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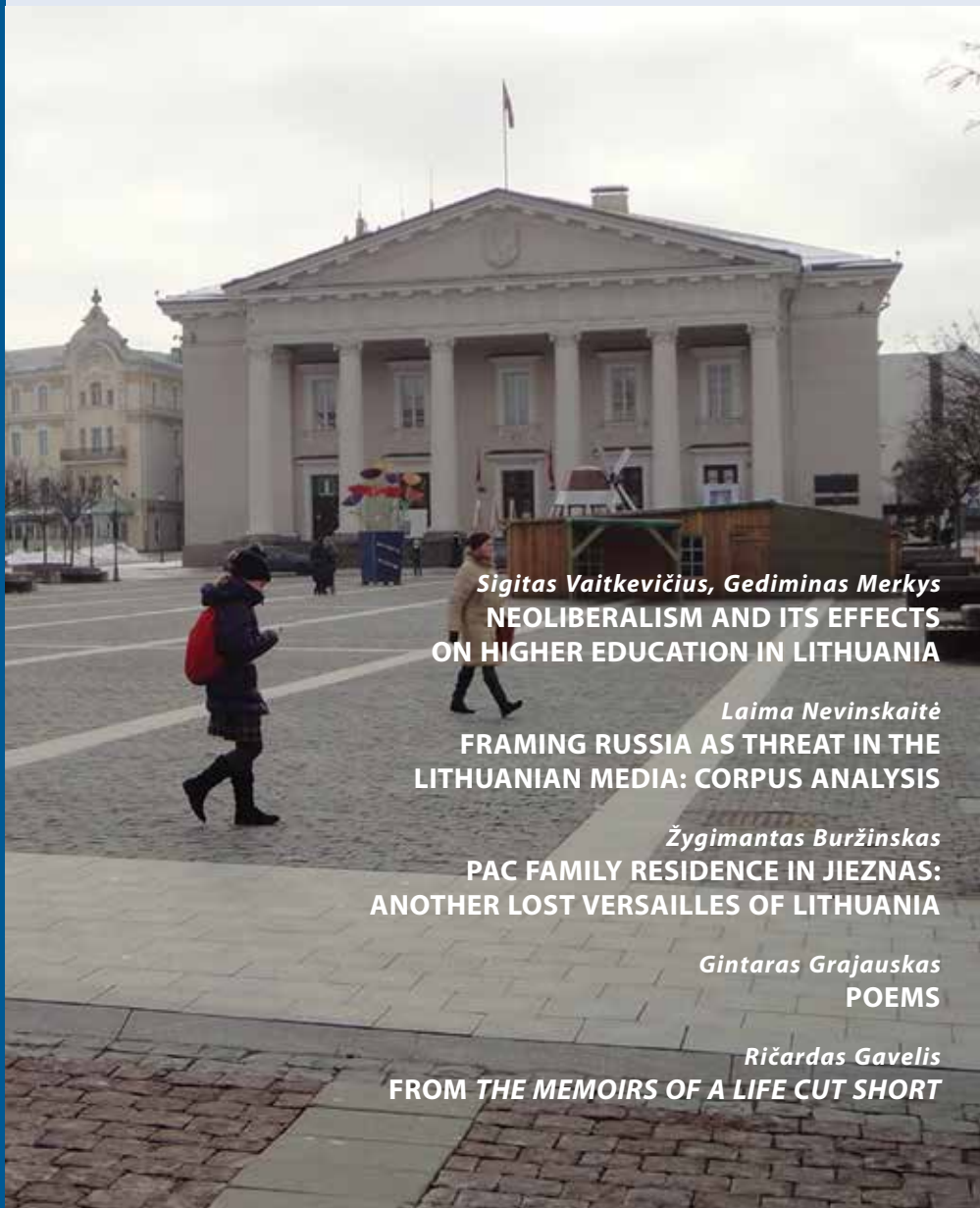

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Jieznas St. Archangel Michael and John the Baptist Church. Photo by Žygimantas Buržinskas. See article on page 43.

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SIGITAS VAITKEVIČIUS,
GEDIMINAS MERKYS

Introduction

As ideological doctrine and social practice, neoliberalism is not a new phenomenon in the world. On the theoretical level, it has already become a kind of philosophy, which participants in the educational market consider a burst of freedom, but which philosophers of education consider to be a destructive process in education. Most probably, neoliberalism is not an evil in itself. As with any other theory, its experience in problem solving and in encouraging greater activity in processes that have been neglected as well as in the use of the self-regulative powers of systems is a useful one. However, as with any theory, it cannot be applied everywhere, always and for everything. Of course, no approved theory is bad in itself. Some theories simply developed as a way of acquiring positive knowledge, while others were intended to describe negative experiences.

It is worth noting that from time immemorial, philosophy has constructed not only theories, but also anti-theories, whose func-

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tion it is to clarify the dysfunctions and destructive characteristics of established theories. Not all anti-theories operate to level the scales in such a way as to make the theory being criticized more normative and to give it the opportunity to become more integrated and practical. Some theories have the characteristic of upsetting those scales, and this turns them into an instrument by which destructive processes are sought rather than an instrument by which integration can be enhanced. Such is the neoliberal theory, which, according to *Educatorvoices*:

> [Neoliberalism is] …an ensemble of economic and social policies, forms of governance, and discourses and ideologies that promote individual self-interest, unrestricted flows of capital, deep reductions in the cost of labor, and sharp retrenchment of the public sphere. Neo-liberals champion privatization of social goods and withdrawal of government from provision for social welfare on the premise that competitive markets are more effective and efficient.[1]

This description already shows that the grandiosity expressed in concepts such as "[unrestricted] flows", "[deep] reductions" and "[sharp] retrenchment" is characteristic of the ideological doctrine (theory) which is the subject of the commentary. This grandiosity assigns to the doctrine a heightened capacity, which is akin to an objective idealistic model.

The creators of the philosophy of neoliberalism – Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, Robert Nozick, William Niskanen and James Buchanan – as a group tended to acknowledge a few government functions as indispensable, namely national defense, national security, protection from threats and violence, enforcement of contracts, etc. However, proponents of neoliberalism reject the ideal of the common good. They see almost all government action as harmful to individual freedoms. This doctrine supports the position that maximizing personal interest is part of human nature.[2] It should be noted that according to the con-

[1] *Educatorvoices*, "What have schools got to do with neo-liberalism?" 2013.
[2] Crawshaw, "Neo-Liberalism in New Zealand Education," 2016.

cept of rational social responsibility, maximization of individual interest should be harmonized with social norms and rules without crossing the boundaries of legality (the Machiavellian perspective), while not diverging into an overly exaggerated altruism.[3] However, neoliberal theory does not have such a qualification and leaves the question of the extent of set limits to the organization itself, giving it the right to act economically and with limited liability. All of this brings this doctrine closer to Machiavellianism and distances it from altruism.

For neoliberals, most institutions which do not belong to the "market" are entropic and tend "to usurp the role of provider", while employees, if they are not controlled, tend to squander resources and maximize their own self-interest.[4] Educational organizations are the best example. That is why neoliberals support indicative control and management of employees as raw material in order to amass benefits for the organization.

Institutions of higher learning in Lithuania (colleges and universities) were chosen for an empirical study of neoliberalism and its effects. The ideology of neoliberalism very clearly affects the function and management of these institutions at the present time. That is why they are an appropriate vehicle for a study of the operation and effects of the neoliberal model. In Lithuania, neoliberalism has been entrenched in institutions of higher learning by means of a statute which deals with research and higher education and by means of the corresponding understanding of neoliberalism and a corresponding practice of governance which the central government and influential interest groups support. There are many examples of neoliberal management in Lithuania's schools of higher learning. In addition, organizations have been created which are designed to maintain neoliberal processes by collecting and disseminating information with that single purpose in mind.

[3] Vaitkevičius; Stukaitė, *Įmonių socialinės atsakomybės formavimas*, p. 624–632.
[4] Crawshaw, "Neo-liberalism in New Zealand Education."

Institutional Neoliberalism in Lithuania

From about the year 2000, there began in Lithuania intense ideological-political preparations (in the sense of public relations and opinion formation) to instill the principles of neoliberalism into higher education. In the year 2000, the press was full of news items, which can be summarized as follows: a) the quality of higher education in Lithuania is very poor, it lacks an international component, and the results of scholarly research do not merit citation; b) budgetary resources and entrusted funds are being used ineffectively; c) professors and instructors are aging; d) institutions of higher learning prepare students as the institutions wish, but not as employers and the job market require; e) there are too many universities and too many university students for such a small country. It was suggested that state universities should be allowed to use the real estate they control freely, to rent it and sell it, that universities be granted the status of public institutions, which means that their status would be a middle ground between budgetary organizations and business organizations.

A separate news item served as a critique of the traditional autonomy of universities and their existing model of governance: "Where have you ever seen workers and subordinates choose their own bosses?" Thus, according to the "reformers", university presidents and the heads of academic departments should not be chosen by the academic community. In addition, university presidents should be required to appoint members of their own team – deans and the like – themselves. It has been suggested that universities are very secretive and are not accountable to their communities or to employers. Employers have been co-opted in large numbers into various academic structures and expert institutions in the belief that they would bring openness and new management ideas, and might even invest their own funds into state universities and into research, and in this way, promote partnership ties between education and business. It is characteristic of Lithuania that those invited to join academic structures,

expert groups and the like in large numbers were not representatives of some kind of associated business structures but instead representatives of individual business organizations.

It took a global background event such as the world financial crisis of 2008 to provide the political will needed to extrapolate vigorously the principles of neoliberalism into the country's institutions of higher learning. At that time, the aim of maintaining fiscal discipline, the motivation to control public finance, and admiration for the new system of public management, according to which budgetary organizations must learn from business and use it as a model, all manifested themselves quite strongly. The installation of the neoliberal model into institutions of higher learning in Lithuania should be linked to the Research and Higher Education Law which the Lithuanian Parliament passed in 2009. This law made the following changes: 1) it changed the status of state universities (they changed from budgetary institutions into public institutions, which ideally should have to provide for their own resources); 2) it changed the model of management (which was copied in part from business); 3) it changed the principle of financing, based on the so called "student pouch" (money follows yesterday's graduate, yesterday's student).

Once a ruling majority had been formed, whose core in 2009 was made up of conservatives and liberals, a new Research and Higher Education Law based on neoliberalism was adopted at an accelerated pace, circumventing the phase of serious debate characteristic of democratic lawmaking. Various interest groups, including scholars, legal experts, civilians, members of educational trade unions, members of the opposition, etc., expressed doubts and argued that the law is clearly in violation of the Constitution of Lithuania, that it is ill-considered, and that it will have dire consequences, but their apprehensions were ignored. This drastic action, hardly an example of democratic lawmaking, was cloaked in resounding promises by government officials that the new law and the new management model to be applied to institutions of higher learning will "naturally regulate" everything, will guarantee solutions to the old problems of this sector,

will raise the quality of the country's institutions of higher learning to previously unseen heights, will ensure their competitiveness on an international scale, and colleges will begin to prepare the specialists which employers and the job market require.

In 2009, the ruling majority in Parliament blocked a proposal to ask that the Constitutional Court of Lithuania expedite consideration of whether the aforementioned 2009 statute is consistent with the law of the land. Parliament rejected this proposal by majority vote. This highlights the link of the neoliberal world view and its method of operation to Machiavellianism: "the end justifies the means; if you have a grand and important goal, you can violate law and morality in its name with impunity." Afterwards, some opposition members of Parliament presented this issue to the Constitutional Court of Lithuania. The Court considered the issue in due course rather than in an expedited fashion and rendered its verdict at the end of 2011. The Lithuanian Research and Higher Education Law was held unconstitutional. The Court found many infractions (in the area of the governance model as well) and required Parliament to correct the law. However, the law is still being "perfected" to this day, namely in 2017.

The essence of the anti-constitutional reforms which had been instituted was the desire to rely on the example of private business, to install primitive neoliberal management schemes, to eradicate autonomy, to curtail the powers of academic communities, and to put all the power to make decisions into the hands of a small group of "top managers" and to let them govern in a manner which is practically uncontrolled. It did not take long for some small but very active and influential quasi-elitist interest groups, which had benefitted from these destructive anti-constitutional "reforms", to appear in the reformed schools of higher learning. A mechanism was created which justified all of this and in turn maintained the vitality of the whole process. This mechanism manifests itself in many ways, and its essential characteristics and effects are noticeable everywhere. First, one should mention areas such as management, generation and dispensation

of monetary resources, the status of employees, the legal immunity enjoyed by the so-called elite and those in the highest positions of authority, and the pretense of operational quality. Finally, all of this has brought about a deeply-rooted change in the organizational culture of schools of higher learning and essential changes and deformations in the identity and mission of these institutions. The university has changed from a traditional institution, which creates and encourages the spread of knowledge and occupies a central place in the community in order to ensure the continuity of culture, to an institution which in essence lives simply in the here and now, is constantly in a hurry and constantly late. The latter must always be in competition, must provide services, must account for itself, must advertise itself, etc.

Neoliberal Management in Lithuania's Institutions of Higher Education

The law of 2009 brought about a new management model for state institutions of higher learning. A new management apparatus, the university council, was created. Its purpose was to concentrate management in a small group of appointed individuals and in this way to keep the community away from the decision-making process. The council took over functions which had earlier been entrusted to the senate – such as choosing the university president, approving his/her report, determining the inner structure and strategy of the university. The functions of the senate were limited to academic concerns. The Constitutional Court of Lithuania later held the formation of such councils and their functions to be unconstitutional. Thanks to this new management body – the council – business representatives have entered the management of universities, and their sole goal is to maximize personal gains. In this way, a management body, which was considered a necessary expert advisor and which theoretically was supposed to advise and finance the university, became the principal management body of the university and collective-

ly made essential decisions about the development of the university not to the benefit of the university, but for its own personal benefit. This was accomplished through a law which granted to this management body very broad decision-making powers without providing any real accountability for the decisions made and without providing for the possibility of removing a council member. This became the premise for taking control of universities and for their dysfunctional management designed to help a narrow group of members pursue its proprietary interests. The circumstances for this were favorable: the possible assimilation of funds from the European Union, legal immunity, the ability to place blame on a worsening demographic situation, the financial crisis and the like.

The reorganization of university management took place not only externally, but also internally. It began first with the destruction of the organizational culture and traditions of universities. Relying on the pretext that schools of higher learning needed a new image, their image was changed by transforming the internal structure of the university and by "modernizing" the university. At the same time employees with more experience and influence were fired, and their positions (in the administration of the university) were taken over by representatives of business, whose salaries were much higher, who had commercial experience, but who had no idea of the specific needs of a university.

All other academic employees were required to become educational managers. Prescriptions were begun regarding the amount of funds, an employee in his/her capacity as a manager, must attract to the university by undertaking projects. As an example, one can consider the requirements placed on a professor, whose maximum salary before taxes is only 1,440 euros per month, and 1,090 euros per month after taxes. Such a professor is required to attract 100,000 euros per five years during his/her tenure while at the same time fulfilling other requirements, such as working 1,440 hours per year, of which no less than 720 hours must be devoted to teaching and the remainder to research. The professor must also write scholarly books and textbooks, must

prepare scholarly articles and publish them in leading scholarly journals of the world.

An employee, who in the earlier model had been doing research and expending funds in an effort to foster scholarly progress, was now forced to become a salesman, i.e. to do double work. Phenomena such as mobbing (bullying) and favoritism supplemented the organizational culture as large numbers of employees were unable to deal with such double duties. Mobbing is generally directed against those who do not reconcile themselves to such a situation, who begin to criticize the imposition on a scholar of excessively managerial responsibilities which have nothing to do with his/her work as a scholar. Favoritism manifests itself when 'party' membership, kinship and other non-academic criteria are used to select persons who are of average ability but are loyal to the administration, so that these persons might be given the opportunity of making careers in administration. This allowed mediocre scholars to unite and obtain relative superiority over the remaining, more accomplished scholars.

Employees in the Neoliberal University

As inadequate and unbalanced demands on university employees increase, their dissatisfaction with their work and surroundings grows. In 2016 we conducted research by using an extensive survey, which revealed that the situation among scholars and instructors is complex. The questionnaire used six scales to measure opinions: 1) A just Compensation for Scholarly and Pedagogical Pursuits (wage equity scale); 2) Respect and Dignity; 3) Working Conditions in Schools of Higher Education; 4) The Status of the System of Higher Education and its Probable Outcome; 5) Longstanding Problems of Universities; and 6) Democratic Processes in Schools of Higher Education. These opinion scales were designed and validated using the method of factor analysis which statistically aggregated 40 primary indicators about universities and the sector of higher education.

958 academic employees (about 11% of Lithuania's instructors and researchers working in higher education) were interviewed. It became clear that dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs is felt on average by 80% of employees, while as to the issue of a just compensation (wage equity scale), dissatisfaction with salary levels among instructors and academic employees in universities exceeds 90%.

A similar situation exists for instructors and academic employees with respect to the case of a "A Just Work Load." Here the level of dissatisfaction varies from 76% at Kaunas Technological University to 89.6% at Šiauliai University.

The survey also revealed that due to inadequate salaries, more than 87% of instructors and academic employees in Lithuania's universities are forced to seek supplementary employment. Not all of these supplementary jobs are related to scholarship and research. Often, these are jobs in business which are not related to the academic sector in any way.

However, the situation is not the same for everyone. Employees who succeed in finding favor with the leadership of the universities and so obtain the right to vote themselves a bonus or to receive higher salaries are in a much better financial situation, and their incomes are two or more times greater than those of their university colleagues. It is normal that under such circumstances a sense of injustice naturally began to form, social differentiation increased, and a gap between privileged wealthy employees and ordinary poor ones arose.

On the scale of "Respect and Dignity", responses to the assertion "if I could plan my life over again, I would not choose the profession of scholar or instructor" succinctly and eloquently show the effects of the politics of neoliberalism. Below we provide an index which gauges positive responses to this assertion. With the exception of Vilnius University, where the index is only 22.5%, at other universities the index is considerably higher: from 34.2% at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences to 55.5% at Lithuanian Sports University. Responses of employees from six universities crossed the 40% barrier: Lithua-

nian Sports University mentioned above, Klaipėda University (50%), Aleksandras Stulginskis University (47.9%), Kaunas University of Technology (44.5%), Vytautas Magnus University (41.9%), and Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (40.0%). These responses show how much academic employees are disappointed with the situation at their universities and their particular work spaces and how in this respect the attractiveness of universities has declined in comparison with other types of organizations. In addition, the responses show that in fact the profession of scholar and instructor is no longer a prestigious one in Lithuania and that their respective work spaces are no longer recognized as desirable or of high quality. All of this has complex multi-faceted negative consequences such as the reluctance of more talented graduates to remain at the university, a lack of respect for instructors, the instructors' lack of desire to invest in themselves by preparing lectures of higher quality and the like.

Responses in the scale entitled "Working Conditions in Schools of Higher Learning" are very revealing. The percentage of responders who considered the quality of working conditions for instructors and scholars at present to be poor ranged on average from 70% (Vilnius University) to 93.1% (Šiauliai University). A similar percentage of responders gave a negative response to the question of whether universities have created an environment in which scholars and instructors can achieve their professional goals freely and adequately. The range of scholars and instructors who did not think working conditions were suitable ranged from 72.4% (Šiauliai University) to 94.5% (Lithuanian Sports University). This is a clear indication that the situation in Lithuania's universities is worsening.

The number of researchers and instructors who noted the spread of protectionism, favoritism and mobbing in Lithuanian universities ranged from 66.2% (Aleksandras Stulginskis University) to 83.4% (Lithuanian Sports University).

The number of unmotivated students is another important indicator that working conditions at universities are worsening. It has become clear that this is a consequence of neoliberalism.

With respect to openings for paying students, the main criterion is a student's ability to pay, not his/her aptitude or his/her academic excellence. The number of scholars and instructors responding to the survey who noticed an increase in unmotivated, uneducable students ranged from 69.9% (Lithuanian University of Health Sciences) to 83.9% (Vytautas Magnus University).

The number of scholars and instructors who fear losing their positions, ranges from 62.5% (Vilnius University) to 93.1% (Šiauliai University). The facts stated above show that instructors and scholars to a large extent are preoccupied with problems of survival. They have few opportunities to pursue academic work calmly and coherently or to strive to ensure the quality of their work in earnest. This indeed is a serious indicator of the negative consequences of neoliberalism.

Responses in the scales labeled "The Status of the System of Higher Education" and "Problems of Old Universities" revealed opposition to the financial model for "student aid". The opposition ranged from 61.1% (Lithuanian Sports University and Vilnius Gediminas Technical University) to 75.9% (Šiauliai University). Over 70% of the respondents from Šiauliai University expressed their opposition; the analogous response at Klaipėda University was 74.6%, at Vytautas Magnus University – 71.6%. Two of these universities are regional universities (Klaipėda University and Šiauliai University), and one is a university oriented towards humanities and social sciences – Vytautas Magnus University. Such opposition in the case of student aid is understandable, since the whole concept of student aid is directed towards the elimination of regional and small, specialized universities. Discrimination in the apportionment of money, namely by financing the humanities and social sciences much less than other studies, inevitably affects those universities which are dedicated to the humanities and the social sciences.

Responses in the scales labeled "The Status of the System of Higher Education" and "Longstanding Problems of Universities" showed substantial agreement with the proposition that bureaucracy is increasing in universities and colleges. Agreement with

this proposition ranged from 77.3% (Lithuanian Sports University) to 92.2% (Vilnius Gediminas Technical University). This is just another characteristic of neoliberalism, which manifests itself in a university's desperate attempt to demonstrate that it meets indices. This is indexation. It is needed as a way to demonstrate that what is at fault is an unfavorably changing environment, and that certain changes must be made, which are not necessarily economically based. Indexation allows influential university presidents to engage in non-transparent lobbying and to demand allocation of financial resources from the budget.

The percentage of those employed in scholarly research or education who agreed with the diagnostic assertion that the system of higher education in Lithuania is undergoing a crisis ranged from 72.3% (Lithuanian Sports University) to 92.6% (Vytautas Magnus University). The latter also overwhelmingly assented to the proposition that the essence of chronic problems of higher education in Lithuania is not being addressed. With the exception of Lithuanian Sports University (66.7%), assent to this proposition ranged from 75.0% (Vilnius University) to 93.1% (Šiauliai University). This shows that the problem is not simply the problem of a single university but is a widespread phenomenon caused by a defectively administered system of higher education.

The percentage of those employed in scholarly research or education who do not believe that the schools of higher education are autonomous, ranges from 33.3% (Kaunas Technological University) to 61.1% (Lithuanian Sports University).

On the scale of "Democratic Processes in Schools of Higher Education" (in its external aspect), there was widespread dissent from the proposition that the politics of higher education in Lithuania is just, wise, and effective. (A minimum of 72.2% to a maximum of 94.4% dissented from this assertion.) At the same time, there was widespread agreement with the proposition that a democratic discussion about the mission of Lithuania's universities and the need for regional schools of higher education must begin. (A minimum of 75.4% to a maximum of 88.9% agreed.) This essentially shows that in all universities there exists a dis-

satisfaction with the present situation which came about after the passage of the Research and Higher Education Law in 2009 and the legitimization of the neoliberal development perspective. This dissatisfaction is a widespread phenomenon in the community of Lithuania's universities.

Analysis of the internal aspect of the scale of "Democratic Processes in Schools of Higher Education" revealed that the academic community is removed from the process of making the most important decisions. Those assenting to this proposition ranged from 71.2% of responding scholars and educational employees at Šiauliai University to 83.4% of responding scholars and educational employees at Klaipėda University. A minimum of 50.7% of responding scholars and instructors at Aleksandras Stulginskis University to a maximum of 75.4% at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences agreed that as a result, abuses in university administration manifest themselves.

According to data from the survey, efforts to stifle criticism are relatively less pronounced at Aleksandras Stulginskis University (43.7% agreed that criticism was being stifled), while efforts to stifle criticism are greatest at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, where the respective level of agreement reaches 72.6%. Thus, one can speak about democracy, self-government and free speech in Lithuania's universities only theoretically. Factual reality differs very drastically from official pronouncements. In general, one should note that at present it is practically impossible for an individual scholar or citizen to publicly criticize universities in Lithuania. Universities are substantial legal entities, and they are clients of advertising services. The financial pressure they exert on Lithuanian news sources, which are economically weak, is naturally an essential barrier which prevents the academic community from making public its general disappointment with the status of the sector of higher education and from having this disappointment become a publicly proclaimed and widely disseminated phenomenon. An academic employee who is determined to make public the troubles and pains of Lithuanian universities under circumstances

of a demographic crisis and worsening finances, risks being accused of disloyalty to his institution and his professional guild.

The survey of employees confirmed that destructive factors exist in the very inner administrative structure of universities. With the exception of Vilnius University, where 20% of the employees responding considered the university council to be ineffective, employee responses elsewhere ranged from 40.8% (Vytautas Magnus University) to 77.8% (Lithuanian Sports University). Opinions are more equally distributed regarding the functions of the senate (the academic council), which is made up solely of university employees and students and to which functions such as management of instructional processes are assigned.

In evaluating administrative functions, the number of academic employees who agreed that university administrations ignore the opinion of the senate in making their decisions ranged from 27.5% (Vilnius University) to 58.7% (Kaunas Technological University). This shows that universities are managed more as private businesses in a centralized way and from positions of power, rather than as institutions of higher education which rely on self-management by the academic community by harmonization of interests and consensus.

Legal Immunity and Neoliberal Legality

As the number of clearly amoral and socially unjust decisions at universities increased, waves of protest began to arise. Administrations felt it necessary and in their interest to defend their corporate interests and their questionable decisions. As teachers' unions became active and started to diligently publicize the positive instances of faulty decision-making, a boom of changes in legislative provisions began. What was amoral and faulty was deliberately granted protection by statute. This is how a faulty system uses preventative measures to defend itself and its interests as it actively constructs legal immunity for itself and minimizes the legal vulnerability of the decision-makers. All of this

is masked with propagandistic narratives about the autonomy of universities, the increase in competitiveness, the necessity for reforms, and improvements in the efficiency of management.

After the 2016 parliamentary elections, a distinct situation emerged, in which two interest groups formed – legitimate government, and organizers of reform. Until recently the latter were represented by parties which had been part of the government. A new, distinct situation emerged in which the "reformers" and proponents of neoliberalism no longer find political shelter in Parliament. The ruling party declares its commitments to education and scholarship, and these declarations conflict in part with the dogmas of neoliberalism, and are more reflective of the interests and hopes of the educational community. This leads to a duality on the question of higher education. Some seek to govern, while others try to stay in power. A situation has emerged where the ministry says one thing, because it still represents the neoliberal management model out of inertia, while the Parliament and its Committee on Education, Research and Culture represent a different understanding of higher education.

The Neoliberal Illusion of Quality

In an effort to protect the neoliberal development model for universities from criticism, an imitative, long-term illusion of expected quality has been created for the public. Media sources constantly report that the situation in Lithuania's universities is bad, that the quality of education is low, that scholarly achievements are insubstantial, that the competence of scholars and instructors is low. It is also constantly being repeated that the salaries of scholars and instructors are small because their scholarly-educational achievements are insignificant. In addition, it is argued that these employees are unable to meet the progressive requirements of Western quality, such as publishing in exceptionally high-level academic publications, are unable to attract large amounts of funding for scholarly research, and the like.

Examples of some progressive world-leading universities are presented in contrast. The fact that the annual budget of such universities is equal to the annual budget of many small post-communist countries is not mentioned. Also concealed are the drastic differences in salaries for academic employees, which are six to seven times greater in Western countries, and two to three times greater in some Eastern European countries.

The conference of presidents of Lithuanian universities and MOSTA (Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre), in an effort to provide a better picture of the deficiencies of the earlier socially-oriented model, gather data, which shows the deficiencies of the system in a biased way and transfers responsibility for these deficiencies to its heritage and past. Propagation of the neoliberal model has been going on since 2009, which means – for eight years in 2017. Unfortunately, the neoliberal perspective and the superiority of such a model are still being presented as an attainable future development, not as a present reality. With inertia, the proponents of the neoliberal model continue to assign the negative aspects of its functioning to a pre-neoliberal system, even though the academic community has already identified these aspects as belonging to the new model of universities that is being propagated.

As the situation in universities became worse, there arose a need to defend the neoliberal model as a sort of panacea. This is being done by creating a system of indexation:

– information about negative aspects of the current environment is being gathered, such as information about a worsening demographic situation (even though students can come from anywhere in the world), information about the worsening economic status of the country (even though the GNP in the country is growing) and the like. This is necessary in order to show that it is the current environment which is responsible for failures, not the decision-makers;
– comparability, unification and standardization are being sought. Creation of unified instructional methods and standardized instructional practices is prescribed. In addition,

everyone is directed to seek educational financing from the Lithuanian Educational Council, which provides it on a limited number of grounds. This is necessary in order to show how many scholars are of limited competence and how few "highly" competent scholars, who are able to obtain financing for research, exist;

– systems of indices are constructed, indices are chosen, which exclusively represent the most progressive Western universities, and which in context make the indices for Lithuanian scholars look poor. This is necessary in order to demean the dignity of Lithuanian scholars, to scare them, to silence possible criticism, and to suppress social protest from academic employees.

Money in the Neoliberal Regime of the Universities

Finances are the foundation of every reform. Thus, various financial instruments accompany neoliberalism in Lithuania, and these instruments protect some and exclude others.

The reform began with "shopping-cart-ization". It was aimed at concentrating finances in the most prestigious universities, which naturally made those universities which the market considered the leading ones more attractive. Creation of a student loan system accompanied the "shopping-cart-ization". Essentially, a few banks in the country were chosen and empowered to provide student loans guaranteed by the government. The State Fund for Research and Higher Education had successfully performed this function before the reorganization and had done so much less expensively, without charging commercial interest rates for loans, but this fact is now hushed up. A share of the market was granted to a few commercial banks, which have no academic or cultural interests and only care about increasing their share of the market and their returns.

The role of loans, in addition to that mentioned above, was to help attract more funds for sectors of higher education. This

has contributed to the expansion of the mission of universities. Presently universities are not just institutions of learning and scholarly research, but are substantial managers of government and private funds. If one includes financing from the European Science Foundation, universities have become sufficiently attractive business clients. It is here noteworthy that in Lithuania, just as in Europe, it is not business which is being financed by the majority of educational development programs, but it is educational progress that is being financed. However, even here a model was discovered to enable universities to become something like distribution points for educational funds. Clever business representatives, who saw the pitiful state of universities, were quick to notice that universities could invest in new projects, whose financial scope is substantial and which could "feed" business interests quite substantially. Thus, there appeared the possibility of legally allocating funds for the creation of "valleys". In reality, the funds were allocated to business interests so that they could build and furnish new buildings for universities. With the exception of a few isolated instances of success, "valleys" on the whole do not work as socio-economic aggregates. The argument that at present their economic status is very good is questionable. The reason for this positive status is the fact that everything profitable in subdivisions of universities which operated before these "valleys" were created, namely profitable institutes and successful sales, was artificially transferred to these "valleys". Without these components, the subdivisions began to look quite squalid and unattractive. This is also advantageous for neoliberalism because it allows its proponents to assert that economic entities created in accordance with neoliberal ideology are economically more attractive than the traditional research-academic subdivisions which operated in the past and are still operating. Paradoxically, the quality of the constructed buildings is poor. In most cases, they were not necessary for the university. Existing buildings would have been sufficient; all they needed was modernization. After construction, some of the buildings were given over to those same business interests. It was said that this would

encourage business interests to use the innovations and products which the research centers of the universities created. The university was left with the burden of maintaining these buildings. This was a good way for business to try to appropriate money which universities earned. Consequently, a new purpose has come to supplement the mission of universities in Lithuania – the hidden and entirely "legal" transfer of money to business.

In addition, this became a way of showing how much money the government is allocating to universities and how little profit the universities generate. In order to change this, proponents of neoliberalism add a new argument to their rhetoric, namely that there needs to be a reform of the network of universities, and universities need to be "consolidated". Unfortunately, the idea of reforming the network has been conceived not to save money, but to spend more of the country's and the European Union's money by using a tried and true mechanism for appropriating money – the university.

Summing Up

The development of higher education in Lithuania is under constant observation. Several authors have written critical studies about various aspects of the development of higher education. Samalavičius has studied and researched the industrialization processes of universities.[5] Želvys has analyzed the myths of university size and quality, which proponents of neoliberalism in Lithuania use as principle arguments in support of university consolidation.[6] Balčiūnas and Tručinskaitė-Balčiūnienė have discussed the attributes of neoliberalism in Lithuanian higher education, but they have not discussed the subject matter of neoliberalism itself.[7] They have analyzed the attributes of neoliberalism

[5] Samalavičius, *Universiteto idėja ir akademinė industrija*, 2003; *Tarp Scilės ir Charibdės*, 2016.

[6] Želvys, "The Mythology of Higher Education," 2015.

[7] Balčiūnas ir Tručinskaitė-Balčiūnienė, "Lithuanian Universities," 2015.

as results of the reform scenario of Lithuanian higher education. Viliūnas has presented arguments in support of the university consolidation scenario.[8] Daujotis analyzes the transformation of free education into a dual payment model.[9] The polemical study of Gediminas Merkys entitled "Akvariumas iš žuvienės: studija apie sisteminę Lietuvos aukštojo mokslo krizę" [An Aquarium of Fish Soup: A Study of the Systemic Crisis in Lithuanian Higher Education] should also be mentioned.[10] All of these authors essentially have touched on and discussed the traits of the neoliberal model, but some of them have examined them more critically, while others have been prone to justify the arguments of the neoliberal system.

From the management perspective, neoliberalism is only one management theory, but one whose essence is a free unregulated market. However, as with other critical theories which emphasize the ideal, the consequences of implementing this theory in reality are economically ineffective and difficult to control. That is why the successful practical implementation of this theoretical doctrine requires first the creation of limiting factors, such as responsibility and accountability, and also requires that restrictions on its execution be established. This essentially destroys the identity of the theory. This theory can be established on a principle of self-regulation only if there exists a culture which accepts neoliberal aims completely. In such a case, individuals who ideologically strive to achieve the same goal do not allow anyone to cross the boundaries of rational choice and force everyone to share, as they pursue individual goals. This is in fact the essential mechanism of free market self-control.

Otherwise, in a functioning economy, neoliberalism becomes a beacon not of progress, but of destruction. This is so because it tends to cross the boundaries of historically established ratio-

[8] Viliūnas, "Liberalization and Establishment of Disciplinary Policies," 2015.

[9] Daujotis, "The Rise and Legacy of the Dual-Fee-Track System," 2015.

[10] Merkys, "*Akvariumas iš žuvienės: studija apie sisteminę Lietuvos aukštojo mokslo krizę*," 2015.

nal choice and ignores rights other than neoliberal rights. This becomes a violation of legitimate interests for other participants in the market, and in specific instances it can mean exploitation of these participants (such as employees), as individual goals are pursued. The paradox of the post-Soviet era is that neoliberalism and its most discouraging deformations have a good chance of taking root in a society which is undergoing a post-Soviet transformation, yearns for freedom and greater opportunities, is unaccustomed to respect the rights and interests of others, and views the primacy of laws and statutes with skepticism.

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Framing Russia as Threat in the Lithuanian Media: Corpus Analysis

LAIMA NEVINSKAITĖ

Introduction

Due to its geographic proximity and history, Russia has continuously been the main national security emphasis of Lithuania.[1] The conflict in Ukraine, which escalated after the annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014, has strengthened these concerns, prompting a rethink of strategic security policies and leading to very concrete actions, most obvious of which have been the increase of financing for defense and the reintroduction of conscription service.[2]

The events in Ukraine and their possible implications for Lithuania were very actively presented and discussed in Lithuanian media. Although, as mentioned, Russia was always a security concern for Lithuania and therefore is always present in the media, but during and after the events in Ukraine the amount of news on Russia has increased considerably. Regarding the content of the news, the hypothesis given here is that after the Ukrainian crisis, Russia was intensively securitized, i.e. presented as a threat to Lithuanian national security, and that securitization claims have strongly rested on the events in Ukraine.

[1] Cf.: Kojala, "The Impact of the Conflict in Ukraine on Lithuanian Security Development"; Šešelgytė, "Security Culture of Lithuania"; Jurkynas, "Security Concerns of the Baltic States in the Twenty-first Century".

[2] Cf. Kojala, op. cit., 183.

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Thus the article aims to analyze how Russian foreign politics is framed in the Lithuanian media. The analysis is based on a case study of the biggest news portal in Lithuania, *delfi.lt*. The article presents a corpus driven analysis of news on Russia. Analysis employs corpus analysis tools of keyword and collocation analysis, while the results are interpreted using the notions of media frames and securitization, explicated later in the article.

Data

The analysis of discursive construction of Russia is based on news on Russia published in the news portal *delfi.lt*. In the middle of the year 2015, *delfi.lt* had over 1.2 million unique visitors and was the most popular internet news source in Lithuania (2.91 million inhabitants in 2015).[3]

The period of the study spans a year from March 2014, the month of the referendum in Crimea, to February 2015. The corpus includes news stories which mention *Russia* or *Putin* (Rusij* or Putin* in Lithuanian).[4] First, to calculate the change of number of news stories, the stories from news portal sections for Lithuanian news, Foreign news, and Business were selected, thus excluding news on culture, sports, etc. However, the core analysis is based on news from the Lithuanian news section (including the Opinions section), as it better represents the interpretation of the events, i.e. understanding of Russia. The selection of news stories within this section yielded a corpus of over 1.7 million words, or 1136 news items. The articles mentioning Russia were downloaded with the help of friendly programmers;[5] later, the reference corpus was built using the Sketch Engine platform.

[3] Gemius Baltic. http://www.gemius.lt/visos-naujienos/i-lankomiausiu-portalu-trejetuka-sugrizo-lrytaslt.html

[4] It must be noted that articles mentioning *Putin* but not *Russia* are extremely rare, since he is mostly referred to as the President of Russia or Russian Federation.

[5] Thanks to Tomas Krilavičius and Artūras Kveselis.

Amount of News

The frequency of the number of articles mentioning Russia or Putin (see Figure 1) in *delfi.lt* reveals a very clear upsurge of news on Russia related to the Ukrainian crisis and particularly the Crimean referendum in March 2014. Although the number of articles gradually decreased, at the end of year 2015 the portal was still publishing about twice as many articles on Russia than in the first half of 2013, thus showing that Russia remained in the focus of increased attention.

The change of number of articles can be related to particular events:

- October 2013: Embargo on import of Lithuanian products;
- March 2014: Referendum in Crimea; EU sanctions against Russia and its expulsion from the G8;
- August 2014: LITGAS and Statoil contract on gas supply to the Klaipėda Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal; new sanctions on Russia and counter-sanctions;
- September 2014: NATO summit in Wales, where the Russian threat and security guarantees were discussed;
- March 2015: Assassination of Nemtsov; increase of Russian army in Crimea and new round of EU sanctions;
- since September 2015: Russian involvement in Syria.

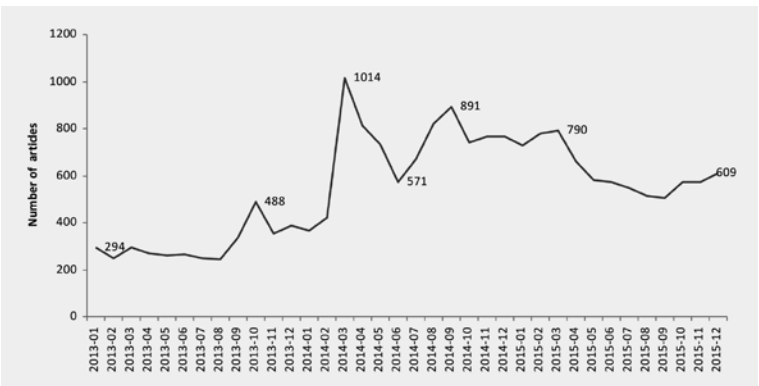

Figure 1. *Number of articles mentioning Russia or Putin in sections of Lithuanian, Foreign and Business news per month 2013–2015*

It is important that the news related to Russia is presented not only as foreign news, i.e. news about events in other countries. During this period, the average proportion of news published in the Lithuanian section was about 30 percent (Economic news constitute about the same percentage, while about 40 percent is covered in the Foreign news). It means that what is happening in/with Russia is treated as having a direct importance for Lithuania, thus treated as a Lithuanian policy issue. In March 2014, the proportion of news in the Lithuanian section was higher than average (34.5 percent) since the implications of the events in Ukraine for Lithuanian national security were intensively debated. Further analysis includes only the news published in the Lithuanian section.

Concepts and Tools of Analysis

As mentioned, construction of Russia in the media is interpreted using the notions of framing and securitization. Media frame is "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events… The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue".[6] Frames define problems, indicate causes, provide moral evaluations and suggest remedies.[7] Securitization means "a discursive process through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object" (in this case, a national state), and to "enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat".[8] Watson claims that the notion of securitization is similar to framing, since here an issue is framed as a "security" issue; thus securitization could be understood as a subfield of framing.[9]

[6] Gamson and Modigliani, "The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action," 143, as quoted in Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," 106.

[7] Entman, "Framing," 52.

[8] Buzan and Waever, *Regions and Powers*, 491.

[9] Watson, "'Framing' the Copenhagen School."

According to Entman, frames are about *selection* and *salience*: to frame is "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text". Information is made more salient in texts by its placement or repetition, or by associating it with culturally familiar symbols.[10] Frames in texts are manifested by keywords, phrases, certain contextual references, references to certain sources, stereotypical images and so on.[11] Thus the analysis rests on the idea that frames can be identified by repetitive use of certain keywords and phrases, or collocations.[12]

As a first step of analysis, a keyword list of the news on Russia was constructed. In corpus analysis, keywords are not the same as simply most frequent words. Keyness refers to statistically significantly higher or lower frequencies of words in one corpus when compared to their frequency in another (reference) corpus.[13] For the present analysis, the reference corpus was constructed from the news published during the same period in the Lithuanian (domestic news) sections that do not mention Russia, i.e. all other news articles in those sections.

The next step was to make a list of collocations of the word *Russia*. Collocation refers to a frequent co-occurrence of two or more words in a running text.[14] Collocates of a word contribute to its meaning and give information about the most frequent or salient ideas associated with a word; if two words are frequently found together, we may be "primed to think of one concept even when the other is not present".[15] Also, collocations will serve as evidence that certain keywords are not merely frequently used, but also associated with Russia.

Keywords and collocates were then more closely examined through concordances (words in context), also common collocates of keywords were investigated. This process, similar to qualitative analysis, allowed interpreting the use of keywords and col-

10 Entman, op. cit., 52–53.

11 Entman, op. cit., 52; McQuail, *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory,* 380.

12 Touri and Koteyko, "Using corpus linguistic software."

13 Gabrielatos and Baker, "Fleeing, Sneaking, Flooding," 10.

14 Stubbs, *Words and Phrases,* 25, 29.

15 Gabrielatos and Baker, op. cit, 11.

locations and classifying them into more or less cohesive semantic sets, leading to a definition of frame(s).

The corpus was analyzed with Wordsmith tools 7.0, using a manually constructed list of stop words (most common words that do not convey topic-related meaning, e.g. and, thus, that, etc.) and a manually constructed lemma list of the most frequent words in the corpus.

Keywords and Collocations of Russia

Closer examination of keywords in the news on Russia and collocates of *Russia* in context yielded ten categories of semantically related terms, presented in the table below. The table is compiled from a list of the top 100 keywords and all collocates that met the criteria of statistical significance;[16] only a few keywords and collocates with a rather general or unspecified meaning were omitted.

Table 1. *Keywords in the news mentioning Russia and collocates of Russia*[17]

Category	Keywords (frequency)	Collocates of Russia (joint frequency)
Russia	Russia (19104), Putin (4254), Russians (2220), Moscow (1678), Kremlin (1330), regime (672), Federation (348), separatists (541), Kaliningrad (198)	president (505), Federation (328), government/authority (137), embassy (119), citizen (190), ambassador (80), elite (75), representative (63), Duma (60), separatists (85), office (as Authority) (116), Byelorussia (91), media (78), Kaliningrad (23)

[16] Keywords were arranged according to the criterion of log likelihood. Statistical significance of collocations used the criterion of mutual information.

[17] The list of collocates includes only "consistent collocates" (cf. Gabrielatos and Baker, op. cit., 11) that were found in news from at least 6 months out of 12. The list includes collocates with one or two words gap, which indicates the most typical distance between the word and the collocate. An example of a collocate with one word gap is "Russian ambassador", with two word gap – "Russia (and) Byelorussia". Joint frequency means frequency of the collocate (how often the two words go together in the corpus).

Category	Keywords (frequency)	Collocates of Russia (joint frequency)
Ukraine	Ukraine (10024), Crimea (2167), Ukrainians (558), Donetsk (351), Maidan (379), events (973), conflict (969), Kiev (448), Yanukovych (227)	Ukraine (838), Crimea (260), conflict (55)
Agency	actions (1942), aggression (1261), force (650), occupation (501), to implement (464)	has to (124), from the side of (81), behavior (61), supported by (52), (something made) by[18] (40), tries (38), behaves (32), uses (30), itself (29), makes (18), demonstrates (16), actively (12), ambitions (9)
Subjects of threat	Baltic (2705), Eastern (2159), Latvia (934), Estonia (908)	
World politics players	Europe (6676), NATO (4926), USA (3764), West (3541), EU (2830), Poland (1987), Germany (980), Obama (522), China (360), Minsk (262), summit (277), Americans (438), allies (250), France (477), Islam (218), Brussels (200), Merkel (200)	West (13)
Security claims/ arguments	security (2675), threat (1323), scenario (261), in the face of (209)	threat (137), in the face of (threat, aggression) (51)
Dimensions of security	*Political*: politics (2969), foreign (2580), political (2056), government/authority (1864), international (1340), tool (1343), position (1158), agreement (813), power (747), political scientist (676), analyst (257), negotiation (215)	*Political*: politics (252), relationship (112)

[18] Lithuanian: *įvykdyta.*

Category	Keywords (frequency)	Collocates of Russia (joint frequency)
	Military: war (4344), forces (2047), military (2934), army (1938), territory (1030), border (858), space (797), peace (430), fighter plane (416), guns (561), ship (746), armament (348), airplane (224) *Economic*: gas (1194), oil (298), Gazprom (287), economic (212) *Societal*: propaganda (978), Russian speaking (202)	*Military*: military (445), troops (303), forces (231), border (141), territory (72), armed (as in forces) (38), special (as in forces) (33), army (16), *Economic*: economics (116), oil (36) *Societal*: propaganda (174), (television) channels (81), information (58)
Historical context	Soviet (1130), USSR (261), the cold (war) (226), January 13 (200), world (war) (496), Georgia (374), historian (211)	empire (121), Georgia (44)
Response	defense (2036), sanctions (1849), to defend (675), to react (227), reaction (198), to stop (198)	in respect of (249), sanctions (100)
Other/ mixed	country (7859), region (2305), world (2202), nation (1651), partnership (194)	

Some of the keywords and collocations do not have evaluative meaning and can be explained by their definition,[19] e.g. collocates denoting state institutions, or referring to the situation, while many of the categories include obviously negative evaluations.

The main actor in this topic—Russia itself—is referred to not only as *Russia* or *Russian Federation*, but also by metonymically used *Moscow* and *Kremlin*. A very frequent term that, besides reference to a specific person, metonymically denotes the whole Russia as *Putin*, who in the news, acts as a personification of his country, e.g. "Putin's aggression in Ukraine", or "Putin's Russia".

[19] Cf. Gabrielatos and Baker, op. cit., 13.

It is interesting to note that although generally in the discourse the name of the nation's people is used to denote the country (e.g. Germans for Germany), the term *Russians* often is distanced from or opposed to Russia, e.g. "there is no doubt that Russians will suffer from the sanctions imposed on their country". In terms of more specific actors on the Russian side, besides the likely state institutions and *nation* or *media*, which is referred to as a source of information, we also see a term from a negative context—*separatists*, referring to Russian separatists in Ukraine. An interesting observation is a frequent collocate *Russian elite* (as separate from the whole nation or citizen), mentioned in the news as that part of Russian society which was affected by some sanctions against Russia. Keywords and collocates show the importance of *Kaliningrad* for the Russian-Lithuanian relationship. Another collocation is *Russia and Byelorussia*, which appears as an associate of Russia, e.g. "[…] Lithuania is of interest to Russian and Byelorussian intelligence services […]", "Russian and Byelorussian military exercise "Zapad" that took place last autumn at the Lithuanian border […]".

The discourse is very much centered on the events in *Ukraine*, which is mentioned over 10 thousand times in the corpus. There also many references to *Crime*, *Donetsk*, *Maidan,* and *Ukrainians*. The case itself is referred to with such neutral words as *events* or *situation* ("in Ukraine", "the present situation", but also "security situation") or a bit more negatively colored *conflict*. It is important to note that the analysis uses only news from the Lithuanian section and not foreign news. It means that the situation in Ukraine is used as a context and an argument to support the theory of a threat from Russia to other countries, indirectly or directly, e.g. "[…] recent events in Ukraine show that our attained independence is not entirely safe"; "Russian aggression in Ukraine showed that the Lithuanian decision to become a member of NATO was a vitally important and right decision"; "we cannot rule out the possibility that the Ukrainian scenario will be repeated in Latvia and Estonia".

In this context, Russia is constructed as an active agent: very frequently used words are *actions* and *aggression* (their most frequent collocations are *Russian actions* and *Russian aggression*), *occupation* (Crimean and Soviet occupation); also, *force* is often used when discussing Russia (e.g. "the only thing that Putin understands is force"). Analysis shows many collocations of Russia with active verbs like *tries*, *makes*, evaluative words like *behaves/behavior*, and other agency-connoting words like *actively*, *ambitions*, *from the side of*, *supported by* (e.g. "separatists supported by Russia"). Thus conflicts and other events that have to be reacted to are attributed to previous Russia initiative.

Since the analysis involves news from the domestic news section, the main subject of Russian threat in this discourse is Lithuania (which is not listed among keywords, since its frequency does not statistically significantly differ from the reference corpus). Besides Lithuania, all three *Baltic* countries, the whole Baltic region and *Eastern* Europe are constructed as subjected to Russian threat.

Many other actors, categorized here as world politic players, are notably present in this context, showing that Lithuanian (Baltic) security is treated not as a local security issue, but as a question of European and world politics. These organizations and countries are regarded as a security guarantee and (possible) allies: *NATO*, *EU*, the *West* in general, such individual countries as the *USA, Germany*, *Poland, France*, and leaders of those countries (*Obama, Merkel*). Also in collocations with Russia, *West* is most often presented as confronting Russia, e.g. "relationship between the West and Russia", "compromise between the West and Russia", etc., or in other situations as an actor dealing with Russia. References to *China* and *Islam* show that the whole Russian issue is sometimes also treated in the more general context of world politics, in terms of its gravity centre and global threats.

The discourse has many direct references to security and threat. Keywords and collocations reveal that Russia is treated as a national *security* issue and a *threat* to Lithuania and the whole

region. The word *scenario* is used to discuss the possible scenarios in Ukraine, but the news media talks even more often about the "Crimean scenario" that could be applied to other countries, scenarios of defense, Lithuanian preparation for "the worst scenario", etc. Collocations unambiguously show that the threat stems from Russia: *threat from Russia* (*Rusijos grėsmė*) is used as a phrase, or threat is mentioned less indirectly referring to the situation of a threat, e.g. "*in the face* of the Russian threat", "*in the face of* the threat of war", "*in the face of* aggression", "*in the face of the* Ukrainian crisis", etc. Such brief mentions of threat in news are important—they show that threat is taken for granted and does not need further explication.

Keyword and collocation analysis reveal dimensions of security that are also emphasized in the Lithuanian security policy.[20] Firstly, the matters are treated as a political issue, i.e. there are references to *political*/*government* actions, *foreign* policy, *politics*/*policy*, etc. Political terms also serve as a summary for various dimensions of action, e.g. *power* refers to soft, military, NATO, global, economic power, etc. Particularly, the collocate *Russian politics* is used as a quintessence of all its actions and a synonym of its influence on other countries, i.e. "His ultimate goal is to bring back Ukraine to the orbit of Russian politics". Another frequent collocation is "Russian aggressive policy".[21] Secondly, the situation is often defined in *military* terms, with references to *army* and various types of *forces*, including geopolitical terms of *border* and *territory*. Also other dimensions are present in the discourse: *economic* or energy security, mostly associated with *gas* and *oil* (even if the news does not include an Economy section); and societal security,[22] related to Russian *propaganda* through Russian television and other *channels*, and the vulnerability of the *Russian speaking* part of the population.

[20] Kojala, op. cit., 178.

[21] In Lithuanian, both *politics* and *policy* are translated as the same word *politika*.

[22] Societal dimension of security is a term used by Buzan (People, States & Fear, 111–112). Lithuanian researchers and state documents use the term "informacinis saugumas", or "information security".

The discourse of a Russian threat also builds on the historical context: among keywords are *Soviet*, *USSR*, *January 13*,[23] *world* (mostly used as in *world war*), also *historian*. Some of the articles may be discussing various events of Lithuanian history, where Russia often is inevitably present as a historical period. However, there are also discussions on interpretation of history or interpretation of the present events in light of Russian history. *Soviet* in the news almost always has a negative connotation: *soviet occupation*, *soviet empire*, *soviet army*, *soviet propaganda*, *soviet nostalgia*, etc. Analysis also shows analogies made between the present situation and history: the *Cold War* in general and such specific cases as *January 13*. Among more recent analogies, the news mentions the *Georgian* case (meaning the 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia). The list of collocations includes *Russian empire*, which is used as a historical term, but also may refer to the present ambitions of Russia, e.g. "to further expand the Russian empire, as demonstrated by the Russian-Georgian war, is simply too expensive", "[…] Crimea, successfully and probably for a long time occupied by the Russian empire". Empire is also used in other collocations applied to Russia, as the *former empire*, *falling empire* (about the present), *evil empire*, *to rebuild empire*, etc. Thus the historical context is used as an analogy to the present events and an argument for the threat.

Finally, a topic in the news on Russia is a response to the Russian threat. Here, the most frequently mentioned are *sanctions* on Russia, military *defense*, *stopping* Russia and *reaction* in general. Keywords are supported by collocations: *sanctions* and other ways of response are *in respect of* Russia.

Other terms are used in various contexts and could be assigned to several categories, e.g. the term *country* is often used in conjunction with the names of concrete countries and for naming the category of the country, e.g. *EU country*, *NATO country*, etc., *region* refers to regions in Ukraine, the Baltic region and other units, etc.

[23] January events, that took place between 11 and 13 January 1991. As a result of Soviet military actions, 14 civilians were killed and hundreds injured.

Conclusions and Discussion

What frame(s) can be constructed from the analyzed categories of keywords and collocations? Analysis reveals the dominant frame of Russia as aggressor and potential threat to Lithuanian national security, in other words, it shows that Russia is being securitized. However, the threat of Russia is perceived as a threat to the whole region and is regarded as an issue of a broader transatlantic community, while the possibility to defend is very much projected on collaboration with international partners. In terms of Entman, the frame defines the problem (Russian threat as a problem of the whole transatlantic community), its cause (aggressiveness of Russia, as demonstrated in Ukraine), its evaluation (negative, as Lithuania has past negative experience of occupation), and its solution (preparation to defend together with international partners).[24] It is considered as a frame (and not media bias), since it allows and actually shows discussions stating both that Russia poses a threat and that it does not; however, the discussion is happening within the frame of threat, or national security. Analysis also shows subframes in terms of dimensions of security: overall political, military, economic and societal security.

This characterization of frame should be regarded as preliminary; it ought to be further refined through a closer analysis. Nevertheless, the evidence is strong enough to make claims about the general ideas in the discourse on Russia. We also must bear in mind that this analysis represents only one, although one of the biggest news source. However, preliminary analysis of other mainstream media in the Lithuanian language show that the news on Russia would paint more or less the same picture, only perhaps in less intensive colors. Analysis did not reveal any positive associations of Russia, but it must be stressed that it dealt only with political news on Russia; analysis of, e.g., cultural news perhaps would reveal a somewhat different picture.

[24] Entman, op. cit, 52.

This construction of Russia strongly rests on the events in Ukraine, which are used as a justification, or an argument, for security claims. Such use of context supports the contextual framework of securitization, which says that in order to be successful, securitization claims (as a speech act) have to be embedded in "existing discourses".[25] In this case, the existing discourses are all the news and knowledge on the conflict in Ukraine. Threat claims also rest on historical context/discourses, i.e. the historical memory and discussions of Russian occupation in Lithuanian society.

Regarding the potential effects of the analyzed discourse, there is evidence that a large part of the Lithuanian population regards Russia as a threat to Lithuania. In a representative nation-wide survey performed by the public opinion research company "Spinter tyrimai" in February 2016, 44 percent of respondents evaluated Russia as a very big or big threat, another 28 percent – as a moderate threat, and only 25 percent thought that it does not pose a threat to Lithuania.[26] There are indications that the media had an influence on the frames of thinking about Russia in the population: when asked about the first associations that come to mind when hearing "Russia", many of the respondents mentioned words or ideas that we saw in the corpus analysis: Putin (9.1%), military conflicts (6.2%), aggression/aggressor (5.5%), Soviet Union (4.8%), war threat (3.7%), also occupation, threat, gas, oil. Among the most frequent answers, there were only a few neutral terms: neighbor (9.9%), big (5.9%), country (2.0%). Thus we also see the framing of Russia in threat terms in society. In terms of securitization, we saw a relatively easy acceptance by society of the new policy measures (increase of financing for the defense and reintroduction of conscription service), which is a sign that securitization was successful.

[25] Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization," 370.

[26] Survey was commissioned by the project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

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Pac Family Residence in Jieznas: Another Lost Versailles of Lithuania

ŽYGIMANTAS BURŽINSKAS

Sleepy Jieznas Town is in southern Lithuania alongside the old Merkinė–Rumšiškės Road. The buildings facing the town were built, most likely, during the Soviet years. However, once the central street reaches St. Michael's Church, it is apparent that this is no ordinary site. The beauty of this church is in sharp contrast to its surroundings. Little by little, a complex and unexpected revelation about Jieznas outcrops – once one of the most palatial manor estates of the Republic of Two Nations was here. Its grandiosity is hard to grasp in the current urban setting of the town. The destructiveness of the nineteenth–twentieth centuries irreversibly demolished the grandness of one of the most important residences owned by the noble Pac family of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The Pac family rose to the heights of the Grand Duchy's political life during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Meanwhile, the constructions of impressive objects at the approach of the war with the Moscow state in the mid-seventeenth century immortalized their political power. The Grand Duchy's Vice Chancellor Stephan Pac acquired Jieznas Manor in 1633 and erected a residence for his family there.[1] The most distinguished monument this nobleman bequeathed is St. Theresa Church in Vilnius. Another important piece from him in Vilnius

[1] Oksas, *Jiezno istorijos bruožai*, 16.

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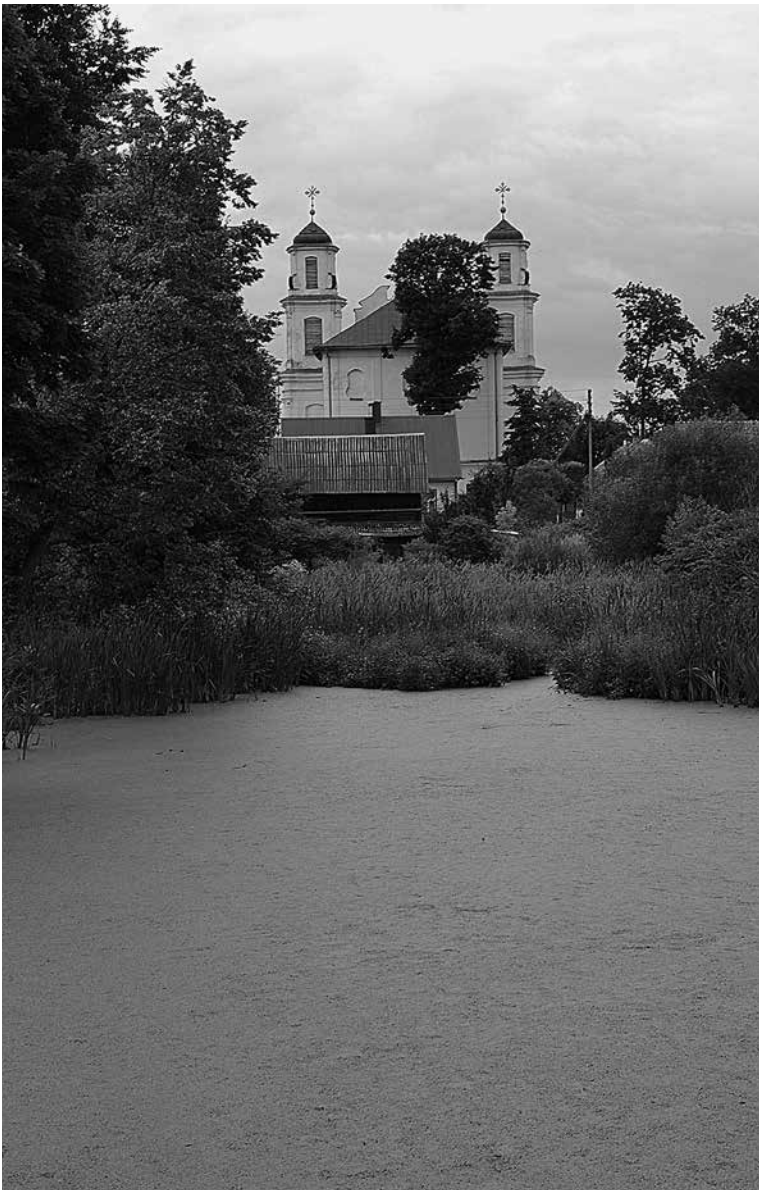
Pac family coat of arms from the Jieznas Manor is part of the collections stored at Alytus Museum (GEK 1235).
Photo by Žygimantas Buržinskas

was St. Joseph, a Bride of Christ Church; unfortunately, the czar ordered its demolition in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the showpieces, crowning the Pac family power, and the most famous objects Pac funded were the Convent of Camaldolite nuns in the Pažaislis area of Kaunas and St. Peter and Paul's Church in the Antakalnis area of Vilnius.

Early Manor – A Residential Palace?

There is very little known about the earlier manors Stephan Pac had built in Jieznas. No more detailed archeological examination has been conducted on the territory of the Jieznas manors to date. Meanwhile portions of historical resources have not been discovered to date or they simply did not survive. It is possible that the second period of manor constructions should be linked to another personage, Casimir Sigismund Pac. He contributed considerably to renewing these palaces while he was building the Pažaislis manor estate during the mid-seventeenth century, after the war. Completion of the Jieznas Church construction was also due to his efforts. The estate's early eighteenth century in-



It is still possible to recognize the structure that had formerly formed this expanse while taking a walk through the garden area of the former manor. One of the ponds is on a single axis with the parish church until now. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

ventory might describe the construction ongoing during this period, which writes about a considerably difficult state of its buildings.[2] The manor at that time may have suffered from the battles of the Great Northern War. Despite this, apparently there were truly impressive palatial buildings, which could be compared to a residential palace adapted for defense.

Huge brick gates led from the town square into the manor estate. The second storey of the gates had been designated as residential facilities. The entranceway passing through the gates had been laid in cobblestones. A brick wall circled the yard area. It contained two brick towers roofed with clay tiles at its corners. One of these towers was probably close to the town square and church; the other was probably at the slope towards the lake. The towers also contained two storeys. The first storey comprised the prison facilities; here the windows were barred. These constructions were in poor condition at the time the inventory was being compiled. The tower closer to the lake mostly had no roof. There is further mention that this tower also contained a cellar. The tower closer to the church was in better condition; its second storey still contained its glazed, green tiled furnaces and three windows. The descriptions in the inventory make known the kinds of windows that had been erected in the towers. These were typical for their times; lead-framed constructions connected the glass pieces, whereas the actual, wood-framed window divided into four parts. It is impossible to establish the structures of these buildings from their brief descriptions. Nonetheless, archeological examinations would help. The locations of these objects are probably the clearest when discussing the old manor. Mention of the marketplace can provide certain assumptions about searching for these objects. The current market square pulls back from the church building. From an urban perspective, such a situation of the church probably resulted due to later constructions in the area. Such a build-up of the square's area seemingly took place over the entire nineteenth century as well

[2] 1721 m. Jiezno inventorius [Inventory], MAB RS F20-1832.

as after WW II. One possible claim is that the boundary of the old market square had stretched along the western wall of the churchyard and continued along the now, built-up yard towards the present Jonas Basanavičius Street. It is difficult to assert, by available data, the area of the former churchyard from the late seventeenth century to the early eighteenth century. At that time, it would have included graveyards. Nevertheless, one tower could have stood at the border of this area and the market square. A search for the other tower needs to head in a southwestern direction towards the lake. Meanwhile the actual entrance gates probably stood on the aforementioned Jonas Basanavičius Street.

Further, the early eighteenth century inventory indicates a building that is a guardhouse. The localization of this object is somewhat more complicated. The inventory only laconically writes that this building stood "next to the gates on the right hand side". Additionally mention of the arsenal storing weapons and ammunition writes about its being next to the guardhouse. It is hard to describe the site of these objects, because the inventory does not indicate whether these buildings nestled against the brick wall or stood in the actual yard of the manor.

The localization of the other arsenal building is somewhat clearer. The mention of this building is about its being on the left side when walking away from the entrance gates. It is likely that this is the still surviving, though significantly rebuilt and ravaged, erection by the churchyard, not far from the surviving building of the smaller manor house. The inventory indicates that the building was roofed with clay tiles and, inside, laid in stones. Stables roofed in shingles stood opposite this arsenal, probably on the other side of the yard.

Apparently, the main manor was considerably smaller prior to the manor's expansion in the latter half of the eighteenth century, as the inventory reports. The building mentioned by the inventory had only one storey. The descriptions include 26 windows framed in lead as well as large furnaces decorated in glazed, white tiles for heating the facilities and a separate exit from the manor leading towards Jieznas Lake. The inventory

This seemingly indistinguishable building, situated by the church and one of the surviving manor buildings, hides old brickwork beneath a layer of plaster. Possibly these are remains of the mentioned, early eighteenth century arsenal. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

describes seven facilities, most with wooden flooring. It indicates the roofing of the actual manor was in wood shingles.

A decorative, Italian styled park was behind the manor; a sundial stood in its center. The building for administration stood behind this garden ("*z tam tą do gospodarskiego rumu*" [Polish]). This building was also in a considerably poor condition; in places, its roof had caved in. A glance at the write-up of the territory indicates a likelihood that this building was already behind the manor's territorial, brick wall. Nevertheless, entrance into the actual territory was possible through more than one gate. Indicated is that one gate was part of the actual, aforementioned brick wall. Another exit through the brick wall was towards the lake. Here there is note of quite an important matter, indicating that this manor's designation included defense. A trench is mentioned as running behind the wall towards the lake, which a bridge crosses and leads to the grange house by the lake. Mention of a trench possibly presumes the presence of a manor's fossa in this place. Historian Jurgis Oksas surmises that the manor had embankments in addition to fossae. However, the only substantiation for such a claim is a hypothetical comparison of the Jieznas Manor with the Nesvizh Castle, owned by the Radvila

The Lost Jieznas Manor — dark contours mark the estate buildings demolished in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Only two manor fragments remain at a distance from each other. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

(Radziwill) family. A review of the inventory data does not substantiate such a comparison.

A grange house containing buildings for different administrative matters was by the lake, as mentioned. Still, a look at the reported data shows that these were not particularly expressive buildings; most of their roofs were covered with hay or wood shingles, and all the buildings were wooden.

Estate Expansion – Grandiose Constructions by Anthony Michael Pac

The rebirth of the Jieznas Manor Estate associates with the personage of Anthony Michael Pac, Senior Scribe of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Colonel of the Duchy's Army and holder of Order of the White Eagle, during the latter half of the eighteenth

Jieznas Manor appears in a Napoleon Orda's drawing, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, viewing a side of the market square. This work shows the still-standing, main building of the manor. The manor's structure was typically baroque enriched by the two towers emerging behind the main building.

century. The possibility for constructing a huge residency arose due to his marriage to a daughter of the Radvila (Radziwill) family, Teresė Barbora, who brought a huge dowry with her, in 1745. The Jieznas Church was newly adorned along with the manor's expansion. Its main facade was rebuilt, and decorative towers were added. The signs of the church's reconstruction are still noticeable today. The still obvious, old church cornices inside the towers have survived after the tower additions. Neither the project for rebuilding the church nor the one for the manor have been discovered. The visible, remaining fragments along with the write-ups and drawings by contemporaries can determine the size of the manor. The architectural implementation of the manor had to correspond with symbolic, calendar motifs. There had been over 365 windows in the manor.[3]

[3] Moravskis, *Nuo Merkinės iki Kauno*, 425.

The Otwock Wielki manor estate near Warsaw, which is analogical to the main building of the Jieznas Manor Estate. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

Drawings belonging to the Napoleon Orda[4] and Władysław Syrokomla[5] portray the most vivid pictures of the manor, as does the drawing of the estate's layout plan by Stanisław Morawski. This was a grand, symmetrical plan of an estate with seven corpuses highlighting the central building with two massive towers. Its exterior was quite reserved architecturally; however, its interior would overwhelm any guest. A huge park with ponds and cascades surrounded the manor. At that time, the Jieznas Estate was one of the largest of its type, not only in the Grand Duchy but also throughout the entire Republic of Two Nations. The manor was a typical, baroque structure with different elements that are recognizable in other manors of the times. No other manors of a similar baroque type have survived within the former Grand Duchy's territory to these days; however, in Poland,

[4] Levandauskas, "Senoji Lietuvos architektūra Napoleono Ordos piešiniuose," 47–48.

[5] Syrokomla, *Wycieczki po Litwie w promieniach od Wilna*, 173.

Crumbling building of the Gubernia *manor found at the end of the territory beyond the ponds.* Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

rather distinguished manors of a similar type have survived in Białystok, Otwock Wielki, Radzyń Podlaski and Nieborów.

Stanisław Morawski described the manor of the mid-nineteenth century as truly impressive. The author had visited this manor a number of times during his childhood, in the early nineteenth century, and witnessed its demise with his own eyes. This contemporary wrote up the elements reflecting luxury in considerable detail. The main entrance into the building of the central manor was by a wide, spiral-shaped staircase laid in double marble. There was a vestibule on the first storey of the central building; from here, a large staircase, also laid in double marble, reached the second storey. On the other side of the vestibule, there was an entrance into the balcony supported by huge columns. The view from here opened up onto the "French-style Italian" park. Large, dry wine cellars were beneath the building. There were tiny chapels inside the manor decorated in real and artificial marble. The entire second story of the central manor's building consisted of an enhancing ballroom decorated in fres-

One of the two survining manor buildings. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

coes by Italian masters picturing the ancient Greek Gods. Morawski stated that this ballroom went unused for a long time, because poor decisions regarding its constructions were dangerous. There were no constructions supporting the ceiling over the large area of the ballroom. The other facilities were no less impressive; luxury abounded. The inseparable parts of the interior of this manor included huge Venetian mirrors, furnaces gold-gilded in various large patterns, parquet floors, marble doorposts and fireplaces decorated with gigantic marble etchings and gold-gilded texts.[6]

A 1960 photograph of one surviving building shows different architectural elements that had not fallen into ruin. The erections on the third storey during Soviet times resulted in the destruction of the building cornices and decorative window frame edgings and, on the second storey, the window arches and broken silhouette roof. Apparently, there had been dormer windows on the roof.[7]

[6] Moravskis, *Nuo Merkinės iki Kauno*, 427–430.

[7] Šalūga, "Jieznas".

Demise of the Manor Estate and the Present

The unstable times of the nineteenth century ripped the Jieznas Manor Estate out of the hands of the Pac family. Additionally, a fire in 1837 damaged the estate.[8] The object, which had once dominated the urban setting, became an unrecognizable area, except to the discerning eye of a researcher. Today Jieznas looks sad. The town streets have emptied, and many buildings stand neglected. The town, which had been developed as a regional center after WWII, is now going through a period, when it is hard to discern any better economic perspective. Is a look back upon history one perspective for developing tourism? Efforts in this area have been quite poor. The town does not have even a small museum that might gather material about the town's past up to now. It is quite a difficult task for any researcher to find anything more than a few old photos of the town. The current territory of the manor estate and part of the park has been built up with buildings of little worth. Different streets have been installed through this territory. Meanwhile the ponds of the estate have been neglected for many years.

The only resident of the town who has consistently shown interest in the past of Jieznas is Vytautas Gusas, who is in charge of one surviving buildings of a smaller manor house. He was the first to establish the configuration of the former manor houses. Of the manors, two separate buildings have survived; they are 60 meters apart with separate, developed lots dividing them. Previously almost nothing had been known about the Jieznas manor estate; there had not even been a definition of an accurate structure of the former estate. Vytautas Gusas has exceptional hands. He is developing a baroque interior made of woodcarvings in this building, on his own. His basis is the example of the Pažaislis Monastery that Casimir Pac had funded. Gusas has made a model with his own hands visualizing his own manor house. He is convinced that Stephan Pac had already conceived

[8] Oksas, *Jiezno istorijos bruožai*, 41.

Vytautas Gusas by his handmade model of the manor estate – the vision of the territory itself is somewhat distorted due to combining the mentioned, early eighteenth century constructions with objects built after the manor enlargement works conducted after the latter half of the eighteenth century. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

such a gigantic estate during the first half of the seventeenth century. Gusas watched the destruction of the estate with his own eyes as well as the demolition of one building during Soviet times. His dream is to see the erection of a history museum in the surviving building under his management.

The situation is somewhat poorer at the other, existing manor's building. Hardly any of the estate's former spirit remained during Soviet times in the dormitory-type facilities established here. The entrepreneur who acquired this building may have had lovely intentions; unfortunately, the result proved even poorer. Remodeling jobs were done without the help of any projects or research work. Shaving old layers of paint revealed the polychromatic paintings of the old manor. Parts of this painting cracked off due to the electrical installations throughout the walls. Plastic window frames were erected in the building. Such jobs only stopped after the Department of Cultural Heritage noticed.

Today this is one of the larger surviving estate buildings, neglected and damaged. The roof of the baroque manor was destroyed during Soviet times. The cornice bands were chopped off, and the third storey was built up turning the building into a dorm. This building connects to the main building of the estate (at the left). Rustic elements have survived until now. A dig has unearthed the foundations of the manor's tower in this building's yard. Photo by Ž. Buržinskas

Now this building again stands empty and neglected due to its bloodletting from inhumane construction jobs and a negligent outlook on heritage.

It must be admitted that, despite the survival of some manor fragments, the true Jieznas Manor Estate no longer exists in the sphere of the town or in the consciousnesses of its residents. A big job waits to renew the idea of the Jieznas Estate, not only locally but also throughout Lithuania. Eternalizing lost objects begins by grasping their value and significance to the entire country. Lithuania has a difficult time remembering its past. A symbol of the noble Pac family of the Grand Duchy reflects the complicated history of Lithuania along with its loss and incurred destructions. This object should be a source of national pride, not, as it is now, merely one more forgotten phase of history.

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1721 m. *Jiezno inventorius*, MAB RS F20-1832.

Translated by VIJOLĖ ARBAS

Children's Games

they ran around and played themselves
out. I didn't even have to calm them:
they sat down on the floor and started
doing something or other, quietly

but when they're quiet, that's usually
a bad sign – so I went to take a look,
and it's all fine: they're playing
tic-tac-toe

"The cross of Christ saves us from
the circular labyrinth of the stoics" –
so said Blessed Augustine; but back then,
we didn't know that, for we were blessed

and now I'm standing here in thought
looking at children's games. I'll go soon,
but I'll stand a while yet, for I'm curious:
who will win: crosses or circles?

* * *

having bounced around the world,
he returned, rich, bringing gifts
in a new car

his extended family sat at the table,
tasting Jack Daniels for the occasion,
politely screwing their faces

the traveler, having downed a few
too many glasses, began, during a lull
in conversation, to complain

Germans are orderly, the Irish hard-working,
Dutch people are generous, only we, Lithuanians
have nothing to brag about

so his father, grabbing a cane,
whacked him on the mouth

saying: now you'll have something
to show off to the others

Poem about the Lithuanian Search for Identity

Lithuanians are sincere, but extremely reticent –
from the impressions of a German tourist

why do they drink straight vodka in the middle of the summer
why do they shout out warlike songs, threaten people and hoot
why do they fight, then cry in each other's arms

because it's dismal for us to live like this

why do they eat open-faced sandwiches during their lunch break
why do they have breakfast drinking coffee and glancing at their watches
why are they now smoking on scaffolding, spitting down, while looking at the sky

because it's dismal for us to live like this

why do they hurry each other along only to be always late themselves
why do they meet each other and then separate right away
why are they continuously unsuccessful and only sometimes successful

because it's dismal for us to live like this

why do they get up in the middle of the night and stick their heads in the refrigerator
why do they get up in the middle of the night and stick their heads in a noose
why do they not get up in the morning but spend all day lying about in bed

because it's dismal for us to live like this

why do they go to church on Sundays
why do they see their women on Thursdays
why do they suddenly stop and stand like restive livestock

because it's dismal for us to live like this

why do they say: it seems like everything has already happened
why do they shrug their shoulders and say: devil take 'im, we'll get by somehow
why do they shake their heads and say: but something's not right, definitely not right

because it's dismal for us to live like this
because it's dismal for us to live like this
because it's dismal for us to live like this

so they say, those Lithuanians, and then they grow
silent, very very silent

* * *

it's already getting dark, but I'm still
on the intercity bus, my head leaning
on the window glass

all along the way, my thick-necked,
rotund neighbor is squeezing and squeezing
me into the corner with his thigh

good God, what an unpleasant chap

further up, there's a snotty teen and
a timorous Vietnamese girl incessantly
chewing the local lilac apples

all the way up front – a pair of older women
from the Word of Love church, who tried to marry me
to Jesus, while we stood around in Kaunas

I told them that I was betrothed
to Saint Augustine

and now it's dark, but we're only at Kryžkalnis,
and I'm home-sick like a child, I've had it with
acting smart, flinging wit

it's dark, and, losing patience, I tear my head
from the window to whisper to my fat neighbor:
"Look how the valley fills with the river's breath."

An Exercise for Summoning Happiness

You want to be happy? so be happy

or we can make you happy

just listen carefully: if you want
to be happy, smile

smile for your wife smile for your son
smile for the television
smile for the bitter soil
smile for the chair the closet and the mirror
smile for the burnt stew
smile for the trolley bus and the ice cream monger
smile for the psychoanalyst
smile for the meteorological phenomena
smile for your pant buttons
smile for the medal of St. Anthony
and if you can, smile for the moles
gnomes worms and other chthonic
creatures
smile up and down
smile left and right

smile and live,
like a fool

Not a Poem

and now I'll just write what I saw
at the Kristianstad church

there's a kind of tree standing there
with pieces of paper on it where people
have written all kinds of requests and
expressions of gratitude to God the Highest –
some even have drawings, or Christian
clip art, made with a computer's help

one note, way down low, is written
with a child's hand:

"My little sister
died.
    Patrick"

Before the Crucifixion, They Muttered

so, that Christ. Earlier, it's true,
he spoke pretty well, but now
he's gone bad in his dotage.

he doesn't care about us at all. Earlier,
it's true, he turned water into wine.
Now, all stubborn, he won't do it.

he's just not friendly anymore, loafing about
alone, in Gethsemane, silent, god knows what
he's thinking. Yesterday, he insulted good Peter.

the collection box is empty. His followers
have deserted in droves. It's interesting, really,
with whom does he plan to build that church?

we believed in him. For who would have thought
that it would ever be like this? Just the other day,
he turned our wine into water, and laughed.

but what a man he was. What a fiery
orator. He could, I'm telling you,
raise the dead.

it's terrible to see. He feels it himself too,
he's not dumb. I think, my friends, our sacred
duty is to give this guy a hand.

Translated by RIMAS UŽGIRIS

From *The Memoirs of a Life Cut Short*

RIČARDAS GAVELIS

THE TENTH: about my son and my soul, about Father-in-Law's stories and dead bodies that weren't dead bodies, but the most important of all – about my first end

> *"Your son – is you yourself, birthed by you yourself," wisdom says. Look at your son, and you will see yourself – look at yourself, and you will see your son."*

This letter will most likely end up being very long, because there's a lot I want to say in it. For a real memoirist, it might make sense to spread all of those events over a few chapters, but I care more about recreating my life for you than retelling everything in chronological order. It all befell me at once in life, without any sort of harmony, mercilessly, so I will dump it all on your head in this letter. It will become clear for you – that is, if you even want to understand it.

By the way, I just started to wonder: what do you think about me, what did you think about me all those years when we didn't even meet, didn't talk at all? Perhaps I seemed naïve and laughable, or perhaps you had forgotten all about me long ago? Perhaps you look at me from the heights of a radically changed life,

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and all you do is see me as a tiny ant, a creature from those accursed times, a creature not even worth wasting time on?

Don't think about me like that. My sad story could only perhaps have happened in such a strange, phantasmagorical time, which now is modestly called the time of stagnation. However, I wasn't a stagnator, rather a participant of history, the truest of stagnators is still alive today. So perhaps my story still has meaning today, and will have meaning tomorrow, and… Think about it.

Everything became jumbled up in my life when my son was born. I already wrote that everything that belongs to the body seemed spiritual to me, almost mystical, so imagine how I was affected by a new life, the appearance of a new body. I was blown away and fascinated, a new life in my house was a miracle, that had happened to me alone, the only one in the history of civilisation. I am not exaggerating one bit – that's exactly how I felt. First of all I began to consider with horror whether I had passed on any of my defects to my son. My heart defects – both in the direct and figurative sense. Until that time I had felt responsible only for myself – Virginija was a very strong woman. I didn't need to support her. After my son was born, I felt responsible for him, in other words, for the whole world.

Living is hard for a person, who is responsible for the whole world.

I looked after my child and in my thoughts I continued to argue with you. I tried to convince you of something, though I knew that you weren't hearing me and, it seems, won't hear me anymore. Raising a child is hard work. I dragged myself around all the time without having had any sleep, and I often talked to myself out loud. I was suddenly overcome by the horror that I wouldn't have anything to pass on to my son. I hadn't even decided what I was going to do next, and then I had to already think of what I was going to pass on to my son. When you disappeared, my everyday worries unexpectedly became my entire life, its content and essence. I watched with horror realizing that all I could talk and think about were those worries. I experienced with horror that I wasn't able to do anything else anymore. Ear-

lier I would at least occasionally sink into a different, more complicated world that was somewhat more elevated than the mundane everyday, a world of conversations with you. When you vanished, all that were left inside me were everyday worries, organisational troubles and the nonsense of writing reports. I began lying more and more often and more and more hopelessly. Every day I continued to find new absurdities in my life, new deceptions, new inanities. Is that what I needed to pass on to my son? I felt that soon I wasn't going to be left with anything at all that would be possible to pass on to him. Gradually I began to feel that I am losing, irretrievably losing my immortal soul.

"Soul" is a strange and unfathomable word. Sometimes I thought that it doesn't have meaning at all, but sometimes – that it was the only meaningful notion in the world. I think that a person doesn't always match up with his soul. I'd go so far as to say that they don't match up most of the time. I think that the entire life of a person is an effort to get his lost soul back.

I myself tried to do that my entire life.

There are quite a few people who don't need a soul at all. It was absolutely necessary for me – for myself, and also so I'd have something to pass on to my son.

I don't know if only love is enough for the soul. Love is a lot, really a lot, I read the miraculous words of St. Paul on love a thousand times. I experienced love myself, I lived it. Perhaps it alone isn't enough, perhaps you can't breathe in love all the time.

It seems I know your opinion, you always repeated that line from Camus: if love were enough, everything would be too simple.

I loved Virginija. Then I loved Birutė. I loved my son like crazy, that big-headed droopy-eared Levukas. They say that parents sometimes for no reason start to morbidly doubt whether the child is theirs or not. Looking at my son's big head and droopy ears, I could rest calm in the knowledge that I wasn't going to be seized by that kind of paranoia. But then I feared for Levukas's heart all the more. I was deathly afraid of showing him to a cardiologist. Thank God he inherited his heart from Father-in-Law's side. Father-in-Law's heart was always as durable and long-lasting as a

diesel motor. Perhaps, I said, the soul always prefers to snuggle up to a poor, sickly heart?

I very much wanted to keep my little Levas from having to look for his lost soul. I wanted that so much that I began to examine myself with suspicion. I always believed that the first spark for a person was lit by his parents and grandparents. If my grandfather hadn't been a woodcarver of religious statues, I wouldn't have become the kind of person I was.

I was suffering because I was trying to guess what kind of spark I was going to light in my son's heart. I loved him very much.

I was still looking for that spark or perhaps something more along the lines of a flint that could start it. Each person is a seeker, but I was an exceptional seeker. Perhaps because my daily life at the time was sorted out. I had time for my seeking.

A person shouldn't have to seriously care to earn his daily bread, otherwise he will look only for bread, and not for his lost soul.

The end of my studies was approaching quickly, and I suddenly realised that I didn't have a clue what to do. I tried to sit down and think about it, however, the monotonous current of events carried me unobstructed. Our life was already planned in such a way so we wouldn't have time to sit down and think. I didn't understand anymore what I was doing and why I was doing it. I dropped out of the physics community altogether, as no one wanted me as a physicist. I couldn't even talk with my course mates – we spoke different languages. All of those years they had done a particular job, gathered themselves into a particular community, in which there was no place left for me. Whether I wanted to or not, I thought about what I had done all those years, whom I could have a friendly chat with, whom I could confide in.

All I could do is talk with those same paper report martyrs from other faculties. Some of them were pretty nice guys – for chatting or having a beer. There wasn't one I could make mention of the idea of a grand community, the feeling of security or ant syndrome to. I couldn't even hint at such things. I also interacted with the district committee instructors and secretaries, but I

had no interest in even chatting with them – in a friendly way or otherwise. Not one of them had any lofty goals or similar foolish notions, those people seemed to me as if they were dead. I tried to prove to myself that I wasn't like that, that I was at least trying to achieve this or that, so…

Inside I was persistently striving for who knows what, but it became utterly unbearable when I sat down and came up with what I had actually accomplished. I had organised Physicists' Day three times, and it had become popular all over Vilnius. I had gotten a group of wind surfers together, I had supported a few rock musicians, and I had also set up a few such preoccupations for myself. However, that wasn't it, that wasn't it, that wasn't it. All those things were just fun and games. With such ambitions, in the best-case scenario I could become the director of the Sports Palace. But I dreamed of becoming a prophet! However, no one listened to me. The wind surfers and rock musicians didn't even feel any gratitude towards me, nor did they even talk with me – after all, I wasn't a wind surfer or a rock musician. Other people in general could have cared less about me.

The truth be told, there is one more significant thing I did – in a proud and principled manner I disfigured your life, and in doing that I did something worse to myself – I drove you out my life.

What else did I fill those four years after the construction work in Siberia with?

Most often lies, fabrications and nonsense. For some reason I made myself believe that a noble goal could be reached by fictitious means, that the nobleness of a goal sooner or later would compensate for everything. I was naïve. I was an idiot.

Imagine the following scene from a non-existent film: a wretched, bald man with an oblong head in black or gray clothing hidden between piles of papers – paperclips, forms, circulars, going through those papers over and over, moving them from place to place. Some piece of paper constantly falls on the ground, the poor man coughs, crawls clumsily under his desk, lifts the paper up, cleans the dust off it, leans on the table and smiles

faintly. You'd think that he's happy. That bald and crouched-over man is surrounded by paper flowers, paper dogs and paper birds. He pets those paper dogs, he loves them, because his soul too is made out of paper.

That is what I saw as I looked in the mirror of my soul.

Probably I needed to go to you, get down on my knees and beg for your advice. Pride didn't allow me to do that. I was still trying to retain my pride.

I was still trying to fool myself, I didn't admit even to myself that I had been doing one particularly horrible thing all of those years. I passively supported the universal lie that was flourishing unabated. Subjectively I was striving for something else, I was going on about lofty goals, however, objectively I was supporting a kingdom of lies. I adapted to it. It swallowed me up.

I was already prepared to become a worthy son-in-law for Father-in-Law.

However in the meanwhile I had not ascended the steps of the secret hierarchy to even the level of Father-in-Law's driver Kaziukas. The drivers of officials don't sit in luxurious offices or presidiums, but they are immeasurably important people. Now, when all sorts of denouncing and ripping off of people's masks have become so popular, journalists shouldn't be digging through papers or hanging around elite circles. If they're looking for juicy material, they should look for the drivers of officials. They're full of information that you wouldn't find in any secret archives. They know absolutely everything. Drivers and all sorts of assistants and people carrying briefcases – they are a closed society, a Masonic lodge, they know one another through special signs, from facial expressions, from the secret glimmering of one's eyes.

Father-in-Law's driver Kaziukas was one of those omnipotent Masons.

He was a small man, but had big shoulders, his hair always cut very short. He reminded me of my father in some way, perhaps because of the fact he was working all the time, though his work was rather suspect.

He had turned into part of the car, he was a centaur – half-man, half-car. Even when he got out of his Volga, when he would stand on his own two feet, I'd sense, that he would switch gears somewhere under his armpits instantly and speed off down the street at a hundred kilometres per hour. It seemed like he had a wound-up spring inside him. No, he didn't run around like he was wound up too tight, he wasn't loud, he was quiet and contemplative, but there was certainly a wound-up spring hidden inside him. He was the embodiment of activity. He was Father-in-Law's legs.

Once I drove with Kaziukas through all of Lithuania. He was bringing me from Palanga, and at the same time performing his primary duty: collecting tribute for Father-in-Law. I sat in a limousine with tinted windows, real leather seats, with a radiotelephone and Japanese television. I had gotten too hot in the sun, I was slightly light-headed, everything seemed a tad unreal. For a short time I felt like I was the real owner of the limousine, I looked with contempt at the shitty cars, which we passed one after another, it was the first and only time I felt like I was the centre of the world. That afternoon I ruled the world, I viewed it through my squinting eyes disdainfully. I'm ashamed, I'm even ashamed now while remembering it, but that's how it really was.

We drove along the mysterious zigzagging routes and collected tribute. In one place we got smoked vendace, at another French champagne, at a third magical hunting cartridges made especially for that purpose, and finally mysterious packages, the very essence of power was most likely in them, its alluring force. Kaziukas would pull up to some factory, in front of a luxurious house in the country or the party's district committee and stop. He would smoke a cigarette without turning the motor off. And at once an indulgent figure with a package would suddenly emerge from the door. Kaziukas wouldn't even turn towards them, just point to the boot with his thumb. It did happen that sometimes he would get out visibly annoyed and return cursing: those asses don't even know how to put a package together properly. But he would get particularly angry if the meek figure didn't show up at once upon pulling up there. He would honk the horn

in rage, and the limousine would howl like it was alive, a figure would run through the door almost stumbling and guiltily lower its gaze. All of those people were gazeless, that was their defining feature. Kaziukas would get horribly angry at those who weren't on time, the perspiring district committee secretaries would bow in front of him, they could have licked his shoes, they could have done who knows what. Capriciously, I was draped over the back seat and kept wanting to order one of them to get on their knees, right in the dust. Any of those gazeless people would have done it, it wasn't even interesting to demand it – it was so clear anyway that they would have gotten on their knees – not in front of me, but in front of Kaziukas. I understood that the district head in this secret hierarchy was Father-in-Law's driver – the dimensions weren't comparable. Everyone awaited Kaziukas quaking, it seemed like a secret service for tracking movement was reporting the route of our limousine and arrival time down to the minute. We collected tribute, it was a sacred ritual, the smallest fault or slip-up could offend Father-in-Law's shadow that was lazily hovering over our Volga limo. We checked a few lakes closed to the public – one for fishing, another for hunting ducks, and we checked other hunting grounds. Finally we threw a couple smoked chickens in the back seat. They appeared so miserable to me that Kaziukas immediately sensed what I was thinking, explaining:

"This is a rare delicacy! They are marinated and smoked by a heroine of Socialist work. The woman really earned her title: no one else in the world smokes chickens like she does."

We stopped to swim at a small closed lake and tried that chicken. It really did have an extraordinary taste, the taste of power and rapture. We drove further on in a drowsy state, the other cars moved over, giving the road over to us. The traffic inspectors would give us a salute as we whistled through the country at a fantastic speed, that afternoon I truly felt almost all-powerful.

That afternoon I looked at the entire world from above. And at those poor physicists, ever slaving away at their strange problems. And at you, my teacher: that afternoon you were just a

poor dishevelled little man, who spit while he talked, going crazy about lofty matters that no one needed. I could have crushed you all with the movement of a finger, I could have squashed you all like fleas.

At first Virginija couldn't talk with me at all, but afterwards, when I for no particular reason pulled her into my arms, she just sighed and moaned out of satisfaction.

"You had never been like that before," she said to me after everything. "You were like a god."

If that evening I would have started a second son, he most likely would have become the ruler of the universe.

The sobering-up came that same evening. You made me sober. Without wanting it at all, quite against my will, I remembered one of your teachings.

"When you see those kinds of riches," you explained to me back then, "when you meet a prosperous man, always think at what price those riches were acquired, and consider whether you would agree to pay a price like that."

Father-in-Law definitely wasn't stupid. He was and is just as clever as you even. His thorny glance hides a formidable mind. He would amaze me just like you did. Among the men in power, he always looked like you in that buzzing hallway of the faculty – like a glaring stain on a colourful carpet. He wasn't the least bit senile, he was full of physical strength. He played tennis ferociously. Older women swooned from his voice. He liked absurd jokes and made up great political anecdotes. Just within my earshot he made up maybe ten different versions on the subject of Brezhnev's eyebrows, some of which I later heard others telling one another in the street.

It would be easy to disparage some senile halfwit or soulless opportunist, who only cared about their privileges and other shiny objects. Father-in-Law was not like that at all.

You can admire him, you can even respect him in a way. Without a doubt, you need to fear him. It probably isn't possible to just love him.

His attitude to me was cool, but he was amiable. He didn't focus on me too much, but he also didn't allow me to be forgotten or feel cheated. He let me operate on my own, but would clean up the place of operation. As far as I can tell, he was simply monitoring me. He wanted to figure out who I was, what I was worth. He was too clever to elevate his son-in-law only because it was his son-in-law. Now I understand that he was deciding what he was going to offer me – either a sinecure or the epaulettes of his aide-de-camp.

Sometimes I think: but how would you have acted if you had been in my place? And at once I reply: you never could have found yourself in my place, for many reasons. Then I ask a different way: what is the most exquisite, most refined thing I could have done? The most refined trick would have been to conscientiously fight for the epaulettes of his aide-de-camp, find out his secrets, examine his security system, and then cruelly annihilate him.

But at once I ask myself: what would I have to do afterwards?

Now it seems like that "afterwards" has come. So what are you planning to do, having listened to Father-in-Law's remarks on your "Perestroika in Albania", having heard from him everything that he dared to say?

And to the question of what price is paid for that, is answered by the fairy tales and myths from the entire world. You must pay with your soul.

Those father-in-laws haven't been hunting for their lost souls for a long time already, I think they've even forgotten about their existence.

One of the greatest misfortunes of man is that his body and even his brain can manage perfectly well without any sort of soul.

At what price?

At the beginning I didn't want to believe the various stories about Father-in-Law, but then there were so many that began to appear that it was impossible to ignore them all, there were too many living witnesses, too many people wronged. They all com-

plained, lamented, and condemned Father-in-Law. When I was told about the grisly horrors that he carried out during the post-war years while practically a teenager, I even wanted to put together a dossier on him. Maybe he thought that gathering a dossier on others – was his privilege and his alone, I wanted to show that the reverse could also be possible.

However, I changed my mind pretty quickly. I am not and don't want to be Father-in-Law's biographer. And secondly, the dry description of other people's pain never leaves a mark. With the expression of an overly satisfied snob, we read about endless suffering, torn-out entrails and cut-off heads, however, that barely leaves an impression on us, unless a grand master of the quill would write it. But each person will relate in an especially vivid, convincing, and painful way, how he himself had cut his finger. How the blood gushed out, how he hurt, how that horrible wound didn't heal for such a long time!

That's how man is made: in reality he only empathises with his own pain. So I too will only tell you what I myself experienced, the other stuff you can figure out. You'll fill in Father-in-Law's portrait easily, you never lacked for perceptiveness and imagination.

I will start with the details, like the following for example: Father-in-Law is sitting in his office, looking tenderly at his interlocutor and promises him generous support, care and protection. But just as soon as his interlocutor closes the door, he calmly dials a telephone number and orders that man to be done away with. A detail? Probably. Every politician's daily bread? Most likely. However such details tormented me my whole life. Yet another detail. Once I was visited by a neighbour who was from Kaunas, a former hooligan on our street. He bravely carried his cross, and took care of his ill mother and supported his sister injured in an accident. I was shocked when I found out that he still lived in the kind of semi-basement that I had lived in way back when. I had somehow forgotten that such things existed. He asked me to intercede, but not for himself. He begged me to save his brother, an economist, who had thought up some sort

of experimental system, which in one factory had given miraculous results. That person walked the stations of the cross, languished in court, even got as far as Moscow, and ultimately almost defended his idea. He wanted things to be better for all of us. He was one of the upright communists – a rarer and rarer species in those times. But suddenly he was relieved of all his duties and almost sentenced for who knows what. My former neighbour continued to show me the conclusions of the scientific committees time and again, he cried real tears. He insisted that Father-in-Law could fix everything, his economist brother very much believed in Father-in-Law's mind and power. His brother felt that enormous GGI. He stood on the verge of suicide, only Father-in-Law could save him. My guest told me everything so convincingly that I almost began to cry.

I steeled myself to go to Father-in-Law officially for the first time. That economist seemed like one of our own, he had a sacred mission, he wanted things to be better for all of us. I prepared for the visit as if for an exam, I looked through the documents he'd brought me ten times. I was a little proud of Father-in-Law and – there's no sense in hiding it – of myself. A person who was backed into a corner was searching for justice from not just any person, but from Father-in-Law himself. People believed in him. And I was the mediator for the re-establishing of justice. I clearly saw how Father-in-Law heard me out with interest, and glanced at the documents. Maybe he would seek out some experts yet. I clearly saw how he re-established justice, and I would be the one that contributed to that, I naively imagined how the model of that economist would begin working better and better, how gradually the entire system would correct itself, how…

I was naive, I was very naive. Father-in-Law listened to me without interruption, and then pushed the documents I had brought off to the side. He knew about that person, but wasn't planning to correct this horrible injustice at all. The concept "justice" didn't exist in his mind at all. So is that economist right or not, I asked, but Father-in-Law couldn't even understand what I wanted. You see, Macaitis (the economist) had made some sort

of subordination faux pas. He hadn't listened to some order, which had been expressed in the form of a recommendation. What's more, he had complained to Moscow. But was he right, I asked, why was he attacked, not just him, but the most important thing, his system, which could have been beneficial for all of us. Father-in-Law truly didn't understand what I wanted. It was as if he was saying, what injustice, what undeserved personal ruin, and furthermore – what guy are we talking about? That erased economist didn't exist for Father-in-Law. As far as I understood, once upon a time he had made a mistake, and then he died, disappeared, into thin air. In Father-in-Law's eyes I was a necrophile. I had dug up his rotting remains from the ground and demanded that they be washed, polished, and worshipped. I was a nutcase. The strangest expression of my craziness were my inexplicable fiery assertions about "the benefit for all of us," "morality," all of those "how can we punish a man that brings only goodness and virtue." Father-in-Law answered me very clearly: that seeker of justice and disturber of the peace is not useful FOR US. We were speaking different languages, our brains worked according to different systems of logic.

I was overwhelmed by dread. I started to lack air, my ill heart was beating irregularly and hollowly. I had understood long ago that the disappearance of Macaitis was in accordance to the rules, sanctioned by Father-in-Law himself. But I started to not understand what those rules were, according to which such people were exterminated. That economist Macaitis was an obstacle for someone. But for whom could he have been an obstacle, if he was merely trying to make things better for all of us? That much I understood, even without being an economist. Who was he an obstacle for? That question didn't give me peace for a long time, sooner or later I had to ask who those "all of us" were. And then I had to ask who those "not us" are. And even later I had to answer myself which of those groups I belonged to and was helping.

It turned out that I was balancing on the border of "all of us" and "not us." It turned out even stranger than that – that I wanted to find justice "for all of us" while becoming a part of the

"not us." It turned out that I was pursuing the sacred aims of "for all of us" using the methods and rules of "not us."

Thus I remained dangling between the heavens and the earth: I was assigned a position as a physics lecturer in a big vocational education institute. And, of course, I quickly became the Komsomol secretary of the technical institute.

At the time I essentially did nothing. Would you call the giving of banal physics lectures, the even more banal Komsomol meetings and phantasmagorical reports doing something? If I did anything, then I did carry out research on Father-in-Law. You could say I attempted to try on his clothes – after all, if I ceased dangling between heaven and earth, then that was going to be my best future option.

Up until that time Father-in-Law hadn't seemed entirely real to me – no more real than to any average newspaper reader. Though I saw him close up, heard how blissfully he panted while scratching his chest hair, how he ran up the stairs to the fourth floor like a young man. I could play chess with him and even win – he didn't become angry at all and wasn't a sore loser, in this sense he was almost poetic. It was more fun for him to lose having come up with some elegant combination than win a boring and tedious match. I could never comprehend that man. He was clever and by no means shallow. He was a handsome older man without any soul. He was a monster with a great number of pleasant traits.

I would always remember how you complained back then:

"We have so much fallen out of the habit of colourful people that when we meet a multi-faceted person we get totally confused. Our life is so monotonous, and the people are so banal, that we have totally forgotten the variety of the world. We are so used to one-dimensional people that when we meet someone different, we don't know either how to act or what to think anymore."

It seemed that you were talking to me about Father-in-Law.

I never did comprehend that man, I didn't understand his credo, his aims. Others often said to me that the desire for power

wins out over all other feelings, but I don't believe that. A person has to have more complex aims than a desire to be the head of the pack. That's a characteristic of animals, but such a refined and complex man as Father-in-Law simply had to have somewhat more complex global plans.

He is a metaphysical being. He has some sort of secret intentions, but I never succeeded in decoding them.

Gradually it began to appear that he really was a metaphysical being. I was in awe of him as the first human was of a magician. Perhaps all magic appears out of a lack of knowledge. That's what happened to me with Father-in-Law. I examined his work almost unconsciously, but of course I couldn't find out about anything in its entirety. Even the most talented interrogator for particularly serious cases with the whole of his powerful apparatus wouldn't have been able to find out everything in its entirety. But I did have an advantage over such a hypothetical interrogator. I could lean not only on facts, but on my feelings, intuition, even imagination. After all, I wasn't collecting case material, I wasn't planning on divulging it publicly. It seems that then already I was getting ready to write you letters.

I wanted to warn and protect you.

Father-in-Law seemed like a massive octopus, or to be more precise – like a centopus, carefully hiding his endless tentacles. Each of them slithering out over vast distances, and branching out into even smaller tentacles; trying to grasp the end of one of them, with surprise and horror I experienced that that end was most often reaching for precisely me.

Just like that: it would reach even for me, a small-time Komsomol functionary. I tried to clarify numerous times how some idiotic ban appeared, how some unwritten order appeared, which gradually became a law, I got tangled up in imaginary threads for a long time, rising higher and higher along the cliffs of the hierarchy, until with surprise and horror I found that the threads unavoidably led towards Father-in-Law's office. Gradually it began to appear that he ran absolutely everything in the world. It seemed that there wasn't a ban, a take-down of someone, a demagogic

slogan that he failed to stick his nose in. I understood, I understood well that it shouldn't be like that – in the end Father-in-Law was not the highest person, but all of those threads unavoidably led towards him. It seemed that he was undoubtedly the highest in some secret, distorted world, it seemed his tentacles were spread out in an oppressive metaphysical space, which was ruled by rot and those poisonous phantasmagorical spores, which had infected absolutely everything, including people's minds, and even objects. In that oppressive space, the putrid spiritual corpses of the dead were scattered here and there: the corpses of people's souls, the corpses of thoughts and ideas, the corpses of propositions and reforms.

That was perhaps the most important thing: those reeking corpses. If they wouldn't have existed, you could have considered it all to be in the realm of fantasy, a creature of my excited nervous system. However, those corpses were too real. They were evidence that this phantasmagorical space brimming with decomposing and poisonous spores really did exist, that those secret tentacles existed, and the outcome of their work was very bleak.

Those spiritual corpses opened my eyes.

If all of Father-in-Law's tentacles, their many-sided offshoots would still be slithering, passing on information, pushing or holding people back, I would have understood the work of this massive and powerful organism as a biological imperative, showing the nature of the ruling organism and its laws. However, this organism did what was not biologically purposeful: it killed creatures that it didn't feed on. Those tentacles, those offshoots quietly choked people's souls, thoughts and ideas, propositions and reforms, and then left their gasping bodies to dismally decay.

Father-in-Law's entire path was sown with those unseen, horribly reeking, decaying corpses. I'd find out about the efforts of the more progressive teachers to at least somewhat reform the schools – and soon after it would turn out that Father-in-Law had quashed all of those efforts. I found out about historians' desires to raise the curtain surrounding the most fundamental moments in Lithuania's history at least somewhat – and imme-

diately I'd experience that all of their desires were masterfully killed by none other than Father-in-Law. He constantly worked with the hands of others, however, you could recognise his handwriting on it at once, the marks of Father-in-Law's iron grip remained on the bodies of his spiritual victims forever.

Gradually I began to fully understand what I should have understood much much earlier: Father-in-Law himself spread those phantasmagorical poisonous spores, which destroyed absolutely everything: thoughts and ideas, people and even soulless objects, weakening even stainless steel, even the indestructible ceramic of the cosmos.

My Father-in-Law was a prosperous breeder and spreader of those spores. He was like some mushroom, feeding off the juices of all of us.

I don't agree with calling such people simply bureaucrats. Such an ordinary word didn't at all fit in describing them. You have to think up a special, threatening, phantasmagorical word for that – the kind that they are themselves. Such people gather into strange sects that are incomprehensible for a sober mind, they recognise each other at once – perhaps from some secret signs, perhaps from their smell. They are dangerous, you need to fear them.

If I could, I'd send a telegram, which all people of Lithuania should receive. If it was brought to every flat, to every dormitory room this is what I would write in it:

> *Be wary of them and, for God's sake, don't think that they are easy to overcome. They won't give up easily. You need to fear them. You need to judge them accordingly. They are not afraid of any sort of spells. A fight with them – is not a gentlemanly sport. It's war. A serious, long and dogged war.*

You can't do without corpses in a war. Yes, namely corpses. Let's say, people who've drowned.

I have to write to you about this. That event helped me to come to a decision. That event shook me up.

I remember, it was an autumn evening, I couldn't fall asleep for a long time, finally I sat down to write you a letter. It definitely wasn't the first one – perhaps the tenth one, perhaps the twentieth one. I still inquired about what you were doing, how you were. You nevertheless got into the doctoral programme for philosophy, fraternizing with your colleagues, horrifying them with your ideas and musings. They approved your dissertation topic with some effort, having thought up a bunch of turgid statements, they essentially fabricated it all. However, after they listened to what you were planning on writing in your text, all of them took fright: it was totally clear that such a dissertation "wouldn't get through." But you yourself felt perfectly great. You knew how to feel great, though you also knew how to be sad. You knew how to do a lot of things. You knew a lot of things.

I kept writing letters to you, wanting to ask you something or other. On that ill-starred night I wanted to ask you whether an honest man can take a dishonest path, if it's practically the only available path for the simple reason that there is nowhere else to go. To join in the procession, all the while secretly hoping to be able to turn everyone in the appropriate direction sooner or later.

There was a lot more I wanted to ask, but I was interrupted by the incessant ringing of the doorbell. Visitors never called at our house at night, so I was quite surprised when I saw Marius, our neighbour from the second floor, standing in the doorway. He was young but had already managed to gain recognition as a surgeon; he was perhaps the only younger man in our building, which was made for the elite class. All the rest were old enough to be my parents.

Almost pushing me aside, Marius stumbled into the room with a partly drunk bottle of cognac. He himself grabbed some glasses from the cupboard, poured some for us both and only settled down after I tossed back what seemed like a double.

"I didn't sign!" he exclaimed in the voice of a gravedigger.

Then he trembled all over – from his cheeks down to his fingertips – and poured himself some more cognac. I had never seen a person tremble like that before.

"They're just bringing them in continuously," he uttered somberly. "They've been laid out right on the basement floor. They don't let our staff near them; all kinds of militia as well as vague lowlifes are bringing them in and piling them up. You understand, they wouldn't even let us… they just insisted that I sign. But I didn't sign! Some had no documents but were somehow identified. Relatives are swarming all around the clinics. There's commotion everywhere, and that son of a bitch locked me in an office with him and tried to force me to sign. He alternated between threats and offers of sacks of gold. But I didn't sign!"

I questioned him in a logical manner and relatively calmly. Maybe you heard something about it – rumours about the pontoon bridge over the Neris, the one near the Concert and the Sports Hall, were buzzing around Vilnius for a few days. That little pontoon bridge couldn't support large flows of pedestrians. Normally it would be closed after concerts or sporting events, but that night someone didn't do what they were supposed to. Someone failed to put up a barrier with a warning; or, maybe he put it up, but there were no security guards on duty; or, perhaps it was something else – in short, hundreds of people suddenly thronged to that rickety pontoon bridge in a rush to cross to the other side of the river and the small bridge inevitably collapsed. Afterwards, I questioned numerous witnesses; there were quite a few of them. Some people floundered about in the shallow waters and waded to shore; many struggled in full view of everyone; others were dragged by the current into whirlpools. It was dark. You couldn't make sense of anything; women and children were screaming; someone was shouting for help; and the scene was crowned by the sight of a phlegmatic middle-aged man, like the captain of some ghost vessel, who was floating on a pontoon that had broken off from the bridge right down the middle of the river, and proudly looking left and right. This much I found out later.

But that night Marius sat across from me and explained something else about those people who had drowned. They were taken to the clinics and laid right on the floor. Only then did the

real catastrophe, the real phantasmagoria, start. There were not supposed to be any drowned people. No catastrophe of any kind had taken place, not to mention one with victims. Marius was on duty that night, and so the clever guys twisted his arm and demanded he sign a stack of death certificates.

All of those people who drowned, right down to the last one, were supposed to have died from pneumonia. They died at home because a doctor had not been called in time.

"They tried to break me again and again," Marius repeated. "They cornered me. They talked so much and so convincingly that at times I thought I was seeing things and that dozens of people really had died from a strange pneumonia. But when I looked once again at the drowned bodies dripping on the floor, I knew all of it was real. And they continued to try and force me. But I didn't sign."

We guzzled down that cognac, Marius went and got another bottle, and I continued to ask him questions, but he repeated the same thing. I think I kissed him and kept shouting "We won't give in!" Apparently, I threatened to fix things. Apparently, I threatened to punish all those who had dug their claws into that mean business. Apparently, I fantasized about establishing an "Avenue of the Drowned" in the cemetery, so that people would always be reminded of where lies can lead.

"Wait. Hold on," said Marius suddenly, stopping me from continuing, sobering up out of the blue. "What graves? What avenue? What victims? There won't be any drowned. That's what's most important. None! There will be only those who died from a virulent outbreak of pneumonia."

"But you didn't sign!" I shouted. "You were the doctor on duty. Everything's in your hands."

"I'm not the doctor on duty any longer," Marius answered even more soberly. "They kicked me out and called in someone else. Maybe the hospital's chief, as if that's important in the long run. What's important is for him to have signed. Understand this – the most important thing is that nobody drowned. I didn't sign, but someone else will have. That's the worst thing. I didn't

sign and they'll point the finger at me, they'll be so far up my ass like an enema for sure, but regardless, there won't be any victims! That's what's most important! If I remained a hero and I suffered for the truth, then all would be great. But I achieved nothing, that's the worst thing. My conscience stayed clean, but someone will have signed. And nothing will change because of it – that's the worst thing. I stayed true, I will suffer for that, and that's the only comfort. But I didn't achieve anything else!"

And then I made a mistake. I suddenly remembered Father-in-Law. I quickly realized whom we needed to turn to. "I'll call up Father-in-Law," I told him quite loftily. "He'll take care of it." Yes, you could wake even Father-in-Law up for this kind of thing.

"Idiot!" he shouted. "Moron! Who do you think called me? Who, in your opinion, ordered me to sign those death certificates? Some decrepit major, perhaps? Who gives those kinds of orders? Who do you think? Who?"

I wanted to barge into Father-in-Law's office the very next morning, but I was in very bad shape. I wasn't used to drinking large amounts and so the next morning I felt like I was dying. I lapped up boiled water, ran to the toilet and retched. I didn't care about any of the victims or any Fathers-in-Law. Sometime later, I stopped by his office. It often happens that we arrive somewhere too late because we had a terrible hangover at a critical moment.

"Nobody drowned, kid" said Father-in-Law, staring at me. "Nobody. Got any documents, by chance?"

"People will testify," I grumbled sullenly. "I'll find them."

"You won't find anybody," said Father-in-Law firmly.

"Marius will testify."

"And what will he say?" asked Father-in-Law, raising his eyebrows in innocent surprise. "That he wasn't at work that night because he was drunk? He was taken to hospital at four in the morning. He was given a blood test. That Marius of yours was completely drunk."

Father-in-Law nonchalantly waved around a copy of the specialists' report. He gazed at me like a boa constrictor, like an

octopus, like a monster. By the way – why am I bothering to tell you – you experienced that look of his not too long ago yourself. I didn't understand why he explained everything to me. He could have shown me the door and that's it. But he explained his secret ratiocinations very thoroughly. I still don't get it. Why did he talk to me? And why did he talk to you, not all that long ago, for god's sake? Was he showing off? Was he teaching us a lesson? I don't understand.

"Marius can't testify to anything," continued Father-in-Law calmly. "No rumours, no slander. By the way, he could easily lose his position as head of the department for being drunk on the job."

"So nobody drowned?" I inquired gloomily.

"Nobody drowned."

"But the pontoon bridge existed, right?" I said, trying to be ironic, however, there was little in the way of joy when saying it.

"If need be," Father-in-Law said calmly, "we would do it in such a way that it was as if the dilapidated bridge had never been there at all – it's just that there's no sense in going to so much trouble."

He didn't speak in a triumphant way or with a clever smile or some other way. He spoke drily and matter-of-factly.

Marius and I never discussed it again. He never engaged me in conversation first. And I was afraid to even go near him.

I was afraid he too would say that nobody had drowned, that he had not barged into my place with a partly drunk bottle of cognac, or that we hadn't shouted 'We won't give in!' at three o'clock in the morning.

Anything you wanted could have happened in that world. Nothing was real. I hadn't been sure anymore for a long time already. I lived well, loved my wife and son. I ate well and didn't have to work hard. I knew how to write fantastic Komsomol reports – the best in the city of Vilnius.

I could leave my son the Volga with tinted windows, with the radio phone – of course, if I ended up deserving one.

At the time I was still totally naive. I was devastated by those corpses which were not corpses. I empathised enormously with that story. As a true bookish Lithuanian, I relied solely on my feelings.

I started to think about it all somewhat later. And this is what I quickly came up with: the drowned or not drowned by no means had any significance on Father-in-Law's path. He just covered them up and deftly erased them from our paper reality. He eliminated many others himself. The postwar corpses, which he disposed of without rhyme or reason, also weren't the most important ones. The most important ones were the others – who died and are still dying in our days.

Think about it: no chemical colossus, choking absolutely everything around it, no poisoning of the land or water could get by without Father-in-Law's blessing. So Father-in-Law willingly let that dragon into Lithuania that's killing us all. Once he wanted to save some minister from another Soviet republic, his friend. Another time – he wanted to receive a medal without waiting in line. The third time... Who knows what other kinds of impulses, what kind of logic works in Father-in-Law's twisted world. In one way or another, he took care of everything, just not us. He quietly poisoned us. Some moronic bureaucrat may not quite have understood what he's doing, but not Father-in-Law. Father-in-Law always knew what he was doing.

That half of Lithuania was eating and drinking that chemical abomination, that even that most sacred of natural miracles, mothers' milk, was poisoning newborns – that's all Father-in-Law's doing. That was his greatest sin, because he really did know what he was doing. He poisoned (and is still poisoning) people gradually, not killing anyone suddenly, you won't catch him by the hand. But it's impossible to count how many people perished because of him, how many people were made invalids, how many children were born mentally retarded – that's what I gradually started to realize. A few tortured partisans, signallers or scores of people who had drowned suddenly became a small

incident. Father-in-Law killed people wholesale, a few here or there didn't mean anything to him.

He can never be forgiven for this, because he knew full well what he was doing.

Crippled children and a fatally poisoned organism – that's what marching at Father-in-Law's side I could leave to my son.

That autumn I was coopted as the district Komsomol secretary for the city. Father-in-Law's tailor made me a wonderful gray suit from French material for the occasion. The material suited me very well, the tailor's work even better. I had to enter my new dominion with that suit. My first crusade was to be the Komsomol work report for the entire Vilnius District. I had to read a speech about the wonderful successes of the Komsomol at the city's report plenary session. That speech was written for me by at least five instructors, the secretary who had to evaluate the report afterwards read it perhaps three times. The text of the speech was long and very boring.

I prepared long and very thoroughly for the session. I had to match the accessories to my divine new suit with precision. I put on a bright, wide tie. Wide ties in floral patterns were the fashion at the time.

I remember I stepped up on the platform and surveyed the hall. As always, people were bored. Some read magazines, some were dozing, some of the girls in the back rows were trying to knit. I had not yet given a talk from such a tribunal, I can state with surprise that everything can be seen perfectly well from it. Earlier I thought that the speakers didn't see how everyone was flipping through magazines or sleeping. But in reality everything was as plain as day. Before uttering anything, I was still thinking that in spite of everything I was perhaps going to wake them up.

I woke up some of them, but not all of them. Some slept all the way to the end of my first and last major speech. They didn't even notice that something unbelievable was happening.

It's of no interest at all to tell you what I said. Although that speech was not asinine. I prepared a long time for it. Today for that speech, if it was published in a newspaper, I'd receive an

award, or perhaps *The Homeland* newspaper would choose me as their journalist on perestroika affairs. I spoke coherently, I tried not to miss or forget anything. The content of my speech was more or less the following: why the Komsomol was deteriorating, who was to blame for it and how we could attempt to bring at least some change to it. I was doubtful myself as to whether it was possible to change anything at all. Nevertheless I suggested a few genuine ideas. I...

It's definitely not interesting to talk about it. So much is said about it today that talking is losing all meaning.

However, at the time that bomb left a bit of a mark. The secretary of the nearby Vilnius District, biting down nervously on a cigarette, continued to pat me on the shoulder in a remote part of the hallway and repeated:

"Hey, man, you said too much. Oh, you said too much! Imagine if you were the national secretary and gave a speech like that in Moscow!"

What could I say in reply? Perhaps just that if I were the national secretary, I certainly wouldn't be giving speeches like that anymore. He continued to pat me on the shoulder and while coughing would take a drag from that crumpled, moist cigarette of his. I was very worried that someone would see us together. He was the first one to suggest I be thrown out of the Komsomol. I didn't need to be thrown out as secretary – I hadn't even been officially appointed yet.

Nevertheless I wasn't expelled from the Komsomol. I was rescued by Father-in-Law. He could have saved anybody from anything he wanted. He invited me for a serious talk, and at once I asked about the drowned people. And I found out that there weren't any drowned people.

Then he calmed me down just so I didn't think I had said a scandalous speech at the Komsomol plenary session. It seems that the speech also hadn't happened.

"In my holdings," Father-in-Law explained dryly, "there are no such scandals."

The previously prepared speech was attached to the reports – the text I had prepared myself. And no one had recorded that speech on a tape recorder.

There's no way I can forgive myself for that. Why didn't I think to record that speech? It would have been possible to compare it to what they are saying now when the red tape recorder button that says "is allowed" is on. I wonder whether I was ahead of everyone back then already, or whether the clever speakers of today would wipe the floor with me with their concepts and their ideas in general.

In any case, it's not important at all. Here, on the other side, there's a lot of things that aren't important to me. I am once again dangling between heaven and earth, I am neither here nor there, I often wish to live in Vilnius again, especially now, in the spring of '88, when everything is changing every single day. Now, when I could proclaim my ideas, when I could openly gather my own community together. I'm a little jealous of you. Yes, we have many possibilities here, about which you can't even dream of, but here everything is endlessly stable and boring. Where you are it's someone more interesting, which is why I am jealous of you a little bit. And I do lay heavy blame on you: why didn't you take me with you, why didn't you take up my aims – why didn't you take on a role as an independent expert or intellectual advisor? We could have accomplished a lot together – your brain, and my hands and heart.

However it was easier for you to do nothing. Sometimes I think that perhaps you're already ruined, you don't believe in anything at all and don't want to believe. That you wrote your "Perestroika in Albania" just because you wanted to demonstrate your endless skepticism, just wanting to show off, and ridicule the efforts of others.

There are people that build homes, however, there is always one that appears and sits off to the side, smoking and being a wiseass, teaching others the art of building, though they themselves wouldn't be able to build anything, even if you threatened them with a shotgun.

And you, Tomas, could you still build something?

I know, I know how you secretly wrote "Perestroika in Albania," how you hid the manuscript in parts in several places, how you shook and woke up suddenly at night, but you overcame your fear. But I also saw how you smiled bitterly leafing through the newspapers, reading the names of people you knew and didn't know, how you felt wounded, infinitely wounded when they didn't invite you to any informal communities, to any legalised movements, how you smiled more and more bitterly, always correcting and correcting again your manuscript, how conceptually you decided that you would never become a part of any community or movement, how you wrote your opus all alone, without joining anyone, proving at least to yourself that you could build something.

But are you certain that it's a real structure?

Translated by JAYDE WILL

ABSTRACTS

SIGITAS VAITKEVIČIUS,
GEDIMINAS MERKYS

Neoliberalism and its Effects on Higher Education in Lithuania

Neoliberalism is slowly becoming established in Lithuania's institutions of higher education. The effects of neoliberalism are already evident as is the organizational identity of higher education that is being created. This article surveys the experience of eight years during which the neoliberal model was applied to higher education. It shows how the management and organizational culture of higher education are changing. It examines questions such as: institutional neoliberalism in Lithuania, neoliberal management of Lithuanian higher education, the status of employees in the neoliberal university, legal immunity and neoliberal legitimacy, the neoliberal illusion of quality, and money in the neoliberal system of universities. The article presents the results of research into the opinions of instructors and scholars working in Lithuania's schools of higher education. These results empirically reflect the situation which has arisen with the application of a neoliberal management model to higher education.

LAIMA NEVINSKAITĖ

Framing Russia as Threat in the Lithuanian Media: Corpus Analysis

The article analyzes how Russian foreign politics is framed in the Lithuanian media. The analysis is based on a case study of

the biggest news portal in Lithuania *delfi.lt*. The article presents a corpus driven analysis of news on Russia from March 2014 (annexation of Crimea) to February 2015 and employs corpus analysis tools of keyword and collocation analysis. Analysis reveals the dominant frame of Russia as aggressor and potential threat to Lithuanian national security. The threat of Russia is perceived as a threat to the whole region and is regarded as an issue of a broader transatlantic community, while the possibility to defend is projected on collaboration with international partners. This construction of Russia strongly rests on the events in Ukraine, which are used as a justification, or an argument, for security claims. Survey data show that the majority of the Lithuanian population also think of Russia in terms of threat.

ŽYGIMANTAS BURŽINSKAS

Pac Family Residence in Jieznas: Another Lost Versailles of Lithuania

Jieznas Town is located in southern Lithuania alongside the old Merkinė-Rumšiškės Road and contains historical ties to Pac family. The Pac family gained political importance during the second half of the seventeenth century. The Grand Duchy's Vice Chancellor Stephan Pac acquired Jieznas Manor in 1633 and erected a residence for his family there. The most distinguished monument this Lithuanian nobleman bequethed is St. Theresa's Churh in Vilnius. Though there is very little knowledge about the earlier manors Pac had built in Jieznas because of the lack of archeological research, it is possible that the second period of manor constructions should be linked to another person – Casimir Sigismud Pac who contributed considerably to renewing the palace while he was building another structure in Pažaislis. Completion of Jieznas Church construction was also due to his efforts. The rebirth of Jieznas Manor estate associates with the activities

of Anthony Michael Pac, Senior Scribe of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Colonel of the Duchy's Army and holder of the White Eagle during the latter half of the eighteent century. The possibility of constructing a huge residency arose due to his marriage to a daughter of the Radvila (Radziwill) family, Teresė Barbora in 1745. The Jieznas Church was newly adorned along with the manor's expansion. Its main facade was rebuilt, and decorative towers were added. The building of the manor estate were still very impressive in the mid-nineteenth century as witnessed by writings of Stanisław Morawski. It should be admitted, however, that the present shape of the buildings is poor and despite survival of some manor fragments, the Jieznas Manor Estate no longer exists in the consciousness of its residents.

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Street Art by Millo in Vilnius, 2015

MOVING?
We need your old as well as your new address, to correct our records.

FRONT COVER: Town Hall Square in Vilnius
Photo by Almantas Samalavičius