powerful executive as the ultimate arbiter of decisions (Belarus), a political system with the executive as a mediator between different interest groups (Ukraine), and a fragmented political system with a weak executive (Lithuania). However, the rigor of such an analytical model is undermined by her subsequent claim that the "recycling" of energy rentals (profits derived from price arbitrage and mostly nontransparent dealings that characterize energy trade with Russia) affect the political system itself. This clearly happened in Ukraine, where interme-

diary companies increasingly set the energy agenda. However, she does not question why this did not happen in Lithuania, where the system of interest articulation lacked a strong executive as an arbiter between the interest groups. This framework makes it difficult to tell what is at work in each particular case: When does the configuration of the political system determine the outcomes, and when do these outcomes result from the recycling of energy rentals?

Balmaceda acknowledges the importance of EU pressure in streamlining Lithuania's institutions towards greater transparency and accountability prior to 2004. This included energy pricing reform and other regulatory changes. These reforms prevented some of the grisliest energy-related corruption evident in the other two cases. The author seems to be oblivious that institutional reforms were prompted by a near-universal consensus among Lithuania's political forces in favor of EU accession. This omission further undermines the rigor of her analytical framework. She claims that a configuration of interest groups, balanced by the executive, is a determining factor. It goes without saying that EU's institutional accountability requirements did not affect the configuration of Lithuania's political system. Nevertheless, they contributed profoundly to the way Lithuania managed energy dependency.

Overall, the book contributes to a better understanding of a wide variety of issues arising from energy dependence on Russia. In retrospect, Ukraine remains the most dramatic cautionary tale of how pervasive corruption, originating from energy rentals, divorced self-serving political elites from the aspirations of Ukrainian society. This lead to a revolution. Energy remains the main source of Russian leverage over its neighbors. Margarita Balmaceda has done us all a service by helping us to understand how these levers work.

VYTAUTAS ADOMAITIS

A Docudrama fit for Hollywood
Felicia Prekeris Brown. God, Give Us Wings.

North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013. 252 pages.
ISBN: 978-1484189122.

Over the years, I have reviewed many books, never once thinking or suggesting that a book could be made into a movie. I now have to violate that tradition. It is not that Brown's book *could* become a movie. It is stronger than that: This book *should* become a movie. I know almost nothing about screenwriting, but I feel that *God, Give Us Wings* is ripe for a docudrama.

Brown's *God, Give Us Wings* and Vladas Terleckas's *The Tragic Pages of Lithuanian History 1940–1953* both review the same time period from two different perspectives. Terleckas's book focuses on the deep suffering and greatest battles in Lithuanian history. It presents cold historical facts, painful figures, and heroic events. The books supplement each other. Terleckas gives the broader historical background, while Brown's adds blood, sweat, and tears experienced by one family. His book is about Stalin, Hitler, partisans, and repression, while hers is about father Felicius, mother Stasė, sister Milda, and the author herself, Dalia Felicija, of the Prekeris family.

God, Give Us Wings consists of twenty chapters plus an afterword. It starts with the description of the Prekeris family in 1939, when the author was two years old. The author's father was a highly respected school teacher. Her mother was a principled and controlling woman whose formal education stopped before she became a teenager. Her sister turned ten in 1939.

In 1939, Hitler invades Lithuania Minor. A year later, the USSR occupies and forcibly annexes Lithuania. A year of life in the "Worker's Paradise" follows. It includes massive deportations of Lithuanians to Siberia. Hitler then attacks the So-

viet Union and occupies Lithuania until the summer of 1944. Brown describes a very stressful life under the Führer, including the extermination of the Jewish population. In chapter 7, the Prekeris family packs to flee the country, as the Soviet Army chases the Nazis out of Eastern Europe. The "meat and potatoes" of the book begins with their departure from their homeland. The endless hardships of the Prekeris family and thousands of other refugees continue through chapter 13. The Nazis conscript Felicius to dig antitank ditches, while the rest of his family struggles with disease, food shortage, poor housing, and fading hopes.

High drama unfolds at the end of the war in spring 1945. The family finds itself on the shores of the Elbe River. It becomes very critical to be on the correct side, because one side was under Red Army control, while the other side belonged to Western Allies, i.e., the British and the Americans. The incident is a cliff-hanger that should be captured with all the intensity of a docudrama.

Life in a displaced person camps follows. This is not the typical DP camp experience of many Lithuanians after the war. The Prekeris family is pushed from pillar to post among six different camps over a few years. Again, high drama ensues when the Soviets want Lithuanian and other Baltic refugees to return to their countries of origin. There, they would be able to enjoy the "freedom of liberation." Nobody believes that promise. A few commit suicide rather than face an almost certain one-way trip to Siberia.

The story of the Prekeris family takes an unexpected turn. The family splits. Stasė and Milda immigrate to England with a two-year work contract, while Felicius and Dalia Felicija stay behind in Germany. This part of the story is both very interesting and stressful. In the last chapter, "We Find Our Permanent Haven," they are reunited and settle in England. In the afterword, the family eventually immigrates to the United States. They see the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor on January

20, 1952. After a few months in Cicero, Illinois, they settle in Stamford, Connecticut.

The author marries Lew Brown and they buy a small house a mile from San Juan Capistrano, the California Mission. She becomes a lawyer. She works for the Superior Court, supervising the Probate Court Investigations Unit. She takes up doll collection as a hobby. She collects a thousand small dolls from every corner of the world, hoping for a granddaughter. The doll theme is also an important part of this captivating history. Read it before it becomes a docudrama!

ROMUALDAS KRIAUČIŪNAS

Arūnas Streikus. The Church in Soviet Lithuania.

Trans. UAB "Magistrai." Vilnius: Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuania, 2012. 47 pages.
ISBN 978-609-8037-1-7.

Streikus provides a condensed history of Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism, during the Soviet occupation, but the publication suffers from various translation and technical issues.

The booklet primarily reviews the changing status of the Roman Catholic Church during the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. The opening chapter makes the perplexing claim that Lithuanian Catholicism only formed in the twentieth century. (2) No explanation is provided. Under the Soviets, the Church sequentially experienced repression, attempts at creating a Catholic Church independent of Rome, forced cooptation with the regime, a brief liberalization during the post-Stalin thaw, more forced cooptation, and liberalization in the last decade of the Soviet Union. The significant work of nuns is emphasized. The book only mentions Siberian exile, but does analyze the Church's

status there, and several Siberian photographs are included. One chapter covers antireligious propaganda. That chapter includes a photograph from a seemingly pagan St. John's Day celebration, but it lacks an accompanying explanation. Oddly, the final events, Lithuanian independence and the collapse of the USSR, are missing. Streikus provides a clear historical narrative sequence with interesting and rare photographs; but the illustrations do not always match the topics being discussed.

The second largest Christian denomination, the Lutheran Church, is briefly addressed several times. Unfortunately, there is no analysis of Soviet attempts to control the Church. The Lutheran situation is stereotypically portrayed, i.e., that the Church focused on its poorly educated clergy and dwindling congregations. (46) The third largest denomination, the Reformed Church, is not mentioned at all. Both Orthodox Churches are each mentioned once, as are various Pentecostal denominations. The Pentecostals arrived toward the end of the Soviet era. Again, no analysis of state-church relations is provided for any of these denominations. Streikus apparently misunderstands the Orthodox Old Believers, claiming untrained laity led worship for them. (46) Old Believers opted for lay led congregations, rejecting the clergy, hierarchy, and corruption of the institutional Russian Orthodox Church. The author repeats that non-Catholic clergy lacked religious education. This emphasis sounds like a prejudice against Protestants and the Orthodox. In contrast, he details the challenges Catholics faced in training their equally underprepared clergy.

Surprisingly, Streikus mentions the appearance of the Hare Krishnas in Soviet Lithuania. They get a modicum of recognition in a book on Soviet Christianity. Why, then, are the historic Jewish, Muslim, and Karaite religious communities of Lithuania omitted? They suffered similar religious repression. The Jewish question is particularly important,

since self-serving Soviet propaganda widely exploited the Jewish genocide by the Nazis. How did the Soviets treat the Jewish religious establishment?

Many of the topics in the volume raise interesting questions for further reading, but there are no sources, bibliography, or index provided. The English translation is faulty and cumbersome. Names are listed inconsistently. Priests are often incorrectly dubbed as friars. Is this a mistranslation of "Reverend?" Protestant and Orthodox worship is called "Mass," the Catholic term. Religious orders are incorrectly called "monks" and their houses "monasteries." Šiluva is misspelled. (29) Miscellaneous vocabulary items are also mistranslated: "hostel" for dormitory, for example. (22) Ultimately, this curious publication requires a professional editor and English-language proofreader to correct its academic and English deficiencies.

VILIUS RUDRA DUNDZILA

1918–1953: Centuries in Lithuanian History Vladas Terleckas. The Tragic Pages of Lithuanian History: 1940–1953.

Vilnius: Petro ofsetas, 2014. 148 pages.
ISBN: 9786094085925

Terleckas dedicates this publication to English–speaking foreign visitors to Lithuania. In the preface, he asks the reader, why one would choose the period of 1918 to 1953 out of the thousand years of Lithuania's history? He answers that the history of every country is measured not in years, but in the intensity of movement:

In this respect, the years from 1918 to 1953 amount to centuries in Lithuanian history: it was during this period that the country shook off the yoke of Russian Tsars and German Kai-

sers; independence awakened the creative force of the nation, and it achieved great progress in various sectors; from 1938 to 1940, Lithuania was issued three ultimatums by neighboring states; in 1940 and 1941, it suffered two occupations and the shock and trauma of mass killings and repression. (7)

The plight of Lithuania from 1940 to 1953 is key to comprehending the character of its people and their psyche. Terleckas relies on research, the stories of his parents and their generation, and his own teenage experience of those years. His book includes about a hundred historical photographs and maps, a list of abbreviations, and a bibliography.

In the foreword, historian Francoise Thom notes that two occupying forces plundered Lithuania and carried out mass exterminations: Germany nearly wiped out the Jewish population, and the Soviet Union sought to eradicate the elite. The two powers worked hard to find local accomplices in their crimes. Terleckas explains, "It is the irony of history that it was in the very countries and regions that were annexed in the aftermath of the Second World War, and repeatedly steamrolled by Stalin, that we saw the emergence and organization of the liberation movement that brought about the downfall of the USSR." (10)

The first part of the book summarizes life in Lithuania after the independence of 1918. It covers the achievements and challenges of state building. The main part of the book focuses on the Soviet (1940–1) and Nazi (1941–4) occupations, as well as the Stalinist regime of 1944–53. Terleckas examines repression, Sovietization, and the armed and unarmed resistance of the Lithuanians.

From 1918 to 1940, Lithuanians encounter real hardships, but with a glimmer of hope for the future. A successful land reform is instituted. Agricultural production and the economy grow better than expected. The country has a stable currency. Education and culture make remarkable progress. Ethnic minorities have their own primary schools, teaching children in their mother tongue. These schools are supported by the state.

Terleckas provides interesting facts and figures for the "dark ages" that follow. The 1939 secret Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact between the USSR and Germany leads to the Soviet occupation of 1940. Life changes from one of hope to tragedy. The Nazi occupation replaces the Soviet one. Lithuania reasserts its independence in 1941, followed by six weeks of hope; but, the Nazis declare Lithuanians racially unfit and make plans to deport 80 percent of the population. Nazis attempt to oppress and demoralize the population, which includes the mass extermination of Jews. Regrettably, some Lithuanians contribute to this massacre of innocents. At the same time, 7,022 people save 3,000 Jews from death, according to data from the the Vilna Gaon National Jewish Museum. Around 45,000 Lithuanians became Nazi victims.

The fourth chapter describes 1944–53 as Lithuania on the brink of extinction. A second Soviet occupation follows World War II. Just before the occupation, some 64,000 refugees flee west to escape the returning Soviets. The USSR's victory against Nazi Germany does not bring any freedom to the Baltic nations. It simply replaces one oppressor with another. The first months of occupation prove the worst fears of the people were well–founded:

> The Soviets unleashed the most brutal force. They had made advance preparation for the repressions against civilians. (...) Many of the NKVD officers considered Lithuania as enemy territory and were not hiding their hostility towards the local population; to them almost every local man was a "bandit." (80-81)

The book presents details on the forced collectivization of farms, unbearable taxation, and the deportation of farmers who refused to join collectives. For many years, many collective farmers eat an unvaried diet that consists mainly

of potatoes and milk. Things get so bad that people coin a saying, "the living envy the dead."

The section on the anti–Soviet Partisan War of 1944–54 is very informative and touching, with excellent documentation. It is a "must read" for anyone who cannot read the entire book. This history of blood, sweat, and tears lasts about ten years. Armed resistance gives way to an unarmed one. The new opposition is institutional and organized, as well as spontaneous and unorganized.

The last chapter, "Repression," includes imprisonment and deportation of the civilian population. Cold demographic facts and figures tell only part of the story. The population suffers years of cultural repression and religious persecution. Philosopher and publicist Eglė Marcinkevičiūtė–Wittig notes that Lithuanian historians used to dismiss the suffering Lithuanians experienced and underestimated the resistance: "But the main expression for the Soviet reactionary sentiment was the attempt to depict some repressive and occupant structures in positive light, even giving them a cozy romantic tint" (book cover back flap). These brutal efforts only galvanized the country to resist and pursue freedom, regardless of how long it would take.

A "Chronology of Major Events" concludes the book; it should be included in the popular tourist publication *Vilnius in Your Pocket*.

Terleckas (b. 1939–) taught banking and monetary systems at Vilnius University in 1967–2000. He served as a member of the Supreme Council and was a signatory of the March 11, 1990 Act of Restoration of Lithuanian Independence. From 1989 to 1992, he helped transform the Soviet banking and monetary systems into ones based on a market economy. His book provides a clear and deep understanding of this past.

ROMUALDAS KRIAUČIŪNAS

ABSTRACTS

Two Patterns of Lithuanian-American Behavior: The Political Refugee and the Economic Immigrant
EGIDIJA RAMANAUSKAITĖ

This paper analyzes and compares the behaviors of the Lithuanian political refugees who came to the United States after World War II with the economic immigrants who arrived after 1990. The comparison suggests that the agents, even when they experience negative influences from their environment, retain their original state of political refugee or economic immigrant. The paper discusses the immigrants' relationship to the U.S. government, to American society and their work environment, to their relatives in Lithuania, to their immigrant cohorts, and to the previous generation of Lithuanian immigrants.

The Religiosity of the Inhabitants of Dzūkija
AUŠRA KAIRAITYTĖ

Personal religiosity has various components. It includes personal religious practices and personal religious experiences. Other components include the attitude people have towards the saints and the practices they follow in connection with their veneration. The aim of this article is to examine the religiosity of the inhabitants of Dzūkija (an ethnocultural and historical region located in southeast Lithuania) by analyzing how the cults of the more popular saints have manifested themselves there during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The article presents ethnographic field research into the cultural heritage of the city of Merkinė in Dzūkija. Con-

ducted in 2013, the research showed that, despite rapid secularization and changes in attitude towards religion, today's inhabitants of Dzūkija have a religious worldview in which it is not unusual to pay attention to activities and functions associated with saints prominent in traditional culture or to pray to certain saints for assistance.

LITUANUS • 47 West Polk Street, Suite 100-300, Chicago, IL 60605-2000

www.lituanus.org

LITUANUS THE LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY VOL. 61, NO. 2 (2015)