

# LITUANUS

THE LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY

VOLUME 62:2 (2016)

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From One-Dimensional to  
Multidimensional Thinking

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Three Stories

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# Toward the Culture of Hope

ALMANTAS SAMALAVIČIUS

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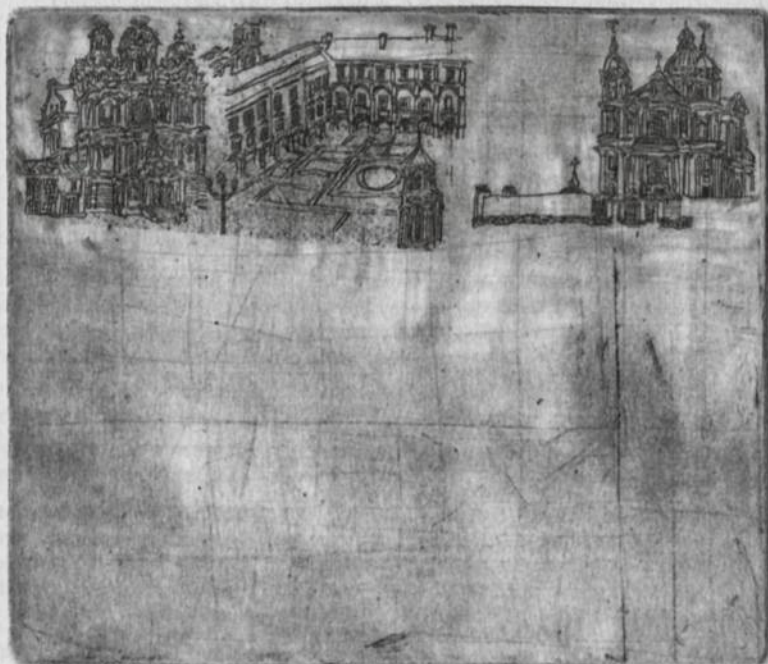
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## ABSTRACTS

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Eglė Kuckaitė. *From the cycle Nobody Can Hide Love like This*. 2002, C3 (etching), 13 x 137.

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## Toward the Culture of Hope

ALMANTAS SAMALAVIČIUS

This issue of the journal is perhaps somewhat unusual in a sense that a large part of the material included can be labeled as kinds of transactions of a dead poets' society. And in fact it includes a striking number of posthumous publications that taken together might provide the readers some insight into the recent past of Lithuanian intellectual and political culture as well as its artistic and literary realms. Though the wise and critical philosophical musings of Romualdas Ozolas; the subtle, emotionally loaded, elegiac prose narratives of Bitė Vilimaitė and Antanas Ramonas; and the elegant graphic works of émigré artist Žibuntas Mikšys seem to have so little in common, nevertheless they all reflect and represent an élan vital of mind and imagination that have kept and continue to keep Lithuanian culture alive during recent decades in different geographic locations.

Undoubtedly one of the key texts of this issue that deserves a very close reading is an article written by Romualdas Ozolas – the late Lithuanian thinker, politician and social activist who not only played an important role in triggering the national resurgence movement, Sąjūdis, and guiding it into the reestablishment of Lithuania's independence but who also made the transforming of the level of contemporary political culture his conscious, life-long project. Though these timely reflections now presented to the readers of this journal were recorded some years ago, in many ways they still remain as topi-

cal as they were eight years ago when they were delivered at the event celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the national resurgence movement. While reconsidering the experience of Lithuanian society on its road to freedom, Ozolas draws our attention to the infamous role played by one-dimensional thinking that took root during the long era of Soviet domination. Though the era of dependence is now finally over, and while Lithuania has successfully made its way into the realm of freedom, it is nevertheless important to realize how powerful this lame tradition of one-dimensional thinking continues to be today and what strange new forms and configurations it has recently acquired. And as the philosopher and politician has insightfully observed, despite the fact that during these transitional years, the Lithuanian people have chosen freedom of thinking over captivity of mind, alas, not very many have so far realized that freedom to think and free thinking are two very different entities.

While observing recent developments in Lithuania, one can only agree that during the last quarter of a century after the collapse of the one-dimensional political system, the Lithuanians have heartily embraced the freedom to think, but at the same time free thinking has hardly become a fact of common experience. Perhaps this scarcity of vitally important free thinking is one of the primary reasons why despite so many undeniable accomplishments, Lithuanian society has failed spectacularly, as Ozolas acknowledged, in so many spheres. Perhaps this same scarcity of free thinking has contributed to a situation making so many Lithuanian citizens leave their country in pursuit of employment possibilities, decent wages, and adequate social benefits. Meanwhile, this threatening tendency is still stubbornly refused to be admitted to by numerous government officials who continue to speak about people's inherent right to move under conditions of freedom. At the same time, hordes of mainstream Lithuanian politicians continue to praise what they think are the



benefits of the free market and economic growth without any consideration of the threats posed by globally dominating, neoliberal discourse and its politics. None of them seem to have taken seriously the warning of the late Czech intellectual and politician Václav Havel who has concluded that

Enormous private multinational corporations are curiously like socialist states, with industrialization, centralization, specialization, monopolization. Finally with automation and computerization, the elements of depersonalization and loss of meaning in work become more profound everywhere. Along with that, goes the general manipulation of people's lives by the system (no matter how inconspicuous such manipulations might be in comparison with that of the totalitarian state).

Romualdas Ozolas seems to have been one of those not very numerous Lithuanian politicians whose thinking in some ways resonated with that of Havel's. Like Havel or like the contemporary Siamese Buddhist social thinker Sulak Sivaraksa, Ozolas was deeply worried about the unprecedented growth of what Sivaraksa calls "the monoculture of consumption" that came disguised as freedom after the end of dependence and totalitarian rule. And this new form of totalitarianism critically reflected on by Václav Havel was something he believed should be strongly and consciously resisted.

A quarter of a century seems to be quite a sufficient time to nurture a cultural environment necessary for freethinking as well as for developing a new quality of political culture and yet, the present levels of both remain highly questionable. Some critics, agreeing with the insights of Ozolas, suggest that quite the opposite is true: the standards of political culture have never been so low in Lithuania's post-Soviet era as during the last few years. So far, the one-dimensional thinking that Lithuanian social thinker considered to be one



of the prime reasons for our social, political and cultural failures seems to be winning. Eight years ago the Lithuanian philosopher complained that he had no idea whether the national stadium would be finally erected in Vilnius, whether the state would give financial allocations to make up a national collection of art works, nor about what would finally happen to the Palace of the Grand Dukes. Not much can be said today either, as there has been very little progress in all of these and many other spheres. So far the future of the national stadium is uncertain, financial allocations for making up a national collection of art works is still a dream of concerned enthusiasts, and the Palace of the Grand Dukes has not yet managed to acquire a convincing cultural identity. And yet, despite its bitterness, Ozolas' philosophical insight contains a hint of hope. It is *our* world. And the world is truly *here*. Moreover, the late Lithuanian philosopher and politician is not alone in this kind of reasoning. A growing number of us seem to realize that it is *we* who are responsible. And though this number has not yet acquired a necessary critical mass to create a qualitatively different level of political culture, it keeps growing. This understanding and its growth gives us some hope.

## From One-Dimensional to Multidimensional Thinking

ROMUALDAS OZOLAS

Cultural changes are primarily changes of thinking; they penetrate culture and lifestyle through politics. The requirement for unidimensional thinking was imposed upon Lithuania during the Soviet occupation. In foreign policy, this entailed promoting the world socialist revolution; on the domestic front – encouraging industrialization, the collectivization of agriculture, and the strengthening of military power. In the cultural sphere, the ultimate goal was the implementation of “correct thinking,” or more specifically, the understanding of how to fulfil the aforementioned strategic tasks. The underlying objective was the creation of communism, the promised kingdom, and to guarantee a state of wellbeing and happiness.

This was a powerful idea. It summarized the European spiritual quest that began with the Renaissance. More im-

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ROMUALDAS OZOLAS (1939–2015) was a Lithuanian philosopher, author, and politician. A founding member of Sąjūdis in 1988–1990, he was one of its leaders and made a significant contribution to the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence. A member of the first cabinet of ministers after the declaration of independence and eventually a member of parliament, he finally retired from politics – but till the very end of his life nevertheless remained a social activist, wrote numerous volumes documenting Lithuania's political ascent and development, and founded and edited a journal “Nepriklausomybės sąsiuviniai.”

portantly, along with the alternative of National Socialism, it formed the substance of twentieth century life. It was only after the World War II that, in an attempt to remain democratic, it came under the arbitrage of North American capitalism.

In 1983, I published an essay in the journal "Literature and Art" entitled "The World Is Here." In it, I sought to reveal Lithuania's efforts to discover itself within Soviet internationalism. I also wanted to highlight the importance of experiencing the joy of authentic life right here, in our own land, as opposed to some distant country behind the horizon. The journalist, writer, and translator Juozas Keliuotis called the essay a persuasive analysis of Lithuania's lived reality. Many others asked: "Who gave you the right to write like this?"

The control exerted over our lives was by then extreme: even the right to think had to be granted!

Today we already know the destiny of the two radical ideas of the twentieth century: piles of human bones, haunted by the mutants of Communism and National Socialism. However, we do not yet know what awaits the third one, democratic capitalism, what might be called the concept of natural social development. In fact, since the emergence during the Cold War of corporations whose budgets surpass national budgets, and which are freed from the social responsibility for the origin of the capital, the relationship between capitalism and democracy has been troubled and troublesome. No solution has yet been found, but this is one process in which we all participate in one way or another.

We can be proud of ourselves for being active in overthrowing Soviet communism. Lithuania played a major role in expediting the fall of its major fortress, the Soviet Union.

What problems then, most importantly mental ones, have we inherited from the epoch that insisted upon the one-dimensionality of thinking?

In the most general sense, the effects have been traumatic. The demand for one-dimensional thinking was a blow to



the national mind, a knock-out after which it was temporarily left unconscious. The lifting of the ban on thinking freely, achieved together with independence, dazed our minds, too; overwhelmed by the joy of victory, we seem to have overdosed on freedom. Typical examples? At the end of the First Republic, the mental vacuity brought on by the Soviet occupation in 1940, obvious in the last session of the ministers. Or at the beginning of the Second Republic after independence was declared in 1990, when the business association called for the abolition of all taxes. Moreover, in Lithuania we now annually celebrate the day of "Living Without Taxes".

We have freed ourselves from the prison that held our minds captive. However, freedom to think does not always and necessarily entail freethinking. Freethinking means that the human being is able to progress from facts to generalizations, or vice versa – to descend from greatest abstractions to the most specific realities. In order to avoid disturbing the process, the thinking person has to treat abstractions as an appropriate means of thinking without ignoring or despising empirical facts; nor should s/he preference empirical facts over abstractions. These are very old problems, pertaining to any thinking culture. It took the Greeks almost a thousand years before Aristotle found a way to secure the balance between experience and thinking, and, equipped with his new science of logic, undertook the philosophical reconstruction of the world. Obsessed as they were by their inborn distrust for abstraction, it took the European barbarians two thousand years to master this art, manifest in the "critiques" of Immanuel Kant, a skeptic of Baltic origin. Lithuanians gathered an immense empire to fight the abstractions repressively implemented by Christianity and failed to notice how their empire itself had been engulfed by the culture of their allies, the Poles, who advocated social security. When the Lithuanians came to their senses, new fashionable concepts had already been arriving from the West,

those of positivism and pragmatism, which aimed to deconstruct classical European thinking.

It is quite surprising how efficiently Lithuanians utilized this difficult period of sobering up. On the new ideological foundations, they restored – or, more precisely, created – a nation state, signing the declaration of Independence in 1918. Then, as a result of the great tension on the diplomatic front, they realized that creating and maintaining a nation state entails the process of translating world culture into the forms of a national culture, and most importantly, into its major form, the national language. Moreover, during two subsequent decades, they laid the philosophical and ideological foundations for such an understanding. First, there was philosopher Stasys Šalkauskis's pedagogy of personal upbringing; Antanas Maceina's existential criticism; Juozas Keliuotis's modern nationalism; the manifesto "Towards Complete Democracy," formulated by a group of intellectuals; finally, there was the emergence of an absolutely authentic art, such as the works of the Ars group; poems by the young Vytautas Mačernis; and the prose of immigrant Marius Katiliškis and Antanas Škema.

Karl Marx's empirical interpretation of existence was very attractive to pragmatic minds because of its practical approach. Attentive to real facts, Marx's analysis did not avoid generalizing about them on any level or aspect. However, processed by the mincer of the Russian mass thinking, Marx's philosophy was turned into the ideology of Marxist-Leninism, according to which, Marx's economic determinism and the proletarian interest were taken for the absolute and unquestionable truth.

Even the Middle Ages saw vehement discussions about whether an idea exists as an ideal object or whether it is merely a quiver of air while the word that marks the idea is pronounced. For the European mind of empirical predilection, the theory that an idea is not that what the word describes was for a very long time simply unbearable. When uttering the word



"communism," Russian Marxists similarly did not think that it could be naming an abstraction; communism was perceived as a reality, and a very accessible one. In post-war Europe many Western intellectuals literally went crazy about Marxism.

A similar stance was close to the Lithuanian mentality, too, as it also wanted to see behind the word the object it signified. Those who had problems with that had already crossed the Atlantic or were being transported behind the Ural Mountains. After the guerrilla warfare against the Soviets was subdued, Marxism cozily settled in Lithuania. It easily rejected both ontology and gnoseology, replacing the variability of cognition by the so called theory of reflection, according to which, on a certain level of thinking, all concepts engulf reality. The so-called methodology of philosopher Eugenijus Meškauskas was based on de-ideologizing Marxism and analyzing its concepts according to the principle of logical impeccability. His theory did not question Marxism, though; this was left to the free will of those acquainted with the "methodology."

Free will manifested itself in the way young thinkers chose the trends of Western philosophy that suited their tastes. They would analyze them, framing their own texts as a "critique of Western bourgeois philosophy." This is how existentialism and almost all varieties of neo-positivism, from physicalism to logical linguistics, reached Lithuania even before independence. Most were endowed with Lithuanian transcriptions and explications, which led Lithuanian thinkers not only along the beaten tracks but also across the new space of independence. Instead of Marxism, there was suddenly an abyss, into which went the thinking about the state. A couple years after the restoration of independence, we tried to cover up the absence of thinking about a responsible statesmanlike position by encouraging ourselves to reread Stasys Šalkauskis and Antanas Maceina, Vydūnas, and other elders. All had been covered with a thick layer of

dust, but there was no time to clean it from their portraits and coats. Very soon they were pushed away, while the foreground was occupied by Algirdas Julius Greimas, Vytautas Kavolis, and others. Recently their authority, too, has been losing its power.

The underground press, an important factor in the process of Lithuania's liberation from the Soviet regime, failed to surpass the ideological imperative of Romas Kalanta's public self-immolation. According to this imperative, freedom has no alternatives.

The experience of the national rebirth period as well as its ideals and principles concentrated on the Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic. What happened "under" the constitution, that is, in lived reality, can be described as the noise and rage, caused by the redistribution of wealth.

The economic, legal, and political confusion determined that our thinking, which had only recently regained freedom, started abusing it, playing with it, or simply found new masters. Meanwhile, the free critical mind either mutated and became cynical, or rapidly sunk into silence. Those voices that were still loud were easy to silence. The over-abundance of information was destroying itself, while those to whom silence was useful were stimulating the process by suppressing discordant thinking. The concept of the state as a factor that should foster national unity by motivating for common action was pushed out of the public space. It was if the state were still seen as a repressive apparatus, the way it had been during the Soviet occupation.

Today, the state of our mind can be described very simply – as deconstruction. Not only are classical ideals and principles of thinking refused, but all classical spiritual experience is also rejected. To avoid making the process look too radical, the neo-Kantian distinction between the principle and value is evoked, even though the principle is too eas-

ily yielded to cynical mockery, whereas the value is taken as a sign of one's ability to think. Everyone now speaks about values! Human dignity, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights – these are the major values of the European Union (article 2 of the Constitution). There are also other values. This is both intellectual and convenient: principles can only be betrayed, while values – profitably sold.

Recently, scorn for abstraction has been encouraged more and more actively. Abstraction is generally seen as something from the other world; it is often referred to as a trap for freethinking, a tool for the dictatorship of the mind, an intellectual cul-de-sac.

In Europe, abstraction was for many centuries the flag and landmark of the mind, the vessel of thinking, accessible to all and everyone who wants not only to feel, sense or react in a unique way, but also to think, that is, to govern both himself and his surroundings. Himself – without waiting for advice, direction, or order, and thus without allowing anyone to manipulate him. To attack abstraction means to attack the language itself, the power that distinguishes the human being from other living entities because the word is an abstraction too – the name of a thing, not a thing itself; material, but not equivalent to a thing. To attack abstraction also means to attack the state because the state, from its constitution to the plans of its ministries, is the understanding of how to organize the life of the country, and it is expressed through abstractions. Their destiny is the same as that of all other plans: to remain unaccomplished, to remain outside lived reality, which is formed out of our hopes and deeds, but mostly, out of inert materiality. In any case, they are signs that create the feeling of commonality, engendered by the state as a contract for common life and the mind as the creator of that contract.

Thus, marching towards freedom and independence, did we really march towards an independent state? The



state is first of all responsibility, both personal and communal, and thus means living not only for yourself, but also for the nation.

The Sajūdis movement ensured constant supervision of the power structures and all spheres of life; this helped analyze the actions of the authorities and society in order to decide whether these actions were appropriate and to draw attention to the judgments.

Today, philosophical silence hovers over the noise of the lived reality. Various collective mental activities are organized, conferences devoted to specific areas of knowledge. However, they are largely unheard by political parties and, in any case, hardly ever say anything substantial.

Years ago, discussions at the Academy of Sciences about possible amendments to the constitution of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic helped create Sajūdis. Maybe independent Lithuania's Academy of Sciences could now suggest amendments to the new Lithuanian state, mental constructs and conceptions as opposed to political vantage points. Maybe then the nation would be able to undertake the major task of freeing itself from radical, ideologized empiricism and would save not only abstraction, but also thinking. At least public thinking.

Because in the state of philosophical silence, which hovers over the political noise begotten by the distribution of wealth, schools have already started refusing to educate young minds and have, instead, been pandering to their whims, too easily identified as human rights. Education is now grounded in interpretation as opposed to understanding, in calculation as opposed to logic. History has become a narrative, a story, controlled by the narrator. Language as a national system of cultural meanings and significations is no longer a major criterion, especially in the face of the world's commercial and political demands and the rapid digitalization of knowledge.

All this is supposedly new and modern, and we certainly cannot refuse to adapt to the global processes.

But what about the ideals and principles of Sajūdis?

Speaking diplomatically, I do not know.

Eurostat contends that Lithuania is a socially irresponsible state. National authorities claim that massive emigration of Lithuanians is the ultimate good.

Foreign political scientists say that our democracy is sick and our politics is in crisis, but only the oppositional parties agree with them, even though they are not unanimous, either.

It has been said that each year the amount of money equal to the yearly Lithuanian national budget evaporates through untaxed income. I do not know whether this is true because the data is classified. It is a business secret.

There is so much I do not know. There is so much we do not know.

I do not know whether the national stadium will ever be built in Vilnius. I do not know whether eighteen years from now artworks will finally be bought for the national collection, or whether this will remain the business of a handful of individual enthusiasts. I do not know what will become of the Rulers' Palace. Finally, given the low birth rates and the enthusiasm in welcoming immigrants, I do not know how long the Lithuanian nation will survive.

But I know that my *world* is here. Even more – the world is *here*. *The world is here*. I am responsible for it together with my nation because this world is mine. And if I do not know how this responsibility should be manifest, I have to find out.

It would be good, though, that instead of "I," I could say "we," freely and joyfully.

Lithuania is not only brave, as its infantile trademark says; it is also a clever country, as Sajūdis, said. Some of us still believe that.



This article is based on a speech delivered at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, entitled "Lithuania: From the National Rebirth Period to the European Union," organized to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Sąjūdis, the Lithuanian national reform movement established on 3 June, 1988. Editor's thanks are due to Mrs. Laima Kanopkienė, editor in chief of "Kultūros barai" journal for permission to publish this article.

# Organizations of Lithuanian Historians on the Other Side of the Atlantic in 1948–1990: Between Professionalism and Amateurism

VALDAS SELENIS

Up to now there are still few synoptic works on the historiography of the Lithuanian emigrants. The historian Juozas Jakštas, himself a representative of the 1944 wave of emigration, at the II Lithuanian Congress of Culture in Chicago in 1966, was the first to present a review of the historiography of Lithuanians in the USA at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, which "is not just an enumeration of the works of history or the account of their content".<sup>1</sup> In the posthumously published *History of Lithuania* of Zenonas Ivinskis, Paulius Jatulis prepared a very concise overview of emigrant historiography.<sup>2</sup> Egidijus Aleksandravičius in "Kauno diena" (Kaunas Day) in 1998 published a small article about the *discovery* of the creative legacy of the emigration, noting that the massive interest in the works of the emigration historians did not

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<sup>1</sup> Jakštas, "Amerikos lietuvių istoriografija," 291–296.

<sup>2</sup> Ivinskis, "Lietuvos istorija," 71–75.

receive the serious attention of researchers and historians.<sup>3</sup> Aivas Ragauskas was interested in and described as much as available sources allowed the features of the communication of emigrant and Soviet Lithuanian historians.<sup>4</sup> However, the historians, prepared for professional work in independent Lithuania, and pushed to the other side of the Atlantic by the war and occupations, had plenty of opportunities to resent the reviving and growing romanticism and the related to it "movement" of amateurism. Nostalgia for the abandoned homeland, the uncertainty of the future encouraged one to make the beginning of the Lithuanian state earlier, to search again for Lithuanians in all possible ancient civilizations, to publish counterfeit not convincing historical documents. The question of what "declining" historiography symptoms the Lithuanian exile historians of that time identified and how they proposed to 'cure' them, is the problem of this article.

To answer this question and reveal the movements of historical thought first assist some currently available online sources – the periodical journals "Aidai" (Echoes), "Akiračiai" (Horizons), "Metmenys" (Outlines), "Draugas" (Friend), "Tėviškės Žiburiai" (Lights of the Homeland), "Lituanius" and others. In this paper, we also use published historical memoirs, of which the most informative is that of Juozas Jakštas *Mano istorijos mokslo kelias* (My Path of History Studies), published in 1992. One can learn considerable valuable data or "behind the scenes" information on the scholarly or social activities of historians from the correspondence, which is held in the University of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas (it was used in the book Adolfas Šapoka. *Raštai. T. IV. Mokslinė korespondencija* (Adolfas Šapoka. Works. Vol. IV. Scholarly Correspondence) by the author of this article and

<sup>3</sup> Aleksandravičius, "Lietuvos istoriografija," 293.

<sup>4</sup> Ragauskas, "Sovietinės Lietuvos," 77–83.

the Zenonas Ivinskis Fund (F 198) of the Manuscript Department of the Vilnius University Library.

The aim of this article is to discuss the problems and trends of historical thought in the organization of professional history science in the United States and Canada in the period 1948–1990. The tasks are to analyze and disclose the characteristics of the formation and performance of the organizations of Lithuanian emigrant historians in the same period, their approach to the manifestations of the profanation of the science of history and amateurism.

### **The Recruitment of Organizations and Historians**

Institute of Lithuanian Studies in Chicago, founded in 1952, was not an office, but a scholarly society. The Institute was restored by the Society of Lithuanian Professors in America, most of whom were former professors of the universities of Lithuania. The first congress was held in 1971 in Chicago and later continued to be held regularly approximately every three years. In fact, it was the first organization that in exile began the recruitment of the forces of historians and began operations in an "empty space" without either resources or suitable infrastructure.

One can see the problems of the beginning of the organization of the Institute's Lithuanian History Section from the questionnaire sent out to the members by the first head of the section Adolfas Šapoka with the outline of the section's work plan, the execution of which depended on the individual activities of the members, because the Institute did not have adequate working conditions:

In creating the plan of the work activities of a scholarly institution under normal conditions it certainly would be suitable to follow the very object and the demands raised at that time for



the specialists of that area. But our conditions are completely abnormal – all the members of the section can devote to the history of Lithuania only splinters of their available remaining time, there are no funds either to free any person or to acquire minimum measures, so at the beginning we have to concentrate our attention to only one or another episodic matter, to clarify the conditions without the possibilities for scholarly research and act by helping and promoting each other.<sup>5</sup>

Šapoka, referring to “the demands raised by the existing moment and the emigre public,” offered to find out the conditions for research and scholarly work: to register the professional historians and enthusiasts, to ascertain who is interested in what or what he is researching and what kind of help or assistance he expects from colleagues, to register those studying history and encourage them to take interest everywhere in the history of Lithuania and to register in their place of study facts found relating to the history of Lithuania, to document what is written highlighting the history of Lithuania, to compile within the borders of the activities of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies a catalogue of the existing Lithuanian related material, with the members of the chapter actively contributing to this work. The basis for the catalogue could serve the bibliography of various Lithuanian related works prepared by Vaclovas Biržiška at Library of Congress in Washington and under his very leadership Šapoka also offered to provide opportunities to publish the prepared works, “to find paths to enter foreign scholarly journals”, in addition, “to fulfill the demands raised at that moment”, i.e. to keep track of foreign publications and to respond to the frequent distortions of Lithuanian history, especially in encyclopedias, at the same time introducing to publishers and scholarly institutions potential assistants on the history of East-

<sup>5</sup> Šapoka to Vaclovas Biržiška. July 11, 1952.



ern Europe. He made the same offer to the whole Institute of Lithuanian Studies, to whom would fall the need to warn Lithuanian society and Lithuanian institutions that in such cases "they would direct the interested to the right place". The latter proposal was inspired by Zenonas Ivinskis, who had written about inaccuracies, outdated or distorted information about Lithuania in the famous *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and Šapoka encouraged

to engage in the matter of Lithuanian information and propaganda. For this it would be suitable to prepare a serious scholarly history of Lithuania in at least several foreign languages, to devote attention to historical issues raised by political affairs, such as borders, relations with neighbors and so on, to satisfy the thirst for Lithuania's history, to have a broader history of one's nation and the textbooks needed by the younger generation, to find out the conditions and opportunities to research, write and publish the history of Lithuanian emigrants in the USA and other countries. Also to take care for the preservation and gathering of the historic materials of the emigrants.

Šapoka wrote to the temporary President of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies Petras Jonikas that not a single member of the section believes that it should issue a separate publication. The members of the section at that time could offer for publication only one prepared work, *The Baltic Sea at the Time of Napoleon's Continental Blockade* by Vincas Trumpa, Jonas Matusas wrote that he had prepared *The History of the Civilization of Lithuanians up to the Sixteenth Century*, but this was a compilation of articles printed in journals of Lithuania in 1941–1943, but somewhat supplemented. Šapoka questioned whether it should be printed. He noted that having asked members of the Institute about the material col-

lected in the World Lithuanian archive, library, office and the Lithuanian American Cultural Archive, all the members were against centralization, because being decentralized it is accessible to a greater number of individual members.<sup>6</sup>

Another area of the activities of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies is the substantiation of memorial dates of Lithuanian history and the organization of their celebration. Being the head of the History Section of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies, Jakštas on March 9, 1965 wrote to all the members of the section about the "arising in society wish last year to have a historically based date for the beginning of the Lithuanian state," which reached the Board of the Lithuanian World Community (hereinafter – LWC) and it approached the LWC Cultural Council on this matter. In the letter "about the date of the beginning of the state of Lithuania" Jakštas noted that

Perhaps the wish appearing among us last year to have a real date for the beginning of the Lithuanian state arose under the influence of the Polish Millennium, which is being celebrated this year. As in the case of the Polish Millennium, the beginning of the state is connected with Christianity, so in our community a similar trend is held: to throw the beginning of the state and Christianity of Lithuania with the baptism and coronation of Mindaugas.

Jakštas stated that "states, like ours, especially in the Middle Ages, were the outcome of public and political development and the moment of their founding is untraceable," noted that

deciding also from the first date of the documents for the donation of lands to the Order, July 1253, one can speculate that at the time it was already crowned. Thus, the crowning date of 1253 is

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<sup>6</sup> Šapoka to the President of Lithuanian Research and Studies Institute. July, 1952.

hypothetical. [...] Only 1251 remains, supposedly the year of the papal bull, the real date before which Mindaugas was baptized, and after which he was adorned with a royal crown.<sup>7</sup>

Views on the interpretation of historical facts were exchanged at the congresses of the Institute. On May 17–18, 1975 during the congress of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies Jakštas discussed news about the treatise on Lithuania by the French fourteenth century author Philip de Mezieres, noting that Lithuania was very well known to the whole of Western Europe. Jonas Dainauskas questioned the authenticity of the Act of Krėva, because “the Poles made it the cornerstone of the state relations of Lithuania-Poland”. Much earlier Ivinskis criticized Dainauskas, asked why it was necessary to falsify the document of the 1385 Krėva agreement, the provisions of which Jogaila began to carry out after half a year.<sup>8</sup> However, the criticism of professional historians was rarely taken into account.

At the III Congress of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies on November 24–27, 1977 Saulius Sužiedėlis made a presentation about the social-economic problems of the Užnemunė cities and towns in the nineteenth century, about the often influenced by strained economic reasons peasants and city dwellers, or the relations of the Lithuanians and Jews in the towns, the economic policies of the estates that hindered the economic progress of the Užnemunė towns. At the same congress, Dainauskas “exposed” another document of medieval political history – the 1413 Horodle Acts as counterfeit, “not having any value as historical documents.”

Among the eleven sections of the First Congress of Culture, which took place in Chicago on June 30, 1956, was the history section. The Central Board of the Lithuanian Ameri-

<sup>7</sup> Jakštas to Ivinskis. Cleveland–Bonn. 1970.

<sup>8</sup> Ivinskis, “Lietuvos istorija,” 598.



can Community invited Vincentas Liulevičius to organize the meetings of the section. The Lithuanian Historical Society (hereinafter – LHS) was asked to arrange the History Section at the II Congress of Culture in 1962. The same Liulevičius was asked to lead the section. He wrote personally to 59 people, who were more concerned with the history of Lithuania, of which 26 supported the idea of establishing the LHS, 9 had doubts, several strongly opposed, others – did not answer. During the Constituent meeting on December 15, 1957, 29 individuals approved the LHS. During the II Congress of Culture Jakštas presented perhaps the first review of the historiography of USA Lithuanians at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. In which he noted that: “a true historiography examines the history of the works in relation to the prevailing ideas of the time and sequence, how much they influenced the authors and determined their chosen direction.”<sup>9</sup> The historiography of the emigrants was divided into four groups – local history, biographies of individuals, histories of organizations and the general history of the Lithuanians of America. The work of Simas Sužiedėlis *St. Francis Lithuanian Parish* (1953), even though it is not unbiased in the evaluation of the parish’s Statute, in the opinion of Jakštas, is the most prominent known to him “local work of history among the Lithuanians of America”. Even though in some places an apologetic tone penetrates, the *Alliance of the Lithuanian Roman Catholics in America* by A. Kučas is the most famous contribution to the historiography of the organizations of Lithuanians in America. Jakštas raised three challenges for the historiography of Lithuanians in America: first – to accumulate as many sources as possible testifying to the daily life of the people here, second – to produce more monographs on organizations, their senior managers and individual col-

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<sup>9</sup> Jakštas, “Amerikos lietuvių istoriografija,” 291–296.



onies – from combinations of the histories of organizations one could write also a general history of the Lithuanians in America, the third and final – to cast off the “factionalism” and consider the Lithuanian community in America as a national unit.

An important bar of LHS activities was the organization of commemorations of various anniversaries in Lithuania's history. To participate in them were invited historians not necessarily doing research on the specifically mentioned event, personality or organization, but “everyone who can”. In 1963 the LHS commemorated the anniversaries of the uprising of 1863 and the death of Mindaugas in 1263. Jakštas in his article in “Tautos praeitis” (Past of the Nation) about the significance of the uprising concluded with the comparison:

To us who survived World War II and as a result of it were exiled from our land, the uprising of 1863 should be significant by its similarity to the uprising of our countrymen in 1945–53. First, both are similar in that one and the other was animated by the hope of getting help from the West.

Few Lithuanian historians worked in the colleges or universities in the USA, but the work of an instructor also did not allow one to focus more on history research. As such “successful” cases one may mention the work of Konstantinas Avižonis at Elon University (North Carolina), Antanas Kučas – University of Scranton (Pennsylvania), where he taught Eastern European history and Antanas Vasys (Vasiliauskas), who initially worked in a factory, but for three years at Syracuse University taught the Russian language, which “he had not studied and which he hated”. It is interesting that using connections Vasys offered Ivinskis a permanent place in one of the US universities to teach the Russian language, Russian history and a course on

general philology, of course, Ivinskis was then in Rome investigating the Vatican archives, and declined the offer.<sup>10</sup>

## Projects

Lithuanian historians in exile with the rare exceptions of those involved in exchange programs (Romualdas Misiūnas, Leonas Sabaliūnas) did not have possibilities to access the archives of the Lithuanian SSR, or other USSR archives. Archives and libraries in the United States and Canada have only a fraction of the needed material, and some none at all. Šapoka wrote to Mykolas Biržiška: "it is even amazing that there is no interest in the science of history. In a city with a million residents there is not even a single somewhat suitable library for that purpose."<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, a scholarly problem of a broader scale could interest the audience of the most prestigious universities of the USA. Archaeologist Marija Gimbutas made such a research proposal and shared her impressions about the beginning of her scholarly work with Ivinskis:

[...] I read my first lecture at Harvard University: a summary of my study. I had to speak English without a text, because I showed about 20 maps. The audience was really serious: professors and doctoral students. A total of about 40–50 people. I spoke more than an hour, and the discussions with archaeologists and linguists continued [...]. I had a chance to show what I know, many times I mentioned Lithuania, the issue of Lithuanians, the surnames of Balts and our scholars (e.g.: Būga). Everything was absolutely new for them. The mood was certainly sympathetic, I received applause and a real assurance that my book will be published when I write it, but Zenonas when will I write it? I am

<sup>10</sup> Vasys to Ivinskis. January 9, 1959.

<sup>11</sup> Šapoka to Mykolas Biržiška. November 9, 1958.

still like at the beginning, all the technical work is before my eyes, although I have a full picture in my mind. I have to cover the whole of Eastern Europe – from the Baltic Sea up to the Caucasus and from Germany up to the Volga. On most of it the work is that of a miner, because there is nothing at least partially finished.<sup>12</sup>

Some more significant projects of history were matured and realized in exile. Some of the initiators and authors had not tasted the study of history. Bronius Kviklys proposed to Šapoka to review the two-volume *Description of the Lands of Lithuania* – the forthcoming four-volume treatise *Mūsų Lietuva* (Our Lithuania), aimed at the countryman with medium education residing abroad.<sup>13</sup> Šapoka agreed, but warned that he cannot uncover errors, touching local history, because he does not have sources to check them. After he died suddenly, Rapolas Krasauskas and Ivinskis agreed to give further advice and also review *Our Lithuania*.

K. Trimakas, the chairman of the Commission of Eastern Studies formed by the Lithuanian Freedom Committee, proposed that historians prepare a work about the history of the development of Lithuania's Eastern borders, Simas Sužiedėlis was obligated to look for work assistants. When Šapoka, Avižonis, Jakštas, Vladas Viliamas, Kazys Pakštas declined, Sužiedėlis convinced Ivinskis, arguing that the Commission is not a scholarly institution and does not have the aim to undertake the studies "with a whole scholarly apparatus," it is important to give an overview of the development of Lithuania's eastern borders to the present day and the "journalistic propaganda-matters" which "both the Germans, the Poles and Belarussians" carry out.<sup>14</sup> Moreover,

<sup>12</sup> Gimbutienė to Ivinskis. March 24, 1951.

<sup>13</sup> Kviklys to Šapoka. March 4, 1961.

<sup>14</sup> Sužiedėlis to Ivinskis. About 1951.



Ivinskis in 1946 in Tübingen had prepared a study on *The Issue of Lithuania's borders*.

Ivinskis replied to the request of Institute of Lithuanian Studies History Section head Šapoka about the writing of a history of independent Lithuania. His response was skeptical: there are no "tangible data" that the conditions for writing in Lithuania will ever improve, because the material remaining there can be destroyed, nevertheless, such a history is necessary and the Institute of Lithuanian Studies can undertake part of that work, moreover, an editorial team of at least three persons should be composed from the historians living in the USA and Canada, in cooperation with the diplomats, who may be interested in the preparation of such a publication. Ivinskis himself could write about the Act of February 16 and the period of Lithuania's (State) Council, or on the relations of Lithuania and Germany after World War I. Ivinskis could not imagine what could be published if there are no resources and proposed to apply to the Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations and present a project for research on the cultural, economic, religious and other life of occupied Lithuania, as that "could open the door to those institutions in America that could finance such a project".<sup>15</sup> Jakštas prepared such a study, though of course not of very high quality, around the year 1970, but it was released only twenty years later.

On April 12, 1970 Jakštas read a lecture about the Constituent Seimas in Chicago, where he received a proposal to write an article about the historians belonging to the "Ateitis" Federation. He mentioned this to Ivinskis

I stayed there for a few days and had the opportunity to visit the newspaper "Draugas" and glance through old (1918) issues of "Draugas". I talked with members of the editorial

<sup>15</sup> Ivinskis to Šapoka. October 8, 1958.



board and was asked by them to write an article about all the "Ateitis" Federation historians. It was desired to have it by the upcoming Jubilee. I agreed. Immediately together with a Miss Rūgytė we put together a list of "Ateitis" historians and counted 20 of them. The number is imposing. How to gather information about them? On the advice of Liulevičius, I sent to all of them questionnaires with an accompanying letter, asking them to reply to me. From the answers I would be able to write something about each of them. To You, Zenonai, I did not send a questionnaire, because I know your life and works very well.<sup>16</sup>

The project of the synthesis of Lithuanian history remained unfulfilled. At the X Congress of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies on November 28, 1985 held in Chicago it was stated that Dainauskas is coordinating the writing of the collective history of Lithuania initiated by Jonas Puzinas and in addition to the prehistory section two other parts are prepared by Jakštas and Sužiedėlis. Three authors had not yet completed their work.

In the summer of 1973 while still in Jerusalem, Dovydas Fainhauzas, as a known specialist of nineteenth century Lithuanian and Belarusian history, unexpectedly received the offer of USA Lithuanian Jesuit Provincial, the director of the Youth Center in Chicago Gediminas Kijauskas to write a work about the origins of Lithuania's independence. At that time working at the University of Jerusalem, but not fitting in there well, he came to Chicago from Israel in 1974. Historians Jakštas, Vanda Sruogienė, Puzinas, Simas Sužiedėlis, V. Trumpa and Jonas Račkauskas wrote recommendations to the World Lithuanian Fund to support him materially in writing a study about the Lithuanian emigrants in Chicago in 1772–1914. In 1977 Fain-

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<sup>16</sup> Jakštas to Ivinskis. April 21, 1970.

hauzas prepared and published the history of the Lithuanian community in multi-ethnic Chicago.<sup>17</sup>

### "The Etruscans" and Other Problems

As already mentioned, the History Section of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies decided not to issue its own publication, but the LHS was interested in publishing a history journal. The first issue of the LHS "non-periodical journal of history and related areas" "Tautos Praeitis" (The Past of the Nation) (hereinafter – PN) printed the lecture of Vytautas Bagdanavičius "A Critical Review of the Soviet Lithuanian Historiography" read at its annual meeting, the article of the former Director of the Republic of Lithuania Mint Jonas K. Karys "The Oldest Lithuanian Money" and the "scholarly" article of the Marian priest LHS President Kazimieras A. Matulaitis "Are the Etruscans Related to Us?"

LHS Secretary Alicija Rūgytė wrote that the PN journal under the conditions of exile life could not be raised to a high scholarly level. It was enough to have articles satisfying the general public, lovers of history. Almost all of them were of a descriptive, but not investigatory nature. Many of them were the lectures given at meetings by LHS members. The PN was the operating base of the LHS.<sup>18</sup> Not all historians were satisfied with the PN journal. For example, responding to a letter of Vytautas Bagdanavičius asking why the PN is not mentioned in the pages of "Tėviškės Žiburiai" (Lights of the Homeland), Šapoka replied, regretting that in PN there are no items of serious study, because one does not need reprints, but to concentrate on recent times, to publish documents and memoirs, one cannot justify the working method of Matulaitis writing about

<sup>17</sup> Fainhauz, *Lithuanians in Multi-Ethnic Chicago*.

<sup>18</sup> Rūgytė, "Lietuvių Istorijos Draugijos penkiolikmetis," 283.

the kinship of Etruscans to Lithuanians.<sup>19</sup> The editorial board of PN in a postscript to the Matulaitis article about the Etruscans noted: "It would be good that other historians or linguists express their opinions on this issue," the prose writer, translator and scholar Juozas Tininis replied to this invitation. He noted that Matulaitis quoted only those Etruscan inscriptions which randomly remind Lithuanian language words, indeed there cannot be talk about any language affinity, because linguists a long time ago determined that the Etruscans were not Indo-Europeans.

Historians sparked a wider debate on the scholarly level of PN. Antanas Kučas wrote that

when talking about its content, some critics in their reviews already had time to scold, to regret the absence of works by specialist historians and to slip in their value and to lash the poor publishers for not doing it according to the fashion "cut" by the critics. But we are all well acquainted with the conditions of intellectual work, so we should rejoice that there are people who are sacrificing their work and energy to know the past of the Lithuanian nation.<sup>20</sup>

Viktoras Gidžiūnas noted that

when the promise of a newspaper for history was made, historians were waiting for a serious scholarly journal, because only such could justify its emergence. There was and still is room for ordinary historical articles in the newspapers that are already being issued, only historians did not have any place to print their broader study with the full critical apparatus or publish the documents collected in archives. Others yearned for and still

<sup>19</sup> Šapoka to Bagdanavičius. December 30, 1959.

<sup>20</sup> Kučas, "Tautos praeitis," 89.



long for a journal in the format of "Židinys" (Focus) that had been issued in Lithuania. The editorial board and administration organized by history buffs that issued the first book of *The Past of the Nation*, disappointed the expectations of historians. This can be seen from the way Šapoka evaluated the first book in *The Lights of the Homeland* and Trumpa the second in "Aidai" (Echoes). [...] Although Liulevičius sharply retorted to the second book reviewer in the same "Echoes", but even he had to admit that serious criticism, rather than adulation, contributed to the progress of the "The Past of the Nation", since in the third book we do not find either the Etruscans or the Hittites, although we find an introductory (article) of a comparable level.

Gidžiūnas noted that if an authoritative historian would be invited to the editorial board, historian scholars, who could specify how to manage the journal – to unify the scholarly apparatus, the system of footnotes, would join in.<sup>21</sup>

The controversy of Šapoka with V. Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė illustrates the way professional historians reacted to inaccuracies even in the discourse of literature. The dispute arose from the play of Balys Sruoga "Kazimieras Sapiega" (Casimir Sapieha). In a polemical article Šapoka wrote: "Great is the problem, how the reality of real life correlates with the truth preached by the poet, because in society there is expressed the desire to seek truth in a literary piece."<sup>22</sup> Šapoka referring to himself writes: "As far as I know, Sruoga failed to get a not bad thesis of a student about those events, even though that work should have been in the archives of the University. It was not found!" In a "long retort" to the article of Šapoka, Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė noticed many anachronisms and inaccuracies in the portrayal of historical figures and the events themselves. According to

<sup>21</sup> Gidžiūnas, "Trečioji Tautos praeities knyga," 225.

<sup>22</sup> Šapoka, "Balio Sruogos Kazimieras Sapiega," 5–7.



Šapoka, having set down a "sensational" heading Sruogienė began in a calm tone, but ended with a "difficult to understand scream and incrimination." Šapoka was accused of overtaking his own words in the textbook *History of Lithuania*, with the creation of a whole new type of Sapiėha. The conclusion of Šapoka was: "We can respect the sentiments of the widow for her deceased husband, but there are limits to everything." On this subject, he wrote, more precisely replied, to the scolding letter of Vaclovas Biržiška, explaining that he had no intention to attack Sruoga as a creator, he was annoyed only by the rhetoric of Jurgis Blekaitis that all this (the play "Casimir Sapiėha") corresponds to historical truth, if writing in a specialized journal one could also point out more things than in a newspaper review.<sup>23</sup>

Paradoxically, Šapoka belongs to the rare cases in exile when professional historians would go on the path not requiring verification of critical data. Šapoka in "Echoes" writing about the Volyn treaty in 1219, discussed the issue of the capital of Mindaugas and did not miss the opportunity to note that "now all accept the thesis of H. Paszkiewicz that this treaty is exactly evidence of the existence of the state. In other words, Mindaugas did not actually create the state, but only centralized it." Liulevičius came to the same conclusion:

for the state to exist, one needs a nation, territory and authority. Remembering the just told fact about the concluded in 1219 treaty of the Lithuanian princes with Volhynia, we see all three elements of the state, so at this time the state of the Lithuanian nation really had to exist.<sup>24</sup>

Šapoka was inclined to see the beginning of the state even from the siege of Apuolė in 853.

<sup>23</sup> Šapoka to V. Biržiška. November 23, 1952.

<sup>24</sup> Ragauskas, "Nuo hipotezės iki mito?" 59.

Historians belonging to the post-war wave of emigrants, in some places had to adapt to the Lithuanian community with older admitted roots. To give an academic lecture to the generation of the older Lithuanian emigration about the issues of history was a completely different matter than to the audience of Harvard University. The experience of Simas Sužiedėlis in Brockton in this respect differed from that of Gimbutienė:

First of all, I wanted to bring that lecture about Mindaugas nearer to local listeners the greater part of whom are still "aušrininkai" (people of the "Aušra" (Dawn) newspaper) – people of the epoch of the wooden plough and sickle, although they drive modern cars and live in the shade of skyscrapers. For the Lithuanian language they are children who can have understand only the simplest concepts.<sup>25</sup>

The largest part of the exile historians continued to show interest in the political history of Lithuania in various periods. Jakštas in "Echoes" responded to an article of Jonas Švoba "The Case of the King of Lithuania" in the August 14, 1970 issue of "Dirva" (Soil). Jakštas noted that

From the time when Dr. Pr. V. Raulinaitis announced in an article of June 23, 1962 in "Draugas", arguing that the rulers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania should be called kings and their state a kingdom, there began a fight of feathers between the supporters of Raulinaitis and historians, defenders of the accustomed heritage.

Jakštas drew attention that neither Jogaila nor Vytautas called themselves kings of Lithuania, therefore one has to call the past in the way "as it called itself."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Sužiedėlis to Ivinskis. November 24, 1951.

<sup>26</sup> Jakštas, "Prie Lietuvos karalių bylos," 59–63.

Trumpa with equal criticism assessed both the ideological "steward" Soviet Lithuanian historians and the not very precise emigrant historians. For example, in parallel evaluating the book of Juozas Žiugžda *Antanas Mackevičius: 1863–1864 metų sukilimo reikšmė lietuvių tautos istorijoje* (Antanas Mackevičius: The Meaning of the 1863–1864 Uprising in the History of the Lithuanian Nation) and J.B. Končius *History of Lithuania* Trumpa noted that the historian must use the dictionary, which was in circulation "at that time," and not to transfer the terms to those times in which they were not used. Portraying the immensity of the "revolutionary" movement, Žiugžda inadequately relies on the authority of Karl Marx. The "history" of Končius, published in English, in turn, is teeming with factual errors, in the opinion of Trumpa it would not at all be worth talking about, if it had not been published by the Lithuanian American Community, which is wasting money on "such sordid" things.<sup>27</sup>

Trumpa also spoke about the issue of myths in history:

And a lawyer, and a security official and a policeman, even a for-ester now try to be a historian. Almost everyone writes memoirs and thinks that he is writing the history of his nation. Of course, most of those histories are only "myths" or plainly speaking, only blowing mists into the eyes. And meanwhile the emigrant society shouts – more myths, more fogs, more patriotism.

Teodoras Narbutas and Tadas Korzonas were engineers, but devoted their whole life to history and wrote good works of history,

one cannot say this about some of our emigrant pseudo-historians who, episodically fumbling here and there, on this and that, began to question the fundamental conception of our his-

<sup>27</sup> Trumpa, "Kaip nereikia rašyti istoriją," 9.



tory, invented various theories about kings and princes, the baptism, began to proclaim as falsifications in their opinion almost everything that was not useful for the Lithuanian nation, and, worst of all, in the name of patriotism, to consider as immortals and heroes of the Lithuanian nation people who were neither Lithuanians nor heroes. For they proclaim our real historians as insufficient patriots, succumbing to foreign influences, degrading the past of the Lithuanian nation. It is not surprising that the public likes this. It even organizes referendums to resolve one or another historical issue. Like, it seems, by a vote one can decide if the earth revolves around the sun, or vice versa.

Trumpa states that the historian often becomes just a victim of public rape.<sup>28</sup>

Jakštas wrote to Ivinskis that not all emigrants historians are depraved, there are good ones, such as Liulevičius, although he also when writing about the first mention of Lithuania's name relied on the textbook edited by Adolfas Šapoka, where the editor had fabricated the message:

When after returning from Vienna in early 1936, I received from Šapoka his rewritten manuscript, I encountered a text almost foreign to me. There were many places where there were attempts to correct and rectify. I settled, nevertheless, with simply noting what appeared to me greater errors. The greatest one was that he completely reworked my mentioned Einhard with the name of the Aistians in his well-known chronicle *Vita Caroli Magni*. Also mentioned there were even more medieval chronicles with the Aistians. Shortening this Šapoka crossed out everything, leaving only that biographer of Karoly, making him an anonymous scout. From the hint of a serious chronicle he

<sup>28</sup> Trumpa, "Istoriko atsakomybės klausimu," 117–123.



made such a child-like little history, somehow randomly created. I, of course, crossed it out, and wrote in my own text. But Šapoka crossed out every one of my corrections and completely restored his text. The Einhard place remained. I felt quite angry. But I was silent for a holy peace. Only at a meeting I demanded that he take full responsibility. He agreed with this and noted it in the preface. For me, this place in the history of Šapoka has always been a mote in the eye. And now when I read that reference of Liulevičius, the mote has already turned into barley.<sup>29</sup>

Historians in exile felt a grievance because of the non-valuation of their work. Viktoras Gidžiūnas at the III Congress of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies, which was held in Chicago on May 29–31, 1971, in his lecture, describing the funds of the Vatican archive, noted that there were very few who evaluated these treasures of the past: "Today many a journalist throws a word of contempt even at serious historians, claiming that we have developed too many historians, and they overshadow other scholars."<sup>30</sup>

Jakštas at the Congress of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies in 1971 said that an unnamed colleague of his having carefully read the historical articles published in the press of Lithuanian emigrants in the USA with bitterness wrote about "the begun to be produced historiography of decline". He even proposed to historians to prepare a declaration against these "scribblings". Jakštas did not agree with such methods.

Let anyone write what he wants and how he is able. And the adepts should point out the errors with supported data and warn those deviating from the foundations of the science of history. The controversy arising from this, if it is objective (and not personal), would benefit the science of history. It would en-

<sup>29</sup> Jakštas to Ivinskis. December 9, 1970.

<sup>30</sup> Gidžiūnas, "Lietuvos istorijos šaltiniai Vatikano archyve," 232.

courage interest in our past in the broad public. Then could arise also all sorts of unexpected problems and in considering them the science of history would be pushed forward.<sup>31</sup>

## Conclusions

The History Section of the Institute of Lithuanian Studies was the first public scholarly organization of Lithuanian emigrant historians, which due to the conditions of operation did not become an academic institution. The Institute's activities plan provided for registering historians, preparing a catalogue of available Lithuanian related materials and for responding to and correcting the distortions of Lithuanian history occurring in the Western scholarly press and media. It was intended to focus on the historical issues raised by political circumstances, such as borders, relations with neighbors, and similar issues, to find out the conditions and opportunities in the USA and other countries to explore, write and publish the history of Lithuanian emigrants, as well as provide for the preservation and mobilization of historical materials of emigrants.

The Lithuanian Historical Society began to publish a separate journal devoted to historical themes. Historians evaluated "The Past of the Nation" in a controversial manner because in the first issues of the journal there appeared quite a few much romanticized and not meeting scholarly requirements articles. The amateurism and the abundant works of unprofessional "lovers of history" allowed historians to talk about the "decadent" historiography holding the princes of Lithuania as kings, looking for the kinship of Lithuanian with Etruscans, the earlier beginning of the state and unfavorable to Lithuania historical documents as falsifications, but some historians valued

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<sup>31</sup> Jakštas, "Lietuvos istorikų darbai Vakarų pasaulyje," 262-270.

it as an opportunity to discuss and highlight issues that should be addressed in improving the level of scholarly work.

The most significant realized project of a non-professional historian is the four-volume work of Bronius Kviklys *Our Lithuania*. The most significant unrealized project of professional historians – the since 1978 being prepared, but still never appearing synthesis of the history of Lithuania.

Despite the abundance of romantic pseudo-scientific papers there were many professionally written works of political history, some valuable works of social, cultural, and local history.

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## Žibuntas Mikšys (1923–2013)

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**Mikšys** had shown an early interest in poetry and theater from his mother's influence. His mother, Zuzana Arlauskaitė Mikšienė, was a well-known actress and director in Lithuania. Mikšys' art interests were reinforced at the Kaunas Jesuit High School under the tutelage of sculptor Alfonsas Janulis. During Mikšys' Displaced Person years in Germany he had the opportunity to study art at the Nuremberg and Stuttgart Academies of Art and theater direction at the Kunibert Gensichen Drama School. According to art critic Dr. Erika Grigoravičienė fine art, theater and literature were closely related in Mikšys' lexicon. His visual artistic production was primarily in printmaking including lithography, etching and linocuts. The primary inspirations for his prints were theater and poetry, likely the result of his mother's influence. He used letterforms, words and sentences as a visual resource and they are often incorporated in his prints. He had a fascination with small works in the form of ex libris and created

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ŽIBUNTAS MIKŠYS was born in Kaunas, Lithuania, on December 12, 1923. His family fled to Vienna in 1944 and settled as displaced persons in Germany in 1945. He came to the USA in 1949 and gained citizenship in 1955, but the attractions of Lithuanian communities of Detroit, Chicago and New York did not fulfill him and he relocated to Paris in 1962 where he spent the rest of his years with his wife Miriam Meras, a painter.





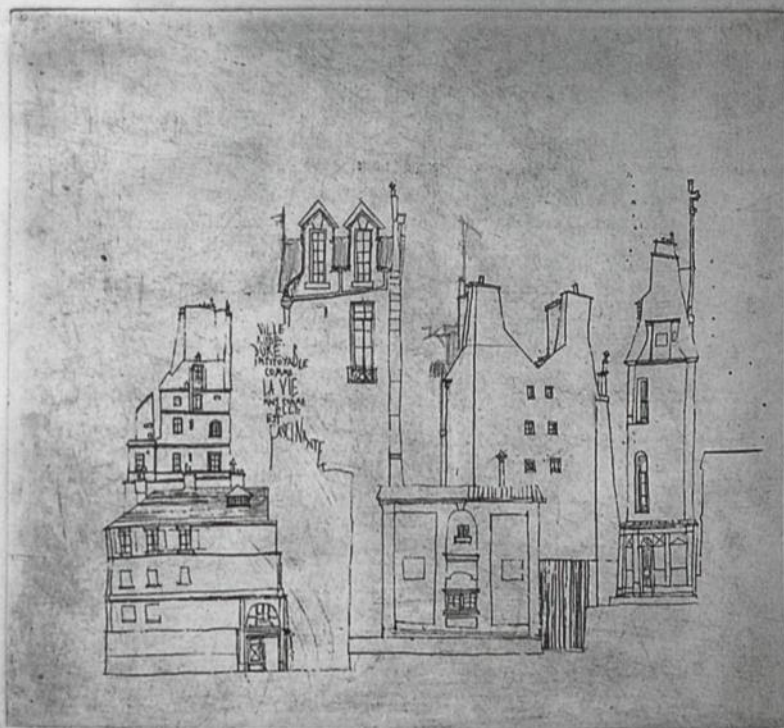
*Žibuntas Mikšys with his wife Miriam Meras in his Paris studio circa 2011.*

them for friends and acquaintances throughout the world as a token of friendship, respect and recognition.

Mikšys valued his Lithuanian roots and stayed active in the Lithuanian community in his new found French home; he taught Lithuanian language at The National Institute of Eastern Languages; he authored *La Lituanie, Pays Entre Deux Mondes* (Lithuania, Land Between two Worlds) under the pen name Jean-Pierre Menthanon. In 1999 he was elected Chairman of the Lithuanian Community Council of France.



Daliai, ex libris, undated, 7 x 5 cm.



III. Senamiestis: kaminai, dated 1976 on reverse, collection of Jurgis & Dalia Anyas, 25.5 x 28 cm.





*Jurgis, undated, collection of Jurgis & Dalia Anyas,  
18.5 x 9.5 cm.*



*Jurgiui, undated, collection of Jurgis & Dalia Anysas,  
17.5 x 9.5 cm.*



en

"Metmenims"

~is

*Metmenims, ex libris, undated, 6 x 7.5 cm.*



H. Vepštenei

~a padēka

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*H. Vepštenei su padēka, ex libris, undated, 6.5 x 7 cm.*





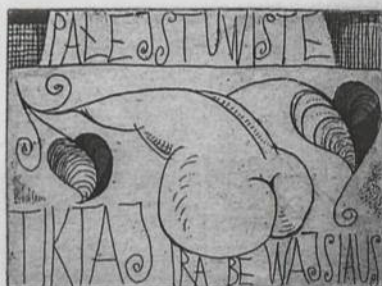
Henrietai Vepštienė su geriausiai linkėjimais 2/2

Henrietai Vepštienė su geriausiai linkėjimais, ex libris, undated, 8 x 6 cm.



*Untitled, ex libris, undated, 5.4 x 3.8 cm.*

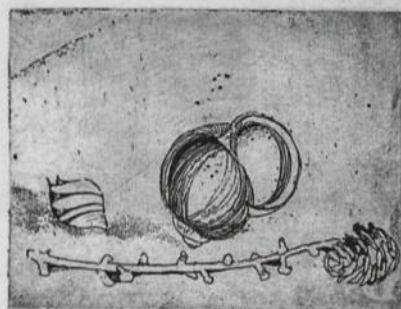
*H. Vyskinitis, on paper, ex libris, undated, 8.5 x 7 cm.*



Jurgiui

Tubmatus

*Jurgiui, ex libris, undated, collection of Jurgis & Dalia Anyas, 6 x 8.2 cm.*

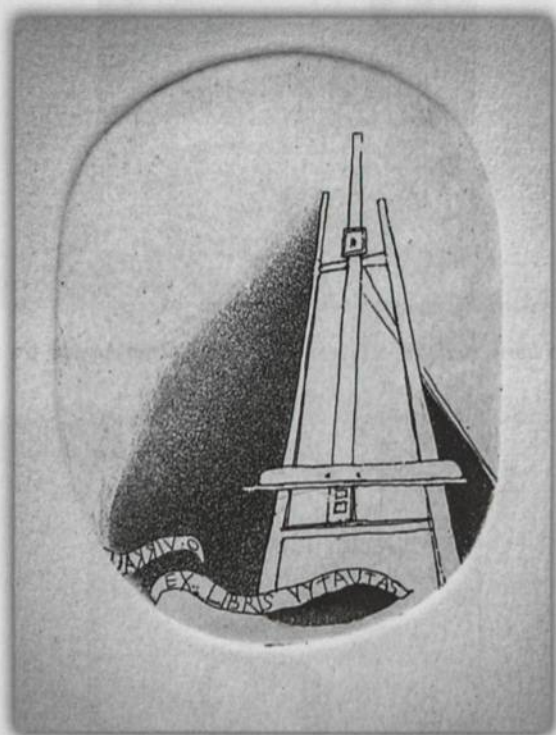


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*Untitled, ex libris, undated, 6.75 x 10 cm.*





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## Three Stories by Bitė Vilimaitė

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One of the leading feminist voices in Lithuanian prose, Vilimaitė mastered a distinct type of short story characterized by a minimalist style, delicately registered detail and a bleak spiritual atmosphere. In very brief sketches that have been described as “fleeting” “minute,” and “momentary” – she explored the essence of women’s lives. Uncertainty, bewilderment and apparent meaninglessness are common themes, always implied rather than stated. Vilimaitė’s approach to fiction abandoned and then transformed traditional realist plot structures – defying reader expectations by omitting expositions and resolutions in favor of seemingly unrelated details and clipped dialogue that conveyed fragmentation and skepticism. Many of her stories – including the three here translated for the first time – consist of only a few pages of laconically rendered scenes or gestures that nevertheless yield arresting truths. With ultra-concision and jarring psychological insight, Vilimaitė attempted to capture in compressed form the totality of human fate.

Born in 1943 in Lazdijai, Bitė Vilimaitė grew up in Kaunas and spent her adult life primarily in Vilnius. She studied Lithuanian language and literature at Vilnius University from 1960 to 1965 and later worked as a journalist for the magazine “Kinas” (Cinema). Between 1966 and 1996 she published eight collections of short stories, finally achieving both critical and popular success in 2002 with the collection, *Papartynų saulė* (Sunlight for Ferns), for which she won the National Prize for Literature. She died in 2014.

## Anatomy of a Friendship (2002)

They were drawn together by their analogous domestic situations: both were on the verge of divorce. Perhaps the reason they almost never spoke about it was that on this topic they could neither discover nor reveal anything. Out of a desire to keep their husbands busy at home, they ordered endless improvements to their apartments. (Their husbands didn't know each other).

When they went out together they could state guiltlessly, "Mine brought home some alabaster to fill the empty spaces." "And we're going to start painting the kitchen door soon." When you think about it there are many families like this among the city's millions, proving that unhappy families also resemble each other.

They had met in the French classes they both registered for as an excuse not to spend their evenings at home. Unfortunately they both soon dropped the classes. Nora found sitting in a café drinking coffee more enjoyable, and she dragged the weak-willed Vylé with her. The two looked strange together: Nora tall and thin, decked in furs, and Vylé tiny, plump, always in a black coat with a checked hood. Nora's son was already in college; Vylé left her boy with his grandmother.

The two had identical apartments and by a lucky accident even lived in the same district. Both were young-looking because they cared so much about appearances. Vylé had long dreamed of losing weight; Nora, on the other hand, claimed that all of her problems with her husband started because she couldn't get her former shape back after her operation. Nora worried excessively about her health, always wearing on her chest a peppery compress that gave off an aroma of medicine, elegance, and melancholy. Vylé disregarded her health and refused to despair, though things



were going quite badly. She was already talking about a lawyer and the possibility of moving to a new apartment. She left her bank book with Nora for safekeeping.

Nora thanked God she had not reached that point, no, that would never happen to her. All women set themselves above their friends. How good and pleasant to take under her wing one standing on the edge of a precipice, knowing all along she would fall. Nora opened wide her door to Vylè, letting her see that her, Nora's, husband still came home and still mixed paint for the fix-up projects, keeping his brushes soaking in a little bucket. They would never get divorced.

And when Vylè began to visit regularly, Nora's husband did in fact come straight home from work. He also fixed up the car, and sometimes the three of them would drive to the country house together. He would weed his garden while Nora and Vylè sat on the porch drinking tea. "A really nice friend my wife's picked up," he would be thinking. And to Nora, when they were alone, he would say, "I'm not surprised your friend's husband left her. She looks vulgar." "In any case we need to help her. Yes, her hair and figure are horrible, but she's my friend don't forget," Nora would answer. "Try not to show that being with her is unpleasant."

After her divorce, Vylè visited Nora at home less often. She moved to a new apartment. They met once in a while for coffee. Nora couldn't stop wondering at the great changes to Vylè. She grew out her blond hair, lost weight, bought a silver-black fox stole, took up driving. She was no longer so sweet and open-hearted and sometimes viewed Nora with condescension. "How is your health dear?" "Oh, don't ask," Nora would answer, with red blemishes blazing on her cheeks - "nothing seems to help. I'll probably have to go to the sanatorium. My husband's begging me to go right away."

"So why don't you go? Your boy is grown, I don't understand what's keeping you," Vylé mercilessly replied.

Nora went. She was not so naïve that she didn't know where her husband was going every night, who he was teaching to drive, and whose little scarf she found at the country house, clinging to the wild rosebush. Once, without Vylé's knowledge, she had a talk with her husband; one that probably hastened their divorce. Biting her lip, Nora stood amazed that her life had turned to nothing, gone up in smoke.

And somewhere in the distance, far from the heat of passion, stood a young man with a strong chin and light hair – Nora's son. And in another home there sat at the table a yet child-like, awkward adolescent, reading a book. He glanced repeatedly at his watch, waiting for his mother, not knowing that she was at that time riding in a strange car with a strange man by whom fate had deceived her, and that they were racing toward ruin with terrifying speed.

### **Home is Out of Bounds (1981)**

A woman, returning home with a full bag of groceries, remembered an incident from the distant past – that place on the far side of mountains that you either approached on foot through valleys where little lambkins sported in a green meadow, or where you fell from the precipice onto the sharp rocks below, tearing your clothes to pieces and leaving you mutilated, sometimes dangerously so. The woman set her groceries on the courtyard bench and traveled back a quarter century. She was a teen in sneakers, with a handed-down dress and sun-bleached braids, for some reason counting all the moles on her arms – she had a lot of them. The kids were playing hide-and-seek. You could hide outside or inside, in the storage rooms or stairways – just not in your own apartment. The girl counted all the way to a hundred and yelled "Ready or not!" First she went down the hallway checking every floor, then

came suddenly to an apartment with an open door. She had no idea why, and pushed on the door and crept inside. In this apartment lived a man with rough, wiry hair, whitish and beautiful. He sat there smoking. A little surprised, he looked at the girl.

– I'm looking for..., maybe somebody's hiding here? – said the girl.

– No, there's no one here, – he answered, looking very intently at her. The girl now wanted to leave, she'd been thoughtless and foolish, but the man's gaze held her.

– Why are you limping? – he asked in a stern voice.

– I broke my leg at school last year, – she answered.

– Did it hurt?

The girl tried to remember.

– No, – she fell silent, then suddenly opened up: – You see I was in love with the teacher who carried me in his arms to the ambulance.

– You were in love... – the man impatiently stood up and went to the window. – Would you like me to give you something?

– Give me what? – she asked eagerly.

– Whatever you want. Pick something.

Looking around, the girl said: – Well, besides books, there's nothing here.

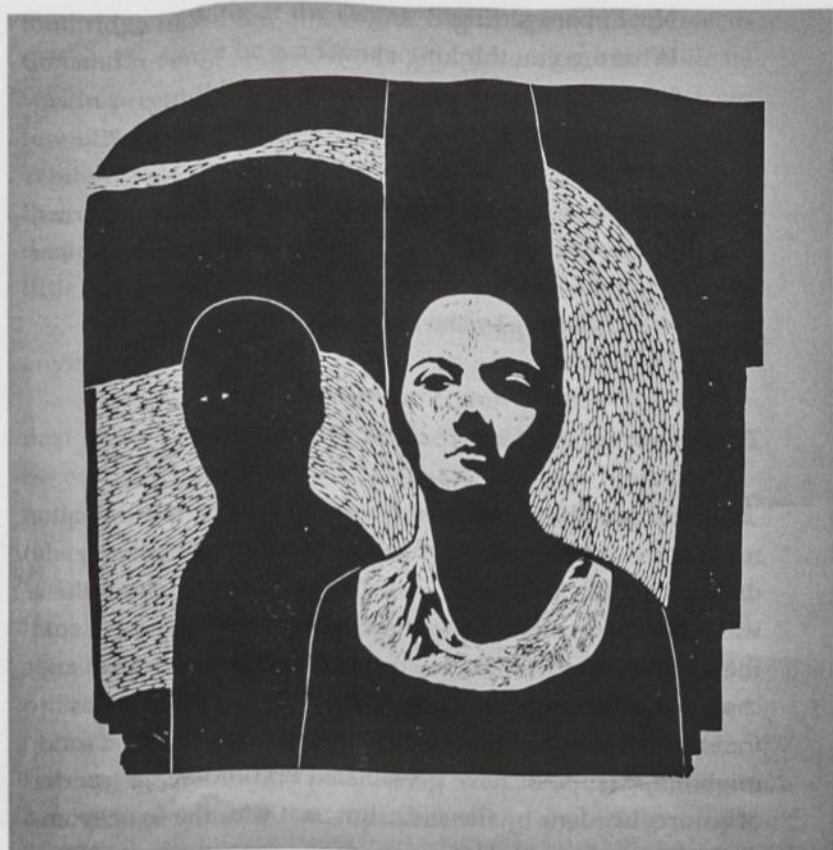
– In that room there's something better, – he said.

Suddenly the girl sensed danger like a bad odor. – Maybe a book, – she said and grabbed the first she saw. She lifted her eyes to him and said with feigned naïveté: – You know, when you play hide-and-seek, home is out of bounds...

Much later, she nevertheless returned to that apartment. The man sat there smoking, as if he hadn't moved at all for the entire three years.

– You're not limping anymore, – he said. The girl approached and touched his hair. It really wasn't so rough and she petted it with her palm, like fur. His possessions were





*Tadas Gindrenas. Two heads. 2009, linocuts, canvas. 100 x 100 cm.*

packed in boxes. – It's sad, – he said, – I can't give you anything. – He stroked the girl's hands, where there were now far fewer spots. – Do you still love that teacher who carried you to the ambulance? – he asked. – All this time I've been jealous of him. – Not anymore, – the girl lied.

The woman somehow made it home. In the entry way, she kicked off her shoes and went barefoot to the living room, where her husband sat smoking in an armchair.

– You waited for me? – the woman asked happily.



- No, I'm just sitting.
- What are you thinking about?
- I'm just sitting, not thinking about anything.
- I brought food, should I fix something for you?
- I'm fine, don't fix anything.
- What's wrong? - And the woman held out her arms, now almost perfectly white with a thick gold bracelet on her wrist, to her husband.
- What's wrong? - she nervously insisted.
- I'm leaving you.

### Three Encounters (1981)

That summer the resort town was sun-scorched. For the same reason, the green lines of grass on the sidewalks completely dried out and looked like hair dyed unevenly with henna; there was a bumper crop of sweet cherries. The country people sold them on every corner, carrying them around in wooden suitcases and measuring them out by the gallon. The beach was littered with the spat-out pits which, singed by the sun and sand, might at some point have germinated and become a wonder of nature. Gardens by the sea... But as it was, the sea circumscribed the natural limit of man's emptiness.

A woman exhausted by the heat came to the park with a child and stood by the pond where little cygnets swam. The child sat on a bench, throwing breadcrumbs into the water, watching everything in coolness and comfort. In the distance, the sea whispered like the echo in a seashell.

- Mama! - the child shouted and came running up with bloodied knees. - I fell down. The woman turned to look from the carefully trimmed meadow and flower beds. - Yes, things thrive here from all over, - she said - but not for this traveler.

She pressed the child to her while he sobbed silently. Then she saw her ex-husband. He was standing on a little

footbridge looking at the swans. She imagined the persecution and revenge he would exact for divorcing him while he was in prison. He was standing right there, and there were few other people around. But her husband didn't see her. White-faced – which she took to mean that he'd just arrived that day – his glance fell on the green duckweeds and suddenly her thought went out to him, a thought like an ugly little baby swan. But he turned to go – and went.

– Mama, mama, – the child said again, – it doesn't hurt anymore.

The next time she saw her former husband was at the post office. She was waiting in line for a money transfer and he was looking through the "general delivery" letters. She noticed his face when he tore open his envelope: avid impatience – and immediate disappointment, leaving his face as sad as a full moon. He crushed the letter in his fist and threw it in the trash. She could hardly stop herself from taking it out after him; she felt her heart beating wildly and told herself: calm down, you've suffered so much already... She counted her considerable sum and felt slight contempt for the sender. Leaving the building she called her child. He'd jumped over a fence to play in the churchyard. And she shook him roughly, right there, near the grave of some bishop.

And about the third encounter, perhaps a week later: He was already a local, with rubber flip-flops, strolling lazily, dressed in jeans and a loose t-shirt with one of the Beatles on it. Yes, he looked terrifyingly young. Beside him was a girl who apparently knew not a goddamn thing about his past, otherwise how could she dare to be seen with him in public?... The former wife watched him, stunned. She no longer believed that he had come there to look for her. He had thrown her away in his thoughts like a worn out pair of gloves. He didn't recognize her anymore and made no attempt to imagine how she'd changed in three years: prone

to plumpness, she was already quite round, her hair was straight, her clothes now plain. She had several gold teeth; her son was now quite grown. Why did she want him to recognize her?... She went to the post office and bought some coins to make a long-distance call. I'm coming home right away, she shouted into the phone. The other voice spoke very slowly and she felt she could even smell the apartment renovation. Why such good things, why such luck, she almost shouted. That's how she spent her coins.

On the day she left, the woman and her son went swimming one last time. A white steamship passed in the distance, sending waves to the shore. She held the child's hand and spoke out loud to herself, – outside the beach limits someone drowned at 9 am today. His body has been identified.

– Mom, I want to ride on a steamship, – said the child.

– Wait, – said the woman, scanning the sea. – Next year we'll do that.

– Mom, – said the child, – I won't ask anymore, just please stop crying. She pulled the child back to her, and her face was like a woman trapped in quicksand. Her crippled thoughts flew first to all of those beyond the beach, and they embraced even the man with drenched hair, like seaweed.

*Translated by PATRICK CHURA*



## Three Stories by Antanas Ramonas

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**A**ntanas Ramonas (1947–1993) was a notable Lithuanian prose writer and essayist of the late Soviet era. Throughout his life and until his tragic death in 1993, he stayed away from mainstream literary life and lived on its margins writing and publishing very little. He was later described as an author who, disillusioned with the realities of his time, chose “exile into his inner self,” recording his observations, insights, philosophical musings and understanding of life in the form of short prose texts bordering between the short-story and the literary essay. Despite the fact that his literary legacy is not very impressive in quantity and contains just a couple collections of short stories, *Northern Wind* (1984) and *Sun of November* (1988); a short novel “White Clouds of the Last Summer” (1991); as well as a posthumous collection consisting mostly of his published work, he was and continues to be admired and appreciated by literary critics for his exceptionally elegiac and nostalgic prose. Unlike most of his contemporaries who usually wrote prose embedded in the countryside, Ramonas was one of the few Lithuanian prose writers of the period who intentionally depicted urban experiences and wrote mostly about the past of his beloved Vilnius, meditating on the changing city full of haunting memories. He was buried in the old cemetery of Užupis, a place so dear to his heart.



## Fountains

Fountains flowed in Greek poleis, gushed in the marble squares of the Eternal City, and their quiet babbling like the unobtrusive whisper of distant life calmed the sleepy Islamic gardens even more. The gardens of Granada, too, were refreshed by the coolness of fountains, while Celtic druids performed their secretive rituals next to them; they were seen by gentle Provence as well as Germany's Gothic cities. They came here as well under the gray northern sky, where passions do not surge to the surface in a destructive flame, where suffering is silent and deep; they gush like an uninterrupted, unfathomable flow of thought that, regardless of how high it rises, always returns to the earth. Thus it is in this small pool that the eternal and wise progression of Nature is repeated.

Clamorous, gold-encrusted, covered with marble and jasper, the emblematic murmur of Peterhof's fountains, the crowds of ladies in colorful dress, the well-mannered cavaliers in wigs, the fountain in the Austrian emperor's palace garden is a well confined in marble captivity from which the Danube begins, the fountains of Versailles trimmed like the trees of the park's promenades, the fountain of Brussels' square – a bronze boy peeing naughtily in full view.

And despite this, the most beautiful of all fountains, perhaps because I have never seen either Versailles or Brussels, is the one in Sarbievius Courtyard of Vilnius University. As a student I sat there for hours on end and watched how the wind, blowing through the arch of the gates, chased a very narrow jet of water here, then there, and yet it still stubbornly forced its way upward. Towards evening, as the late summer sun was setting, the university caretaker before locking the iron gates, would turn down the spigot on the wall. The stream would slither down, the fountain would be still, but the caretaker, for some unknown reason, would never turn



9/30 C3 - Universitete kolonos, namas, Eglė Kuckaitė  
 sv. Mykalojus, Didžioji Sinagoga. 2002

Eglė Kuckaitė. From the cycle *Nobody Can Hide Love like This*. 2002, C3 (etching), 13 x 137.

it off completely, and a tiny stream the length of one's thumb would softly chatter through the entire short summer night. Sometimes, driven by some vague anxiety of my youth, I would go there at night too. I would linger, listening to the hushed stream of the fountain, the moon traveling across the sky, its light, like melting gold, dripping from the blackened tiles. The birch was still, its head bent over the fountain's mirror, the city was still, the tower clock in Gediminas Square struck the short night hours.

The caretaker had released some stickleback into the pool. As the sun was rising, the tiny fish would begin to uneasily dart about the edges of the pool, and then from the dark buttresses of the building, Rascal the Cat would appear. He would go to the fountain, sit opposite me and with his wicked green eyes stare at the buzzing little fish. Rascal very much wanted to catch at least one of them and devour it right there on the cement block. But the water was wet and cold. He would sit there like that and watch until the caretaker, who lived there on the grounds of the university, woke up and unlocked the gates, letting the current run free. Rascal the Cat would rise and in a dignified manner go on his way along paths known to him and him alone. Before turning the corner, he would look at me over his shoulder disdainfully. Who knows why, but he did not like me.

After that I saw many fountains. I saw them hushed, rusting in neglected parks. The bottom, where earlier clean and cold water churned, was befouled, strewn with pieces of brick, broken glass, and paper. I feel sorry for them, just as I feel sorry for some people. And I'm ashamed to admit, sometimes even more so for them. It seems that at some point they will speak out, and their current will glimmer in the sun like a rainbow.

Even now I dream of the fountain in Sarbievius Courtyard, the caretaker, Rascal the Cat walking away. The current of that fountain, I hope, will ripple in me, until the caretaker who passed away long ago will come, open the little doors in some wall and turn the spigot off. Completely.

### The Dawns of Vilnius

For some reason it seems to me that there's an old manuscript adorned with delicate calligraphic handwriting gathering dust in the university's manuscript collection, untouched by anyone. The paper sheaves, roughened by time, are tied together by thick linen thread. They're not bound into luxurious calfskin;

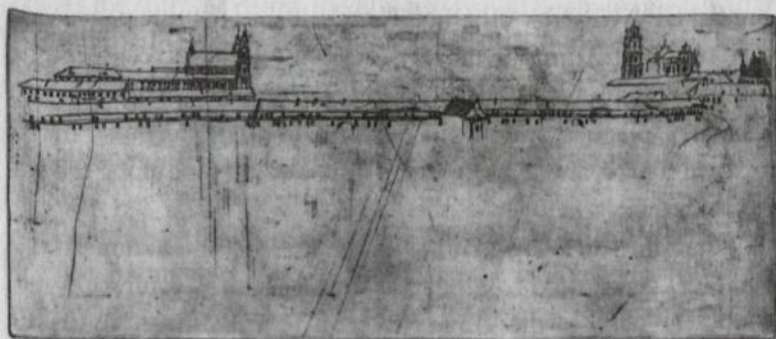


it's the simple, humble manuscript of an unknown Vilnius vagabond. "DE AURORA VILNENSI" embellishes the title page.

Wandering through the city, it took me awhile to comprehend that it had seen thousands of dawns during the raging of wars, fires, plagues, and the playing of merry banquet music in the royal palace, and the echoing of a shepherd's pipe along the curves of the Neris River.

Standing on Bekesh Hill, with the June night that honestly hadn't even started coming to an end, I see the sleeping city behind the bend of the Vilnia River, beyond the green Youth Gardens. The sky becomes dark in the west, while a white mist hovers above the little, flowing river. Further on, it's already bluish in color – above the squares and parks, above the Neris on the right. I chew on some dried bent grass from the slope and wait for the first ray of light, which will soon shoot out from behind the colorful hills, running to the east. The birds are stirring; the nightingales are singing, intoxicated by their own song, even the rippling of the Vilnia is like a song, which also changes. The sun's rays climb down the white towers of the city. The gold-coated round bob of St. John's Bell Tower flickers, as does the bell tower of Cathedral Square after that, but I missed seeing it, as the azure spires of the Missionary Church have already been glimmering with the sun behind them for a while. The city, a fairy tale city in my eyes, rises from the valley as if from the bottom of an enchanted sea. And like always at dawn, especially as the early summer dawn comes up happily, it appears that the day, this very day, will never end. The white towers of the city will shine forever, the distant expanses will turn a bluish hue, and the dew drops will quiver in the garden blossoms in the Old Town. It is still twilight on the streets, but the Cathedral roof is already glistening. Through the semi-round window above the apse, the light falls inside and illuminates, only a few times each year, the rosettes on the vaulted





Eglė Kuckaitė. From the cycle *Nobody Can Hide Love like This*. 2002, C3 (etching), 13 x 137.

archways of the naves. The clock of Gediminas Square strikes the hours in a dignified manner as only it can.

The dawn appears one way when you look from Bekesh Hill, and is totally different when you look at the dark red, almost toy-like roofs of Užupis from the Missionary Church, while down below you see the Vilnia, hurrying from Belmont Forest, which looms dark in the predawn fog. On the left, down below, the delicate towers of St. Anne's Church shudder ever so slightly and plaintively. From Šnipiškės Bridge, I see the castle's austere silhouette and the bend of the Neris. The river flows, saying something to itself in the distance, quiet, serious. You can't even compare it with the chatty Vilnia. It dives forward headlong, chatting loudly about what it saw on its short trip. From Mindaugas Street you see everything against the background of the dawn; you see everything once again differently from the hills of the Šeškinė neighborhood, as well as from Tauras Hill, or from the Lazdynai neighborhood, where a restless rider full of life gallops into the rising sun. From the heights of the Liepkalnis neighborhood I see the bustling train station down be-

low that never sleeps, but which nevertheless is gathering itself together before dawn, or the sublime dawn in the tranquil courtyards of the university, even those in the small and cozy Poczubutt Courtyard. Then there's the observatory's frieze with the signs of the Zodiac, the weathervane on top, and the old maples along the footpath. It seems that the eternal dusk of centuries hangs there, and only when suddenly the leaves of the maples flutter do you understand that the sun has risen over Vilnius.

The sun becomes ever more serious, the greenery of the trees deepens in color, the dawns of August become bluer and bluer, the city's towers poke out from the night's fog slower and slower. It's already a golden fall. In the morning, in total silence, nipped by the frost, the leaves fall to the ground due entirely to their own weight, without a sound, without complaining of the frost. The Vilnia becomes hushed, while the Neris becomes even more contemplative than usual.

The foul fall weather, the rains, the wind, but if you're in luck, on a frosted-over morning at the end of November you can see a wonderfully clear dawn. The horizon is without a hint of mist, everything suddenly draws nearer, and the city appears unbelievably brilliant, like the delicate filigree of old masters. Black trees cast rigid, colorless shadows.

December comes with the first snow that doesn't melt anymore along with its light flurries, and from the sky that has just become silver you'll understand that the day is already dawning. But the city's towers will remain somewhere up high, lost in the twilight, apart from everything, submerged in themselves. And the night won't leave entirely, it will just huddle in the darkest recesses of the Old Town's courtyards in shame, patiently crouching, awaiting the quickly approaching eve. Slowly turning gray, the roads freshly blanketed with snow, run together from the cold blue distance, from all sides into the frost-covered city, hiding behind its walls. The white towers

against the background of the white hills, and on the tops of the hills – black pines swaying in the wind.

Each dawn is different, as each day is different, as each person is different. And walking on the pavement of the street, I feel the warmth from the soles of our forefathers who lived here from time immemorial, their pain, their sorrow, anxiety of love, hours of contemplation. All of that has been absorbed throughout the centuries by the stones tread upon by thousands of feet: barefoot, in bast shoes, tall boots, young and old, children and women, beauties and tramps, scoundrels and the meek. I see a careless begging vagabond rattling an old sword, stepping through the arch of the university's courtyard as a fine November rain drizzles: carelessly whistling, the hems of his threadbare overcoat flapping, with the manuscript "DE AURORA VILNENSI" under his armpit that is addressed to God knows whom.

### Yorick of Vilnius

In the spring of 1837 a regiment of light infantry from Estland marched to Vilnius and lined up "in detachments in columns from the right" in the small square near the Gate of Dawn. At the front of the columns sat the battalion leaders on their horses. Opposite them, a bit further, was the colonel riding his horse past them in order to see the entire formation. After giving the command "at ease," the adjutant ran to inform the garrison leader. The regiment was quickly surrounded by a colorful band of curious onlookers. A command unexpectedly rang out from the crowd:

"Stand easy! Right shoulder!"

The colonel stiffened and repeated the command, and afterwards the battalion heads repeated the same.

"Hello, men!"

"Hello, your excellen..." laughing was heard from the crowd, and the colonel turned around. A tall, thin man sat on an overworked nag with a yoke, dressed in a greasy tailcoat,



with patched-up gray pants. Smiling broadly, he held out his hand in respect near the brownish top hat that was battered and frayed like a three-ruble note. The colonel became red, and his beautifully curled imperial moustache began to quiver out of anger. He could have very well driven his horse into the crowd, but he held himself back.

"Unter Sukin! This... This..."

Unter Sukin, having understood his superior at once, put his gun in position and went on the attack. The people dispersed unwillingly. Having detected the rotten smell of rebellion with the God knows how well-trained scent of a guardian of the peace, the police master himself appeared in the square. Upon seeing this person prancing about on his nag, he sighed deeply and waved his hand dismissively:

"Pay no attention to him, your excellency. That's Jonelis Kristalevičius, the fool of Vilnius..."

The versemonger, mystifier, and joker Jonelis lived on the cobblestones of Vilnius' streets as carefree as a sparrow. He did not care for that which glittered in the world, living for the day and not worrying his head as to where he was to get a bite of bread, or where he would lay his head once night came. Surrounded by a crowd of young people or students, he strode from one end of the city to the other with his long legs, cracked jokes, made rhymes, wrote long philosophical tracts, turning the exalted wisdom of eminent university professor of philosophy Daugirdas into nonsense suspiciously well. He was taken into all homes with pleasure, starting from the upstart merchant Muller and ending with baroness Lopacinskienė who was going mad because of old age and aristocratic haughtiness. He entertained the satiated nobility with his poetry and strange tales, and did not become angry when he was ridiculed, but he stubbornly safeguarded three things: his past, about which no one knew, his poet's honor and the brownish top hat, which he would not have traded for a bag of gold.



It was in this way that he walked through the city during the cold downpours of November, and during the snowfall, and the galloping of the Cossacks of Count Tolstoy's reserve army, and the booming of Gelgaudas' cannons in the hills of Paneriai. He shared his poems with all that he met, created epigrams and did not care whether it was a dignified magnet or the blue uniform of a gendarme.

Once persuaded by someone, he brought an ode to Duke Dolgurukis, who was at the time the governor-general of Vilnius, in which he rhymed all of the general's love victims. Fat as five Benedictine monks, the duke was in a good mood after his morning bottle of Madeira wine and became very curious:

"Who is that son of a bitch?"

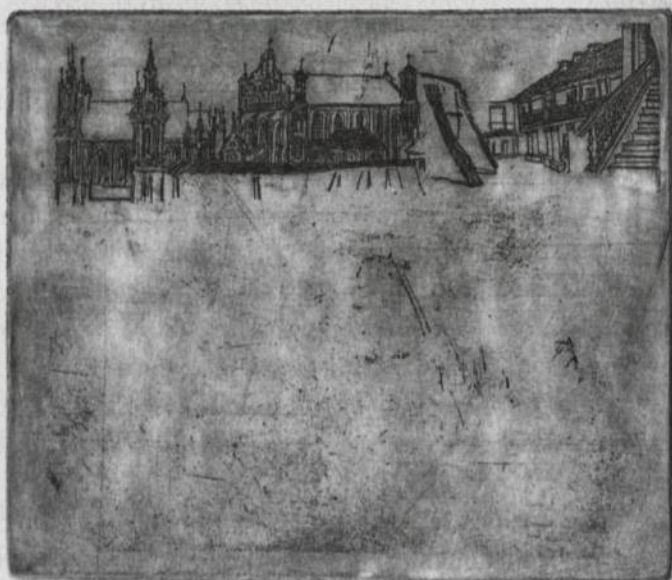
But when the ode spread through the entire city, the general became furious. This time Jonelis was saved by the wide-ranging hand of the emperor – it plucked the governor out of the silken skirts he had gotten tangled up in and whisked him off to distant Charkov.

The new governor-general of the Western lands, the ambitious and cunning Serb named Mirković, decided to bring order to what Nikolai Pavlovich, the absolute ruler of all of Russia, liked to call the devil's city. The governor called for the police master and quietly asked: "How can it be that this undoubtedly pernicious person without a clear occupation is still wandering through the city without the slightest of cares?" Police master Rutkowski stood rigid and with great respect, not daring to even blink, stared at the general's golden epaulettes.

"I am listening, your highness... It will be done, your highness... Certainly, your highness..."

The author of slanderous poems was apprehended and dragged to the police post. Jonelis stood, bowing in respect, pressing his priceless top hat next to his upper thigh.

"What!"



Eglė Kuckaitė. From the cycle *Nobody Can Hide Love like This*. 2002, C3 (etching), 13 x 137.

"It is I, your policing majesty, I swear as a boyar that..." he repeated, proud of his poetic talent.

Furious, the police master ordered him to be whipped, but the criminal maintained his position.

"Throw him out," Rutkowski said, tired, to the police officer.

"I dare to inform you that I, as a boyar, am offended at your unlawful..."

Rutkowski began to howl and grabbed the inkwell.

"Fool," the police master reported to the zealous general, and for the first time during his entire career the wrathful Mir-

ković conceded. It was in this way that Jonelis received the official rank of fool from the hands of the government.

Sometimes Jonelis would unexpectedly disappear, and reappear only after several days even thinner and more unshaven. To the great delight of onlookers, he would get down on his knees right in the mud on the street facing the Gate of Dawn and begin to cry out loud praying:

"Lord, it is I, your unworthy servant, I wasted the days given to me on this earth... I am a vagabond and jester, blacker than mud, in which I am kneeling... I have sullied the intelligence and talent given to me... I did not bring gain either to my fatherland or to a close person... I had one, but did not appreciate the person... You gave that to me, but I threw it away..."

Having prayed he would wipe away his tears with a dirty handkerchief, put his top hat back on, and everything would begin anew.

Jonelis ended his days as most vagabonds do – he came down with pneumonia and died on two armfuls of straw in the corridor of the Brothers Hospitallers' monastery. Yorick of Vilnius was buried in a common grave in Rasa Cemetery – thus ends the story of Baron Vasily von Rotkirch, the head of the governate's gendarmes, lieutenant general, and receiver of the Order of Vladimir, Third Class and Fourth Class, the Order of St. Anna, Second Class and Third Class, and also other orders, who certainly did not waste the days given to him on earth, however you did feel the envy of the baron between the lines for that man who was free as a bird, Yorick of Vilnius, as he said, for the versemonger and jester, a baron without a coat-of-arms and estate – Jonelis Kristalevičius.

Sometimes at night while going along a street in the Old Town, I remember that idiot of Vilnius and it pierces my heart – Lord, I let the days gifted to me on this earth to the wind, days of which few remain.

## SHARON JOFFE

**Connections:**

**"Ich bin doch immer unterwegs" (I am always on the way)<sup>1</sup>**

Many years ago, on an oppressively hot, stiflingly humid day in June, you left.

Bereft and alone, I paced through the house, registering the gaps and openings of where your shirts used to hang, your books that once beckoned me to read them, and the achingly empty walls where your art collection was once displayed. White spaces, open vistas, voided walls. Physical manifestations of a heart torn wide open. For years, those white spaces were blazons – emblems of a frozen, heatless space.

But then things changed and, like the ground that thaws out after a raging ice storm,

Buds opened and life regenerated

And I began to heal.

<sup>1</sup> Pranas Domšaitis (1888–1965) was born in Kropynai, Lithuania, and died in South Africa. Many of his works can be seen at the Pranas Domšaitis Gallery of the Lithuanian Art Museum in Klaipėda. "Ich bin doch immer unterwegs" were Domšaitis' words, spoken "on his deathbed" (Source: L. Bialopetravičienė. "Pranas Domšaitis," Lithuanian Art Museum website, Vilnius, 2001).



Then I noticed once again, the ice-white spaces on the wall,

And dreamed of filling them with life and color and gem-green trees on oil-painted canvases,

The smell of paint and pigment and the imagined rough-smooth edges of the artistic composition

Tantalized and teased me,

The walls begged to be filled again.

I chose two paintings from an art collection,

Fortuitously,

Ignoring the other proffered art

Somehow I was drawn to these twin shapes,

A pair of paintings,

Each depicting a Zulu maiden,

Two African figures, regal and tall,

Copper-colored,

Attired in earthy tones of ocher and orange and red,

Beaded necklaces encasing long, limber necks

And wise, strikingly beautiful faces peering out from the rich palette of colors

Framed by drapes and panels of silver-gray and yellow-gold cloth.

But what attracted me most was the signature on one and the monogram on the other –

On both compositions

A flourishing D, curvy, sinewy, Blakean-like in the tendrils and fronds surrounding it:

Pranas Domsaitis, I was told, a great South African painter who found solace in the African landscape that had also been my home.

I hung the paintings in the white spaces,

Pleased with the effect on my home,



*Pranas Domšaitis. Paintings.*

The open once-sterile spaces, no longer symbols of a dying, icy landscape,  
But a nurturing place for healing and growth and future joys to come.

But something drew me to those two paintings,  
Something compelled me to choose them,  
Not only the regal Zulu figures in their African animal-skin karosses<sup>2</sup>,

But the Lithuanian connection that I soon discovered as I researched the artist behind the work,  
A painter who,

---

<sup>2</sup> A traditional African cloak.

In connecting the sunny-warm tones of Africa and the  
 glass-gray coolness of his European heritage on his canvases,  
 Impelled me, drew me in,  
 Spoke to me in dulcet tones  
 So that when I recognized the D as the monogram of Pra-  
 nas Domsaitis,

Lithuanian artist,  
 Son of Klaipėda,  
 Who spent his youth in Kropynai,  
 Inhaling the same Lithuanian air  
 That my grandfather breathed in the adjacent district of  
 Telsiai,

In the little town of Vieksniai where he lived as a young  
 man,

(Could they both have bathed in the Baltic ocean on the  
 same summer's day and not have known it?)

That invisible thread of a connection  
 Flowed to me as I unknowingly chose these canvasses  
 And, years later,  
 Still courses,  
 Through the brushstrokes and filaments of paint that  
 adorn the walls of my house  
 Where Domsaitis and I are forever on that same way.

But what attracted me most was the monogram on the other  
 paintings. On both canvases  
 Something compelled me to choose them.  
 A flourish, a curve, a dash, a dot, a line, a shape, a form, a  
 Not only the regal Latin letters in their African dress  
 It was the way they were written, the way they were placed, the way they were  
 Pranas Domsaitis, I was told, was a great Lithuanian painter.  
 I saw his connection to the Lithuanian landscape, the way he had been  
 who found solace in the African landscape, the way he had been  
 my home.

A painter who  
 I hung the paintings in the white space,  
 Pleased with the effect on my home.

# BOOK REVIEWS

*Adomas Galdikas: Lyrinės abstrakcijos erdvių link*  
(*A Winding Path to the Expanses of Lyrical Abstraction*).

Antanas Andrijauskas. Vilnius: Vilniaus aukciono  
biblioteka, 2014, 336 pages. ISBN: 9786098014143.

Adrijauskas' monumental, Lithuanian-English volume of Adomas Galdikas (1893–1969) reveals the artist's legacy to the world. Few Lithuanian painters have had four monographs published in their native language, let alone a bilingual edition. Galdikas was a humble man with sixty years of brilliant artistic creativity. The author, Andrijauskas, is a philosopher of art. The monograph features his thoughtful essay on Galdikas, "Lyrical Abstraction".

The title "Lyrical Abstraction" poses more questions than it answers. Andrijauskas examines new horizons about the artist. Lyrical abstraction developed in Paris, and came to New York in the sixties. I am sure Galdikas was aware of it. He was happy to have an artistic dialogue with me, after my first analysis of his artistry was published in Spanish. His landscapes were too real to be just a play on abstraction. He called them "lyrical." I had to accept that lyrical, poetic, and musical all described his harmonious artistic style with its rich sensual color.

As an artist, Galdikas followed the development of art through the twentieth century. He searched for new ways of expression. He is an initiator of modern Lithuanian art, following the legacy of M. K. Čiurlionis. Galdikas studied with



the masters at the Baron von Stieglitz School of Technical Drawing in St. Petersburg, but he avoided Russian Symbolism. He considered it decadent. His inspiration came from a combination of nature in his native land, French impressionism, and the Far East vis-à-vis Berlin. He never became a true impressionist or expressionist. Traces of Cézanne and Bonnard can be seen in many of his paintings. Galdikas was forgotten for many years. Public recognition of Galdikas' stature as a remarkable painter has taken a long time. He held 4 major exhibitions (Paris, 1948; New York, 1956, 1957, 1960) with positive reviews in the local media.

A generation of painters, lithographers, and sculptors were born during inter-war Lithuania. Most of them left their homeland during World War II, becoming émigré artists. Most were Galdikas' students: V. Kašuba, T. Valius, E. Urbaitis, V. K. Jonynas, and others. He taught and influenced several generations.

Andrijauskas states that Galdikas gives his paintings color and music, with inspiration from nature. Color and light mixes freely and it all ends on canvas or paper. He used to spend many hours in the park, where he drew hundreds of sketches in his diary. Days ended in his study with hours developing the colors that he saw in the park.

Andrijauskas divides Galdikas' art into four periods. The first period, Lithuania from 1917–1927, covers 10 years of experimentation, combined with his other endeavors. He taught art. As a government artist, he designed Lithuanian stamps, bonds, and paper money. He experimented with Art Deco, a popular movement of the time. He also crafted leather decorations, drew book illustrations, and designed book covers. Romas Viesulas (1918–1986) once said that Galdikas' influence was more in the graphic arts than in painting. Galdikas created many more temperas and oils than lithographs. His odyssey in color secures his longevity. He

taught lithography to any number of famous artists, such as V. Petravičius, T. Valius, V. Ratas, P. Augius, R. Gibavičius and P. Repšys. He cherished Lithuanian traditional xylography, a medium of folk art. Galdikas also taught etching (ofort).

For half of his life, Galdikas was a devoted educator. His students describe him as expressive and firm. He avoided organizations and newspapers so that he could devote his time to his creative work. He wanted to introduce Lithuanian art to the United States when he settled in New York in 1952. Teaching art was more important to him than his own creations. There is no Lithuanian artist of the period that did not study with Galdikas.

Galdikas' second period ranged from the 1930s to the end of World War II. The 30 year old experimented with modernism and played with French Fauvism. Beautiful female figures became his frequent subjects. He created the costumes and sets for 19 stage productions. He won a Gold Medal for his stage design of "Šarūnas" by Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius and the Grand Prix for his triptych "Lithuania," both at the International Exposition in Paris, 1937.

The third period is very productive for Galdikas: exile in Germany and France 1944–1952. He concentrates on the landscape of his native land in all its seasons. Home becomes remote, even too remote. Color takes on a new focus, with a search for color everywhere. Galdikas explores abstraction, even though he does not seem to like it. He teaches at the V. K. Jonynas Art School in Freiburg (École des Arts et Métiers). His love for art inspires his students. He guides them, quickly, to new developments. Their art is exhibited internationally.

Galdikas focuses his efforts on his Lithuanian community. He seeks links with his country, no longer free. He limits his integration into his new country, as often happens with immigrants. In spite of his abstract intentions, his lyri-

cism renders the traditional landscapes of his country. At times, he wants to destroy his abstract paintings as futile. He sometimes gets careless about detail. He does not to sign his "abstract" temperas or name them. His wife often saves them and signed them for him. Consequently, some of the attributed dates in Andrijauskas' monograph may be questioned.

Galdikas' fourth period (New York, 1954–1969) reveals a desperation for color. He turns to television. The cowboy films give him color. He perfects and finally abandons his classic design of a road that bursts into an explosion of blossoming bushes and trees with an occasional human figure. Expressionism emerges fully in 1964 as his attempt to find color. Andrijauskas enthusiastically celebrates this period. He perceives deep connections between the Far East and the "Lyrical abstraction," i.e., abstract expressionism. Such new developments are perhaps one of the reasons contemporary Lithuanians "forget" about Galdikas. The lyrical landscapes of this fourth and final period are more color than nature. His beautiful landscapes depict nature less than they enhance nature.

Andrijauskas analyzes with precise detail the various artistic influences on Galdikas. His enumeration can be overwhelming. Per the author, hundreds of old and new art schools are related to Galdikas. Galdikas expresses personal attitudes about various artistic novelties from Cézanne to Modernism. Still, his work returns again and again to landscapes. He concentrates on his own search for the harmony between color, light, and music. Ultimately Galdikas' compositions are very much his. He pays little attention to Modernism and abstract art, even though in New York he would walk every week through Manhattan's Madison Avenue galleries. The artist shook his head at abstract expression-



ism. He would try to paint similar canvases in his studio. Soon, his brushes would resume his usual colors.

## STASYS GOŠTAUTAS

*Concise Encyclopaedia of Lithuania Minor*. Vilnius: Foundation of Lithuania Minor and Science and Encyclopaedia Publishing Centre, 2014. 656 pages. ISBN: 978-5-420-01746-3.

**L**ithuania Minor is a lost world. Located along the Baltic coast on territory that now belongs to Lithuania and the Kaliningrad region of Russia, it was once the home of Prussian Lithuanians, a people whose different cultural and religious development set them apart from the majority of Lithuanians. After emerging as a people with a distinct identity under Prussian rule, and maintaining this identity under German and Lithuanian rule, their world abruptly came to an end during World War II. As the Russian army advanced towards Lithuania Minor, almost all Prussian Lithuanians left. After spending a few years in refugee camps, some remained in West Germany, but most immigrated to the United States, Canada, and Australia. The *Concise Encyclopaedia of Lithuania Minor* is a monument to this lost world.

The *Encyclopaedia* is made up of three parts. The first part consists of general information about Lithuania Minor, focusing on its history, economy, and culture, and a bibliography listing works in six languages. Most of the sections in this part are by named authors who are the leading scholars in their respective fields. The second part consists of entries with descriptions of the cities, towns, and villages of the region. The third part consists of biographical information about the region's most prominent individuals. The *Ency-*



*clopaedia* is based mostly on the entries in the four-volume *Mažosios Lietuvos enciklopedija* (Vilnius: Mažosios Lietuvos fondas and Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2000–2009). Because translating and editing was done by non-native speakers of English, the text is sometimes difficult to understand. The text, however, is complimented by many high-quality illustrations, maps, and tables, and is accessible using several helpful indexes.

Although the *Encyclopaedia* is intended for a large audience, it is addressed mainly to Prussian Lithuanians who have immigrated to English-speaking countries and their descendants. This group of readers will be especially interested in the section on the Prussian Lithuanian Diaspora in the United States of America and Canada (p. 135–145), which provides detailed information about the life of this community since World War II. In contrast, the period before the war receives one short paragraph and does not make full use of the available sources.<sup>1</sup> This is a minor criticism, however. Previous works in English about the Lithuanian Diaspora in the United States, such as David Fainhauz's *Lithuanians in the USA* (Chicago: Lithuanian Library Press, 1990) and the entry for "Lithuanians in the United States" in the *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, (Boston: J. Kapocius, 1970–78) completely ignored its Prussian Lithuanian component.

Most of the information included in the *Encyclopaedia* was previously unavailable in English and, for this reason alone, its publication should be welcomed. Some of the information about the most prominent individuals in Lithuania Minor, however, can also be found in the English lan-

<sup>1</sup> The United States census of 1910, for example, lists the number of people (1,486) with Lithuanian or Latvian as their mother tongue and Germany as their country of origin. See Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910*, vol. 1, *Population* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 996.

guage *Encyclopedia Lituanica*. A comparison of the entries in these two encyclopedias about the same individuals reveals that the entries in the *Encyclopaedia* are usually longer and include more information, but are less readable.

No encyclopedia can claim to be truly encyclopedic or completely accurate. The *Encyclopaedia* is no exception. This work, however, includes a significant number of omissions, dubious claims, mistranslations, and questionable editorial decisions. It would not be possible to list them all in a short review. Here are just a few examples. First, the *Encyclopaedia*, which provides statistics for the ethnic composition of the Klaipėda Territory from 1920 to 1939 (p. 95), does not provide statistics for the ethnic composition of Lithuania Minor from 1825 to 1910. The omission of these statistics is puzzling because they are available in Vincas Vileišis' *Tautiniai santykiai Mažojoje Lietuvoje ligi Didžiojo karo: istorijos ir statistikos šviesoje* (Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2008; p. 162–163), which is listed in the bibliography of the *Encyclopaedia*. Also, the statement that “the official data of Germany’s population censuses... in the first decades of the 20th c. no longer recorded the predominant majority of Prussian Lithuanians in [Lithuania Minor]” (p. 94) is highly misleading. German census data, which covers the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *never* showed that Prussian Lithuanians made up a majority of the population in Lithuania Minor.

Second, the section on Lithuanian Minor in Historiography (p. 283–291) does not mention that historians do not agree on whether the events of 10–15 January 1923, which resulted in the transfer of sovereignty over the Klaipėda Territory to the newly independent state of Lithuania, were an uprising, liberation, annexation, or occupation. The *Encyclopaedia* calls these events a “revolt.” The section on the Revolt of the Klaipėda Territory (p. 99–102), however, does not make a convincing case that a revolt actually occurred.

Furthermore, this section, which lists the twelve Lithuanian soldiers who died during the gunfight for Klaipėda *by name*, does not mention that two French soldiers and two residents of Klaipėda (probably German) also died—an omission that smacks of ethnocentrism.

Third, the section on Lithuania Minor in Historiography includes several anachronistic references to both a Prussian Lithuanian “nation” and a Prussian “nation” in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries (p. 284–285). This is presumably a mistranslation of *tauta*, which, in that section, should have been translated as “people.” Also, *nusidavimai*, “events, history,” is incorrectly translated as “stories” in the titles of several works in the *Encyclopaedia*. This has the unfortunate effect of turning works of fact into works of fiction.

Fourth, the names of persons of German descent who made important contributions to Lithuanian literary culture have been Lithuanianized. For example, Martin Ludwig Rhesa appears as Martynas Liudvikas Rėza. This serves no other purpose than to confuse the reader regarding the nationality of these individuals.

Despite these flaws, the *Encyclopaedia of Lithuania Minor* is still a valuable reference work. After all, a flawed monument is better than no monument at all.

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*The Invisible Front: A Story of Lithuanian Underground Resistance against Soviet Occupation.* Prod. Jonas Ohman, Vincas Sruoginis, and Mark Johnston. Aspectus Memoria, 2014.

*Segvards Vientulis (Alias Loner).* Prod./Dir. Normunds Pucis. NGPD, 2014.

*Risttuules (In the Crosswind).* Dir. Martti Helde. Allfilm, Baltic Pine Films, 2014.

Cinematography from the three Baltic republics continues examining the Soviet occupation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia during World War II. During Soviet occupation, such topics were either outright forbidden or whitewashed to reflect official Communist propaganda. The truth about the era was told only in whispers among trusted confidants. Since independence, films have explored the historicity of the period in various documentaries and memoirs. Now cinema turns its attention to more existential questions of meaning, humanity, and reconciliation.

The "Invisible Front" is an American-made docudrama, inspired by Juozas Lukša's 1951 autobiography *Forest Brothers: The Account of an Anti-Soviet Lithuanian Freedom Fighter, 1944–1948* and his letters to his wife Njolė Bražėnaitė. The movie tells the tale of Lithuanian resistance to Soviet occupation. It combines archival footage, historic photos, and participant interviews with a compilation of staged reenactments. Lukša's life was previously memorialized in the film "Vienui vieni" (Utterly Alone, 2014). *Invisible Front* is not a remake. Instead, it uses Lukša's history as a guide to a broader exploration of partisan life. Such additional details augment the interpretation of the period, especially for the post-Soviet generation that is more prone to exploring history through



cinema. The audience hears from Lukša's wife, other partisans, female partisan supporters, historians, and politicians. The conversations with Bražėnaitė are deeply moving.

The documentary could be improved. It explores the history with a veneer of superficiality, without asking deeper questions. The staged scenarios visualize the tragic historic events. Some verge on the melodramatic. The film occasionally splices historic footage with scenario (sometimes shot with a hand-held 16 mm camera), both in black and white, blurring the distinction between history and its recreation. The film contains an interview with former partisan turned Soviet agent, Juozas Kukauskas. He freely admits to killing a fellow partisan, Butėnas, to prevent his capture. Kukauskas later lures Lukša into a Soviet ambush. The documentary fails to explore the depth of this shocking situation. The movie includes some fruitless digressions, including an unsuccessful, but all too long, search for Lukša's grave.

The film won the 2014 Audience Award for Best Lithuanian Film and the award from 2012 Lucerne International Film Festival. The movie is the first feature length film for the producers and directors Sruoginis, Ohman, and Johnston. Sruoginis' current project is "The Last Stand," about prosecuting the perpetrators of the 13 January, 1991 Soviet crackdown in Vilnius.

"Segvards Vientulis" (Alias Loner) is a docudrama about a little-known rural Latvian Catholic priest, Antons Juhņevičs. Inspired by his faith, Juhņevičs finds himself helping men escape Soviet conscription. His parish becomes a conduit and battleground between the Soviets and the partisans. Juhņevičs, reluctantly, joins the partisans, in spite of his personal anguish over Soviet threats to his mother. He cannot reconcile his conscience with partisan tactics. The Catholic hierarchy negotiates a deal with the Soviets for Juhņevičs' safety. He is to become a model for amnesty,

to lure partisans out of the resistance. This becomes another dilemma of conscience for both Juhņevičs and his bishop. Church authority forces Juhņevičs to agree, but he continues to criticize the Soviets and support the partisans. The deal falls through, and Juhņevičs' fate is sealed.

The producer/director Pucis has woven history with morality in his first feature length production. The movie is tightly constructed, like a Latvian *josta* (ethnographic sash), moving from scene to scene with clarity and fluidity. Even though the movie is shot in black and white, the situations are not: they reveal the complexity of ethical decisions, without resorting to simplistic good vs. evil dichotomies. Varis Pinkis depicts the tragic role of Juhņevičs as a fiery preacher, conscientious objector, and conflicted partisan. Torn between the factions that seek to control him, he has no trustworthy external support or confidant. He becomes a true "loner", as his alias depicts him. Vilis Daudziņš plays the CHEKA (Soviet state security) officer Avdjukevičs with gusto. His role supports the Sovietization of Latvia, seeking to minimize the loss of life. The cinematographer Andrejs Verhoustinskis has filmed the movie in crisp and stunning black and white. The original music by Rihards Dubra accentuates the emotionally charged situations. The film was released in Latvia in December 2014, and quickly became the most watched film of the year.

"Risttuules" (In the Crosswind) tells the moving story of one Estonian family's deportation to Siberia. The family lives blissfully in pre-War Estonia. Erna and Heldur Tamm are deeply in love, raising their young daughter Eliide. The movie employs a literary third-person point of view: the narration comes from the real-life diary of Erna and her letters to her husband. There is no dialog. The scenes are flashbacks that explore the contours of memory. Heldur works as a minor local government official when the Soviets invade.

Their family, like thousands more, is deported to Siberia in crammed cattle cars. The frozen tundra become their endless prison with demanding physical labor. Heldur is separated from the rest of his family and soon executed, but Erna does not learn of his untimely death until the eve of independence, some 50 years later. For her part, Erna is forced into providing sexual services for a kolkhoz official. This ensures her and Eliide's survival. She continues to write to Heldur. Her letters reveal her anguish, hope, and commitment. Although their story is common among deportees, the movie depicts the fate of this one Estonian family in an intensely personal way.

The cinematography by Erik Pöllumaa is astounding. The scenes before the Soviet invasion are shot in overly bright black and white, giving them an idyllic and surreal feel. The Soviet era is told through a series of darker, grimy, shadowy black and white *tableaux vivant*: living pictures, staged with still-life actors. The scenes unflinchingly depict the horrific events of deportation, struggle, and death. The camera slowly weaves in and out among the actors, detailing their faces and emotions with the precision of a sculptor. Their lives are frozen in time. All the while, the audience hears from Erna's diaries and letters. The actors are not always still. The audience can see their breath as they struggle to hold their positions. The filming sometimes includes 360 degree panoramas. As the camera moves through the scene, the actors behind the camera change their positions, to stage another aspect of their gruesome ordeals. The combination of narration instead of dialog, and *tableaux vivant* instead of acting make this movie unique in Baltic cinema. The film is the first feature film by director Martti Helde. He took 4 years to produce and shoot it. Each *tableaux* required 2–6 months staging time, followed by a day of shooting. The movie evokes empathy. The film has won 9 awards at various international film festivals.



All three movies show the impact of Soviet occupation from historic, personal, and emotional perspectives. For the directors, the three are their first feature films. All made their way through various American, Canadian, and European film festivals in 2015. *Sruoginis et al.* focuses on history, *Pucis* examines conscience, and *Helde* explores memory.

## VILIUS RUDRA DUNDZILA



## ABSTRACTS

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### **From One-Dimensional to Multidimensional Thinking ROMUALDAS OZOLAS**

**I**n a speech delivered on the twentieth anniversary of the Lithuanian national reform movement Sajūdis, Romualdas Ozolas, one of its founding members, reviews the intellectual situation in Lithuania during recent decades. He argues that an ideological empiricism, all too redolent of Marxism, has made a comeback. Instead, the European tradition of abstract thought as mastered by Kant must show the way in thinking about the State. He argues that freedom to think and act does not necessarily entail the freedom of thinking and acting. Thus it is no surprise that some of Lithuania's politicians and intellectuals turned to new masters instead of exercising the freedom to think and act.

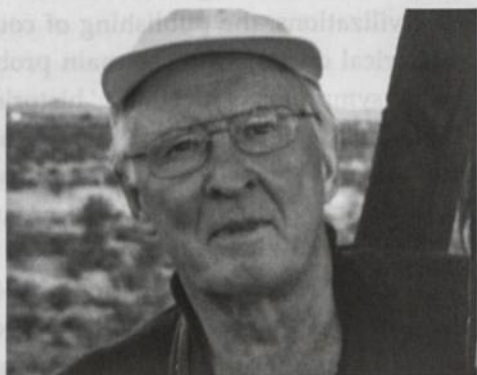
### **Organizations of Lithuanian Historians on the Other Side of the Atlantic in 1948–1990: Between Professionalism and Amateurism**

**VALDAS SELENIS**

Historians prepared for professional work in independent Lithuania, pushed to the other side of the Atlantic by the war and occupations had many opportunities to resent the reviv-

ing and growing romanticism and related to it amateurism of "movements". Nostalgia for the motherland, the uncertainty of the future encouraged making earlier the beginning of the Lithuanian state, the search again for Lithuanians in all possible ancient civilizations, the publishing of counterfeit unconvincing historical documents. The main problems of this article are what symptoms of 'declining' historiography did the then Lithuanian exile historians identify and how did they propose to 'cure' them. The purpose of the article – to discuss the problems of the professional organization of the science of history and the trends of historical thought in the United States and Canada in the period of 1948–1990. Its tasks are to examine and reveal the characteristics of the creation and performance, approach to the profanation of the history of science and the manifestations of amateurism in the organizations of Lithuanian emigrant historians in the same period.

### In memoriam



ANTANAS V. DUNDZILA

1932–2015

Member of the founding committee, past editor,  
and past editorial board member of *Lituanus*.

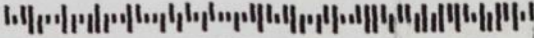
He was an ardent member of and leader in the  
Lithuanian-American community. He wrote  
frequent articles in the Lithuanian media, both in  
the USA and in Lithuania.





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