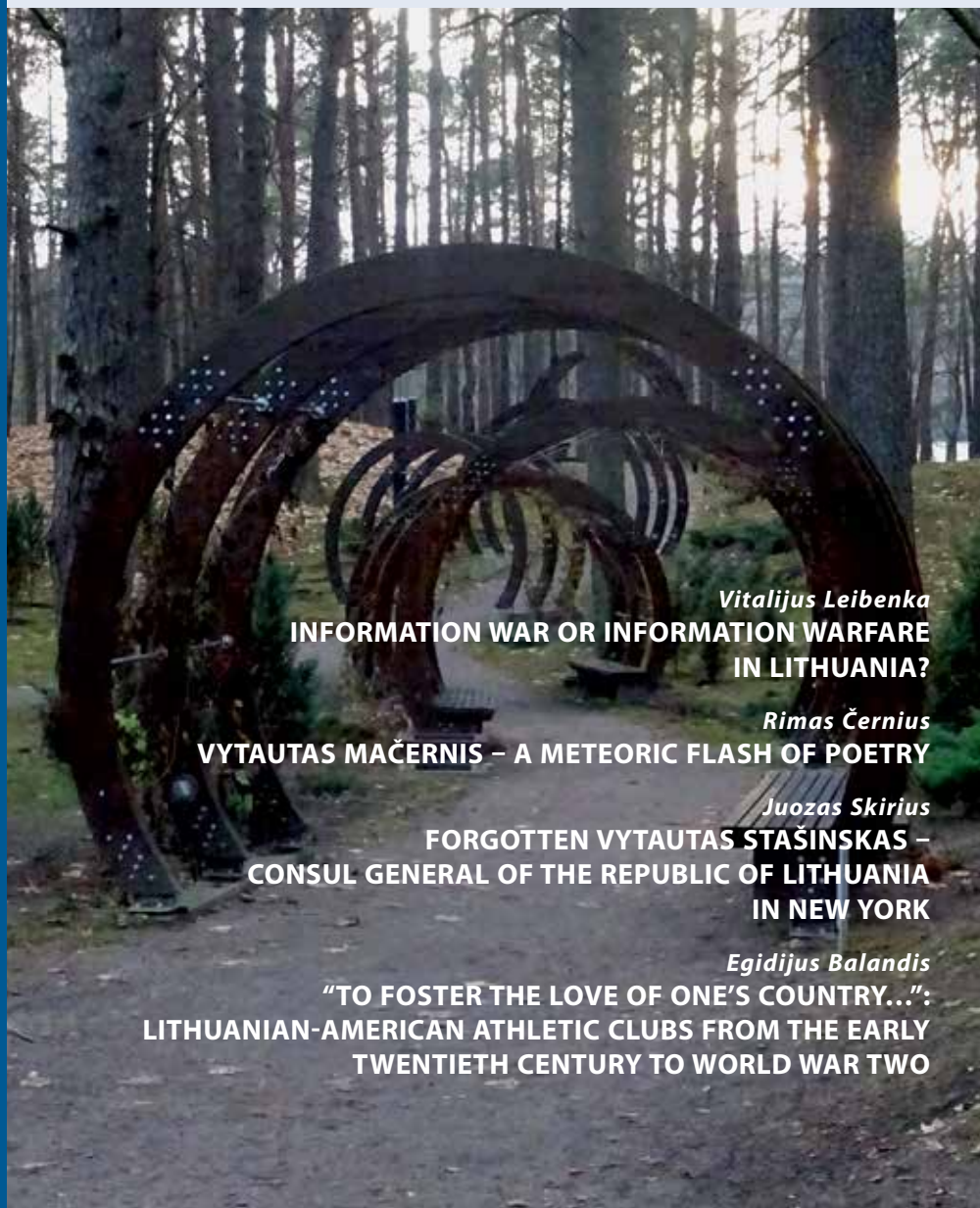


# LITUANUS

THE LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY

VOLUME 67:4 (2021)



*Vitalijus Leibenka*

**INFORMATION WAR OR INFORMATION WARFARE  
IN LITHUANIA?**

*Rimas Černius*

**VYTAUTAS MAČERNIS – A METEORIC FLASH OF POETRY**

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CONSUL GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA  
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**“TO FOSTER THE LOVE OF ONE’S COUNTRY...”:  
LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN ATHLETIC CLUBS FROM THE EARLY  
TWENTIETH CENTURY TO WORLD WAR TWO**

# LITUANUS

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# Information War or Information Warfare in Lithuania?

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VITALIJUS LEIBENKA

## Introduction

The terms *information war* and *information warfare* came into use in the United States of America at the end of the twentieth century. In the scientific literature of the US, both terms are used very frequently, especially when discussing phenomena related to information. It is indeed in the USA where these terms were at first closely interrelated and inspired many discussions. Currently the terms are sufficiently and clearly identified, distinguished and described. Sometimes the term *information warfare* is replaced by *information operations*. However, in Russia the term *information warfare* is not recognized. Russia distinguishes other terms that describe the essence of information warfare.

Information threats are some of the most relevant problems faced not only by the large countries like the United States or Russia but also by small ones like Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Unfortunately, information war is perceived differently around the world, including Lithuania. In Lithuania, it is typically thought that information war is taking place on TV, radio, social networks and in social events. Many people who live in Lithuania have their own understanding of information war and think that a propagandist or misinformative message in the press, false historical information disseminated on television, or distorted ideological information in Russian on the radio are already an information war. In Lithuania, people often don't examine the

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essence, don't verify the facts, therefore they don't examine the disseminated information critically.

For this reason, the aim here is to present the US and Russia's perspectives on information war and information warfare as well as the situation in Lithuania in the context of information war. The analysis of perspectives will make it possible to determine whether what is taking place in Lithuania is information war or, perhaps, information warfare.

## **1. US and Russia's Perspectives on the Phenomena of Information War and Information Warfare**

### **1.1. US and Russia's Perspectives on Information War**

The reason for the emergence of information war is the Persian Gulf War, during which the United States of America (hereinafter the USA) used military measures of information systems to destroy the enemy's information measures.<sup>1</sup> The main weapons during the Persian Gulf War were knowledge and information; they, along with the international coalition forces, provided the USA with an advantage. This fact is acknowledged by Russia as well, admitting that the USA is the pioneer of information war. For instance, Russian scientist Sergej Rastorguyev claims that, in the field of information war, the USA is advanced, and they are lucky because, as early as the years of Cold War, the USA invested billions of dollars in linguistics and psychology, as a result of which it developed the theory of the impact of the media on the audience.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Sergej Rastorguyev also thinks that the USA invested in the methods of information perception as well as its modelling and in mass communication psychology in journalism. Thus, both the USA and Russia understand and define information war very clearly.

<sup>1</sup> Persian Gulf War, also called Gulf War, began when Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. It ended on February 28, 1991 when the allied coalition destroyed Iraq forces.

<sup>2</sup> Расторгуйев, "Философия информационной войны," 15.

US scientists Richard L. DiNardo and Daniel J. Hughes analyzed the perspectives of the USA on information war, which are twofold: the first perspective is that information war was encouraged by the development of information technologies, while the second one is that information warfare is becoming an alternative to other forms of confrontation.<sup>3</sup> While analyzing the first point of view, Richard L. DiNardo and Daniel J. Hughes argue that information war is related to the latest technological innovations; therefore, the computerization of the Persian Gulf War's battlefield as well as incremental computerization of smart weapons, improvement of intelligence devices, and launching of deeper and more precise strikes are emphasized.<sup>4</sup> One of the authors who can be categorized as holding the first view about information war, is US military officer Alan D. Campen, who prepared a publication in 1992 presenting various information on the experience of US soldiers and their allies during the Persian Gulf War related to the use of computers, connections (including satellite connection), digital warfare, and intelligence systems.<sup>5</sup> The second perspective is that information warfare is becoming an alternative to the more traditional forms of war. Richard L. DiNardo and Daniel J. Hughes attribute this view to the third-wave (which refers to the start of the information age) idea's authors Alan and Heidi Tofflers who think that information can be used as a weapon in an information-based society.<sup>6</sup>

Russia, like the USA, considers information war to be a global-level phenomenon. Russia's analysts Igor Panarin, Nikolaj Volkovsky and Sergej Rastorguyev categorize information war as one of the dominant phenomena of the world. Igor Panarin, who is controversial in the Western countries (due to connections

<sup>3</sup> DiNardo and Hughes, "Some Cautionary Thoughts on Information Warfare," 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Campen, *The First Information War: The Story of Communications, Computers and Intelligence systems in the Persian Gulf War*. Fairfax, Virginia: AFCEA International Press, 1992.

<sup>6</sup> Toffler, *War and Anti-War*, 173.



with Russia's heads of state and activities in Russian state institutions), thinks that information war has been the principal instrument of global politics throughout human history, the dominant method to gain spiritual, political, financial, and economic power in the world.<sup>7</sup> Nikolaj Volkovsky, who analyses the historical context of information war, underlines that information war is of a synthetic nature, because, during the historical evolution, it involved many phenomena of human life in which various crowds, social groups, and nations participated.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Nikolaj Volkovsky claims that information war's impact manifests to people as propaganda, contra-propaganda, special propaganda, psychological war, and disinformation.

When analyzing Russia's scientists' insights in the context of information war, one can sense the influence of the US scientists, especially Alan and Heidi Tofflers. Sergej Rastorguyev and Igor Panarin acknowledge the essential influence of the USA in the field of information war, which is why it is dominated by the US logic of thinking.<sup>9</sup> Sergej Rastorguyev claims that information war is not a war between separate countries, because it is already a war between modern civilizations.<sup>10</sup> The causes of all this, such as the emergence of telecommunication measures, thanks to which the masses are controlled and all boundaries are crossed, make it possible to expand military operations to the level which could be described as "the spirit of civilization". Also, Igor Panarin adds that, in the twenty-first century, information war is a method of organizing the noosphere and the global information space within one's own interests and goals. According to Igor Panarin, currently the second global information war is taking place, which is intellectual and semantic and occurring on new fronts, in the aspects of noosphere, psychophysiology, innovation, civilization, etc.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Панарин, СМИ, пропаганда и информационные войны, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Волковский, История информационных войн, Ч. 1, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Волковский, История информационных войн, Ч. 2, 520–521.

<sup>10</sup> Расторгуйев, Философия информационной войны, 359.

<sup>11</sup> Панарин, СМИ, пропаганда и информационные войны, 3.

Nikolaj Volkovsky, who analyzed the US concept of information war, claims that information war consists of information-psychological and information-technical war.<sup>12</sup> Considering Russia's economy, it would be very difficult to find a lot of potential in the information-technical war. However, taking into account Russia's abilities in the information-psychological war, the country's capabilities of achieving its political and other goals should be highlighted. Andrei Manoilo argues that information-psychological war is a political conflict which aims to solve the contradictions of power and political government in the information-psychological space as well as the distribution of roles, locations and functions within the information society's political system, in which the conflicting sides end up through the use of an information weapon during information-psychological operations.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, in Ana Kudinova's view, information-psychological war is an artificial phenomenon created by an enemy in the information space which can influence and have a strong psychological effect on every member of society or the mental state of the entire society.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Ana Kudinova emphasizes that, in order to achieve political goals in the information-psychological war, various fields are exploited: religion, love of the homeland, etc.<sup>15</sup>

To summarize, it could be claimed that the pioneer of information war was the USA, and this is confirmed by Russia's researchers. The USA's influence can be felt in the Russian researchers' works on the subject of information war. However, in the early twenty-first century, Russia's scientists were more focused on developing the subject of information-psychological war, whose manifestations can be found during the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Both countries, the USA and Russia, agree that information war is a phenomenon which is very broad in its essence. In conclusion, it may be stated that information war in

<sup>12</sup> Волковский, *История информационных войн*, Ч. 1, 7.

<sup>13</sup> Манойло, *Информационно-психологическая война*, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Кудинова, *Информационно-психологическая война*, 358.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 359–360.

its broader sense is the revolution in military affairs (RMA).<sup>16</sup> Because of this, it seems that the concept of information war in the world of advanced technologies (especially information technologies) has made the current warfare methods obsolete.

## 1.2. US and Russia's Perspectives on Information Warfare

Information warfare, which exists in parallel with the concept of information war, was first developed in the late twentieth century. The phenomenon of information warfare is highly important in today's world because it is perceived and identified as being at the epicenter of most modern conflicts. Since, with the development of new technologies, the methods and tools of information warfare have been growing in number, the phenomenon of information warfare has become an inseparable part of everyday conflicts. The phenomenon of information warfare is analyzed in-depth in the USA; for this reason, there is a wide range of definitions of information warfare.

Throughout the entire analysis of information warfare, it is always compared to information war. In Martin C. Libicki's opinion, information war, as a separate technique of waging war,<sup>17</sup> does not exist.<sup>18</sup> Richard Szafranski holds the same view as Martin C. Libicki and thinks that information warfare is not a synonym of information war.<sup>19</sup> Richard Szafranski describes information warfare as lethal and non-lethal activities conducted with the aim of tempering or defeating the enemy's willpower.<sup>20</sup> In response to Richard Szafranski's claims, Richard L. DiNardo and

<sup>16</sup> DiNardo and Hughes, "Some Cautionary Thoughts on Information Warfare," 7.

<sup>17</sup> The term describes war instigation or initiation against some other state or group of people. Also, the term means an attempt to eliminate, eradicate, or conquer someone or some group.

<sup>18</sup> Libicki, *What is Information Warfare?*, 10.

<sup>19</sup> Szafranski, "A Theory of Information Warfare," 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

Daniel J. Hughes argue that information war is becoming an expansive term which could become a tautological<sup>21</sup> term which covers everything but the most primitive forms of warfare.<sup>22</sup>

Richard Szafranski<sup>23</sup> and George J. Stein<sup>24</sup> underline that information war does not require a declaration of war, much like the condition of martial law, and therefore information war can be waged by state-controlled, state-funded or non-governmental groups, or information war can be waged against them. The purpose of information warfare is not to kill the enemy, but to subdue him.<sup>25</sup> George A. Crowford, who analyzes information war in military operations, prioritizes the control and management systems; therefore, he claims that information war is defined as organized efforts to achieve victory thanks to which the enemy's control and management system is destroyed and neutralized, whereas the control and management system of one's own forces is sought to be protected so that friendly actions can be coordinated.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, there is no concept of information warfare (Russian: *информационное воевание*) in Russia and it is not used in the Russian language. It is worth mentioning Russia's linguistic perspective on the definition of information war. Alexander Vasiliev and Fyodor Podsohin, who analyze the concept of information war (Russian: *Информационная война*) from a linguistic perspective, argue that

information war is a collection of mass communication practices whose goal is an action (or neutralizing of such an action) using specific units of language in geographic, ethnographic, confessional, political, economic, and other communities of people

<sup>21</sup> Tautology in logic is a complex statement which is true just because of its form (irrespective of the true or untrue statements it encompasses).

<sup>22</sup> DiNardo and Hughes, "Some Cautionary Thoughts on Information Warfare," 5.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>24</sup> Stein George, "Information Warfare," 3.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>26</sup> Crowford, "Information Warfare," 3.

while ensuring the participant's protection and defense in order to achieve an informational advantage for strategic purposes.<sup>27</sup>

Other terms are used in Russia as well, such as *информационное противоборство*, which could be translated as information struggle or information confrontation, or *информационное воздействие (пропаганда)*, which means information impact.<sup>28</sup>

In summary, it may be claimed that the USA's perspective on information warfare and its concept is very clear. Meanwhile, Russia's analysts avoid discussing the distinction of information warfare, and the term of information warfare does not exist. However, Russia has other terms that complement the arsenal of information security and information threats. Russia seems to be lagging behind the USA's advancement, especially in the field of information-technical war, but it compensates this by efforts in the field of information-psychological war. One thing is clear: the USA and Russia understand that technological development makes it possible to discover increasingly varied forms and methods of warfare, regardless of whether one are engaging in information warfare or information-psychological war.

## **2. Theoretical Analysis of Lithuania's Information War and Information Warfare**

In Lithuania, the phenomenon of spreading false information is associated with the information activities of a hostile country, such as Russia. Russia has been increasingly spreading false information ever since Lithuania became an independent state. Russia's actions and their diversity intensified particularly in 2014 following the annexation of Crimea, when Russia successfully organized the actions of hybrid war and dissemination of information useful to Russia. The range of Russia's information activities broadened

<sup>27</sup> Васильев and Подсохин, "Информационная война: лингвистический аспект," 10.

<sup>28</sup> Волковский, *История информационных войн*, Ч. 2, 117.

thanks to the possibilities provided by the development of global technological solutions. Moreover, Russia approved a new information doctrine which radically changed the political and military perspective on Russia's activities in the information space. This created the conditions for Russia to more widely and purposefully conduct activities in the information space.

In Lithuania, the subject of information war is analyzed; however, the term of information war itself is not widely discussed. Vytautas Jakubauskas, who analyzed the indirect impact and Lithuania's military security in 1918–1940, claims that during the interwar period Lithuania faced a broad range of threats to its statehood.<sup>29</sup> Alongside the hybrid threats to Lithuania specified by the author, information threats were one type of such dangers.

Researchers of information war who analyze information war or phenomena in Lithuania that are related to information war emerged only in the early twenty-first century. Because of this, the understanding of information war or phenomena related to information war started developing only in the twenty-first century. Even though information war became a more popular topic of discussions in Lithuania following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, Lithuania felt the threats in the field of information war as early as during the years of independence in the early twentieth century. Manifestations of information activities conducted in Lithuania can be observed during 1990–1991, when Lithuania sought independence. Gražina Miniotaitė claims that the Supreme Council of Lithuania (hereinafter the SCL) used unconventional and unarmed forms of fighting that conformed to the definition of non-violent measures.<sup>30</sup> It appears that the SCL recognized and understood that it could not fight the large armed forces of the Soviet Union without its own weaponry and army. For this reason, it could be concluded that the SCL employed information actions that were unconventional but possible at the time, utilizing such information measures as the press, television, and radio.

<sup>29</sup> Jakubauskas, "Netiesioginis poveikis," 6.

<sup>30</sup> Miniotaitė, "Pilietinis pasipriešinimas," 203.

One of Lithuanian scientists who hold the view that information war is being waged in Lithuania is Nerijus Maliukevičius.<sup>31</sup> His view is supported by another Lithuanian author analyzing the issue of information war, Mantas Martišius, whose monograph (*Ne*)*akivaizdus karas. Nagrinėjant informacinį karą* ((Un)Obvious War. Analysis of Information War) attempts to demonstrate how people's views are a priority for quelling, and public opinion is attempted to be changed in the warring country's favor using modern technologies.<sup>32</sup> The author presents numerous examples of the Russian regime's information war. Another work, a joint article by Mantas Martišius and Vilija Navickaitė, cites the impact on the human mind emphasized by Ukrainian researcher Georgij Georgievich Pocheptsov: "Information war is a communication technology dedicated to influencing the mass consciousness in pursuit of short-term and long-term goals". Furthermore, Mantas Martišius and Vilija Navickaitė present George J. Stein's thoughts and argue that, at a strategic level, information war is a struggle beyond the boundaries of the battlefield which aims to create the needed political context.<sup>33</sup> Viktor Denisenko also holds the view that Lithuania is confronted by information war waged by Russia against both Lithuania as well as NATO and the EU.<sup>34</sup> We must also not forget the traditional forms of information war. These are, first of all, propaganda and its application under modern conditions of information war. A methodical publication prepared by Gintautas Mažeikis, *Propaganda*, which is closely related to public relations and marketing, describes numerous methods and communication trends typical of information war.<sup>35</sup> Even though Gintautas Mažeikis seeks to provide a perspective on propaganda's philosophical

<sup>31</sup> Maliukevičius, *Informacinio karo koncepcija*, 26.

<sup>32</sup> Martišius, (*Ne*)*akivaizdus karas. Nagrinėjant informacinį karą*. Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Martišius and Navickaitė, "Rusijos ir Gruzijos 2008 metų karinio konflikto pateikimas," 87.

<sup>34</sup> Denisenko, "Threats of propaganda," 240.

<sup>35</sup> Gintautas Mažeikis, *Propaganda*, VšĮ Šiaulių universiteto leidykla, 2006.

aspects, the work also provides a detailed description of war motives and information warfare techniques.

Conversely, documents and publications prepared by Lithuania's institutions do not include descriptions of the phenomenon of information war. The Republic of Lithuania's National Security Strategy provides information related to information security and information threats.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, information threats and information security are mentioned in another document of the Republic of Lithuania: a decree by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.<sup>37</sup> Also, the aforementioned document includes the definition of the concept of information incident.

Other documents related to information security, such as the Law on Public Information of the Republic of Lithuania<sup>38</sup> as well as the Republic of Lithuania's laws on state of emergency<sup>39</sup> and civil protection<sup>40</sup> that are mentioned in the Government of Lithuania's decree of 26 August 2020 No. 95 "On approval of the description of procedure of coordination of strategic communication in the field of national security", do not include definitions of the concepts of "information war" and "information warfare".

Analysis of the manifestations of information war in Lithuania must include mention of the annual public threat assessments conducted by the Republic of Lithuania's two intelligence institutions, the State Security Department (SSD) of the Republic of Lithuania and the Second Investigation Department under the Ministry of National Defense (SID), which refer to issues of information security and cybersecurity. When analyzing the assessments of threats to national security during the period between 2014 and 2020, it can be observed that the term "informa-

<sup>36</sup> LR Seimo nutarimas 2002 m. gegužės 28 d. Nr. IX-907 "Dėl nacionalinio saugumo strategijos patvirtinimo," 4–5.

<sup>37</sup> LR Vyriausybės nutarimas 2020 m. rugpjūčio 26 d. Nr. 955 "Dėl strateginės komunikacijos nacionalinio saugumo srityje koordinavimo tvarkos aprašo patvirtinimo," 2–3.

<sup>38</sup> LR visuomenės informavimo įstatymas, 1996 m. liepos 2 d. Nr. I-1418, Vilnius.

<sup>39</sup> LR nepaprastosis padėties įstatymas, 2002 m. birželio 6 d. Nr. IX-938, Vilnius.

<sup>40</sup> LR civilinės saugos įstatymas, 1998 m. gruodžio 15 d. Nr. VIII-971, Vilnius.



tion war” was mentioned just once. During the assessment of 2016, intelligence institutions noted that, after sixteen years, in 2016 Russia had updated the Information Security Doctrine, which defined the measures of Russia’s information war against the West.<sup>41</sup> Additionally, it was mentioned in the assessment that Russia exploits publicly spread information about the supposed information war of the West as pretext for its own international dissemination of propaganda and to strengthen its intelligence agencies’ activities in the information sector.<sup>42</sup> It may be concluded that the terms “information war” (excluding the aforementioned case) and “information warfare” are not mentioned in the threat assessments of intelligence institutions. To summarize, after reviewing the assessments (2015,<sup>43</sup> 2016,<sup>44</sup> 2017,<sup>45</sup> 2018,<sup>46</sup> 2019,<sup>47</sup> 2020<sup>48</sup>), it can be stated that increasing attention is being paid to information security. Notably, the main terms that are encountered are information security, cybersecurity, propaganda, disinformation, information space, information technologies, information policies, information measures, information operations. Also, one may observe that the topic of information security in the analysts’ assessments is becoming increasingly relevant to Lithuania, because information can be found on information attacks as well as cyberattacks, information/cyber-operations, and information/analytical portals in 2017–2020.

The doctrine of the Lithuanian Armed Forces, which was approved on 22 April 2016 by the decree of the Chief of the Lithuanian Armed Forces No. V-570, specifies that the future war and warfare will be related to such military terms as *new generation war*, *ambiguous war*, *hybrid war*, *nonlinear war* (*hybrid war or special war*), *unrestricted war*, *irregular war*, *information war*, *uncon-*

<sup>41</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2017, 22.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2015.

<sup>44</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2016.

<sup>45</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2017.

<sup>46</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2018.

<sup>47</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2019.

<sup>48</sup> Grėsmių nacionaliniam saugumui vertinimas, Vilnius, 2020.

*ventional and asymmetric war*.<sup>49</sup> The term “information” is not mentioned directly in the armed forces’ doctrine. However, “information” is described as a weapon of a waged war when information measures have a negative effect as false, or propagandist information is spread using them. The term “warfare” is described as practical use of the armed forces against an enemy, distinguishing attritional/direct and maneuvering/direct warfare.<sup>50</sup> Another publication of methodical material, *Country’s Security and Defense*, by the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, presents a description of information war.<sup>51</sup> It claims that information wars are hostile actions directed against a country when the principal weapon is information, i.e. when information which aims to form a desired opinion is disseminated, while information which supports unwelcome opinions is sought to be prevented.

Some researchers in Lithuania think that information war is still ongoing in Lithuania. It appears that the researchers do not evaluate the extent to which an information war is manifested. Analysis of the activities of institutions in the context of information war has shown that even Lithuania’s institutions do not approve of the terms of information war or information warfare. Institutions that are assessing the enemy emphasize that information-related phenomena are taking place, but not an information war. Even though the number of phenomena is rising, Lithuania is not preparing for an information war but is planning to decrease the risks of information threats. Because of this, it may be considered that elements of information warfare can be observed in Lithuania, but not information war. Lithuania is not participating in a constant armed conflict with an enemy but rather in an openly declared conflict of information war. During certain periods of Lithuania’s existence, measures of information warfare have been used.

<sup>49</sup> Lietuvos kariuomenės doktrina, Lietuvos kariuomenės vado įsakymas Nr. V-570 2016 m. balandžio 22 d., 59.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 37–38.

<sup>51</sup> Petrauskaitė et al., “Šalies saugumas ir gynyba,” 19.

## Conclusions

After analyzing the US and Russia's perspectives on information war and information warfare, one may argue that the USA is the pioneer of information war and the dominating force in the context of information war. Russia's theorists acknowledge this and try to keep up, developing their own perspective on information terminology and their own concepts related to information war. Furthermore, it has been concluded that information war is a broad and global phenomenon. For this reason, information war can be described as mass communication actions that are performed using all available information measures during conflicts taking place in the global information sphere on the air, on land, water, air, and in space, that aim to achieve information advantage for strategic purposes in order to affect the enemy's information and his information systems and establish information dominance while ensuring the security of one's own information and information systems.<sup>52</sup> Conversely, information warfare does not become war but rather can be a potential part of information war which can be utilized in pursuit of political, economic, military or other goals. Because of this, information warfare can be described as a form of conflict which employs the available information measures for the purposes of protecting, manipulating, extracting or denying information in order to achieve national objectives in politics, diplomacy, economy, the military or other areas that are important to the state.<sup>53</sup>

Following the analysis of the perspectives on and concepts of information war and information warfare, it can be concluded that Lithuania is lagging behind in the area of the description of information war's concept and its changing content. The hostile

<sup>52</sup> Васильев and Подсохин, "Информационная война: лингвистический аспект," 10; Maliukevičius, *Informacinio karo koncepcija*, 26; Campen, *The first information war*, 181.

<sup>53</sup> Stein, "Information Warfare," 3; Libicki, *What is Information Warfare?*, 5; Szafarski, "A Theory of Information Warfare," 2.

forces operating in the information space of Lithuania organize dissemination of false and historically distorted information in the form of information messages by using such information measures as the press, television, and social networks, and by exploiting elements of information warfare.

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*Translated by MARTYNAS GEDVILA*

# Vytautas Mačernis – a Meteoric Flash of Poetry

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RIMAS ČERNIUS

In 1961, a book of the poetry of Vytautas Mačernis was published in Chicago, seventeen years after his death. It was entitled simply *Poezija* (Poetry). Kazys Bradūnas, a poet himself, edited the book, and another poet, Alfonsas Nyka-Niliūnas, wrote an essay about Mačernis, which was published at the end of the book. Here (in translation) is how Nyka-Niliūnas began his essay about Mačernis:

*The life of Vytautas Mačernis was like a meteor. He appeared suddenly, flashed brightly and then disappeared suddenly in the same way into unfathomable realms. He died at the zenith of his short career as a poet, just having turned twenty four. Death always makes a man somehow strangely mystical. It transforms him into a mystery that no one can penetrate, an existence composed of certain signs and suggestions, which no one noticed during his life. I knew Mačernis well when he was alive, and that is why it seems to me today that there was something characteristic of all dead poets in his dark and sadly moist eyes, in his leaning physique, which was almost infantile, and it seems to me that the great success his poetry enjoyed while he was alive was like a recompense from fate itself, a cynical recompense, for the fact that he had been allowed so little time to feed, in his own words, on the “best fruits of the earth”.*

2021 marks the centenary of the birth of Vytautas Mačernis. Reflections on his life and poetry would seem to be especially appropriate at this time. The essay of Alfonsas Nyka-Niliūnas contains some biographical facts about this gifted Lithuanian

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poet who died too young. Here are a few details gleaned from this essay and other sources.

Mačernis was born on June 6, 1921, in a small village named Šarnelė, located in the northwestern corner of Lithuania.<sup>1</sup> His father was a landowner, a farmer, and Mačernis liked to portray his family as descended from nobility. He maintained that the Mačernis family had arrived in Lithuania from Hungary a few centuries ago. According to Nyka-Niliūnas, Mačernis had an aristocratic air about him. He was somewhat distant from both his parents. His father died in 1938, and his mother was left to care for seven children on her own. Mačernis was more attached to his grandmother, who was the adult who spent the most time with him during his childhood. In the cycle of poems entitled *Vizijos* (Visions), Mačernis often refers lovingly to an old woman whom he calls “senolė”. This was the name he used for his grandmother.

The largest city near the birthplace of Mačernis was Telšiai. There in 1939 he finished high school. He then moved to Kaunas, where he began studying English language and literature at Vytautas Magnus University. In 1941 he transferred to Vilnius University where he studied philosophy. His philosophy professor was Vosylius Sezemanas. He also attended lectures by important Lithuanian writers, Vincas Krėvė and Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas, and he attended seminars given by writer and dramatist Balys Sruoga. It was at this time that he met Bronė Vildžiūnaitė, with whom he later became engaged. However, they were never married. In 2017, a novel about the life of Mačernis was published in Lithuania: *Dūžtančios formos* (Breaking Forms) by Aldona Ruseckaitė. In writing this biographical novel, Ruseckaitė made use of the letters Mačernis wrote to his fiancée Bronė Vildžiūnaitė and the remembrances of Vildžiūnaitė herself.

In 1941 Lithuania was occupied by the Germans, and in 1943 the Germans closed Vilnius University. Mačernis then returned to the village of his birth, Šarnelė, and lived there until the autumn of 1944. At that time the Soviet army was advancing into Lithuania. Mačernis decided to try to flee to the West, but during his flight he suffered a fatal wound from a piece of shrapnel or a stray

<sup>1</sup> Some sources list his date of birth as June 6, 1920.

bullet. He died on October 7, 1944. He was buried on a hill near his birthplace, which is where his remains rest to this day.

Mačernis began writing poetry at an early age. His first poems were published in student publications. His early poetry was typical of the Neo-romantic poetry prevalent in Lithuania during the period of Independence which followed the First World War. However, the chaos and upheavals of the Second World War seemed to demand a new kind of poetry. It was with his cycle of poems entitled *Vizijos* (Visions) that the poetry of Mačernis changed significantly and caught the attention of the Lithuanian public. In the autumn of 1943 Mačernis participated in a public poetry reading at Vilnius Philharmonic Hall along with several other poets, and it was Mačernis who emerged as the absolute winner, according to Nyka-Niliūnas.

Nyka-Niliūnas describes the mature poetry of Mačernis as a poetry of conservative revolution. On the one hand Mačernis revolted against the aesthetics and ideology of the older generation poets, but on the other hand he adopted the aesthetically, culturally and ideologically engaged poetry of such traditional poets as Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas and Faustas Kirša. Mačernis was fluent in many languages and was influenced by poets such as Edgar Allan Poe and Oscar Milosz, and by existentialist writers and philosophers. Nyka-Niliūnas draws an interesting parallel between the poem by Mačernis entitled *Pajūrio vaikai* (Children of the Seashore) and Edgar Allan Poe's poem *Annabel Lee*.

In addition to his poetry cycle *Vizijos*, Mačernis wrote a series of poems entitled *Metų sonetai* (Sonnets of the Year). He began but did not complete another cycle of poems, which was entitled *Žmogaus apnuoginta širdis* (The Denuded Heart of Man). In Lithuania, the year 2021, the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Vytautas Mačernis, has been proclaimed the Year of Mačernis. In 1969, on the 25th anniversary of his death, *Lituanus* magazine published an English translation of his poetry cycle *Vizijos* (Volume 15, No. 4 – Winter 1969). The translation was by Leta Janusevičiūtė-Kelertienė. This translation is available on the internet at [www.lituanus.org](http://www.lituanus.org). Here are some of my own translations of poems by Mačernis along with the original Lithuanian texts.



## Vizijos

### IŽANGA

*Į žemę piktas vakaras atėjo,  
Toks baisiai svetimas ir neramus.  
Tiktai už lango blaškosi klajoklis vėjas  
Ir lyg keleivis, beldžias į namus.*

*Bet aš vidun jo niekad neįleisiu –  
Duris užversiu dar tampriau,  
Aš pilnas nerimo, kažko pasilgęs baisiai,  
Paskendęs vakaro rimty, mąstau:*

*Apie šią žemę ir kalvas suartas,  
Ir iš storų sienų pastatytus tuos namus,  
Ir žmones, einant iš kartos į kartą,  
Tuos žmones jaunus, pranašius.*

*Matau jų vasarų auksinį derlių,  
Gegužės mėnesio naktis brandžias,  
Laukus, priėjus pjūčiai, grūdą berlų  
Ir kuriančių žmonių kančias.*

*Tai plaza jie šio vakaro šešėliuos,  
Ryšėja mostais ir galia,  
Ir pamažu atgimsta vėlei,  
Atgimsta vėlei per mane.*

*Šarnelė, 1938.*

## Visions

### INTRODUCTION

A cruel evening came to the land,  
So terribly strange and restless did it appear.  
Outside the window only the wandering wind tosses about,  
And its knocking, as of a traveler demanding entry, is what I hear.

But I will never let him in —  
Tighter still will I shut the door,  
Full of restlessness and longing terribly for something,  
Drowned in the evening's stillness, I keep thinking more and more:

About this land and its well-plowed hills,  
And that house built of sturdy logs,  
And the people, passing from one generation to another,  
Those people so young, so powerful, so strong.

I see their golden summer harvests,  
The ripening nights of the month of May,  
The fields, ready for reaping, the seeds for sowing  
The sufferings of those who mold their lives day by day.

They flutter in the shadows of this evening,  
By gestures and power they become a clearer vision for me to see.  
And slowly they are born again,  
Born again they are through me.

Šarnelè, 1938.

## *Metų sonetai*

### RUDENS SONETAI

#### I.

*Pirmą kartą sutikau ją vieną,  
Grižtančią per parką takeliu,  
Sužibėjo, lyg dvi ugnys, pro blakstienas  
Akys, klausiančios: kas tu?*

*Bet, nė vieno žodžio nepratarę,  
Išgyvenom visą vasarą kartu.  
Susitikę žvilgsniai vienas kitą barė  
Už puikumą išdidžių širdžių.*

*Išsiskyrėm, nė mažiausiu ženkle neparodę  
Savo ilgesio ir degančios kančios,  
O reikėjo tart tik vieną žodį...*

*Bet nebesugrįžti šiandien atgalios.  
Ji veltui kasnakt pabunda, mano vardą šaukdama,  
Aš tuščiai jos grįžtant laukiu kasdiena.*

1943. IX. 20.

## Sonnets of the Year

### AUTUMN SONNETS

I

When I first met her, she was returning  
On a pathway through the park alone.  
Her eyes, like two fires, sparkled through her lashes,  
Who are you? was the question they seemed to pose.

But without saying a single word to each other,  
Together we lived the whole summer through.  
Glances met and would scold each other  
For hearts so arrogant and so very proud too.

We separated, not having shown even by the smallest token  
Our longing and the burning pain that did not go away,  
And just a single word was all that needed to be spoken...

But you are not coming back today.  
In vain does she awake each night, calling out my name,  
My wait for her return each day is empty, it also is in vain.

1943. IX. 20

## ŽIEMOS SONETAI

### XXXIII

*Garsus Toreador, Mirtis baisioji  
Gyvenimo arenoj vaikšto išdidi  
Ir pergalėm naujom kasdien triumfuoja: –  
Jai turi pralaimėt sunkioj kovoj visi!*

*Ji rodo mums raudoną laimės skarą.  
Mes puolam ją, tartum įsiutę gyvuliai,  
Kol aštrų durklą ji širdin suvaro,  
Iš mūsų narso pasijuokus įžuliai.*

*Dievams žaidimas tas žiaurus patinka.  
Aukštai susėdę danguose aplinkui,  
Šauniam Toreador triukšmingai ploja*

*Ir gyvulių būrius kasdien naujus  
Išleidžia pro gyvenimo vartus, –  
Težudo juos Toreador, Mirtis baisioji!*

1944. I. 4.

## WINTER SONNETS

### XXXIII

Dreadful Death, that Toreador renowned  
Walks in life's arena arrogant and proud  
And every day new triumphs does she win: –  
In that hard battle, all must lose, all must give in!

She flashes the red cloak of happiness at us.  
We charge it, like beasts gone mad,  
Until she plunges a sharp blade into our hearts,  
Laughing insolently at the valor that we had.

This cruel game is something that the gods do love,  
As they sit in a circle in the heavens above.  
Noisily the gallant Toreador they do applaud

As through the gates of life each day  
A new band of beasts they release into the fray, –  
Kill them all, Toreador, o Dreadful Death, they say!

1944. I. 4.

## PAVASARIO SONETAI

### LXVII

*Praeinančiam pasaulyje praeisiu,  
Kasdien suduždamas, bet išdidus:  
Mylėdamas skurdžiosios žemės vaisių,  
Ir moteris, ir saulę, ir sapnus.*

*Kaip svečias, pakviestas į šventę šviesią,  
Aš paragausiu, vynas ar svaigus,  
Aš tik gėlių spalvom pasigėrėsiu,  
Savin giliai įkvėpsiu jų kvapus;*

*Ir mylimosios nerūpestingą veidą  
Lengvai palietęs pirštais virpančiais,  
Triukšmingai muzikai aplinkui aidint*

*Ir atsisveikinęs tik mostu su svečiais,  
Palikęs žiburius toliau jų šventei degti, –  
Išeisiu vienišas į amžinąją naktį.*

1944. IV. 29.

## SPRING SONNETS

### LXVII

Through this transient world I will pass,  
Daily being broken, but defiant still;  
Loving the fruit of this squalid earth,  
And its women, and sun, and dreams.

Like a guest invited to a joyful feast,  
I will taste the wine, to see how potent it is,  
Just the colors of the flowers will I enjoy,  
Deeply their scents will I inhale.

And softly having touched with trembling fingers  
The carefree face of my beloved,  
As the music echoes noisily about,

I will simply wave goodbye to the guests,  
Leaving the lights of their feast burning bright,  
Lonely I will go into that eternal night.

1944. IV. 29.



# Forgotten Vytautas Stašinskas – Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania in New York

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JUOZAS SKIRIUS

## Introduction

November 18, 2021 marks the 115<sup>th</sup> date of birth of the former diplomat of the Republic of Lithuania, Vytautas Stašinskas, who had held a rather high position as Consul General of Lithuania in New York in 1964–1967. He is, however, one of the least known and remembered employees to have labored under Lithuania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was probably due to his brief leadership of the Consulate General during the period of Lithuania's occupation. Last but not least, was also his disposition to do jobs entrusted on him silently, without making them known to the public. Even the Lithuanian diaspora, paying tribute to Vytautas Stašinskas' 50<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary with a short article, noted and marked that he was "a silent and humble worker."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, we tend to believe that his personality had for a long time been "overshadowed", of course, in a good sense, by his immediate superior, charismatic and highly active Consul General Jonas Budrys-Polovinskas, who headed Lithuania's Consulate General in New York in 1936–1964, i.e. until his

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<sup>1</sup> P. J., "Konsului Vytautui Stašinskui 50 metų," 2.

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death. Hence, Stašinskas never managed to, and there were no favorable conditions for him to show conspicuously his worth in the Lithuanian Diplomatic Service (LDS) and the Lithuanian American community. It should also be noted that Vytautas Stašinskas belonged to the younger generation of employees of the Republic of Lithuania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for whom the annihilation of the Lithuanian State barred the ways to seek a diplomatic career.



Any wider information about Vytautas Stašinskas except for the encyclopedic one<sup>2</sup> and just a mention of his surname in some scholarly works is not available to us. Regrettably, *Visuotinė lietuvių enciklopedija* (The Universal Lithuanian Encyclopedia) has missed this person as well. It is true though that some factual information about his consular activities can be found in a book on Consul General and Ambassador Anicetas Simutis.<sup>3</sup>

The aim of the article is to remind the readers about him and try to briefly discuss his activities. The material to elucidate Consul General Vytautas Stašinskas' professional activities is stored in the Lithuanian Central State Archives (hereinafter – LCSA), the Legation of Lithuania's fond in Washington (f. 656) and the Consulate General of Lithuania's fond in New York (f. 658). These fonds contain files with collected various documents reflecting not only Stašinskas' consular activities but also episodes from his life.

<sup>2</sup> "Stašinskas Vytautas," *Amerikos lietuvių vardynas*, 221; "Vytautas Stašinskas," *Lietuvių enciklopedija*, 462; "Stašinskas Vytautas," *Jungtinių Amerikos Valstijų lietuviai. Biografijų žinynas*, 290–291.

<sup>3</sup> *Anicetas Simutis: 60 metų Lietuvos diplomatinėje tarnyboje*, 464.

## Vytautas Stašinskas, Before Arrival in New York

According to official information, Vytautas Stašinskas was born on November 18, 1906 in Kaunas into the family of a famous Lithuanian public figure, politician and lawyer, Vladas Stašinskas (1874–1944).<sup>4</sup> He went to the four-year school of Vilnius Education Society “Rytas” and finished boys’ gymnasium “Aušra” in Kaunas in 1926. As a schoolboy, he was active in the first Lithuanian scout troop, participated in sports activities: he played football, basketball, baseball, and competed in track and field. In 1925 he joined the Lithuanian Physical Education Association (Lith. LFLS) Kaunas football club team. As a goalkeeper, in 1927 he became champion of the country, and in 1928 he changed clubs to Kaunas Tauras (was one of the club’s founders). From 1925, he was invited to the men’s football team of Lithuania, taking part in four international friendly matches as a member of the team. He was also elected secretary of the Central Board of the Lithuanian Physical Education Union.<sup>5</sup>

In 1931, he served in the Lithuanian army. Later, he studied in the Faculty of Law at Vytautas Magnus University, graduating from the University in 1934. Still a student, from 1932 he worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. In 1935 he was appointed to the Legation of Lithuania in Brussels as Secretary of the Consulate and worked in the position of attaché after that. After the appointment of Vytautas Gylys, Chargé d’Affaires of Lithuania in Brussels, as Envoy of Lithuania in Sweden in late 1937 Stašinskas was appointed Chargé d’Affaires *ad interim* in Belgium in 1938–1939. He took an active part in preparing a trade agreement between Lithuania and Belgium.<sup>6</sup> Historian Vilma Bukaitė has published an in-depth article featuring trade between Lithuania and Belgium, but she did not discuss Stašinskas’ role in and contribution to it.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> “Stašinskas Vladas,” *Visuotinė lietuvių enciklopedija*, 465.

<sup>5</sup> “Vytautas Stašinskas,” [https://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vytautas\\_Stašinskas](https://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vytautas_Stašinskas).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Bukaitė, “Lietuvos ir Belgijos prekybiniai ryšiai,” 53–73.

## Work and Career in the Consulate Until 1964

In early 1939, Stašinskas was appointed, from Brussels, to work in the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York. This appointment was associated with constant requests by Consul General Jonas Budrys to have more staff in the Consulate, as trade between Lithuania and the USA expanded.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Lithuania decided to officially take part in the World Exhibition in New York in 1939. This caused additional concerns for the Consulate of Lithuania. At that time, just Attaché Anicetas Simutis worked in the Consulate in addition to Budrys. Hence, the staff of the Consulate was obviously insufficient.

So, by order of the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Juozas Urbšys, Stašinskas was shifted to New York to hold the position of attaché, and was to arrive to the Consulate General on March 15, 1939. Next day, he took up his duties<sup>9</sup> as a person experienced in economic issues. Furthermore, Budrys mandated him with the managing of the Consulate's book-keeping.

Occupation of Lithuania by the Soviet Red Army in 1940 and the commenced process of Sovietization threw the normal activities of the Consulate off balance. Consul General Jonas Budrys would consider leaving the Lithuanian Diplomatic Service and taking up business. He even addressed personally Honorary Consul of Lithuania in Los Angeles Julius Bielskis for his advice on the matter<sup>10</sup> as due to his decreased salary of Consul General he saw no possibilities to subsist on it and maintain his big family. Budrys visited the Consulate less and less, and so

<sup>8</sup> For more information, see: Skirius "Lietuvos didžiųjų bendrovių ..." 44–53; Skirius "Mėsos produktų eksportas," 82–92; Skirius "'Pieno centro' bandymas prasiveržti," 38–47.

<sup>9</sup> Order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs No. 47 (copy) of March 8, 1939. LCSA, f. 658, d. 1, f. 276, l. 9; copy of letter of J. Budrys from New York to the MFA in Kaunas No. 2344/3-A of March 19, 1939. Ibid., l. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Private letter of J. Budrys in New York to Consul J. Bielskis in Los Angeles of June 27, 1940. *Vytauto Čekanausko asmeninis archyvas Los Andžele*, Geležinė spinta garaže, f. Correspondence in 1939–1940, l. n.

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Washingtono

I Nr. 1790

Pono LDS notos angliskās tekstas šia atėjo šandien, pirmadienį. Jį nuvežiau į JT ir padalinau tarp 2-3 val p.p. asmeniškai įteikdamas šioms, turintiems savo biurus Jungt. Tautose: The N.Y. Times, N.Y. Herald Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, Associated Press, United Press, International News Service, Reuters, Voice of America. Sekantiems įteikiau palikdamas ant stalo, nes per ilgesnį laiką nieko kambariuose nebuvo Agence France Presse, Syndicato de Prensa Latino Americano, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Daily News.

Viso išdalinau dvylikai (12) šaltinių.

La Prensa visai neturi korespondento Jungt. Tautose - tokio nėra korespondentų sąrašė. Išskyrus vieną iš Kolumbijos, kiti Pietų Amerikos laikraščiai neturi savo biurų Jungt. Tautose.

N.Y. Times tekstą įteikiau Miss Kathleen McLaughlin, kuri yra viena pagrindinių Times korespondentų Jung. Tautose. Ponas Tolsonas ten nedirba. Ji pasiskaitė tekstą, ir paraiškė, kad nelabai suprantanti situaciją. Kai pasisidliau paaiškinti ką galėsiu, tai pasirodė, jog ji valdavo, kad Lietuvos atstovai užsienioose yra sovietiniai. Pagaliau, ji suprato reikimą ir pasibraukė teksto vietą, kamė siūloma sudaryti JT komisiją Rytų ir Centro Europai.

Herald Tribune biura buvo 2 vyrai, pasiskaitę tekstą, paklausė, ar buvo kreiptasi į kokias delegacijas prašant paramos ("approach"), nes Lietuva neturi statuso Jungtinėse Tautose siūlymus daryti. Atsakiau, kad tekstas buvo pasiūstas ir delegacijoms. Dar ten manęs klausė, ar Asamblėjos pirmininkas kaip nors atsiliepė ponui LDS, į ką pasakiau, kad neturiu žinių.

Times, Herald Tribune, ir Christian Science Monitor pasiėmė mano ofiso ir namų telefonus tam atvejui, jei papildomai norėtų ką išsiaiškinti.

Kadangi p. LDS raštas rašytas gruodžio 5 d., o spaudai patiek-tas gruodžio 17, ir kadangi datos bei teksto skleidimo šaltinio klausimai yra labai svarbūs ryšiuose su spauda, tai prie teksto prikabinau Pasiuntinybės lapelį (jį šia dar kiek turėjome) su užrašu: "For immediate release, December 17, 1956", kai kur dar žodžiu paaiškindamas, kad šis angliskasis tekstas yra tiekiamas spaudai (released) šandien, ir kad tai daro Lietuvos Pasiuntinybė Washingtono.

Būsimausias mūsų "releases" būtų gerai todėl iš anksto taip sutvarkyti, kad iš karto matytųsi, kas, iš kur, ir kurią datą jį skleidžia.

V. Stašinskas

Stašinskas was deputized for him, and would sign as 'Acting Vice Consul.'<sup>11</sup> Planning to leave the Consulate, the Consul General made efforts that Stašinskas, who was to be appointed Head

<sup>11</sup> Order of J. Budrys No. 8359 of November 11, 1940. LCSA, f. 658, d. 1, f. 276, l. 32.

of the Consulate, be awarded the official title of Vice Consul. The envoy of Lithuania in Washington, Povilas Žadeikis, approved of the issue, and on May 14, 1941 he received an acknowledgement from the US Department of State that Vytautas Stašinskas had been awarded the title of vice consul.<sup>12</sup> Stašinskas had been chosen as he was a few years older than Anicetas Simutis, but most importantly – he had more experience with leadership. Archival documentation shows that Jonas Budrys took care of Simutis, too, asking Žadeikis to also promote Simutis to a vice consul, as an incentive for him to continue at his work. If there was no such possibility, Budrys asked at least to increase his salary by raising it to category XI, leaving to him the title of attaché.<sup>13</sup> However, since Povilas Žadeikis (as well as the representatives of Latvia and Estonia) managed to persuade the management of the US Department of State that it was necessary to allocate resources for the Legations of the Baltic States from those countries' deposits with US banks, Budrys stayed as Consul General in New York.

The activities of the Consulate General of Lithuania before the occupation of Lithuania, according to Budrys, were comprised of two main areas: trade issues and inheritance cases of Lithuanian Americans. Of course, the Consulate also performed representation functions among the US government and the Lithuanian emigre community, dealt with visas, represented Lithuanian citizens in various matters, etc. After the occupation of Lithuania, trade matters fell away, yet all other matters remained in place. Inheritance issues became tougher, because inheritance issues needed to be protected against claims of the Soviets. The Consulate issued passports attesting Lithuanian citizenship which were valid in all countries except the commu-

<sup>12</sup> Letter of Žadeikis in Washington No. 575 of May 16, 1941 'On the promotion of Mr. V. Stašinskas to the rank of Vice Consul' to J. Budrys in New York. Ibid., I. 33.

<sup>13</sup> Copy of J. Budrys' confidential letter No. 1150/sensitive of May 28, 1941 to P. Žadeikis in Washington. Ibid., I. 36.

nist world.<sup>14</sup> The propaganda activities of the Consulate expanded. A new, additional activity occurred – the Consulate staff were to meet Lithuanian displaced persons (DP) sailing in from Europe to New York and to take care of them in cooperation with Lithuanian American organizations. Hence, each employee of the Consulate contributed to all of these works. On top of that, Stašinskas himself, urged by no one, took an active part in the activities of the United Lithuanian Relief Fund of America (Lith. BALF). Not only did he take part in it but also donated from his own limited resources, understanding the hard situation of the Lithuanian refugees.<sup>15</sup>

Each employee of the Consulate had their personal tasks as well. During the war period, as Lithuanian diplomats and figures abroad began entering into contact with Polish politicians, a need for a detailed study on the relations between Lithuania and Poland arose.<sup>16</sup> Naturally, Stašinskas, who was better versed in this issue than his colleagues in the USA, was charged with preparation of such a study. On June 9, 1943 Žadeikis expressed his thanks to Stašinskas for the job done and recommended that Lithuanian public figures debate on the study issues. President Antanas Smetona, too, upon getting acquainted with the study, made a positive assessment of the study, suggesting to publish its abridged version.<sup>17</sup>

Upon the unexpected death of the longtime Honorary Consul General of Lithuania in Toronto, Gerald L.P. Grant-Suttie on May 24, 1949, Lithuania faced the issue of its representative in Canada.<sup>18</sup> Members of the LDS decided that this post should be kept as the number of Lithuanians in Canada kept growing. Moreover,

<sup>14</sup> From “Amerikos balso” archives. “Pulk. J.Budrys: galvodami apie Lietuvą,” online.

<sup>15</sup> Jankus, “Lietuvos gen. konsului V. Stašinskui mirus,” 2.

<sup>16</sup> Milerytė-Japertienė, *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos santykių vizijos emigracijoje*, 37–42.

<sup>17</sup> Letter of P. Žadeikis to A. Smetona of June 21, 1943 (with annexes). Antano Smetonos korespondencija (1940–1944). Kaunas: VDU leidykla, 1999, p. 614; Letter of A. Smetona to P. Žadeikis of June 27, 1943. Ibid., p. 618.

<sup>18</sup> Alšėnas, “Naujasis Lietuvos Gen. Konsulas,” 4.

the Canadian government did not recognize Lithuania's occupation *de jure* (although it had recognized it *de facto*). On this basis, the Canadian government allowed the consuls of the Baltic States to stay in place and act *de facto* as before (however, they no longer appeared on the official list of consuls of foreign countries).<sup>19</sup> The leadership of the LDS provided for Vice Consul Vytautas Stašinskas to take up the position of Acting Honorary Consul General as he had an excellent command of French and leadership experience. Povilas Žadeikis suggested that Stašinskas could spare a few days a week for dealing with consular issues in Toronto, maintaining at the same time his present position in the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York. In appointing Stašinskas as Envoy of Lithuania in Washington, it was important not to lower his current status, not to impede the activities of the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York, and not to make the LDS face additional financial difficulties.<sup>20</sup> Stašinskas himself approved of his appointment to Toronto under the above-named conditions. However, from the statements of members of the LDS, it was becoming clear that a permanent representative was needed in Canada. It was noted that the status of a representative arriving from New York "may cause complications" among Canadian government layers and the Lithuanian public. Hence, it was decided to look for a permanent representative among the Lithuanians residing in Canada, dwelling on the candidature of a former employee of Lithuania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former envoy to Scandinavian countries, Vytautas Gyls, with whom the LDS leadership was already negotiating the issue. It is true that, at Žadeikis' request, the Consulate General in Toronto at that time was attended to by the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York, primarily Vytautas Stašinskas.<sup>21</sup> As of

<sup>19</sup> 1949 08 24 P. Žadeikio Pro Memo nr. 70 "Konsuliariniai reikalai Toronte, Canada" nuorašas. LCVA, f. 658, ap. 1, b. 276, l. 54.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Confidential letter of P. Žadeikis of September 12, 1949 No. 1550 from Washington to the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York. Ibid., l. 58.



December 1, 1949, Vytautas Gylys took up the position of Honorary Consul General in Toronto. The Canadian government approved his appointment.<sup>22</sup>

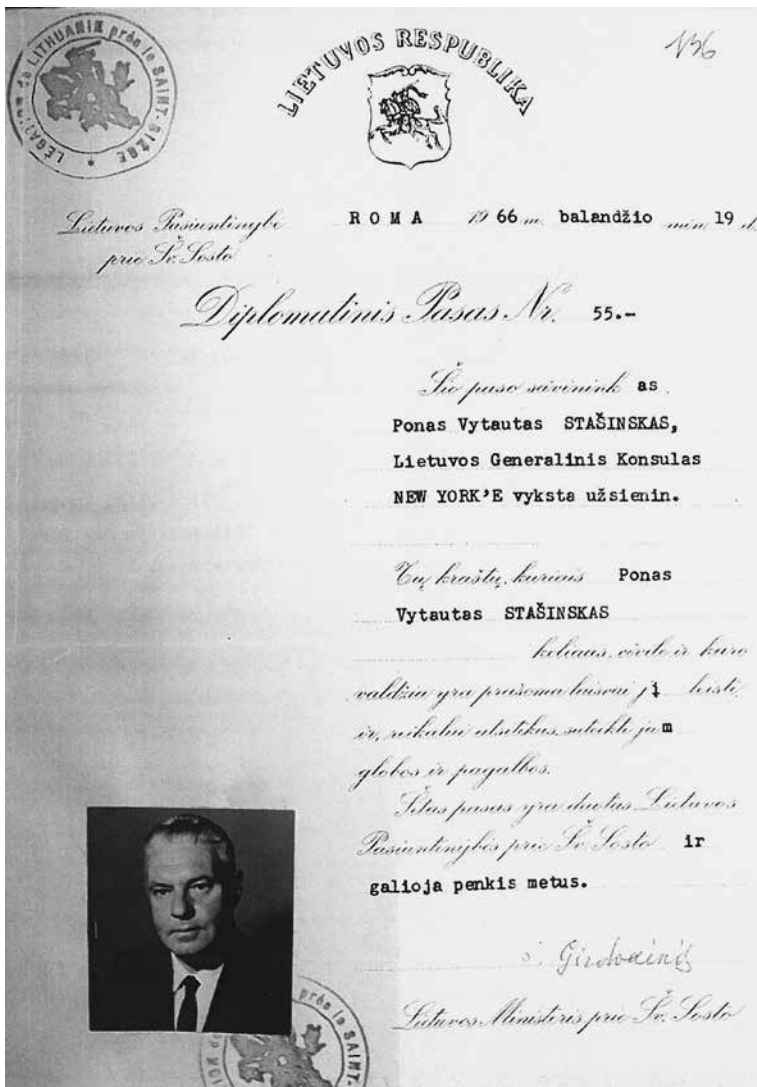
In one of his interviews around 1951, Budrys, speaking about the Consulate employees' activities, mentioned that they had been invited to various celebrations and conferences. This shows that Lithuania and its consuls were recognized as full-fledged members of the consular corps in New York. For example, Colgate University (in Hamilton, N.Y.) had been arranging summer forums for five years – conferences on international politics, with the participation of diplomats from various countries. The representative of Lithuania, Vytautas Stašinskas was a permanent guest at the conferences during that time. According to Budrys, it was a significant forum as its sessions were broadcast on the radio and its reports were published and distributed to universities around the world.<sup>23</sup> In addition, Stašinskas, as the correspondent of the bulletin *The Lithuanian Situation*, was obligated by Envoy Povilas Žadeikis to go on visits to the United Nations Organization (UNO) in New York and follow its work, especially issues pertaining to Eastern Europe, the USSR, and the occupied Baltic States. It was also an opportunity to communicate with accredited representatives of US major dailies and representatives of other countries, to hand over to them letters and notes prepared by the Lithuanian Diplomatic Service as well as other publications on the Lithuanian situation.<sup>24</sup> The following facts serve as illustration as to the intensity of his visits to the UNO: for example, in 1956–1957, Stašinskas arrived 67 times and his trips cost \$40.75. He spent another \$8.20 in the UNO Secretariat to buy publications needed for political work.<sup>25</sup> He prepared detailed reports on his visits and distributed them among

<sup>22</sup> Alšėnas, "Naujasis Lietuvos Gen. Konsulas," 4.

<sup>23</sup> From "Amerikos balso" archives. "J. Budrys: galvodami apie Lietuvą," online.

<sup>24</sup> Copy of letter of V. Stašinskas to P. Žadeikis in Washington No. 3118/32-M of December 17, 1956. LCSA, f. 658, d. 1, b. 276, l. 127.

<sup>25</sup> Copy of letter of V. Stašinskas to J. Kajeckas in Washington No. 346/32-M of February 4, 1958. Ibid., l. 207.



all members of the LDS. In fact, Vytautas was the first, although unrecognized, representative of Lithuania in the UNO. Referring to his status in one of his letters, he noted that he could not use his permit of correspondent

to enter through the door as a correspondent and, once inside, to begin playing the role of a Lithuanian State's official rather than a correspondent, by handing our texts to the correspondents. In some cases I could not avoid such missions, but in the future I will ask to be relieved of them.<sup>26</sup>

We can see from Stašinskas' correspondence with Lithuania's representative in Washington, Juozas Kajeckas, that it was not an easy obligation to perform in an international organization. Interestingly, Stašinskas approved of the hint by Kajeckas that those visits should be limited.<sup>27</sup> Apparently, he, too, had been pestered with those visits as accreditation for a correspondent was not easily obtainable and had to be extended on a permanent basis. Also, a lot of time had to be spared (mainly at one's own expense) not only for the trips but getting acquainted with UNO documentation as well. The fact that *The Lithuanian Situation* bulletin ceased coming out in 1958 impeded the activities. Stašinskas even had to pretend to be a correspondent of the no longer existing publication, which, according to him, was a matter of the prestige of Lithuania should such a fraud be revealed.<sup>28</sup> The employees of the Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania in New York were relieved from the burden of visits to the UNO.

As the 50<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Stašinskas was approaching, the LDS leadership decided to promote him to the rank of consul. This was done by the chief of the LDS, Stasys Lozoraitis on December 1, 1955, and the Envoy of Lithuania, Povilas Žadeikis applied to the US Secretary of State John F. Dulles on January 4, 1956 asking to recognize Stašinskas' new rank. On January 20, 1956, a letter was received from the US Department of State by which the US Government granted to Vytautas Stašinskas "the

<sup>26</sup> Copy of letter of V. Stašinskas to J. Kajeckas in Washington No. 3157/32-M of October 16, 1958. Ibid., I. 220.

<sup>27</sup> Letter of J. Kajeckas to V. Stašinskas in New York No. 467 of October 7, 1958. Ibid., I. 218.

<sup>28</sup> Copy of letter of V. Stašinskas to J. Kajeckas in Washington No. 3157/32-M of October 16, 1958. Ibid., I. 220–221.

title of consul in a temporary form”<sup>29</sup> and a certificate of the US Department of State No 255 was issued.<sup>30</sup> Hence, at that time, consuls of all ranks were already in place at the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York: Consul General Jonas Budrys, Consul Vytautas Stašinskas, and Vice Consul Anicetas Simutis; there was also the post of a woman clerk.

The celebration held to mark Vytautas’ birthday (as well as his 25 years in diplomatic service) organized on November 19, 1956 in the Consulate’s premises was modest. Senior colleagues Vaclovas Sidzikauskas, Edvardas Turauskas and Consul General Jonas Budrys came, each making a congratulatory speech. The hero of the day was honored by representatives of the Committee for a Free Lithuania and the editorial board of the *Darbininkas* newspaper. All who came brought small mementos as gifts. Congratulatory telegrams came from all the members of the LDS. The press noted the hero of the day’s humbleness but also his zeal and diligence in representing Lithuanian matters.<sup>31</sup>

However, the level of subsistence of Stašinskas, as well as that of the other staff of the Consulate, was miserable. As early as 1959, Budrys mentioned to the representative of Lithuania in Washington, Juozas Kajeckas, that the staff salaries in USD should be at least 100 percent higher in order to achieve a more decent level of subsistence, to maintain the dignity of the staff. According to him, the annual salary of, e.g., Stašinskas, with higher education and the length of service of 28 years (without social and health insurance, pension, etc.), amounts to \$4,700, whereas an ordinary person maintaining a lift receives no less than \$5,200 and is provided with all types of insurance.<sup>32</sup> The issue of salaries

<sup>29</sup> This approach of the US Government reflects the status of Lithuania (the Baltic States) – the temporary character of the representatives of the occupied countries.

<sup>30</sup> P. Žadeikis’ Pro Memo On the promotion of Vice Consul V. Stašinskas to the rank of Consul of February 4, 1956. *LCSA*, f. 658, d. 1, f. 276, l. 184.

<sup>31</sup> P. J., “Konsului Vytautui Stašinskui 50 metų,” 4.

<sup>32</sup> 1959 06 10 J. Budrio rašto nr. 1334/5-A J.Kajeckui į Vašingtoną nuorašas. *LCVA*, f. 658, ap. 1, b. 276, l. 265.

for the representatives of Lithuania was sensitive throughout the whole period of occupation and was referred to on a constant basis. A limited budget and the low financial resources available prevented the raising of salaries. The financial position of the Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania has already been extensively described.<sup>33</sup>

Disasters that sometimes struck the staff clearly demonstrate the insufficiency of salary for leading a normal life. Stašinskas' wife, Aldona Bernotaitė-Stašinskienė died unexpectedly on March 29, 1959. Budrys notified Kajeckas in Washington immediately thereof, noting that Stašinskas would be unable to cover the funeral expenses.<sup>34</sup> Stašinskas, finding himself in a difficult financial situation, wrote to Kajeckas:

I have paid by now or will soon have to pay \$ 1,633.02 for the funeral and tombstone, not to mention a few hundred for different related expenses, although I never had and have no savings. My wife was not covered by life insurance [...]. I will have to pay \$395.55 shortly for the tombstone; however, I have no money even for daily subsistence.

He asked for one-time financial aid.<sup>35</sup> Despite all the hardships, the Consul held on and did not surrender, laboring for the sake of Lithuanian matters.

## **The New Consul General of Lithuania in New York**

The longtime Consul General Jonas Budrys died on September 1, 1964. Stašinskas was envisaged to be his successor in New York. Right away, the chief of the LDS, Stasys Lozoraitis, asked him to temporarily hold the position of Consul General, and on September 7 he wrote a letter to Kajeckas instructing him to apply

<sup>33</sup> Skirius, "Anicetas Simutis," 48–58.

<sup>34</sup> 1959 03 31 J. Budrio rašto nr. 1006/S J. Kajeckui nuorašas. LCVA, f. 658, ap. 1, b. 276, l. 250.

<sup>35</sup> 1959 05 15 V. Stašinsko rašto nr. 1227/3-A(S) J. Kajeckui nuorašas (nuorašas siųstas LDT šefui į Romą). Ibid., l. 258.

to the US Department of State with a request to immediately recognize Stašinskas as Consul General and Anicetas Simutis as Consul.<sup>36</sup> During the conversation with the Head of the Division for the Baltic States at the US Department of State, Kajeckas noticed that the American approach to this issue was quite strange: they suggested that Stašinskas be “Acting Consul General”, as was the Estonian representative Johannes Kaiv in New York. This showed that the US Government more or less held the position of waiting for the leaders of these legations to leave naturally and for the closure of these legations. However, the American position changed in view of the developments in the relations between the USA and the USSR.<sup>37</sup> On September 29, Kajeckas filed a note to the US Department of State on the matter of Stašinskas’ appointment. The US officials promised to settle the matter quickly and reply.<sup>38</sup> On October 1, 1964 the US Department of State did recognize Stašinskas as the new Consul General of Lithuania in New York. Kajeckas was notified thereof in writing by the Secretary of the US Department of State, Richard H. Davis. It is true, though, that the Americans, apparently using a maneuvering tactic, granted to Stašinskas the so-called “temporary recognition as Consular General of Lithuania in New York.”<sup>39</sup> LDS members turned a blind eye to this, and Stašinskas was publicly titled as Lithuania’s true Consul General. His salary was raised from \$392 to \$500 (whereas Budrys’ monthly salary was \$610). With a decrease in the staff of the Consulate, however, Stašinskas’ work load increased – along with the previous concerns, he now bore the responsibility for Lithuania’s Consulate General and its staff. He had to permanently keep in touch with LDS members, especially Lithuania’s repre-

<sup>36</sup> 1964 09 03 S. Lozoraičio iš Romos laiškas V. Stašinskui į Niujorką (gautas 09.10). Ibid., b. 277, l. 6; Skirius, “Anicetas Simutis,” 25.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., l. 26.

<sup>38</sup> 1964 09 29 J. Kajecko raštas nr. 1330 V. Stašinskui į Niujorką. LCVA, f. 658, ap. 1, b. 277, l. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Rašto kopija. *Ten pat*, l. 18; 1964 11 09 J. Kajecko raštas nr. 1569 V. Stašinskui Niujorke. *Ten pat*, l. 71.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF LITHUANIA

41 WEST 82ND STREET  
NEW YORK 24, N. Y.

PHONE TRAFALGAR 7-4552

ANSWERING REFER TO NO. 825/36-P

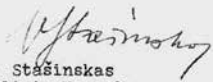
1965 m. gegužės 27 d.

Ponui J. Kajeckui,  
Washington

I š.m. geg. 21 d. r. Nr. 791.

Generaliniam Konsulatui fiziškai neįmanoma visus New Yorko laikraščius peržiūrėti ir pastebėti, kuriame jų ir kas rašoma apie vieną ar kitą įvykį. Tas tariamasis prel. Balkūno "pasikalbėjimas" su "N.Y. Post" korespondentu, idėtas geg. 14 d. numeryje, susideda vos iš 16 eilučių, kurių tarpe net prel. Balkūno pavardė nepaminėta. Išrašas pridėdamas prie šio rašto. Nei tas tariamasis "pasikalbėjimas", nei šeštadienio (geg. 15 d.) DAILY NEWS tilpės aprašymas (bet tik Brooklyn laidoje) ir įvykio nušvietimą nieko naujo neįneša. Kiek ilgesni aprašymai yra dar tilpę geg. 14 ir 17 d LONG ISLAND STAR-JOURNAL, bet tai lokalinio pobūdžio laikraštukas, tad nerandame reikalo apsunkinti mūsų mašininką tuos aprašymus perrašinėjant.

Priedas: 1

  
V. Stasinskas  
Generalinis Konsulas

sentative in Washington. It should be noted that LDS members worked unfixed working hours since there was a lot of work and the staff kept decreasing year after year. As a rule, they worked overtime in the evenings, sometimes on weekends and even during vacations, receiving no extra money for that.<sup>40</sup> Everybody had to put up with this pathetic situation, but Kajeckas kept reminding them that the salaries were to be raised at least somewhat as the cost of living kept rising.

<sup>40</sup> 1967 03 20 J. Kajecko rašto nr. 512 Lietuvos generaliniam konsulatui Niujorke nuorašas. LCVA, f. 656, ap. 4, b. 54, l. 232.

The new Consul gave his first interview to poet Bernardas Brazdžionis, editor of the *Lietuvių dienos* magazine. Giving a brief overview of the situation of the Consulate General of Lithuania, its staff and relations with members of the LDS as well as factors for liberating Lithuania (Lithuanian organizations), Stašinskas also underscored the priorities in the Consulate's activities. The Consul noted that recently "the work in relation with the protection of inheritance so not to end up in the Soviet treasury, had grown a lot and had become much more complicated."<sup>41</sup> On top of that, fellow countrymen – Lithuanian Americans – had to be constantly advised on issues of concern for them such as posting of parcels, money, letters to their relatives in the Lithuanian SSR. The Consulate also advised those going on a visit to the Lithuanian SSR, and followed the activities of those arriving on a tour from the Lithuanian SSR.<sup>42</sup> It helped emigrants in finding their relatives not only in the USA but other countries as well; issued Lithuanian passports, even recovered lost documents for persons, which were necessary for applying for US citizenship, etc. On top of that, Americans often made inquiries to the Consulate about Lithuania, its situation, culture, etc. One had to provide this type of information as well.<sup>43</sup>

Among the Consulate staff activities of significance was to follow the New York City and the State of New York press. Looking through a lot of newspapers, registering and responding to articles that touched upon the issue of Lithuania and other Baltic territories (former states) was no easy work. The Consulate staff collected excerpts from articles or typed such articles on a typewriter and distributed them among LDS members. The Legation of Lithuania in Washington accumulated such information for its political activities and propaganda purposes.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Lietuvos konsulas New Yorke. Pokalbis su Lietuvos Generaliniu Konsulu Vytautu Stašinsku. *Lietuvių dienos*. 1964, lapkritis, nr. 9.

<sup>42</sup> 1965 06 16 Lietuvos atstovo Vašingtone rašto nr. 881 Lietuvos generaliniam konsulatui Niujorke nuorašas. LCVA, f. 656, ap. 4, b. 54, l. 91; 1967 05 02 J. Kajecko konfidencialaus rašto nr. 1283 A/sl. V.Stašinskui Niujorke nuorašas. Ibid., l. 238.

<sup>43</sup> 1965 01 07 J. Kajecko rašto nr. 24 V.Stašinskui Niujorke nuorašas. Ibid., l. 18.

<sup>44</sup> 1965 05 21 J. Kajecko rašto nr. 791 V.Stašinskui į Niujorką nuorašas. Ibid., l. 85; 1965 05 27 V. Stašinsko raštas nr. 825/36-P J. Kajeckui. Ibid., l. 86.



Consular General Stašinskas, who was not fond of big gatherings and was weary of speeches delivered at such, did, however, participate in events organized by Lithuanian Americans to mark the statehood of Lithuania or pay tribute to the founders of its statehood, as far as we can see from available information. For example, on December 17, 1964, he ordered a funeral wreath on behalf of the LDS to put at the coffin of the deceased Steponas Kairys, a signatory to the Act of February 16<sup>th</sup>.<sup>45</sup> On January 15, 1967 he participated in the commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the Lithuanian President, dr. Kazys Grinius, organized by the Lithuanian community in Philadelphia, where he made an opening statement. On February 19 of that same year, the Consul General took part in the Celebration of the Nation organized in Manhattan by the Lithuanians in New York and surroundings, where he made a welcoming speech.<sup>46</sup> Hence, he would only participate in events upon invitation and only if the name of Lithuania resounded there widely.

## Consular General's Premature Passing Away

Having been active in a lot of sports in his younger days, Stašinskas did not enjoy good health later on. A year before his death, in 1966, he underwent serious surgery. However, from June 1967, Vytautas' health began deteriorating. He himself believed it was just flu and did not pay much attention. Colleague Anicetas Simutis wrote that Stašinskas avoided talking about his illness, did not complain to anyone about it, although the Consul General's state of health raised concerns for the people around him. Relatives urged him to go see a doctor, but Vytautas kept refusing.<sup>47</sup> Instead

<sup>45</sup> 1965 01 14 V. Stašinsko raštas nr. 73/2-E *Gedulo vainikas velioniui Steponui Kairiui* J. Kajeckui Vašingtone. Ibid., l. 26.

<sup>46</sup> "Dr. Kazio Griniaus minėjimas," 5; excerpt from article *Tautos šventė New Yorke* (*Tėvynė*. 1967, kovo 3). LCVA, f. 658, ap. 1, b. 277, l. 153.

<sup>47</sup> 1967 07 19 A. Simučio rašto nr. 1045/3-A *Pro Memoria Lietuvos Generalinio Konsulo mirtis* LDT nariams nuorašas. Ibid., b. 278, l. 11.

of registering with a doctor, the Consular chose to have a couple of weeks of a vacation and on July 1 departed by his own car to the summer house of his acquaintance Pakštys. Later it turned out that on July 3, as his health deteriorated, he was taken to Carney Hospital in the suburb of Boston. Medical examinations taken, showed a malignant tumor in his liver with no possibility of removal. The doctors' predictions were not good. On July 15, Dr. Jonas Jasaitis called Simutis on the phone informing of Vytautas Stašinskas' death. Simutis immediately notified the chief of the LDS, Stasys Lozoraitis by telegram. He also passed this sad news on to the representative of Lithuania, Kajeckas, Consul General Petras Daudžvardis in Chicago, and Consul General Jonas Žmuidzinas in Toronto, who promised to inform local Lithuanian newspapers about the death. Simutis took care of repatriating Stašinskas' mortal remains to New York and contacted a funeral home.<sup>48</sup> He also wrote an obituary about Stašinskas in English and contacted the editorial board of the *New York Daily*. Interestingly, it took quite long to explain to this daily's journalist why Stašinskas had been Consul General of the no-longer-existing Lithuanian State and why he was not a citizen of the USA; the journalist was interested in the relations of the deceased with different liberation committees, etc.<sup>49</sup> This showed that some of the employees of the big newspapers did not comprehend the status of Lithuanian diplomats and those of the other Baltic States even twenty-five years after the occupation of these states. Two very short notices of the death of Vytautas Stašinskas appeared on July 16 and 17 in the *New York Times*.<sup>50</sup>

The corpse of the deceased was laid out in the Universal Funeral Chapel in New York, and on the eve of the funeral, July 17, a farewell service was held in the chapel, with 400 people gathered. Prelate Jonas Balkūnas led the service and Vaclovas Sidzikauskas the event. J. Kajeckas, Consul General of Estonia Jaakson, Chairman of the Supreme Committee for the Liberation

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., I. 12.

<sup>49</sup> *Anicetas Simutis: 60 metų Lietuvos diplomatinėje tarnyboje*, 394.

<sup>50</sup> Exerpts. LCVA, f. 656, ap. 4, b. 54, l. 245.

of Lithuania (Lith. VLIK) dr. J. K. Valiūnas, Secretary General of the Seimas of the Enslaved European Nations Gadomskis and representatives of other organizations said their words of farewell. Dr. Stasys Bačkis, counselor to the Legation of Lithuania in Washington, participated in the funeral as well. Condolences were expressed to the sister of the deceased, Ona Stašinskaitė-Paravicini, and to Algis Bagdonas, a relative of the wife of the deceased. After the service in the Church of the Gates of Dawn parish, on July 18, Vytautas Stašinskas was buried in the Calvary Cemetery in New York.<sup>51</sup> All of the funeral expenses, i.e., \$1,797.40, were covered by the LDS from its disposable funds controlled by the US Department of State.<sup>52</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Anicetas Simutis was appointed the new Consul General of Lithuania in New York, and was recognized by the US Department of State on September 11, 1967. He worked in this position up until the reinstatement of the Independence of Lithuania.<sup>53</sup>

## Conclusions

1. Annihilation of the Lithuanian State in 1940 deprived some Lithuanian diplomats, especially the younger generation of employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the possibility to seek a further career in diplomatic service in the usual way. One of them was Vytautas Stašinskas (1906–1967), whose activities we had been almost unaware of until now. Having launched his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania in 1932, in 1935 he was appointed as attaché to Brussels, where he later temporarily headed the

<sup>51</sup> 1967 07 19 A. Simučio rašto nr. 1045/3-A Pro Memoria *Lietuvos Generalinio Konsulo mirtis* LDT nariams nuorašas. Ibid., b. 278, l. 12.; “Mirė Gen. konsulas V. Stašinskas,” 1.

<sup>52</sup> 1967 09 20 J. Kajecko rašto nr. 1454 Lietuvos generaliniam konsului A. Simučiu nuorašas. LCVA, f. 656, ap. 4, b. 54, l. 271.

<sup>53</sup> Skirius, “Anicetas Simutis,” 28–29.

Legation of the Republic of Lithuania. As of 1939, he was appointed as attaché to the Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania in New York, in an effort to intensify the Consulate's activities.

2. Stašinskas often substituted for Consul General Jonas Budrys in New York who saw Vytautas as his successor, which shows that Vytautas was a promising diplomat. As a vacancy for the position of Consul General in Canada arose in 1949, the leadership of the LDS recommended Stašinskas to fill it since he had an excellent command of French and leadership experience. Stašinskas headed the Consulate for some time, until another appointee was found.
3. Envoy of Lithuania, Povilas Žadeikis, had mandated Stašinskas to follow the work of the United Nations Organization, and Vytautas frequented it. There, among representatives of other countries and journalists, he disseminated information about the Lithuanian situation. For a lengthy period, Stašinskas was the first, though officially unrecognized, representative of Lithuania to this organization. Furthermore, under the direction of the Consul General, he visited various conferences on international policy issues, took part in debates, entered into contacts.
4. Legations of Lithuania that remained abroad during the period of the occupation of Lithuania, recognized by some countries, had no firm guarantees that they would be able to continue operating. Limited financing of the activities of the Legations constantly posed challenges – the staff got minimum salaries, while being obliged to work overtime, on weekends, even during vacations. This took a toll on their health. Stašinskas climbed the career ladder in the Lithuanian Diplomatic Service slowly, not because he was lacking in ability but due to the absence of normal conditions: in 1941 he became Vice Consul, in 1955 – Consul, and after the death of Consul General Jonas Budrys in 1964 – Consul General, holding this position for almost three years.
5. Heading up the Consulate, brought new concerns for Stašinskas and increased his workload: the responsibility for

the Consulate staff and their well-being fell on him; he was to keep in permanent contact with Lithuania's representative in Washington Juozas Kajeckas, reply to his letters, carry out his instructions, and be frequently present in Lithuanian Americans events. According to his contemporaries, Stašinskas character was one of diligence and a sense of responsibility, but he was a quiet, humble person who avoided publicity and disliked big events that he was weary of. All this could have contributed to the deterioration of Stašinskas' health and premature death.

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# **“To Foster the Love of One’s Country...”: Lithuanian-American Athletic Clubs from the Early Twentieth Century to World War Two<sup>1</sup>**

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EGIDIJUS BALANDIS

## **Introduction**

About 300 thousand Lithuanians arrived in the United States of America between the second half of the 1860s and 1914. Former peasants found themselves for the most part in cities or towns, to become coal miners, workers at slaughterhouses, tailor shops or to work within the steel industry. A dense network of voluntary associations and their organized action was one of the most conspicuous features of this emigration wave. Hard work, living in urbanized locations, developing capitalism, wakening ethnic awareness, and the favorable legal environment encouraged immigrants to come together, entering into contact which enabled them to pursue common aims. The St. George Benevolent Society established in 1877 in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, is considered

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<sup>1</sup> In 2019, the author defended a dissertation on the topic “Sport in the Social Fabric of Lithuanian-Americans in the First Half of the Twentieth Century.” One of the chapters of the dissertation was dedicated to dealing with the topic of this article. A revised and updated version, supplemented with newly discovered materials is presented here.

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to be the first purely Lithuanian organization.<sup>2</sup> Soon, the organizational network was becoming more and more diverse and comprised a large variety of forms of activity and aims. A number of religious, education, sobriety, leisure activity, youth, women's, political, worker and trade union organizations were established. According to Robert Putnam,

Networks of civic engagement, like the neighbourhood associations, choral societies, cooperatives, sports clubs, mass-based parties [...] represent intense horizontal interaction. Networks of civic engagement are an essential form of social capital: the denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to cooperate for mutual benefit.<sup>3</sup>

Being part of a society not only allowed Lithuanian-Americans to provision themselves in case of illness or disaster, with entertainment and press, but also cooperate in pursuit of better working conditions, educating themselves or taking care of the freedom of Lithuania.

Lithuanian-Americans could not but be affected by American culture and American social life practices. As early as the first half of the nineteenth century, the French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville noted that "Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all minds are constantly joining together in groups."<sup>4</sup> American historian Arthur Schlesinger considered voluntary associations as "the greatest school of self-government", where Americans "have trained from youth to take common counsel, choose leaders, harmonize differences, and obey the expressed will of the majority."<sup>5</sup> According to historian Egidijus Aleksandravičius, "the Lithuanians of the world have turned their experiences in the immigration countries, especially American democracy, into part of the imagination of the Lithuanian nation." He saw the development of the skills of society, as a class of people capable of organization, as "the key factor behind the Lithuanian nation's

<sup>2</sup> Dapkutė et al., *Lietuviai pasaulyje*, 47.

<sup>3</sup> Putnam, *Making*, 173.

<sup>4</sup> de Tocqueville, *Democracy*, 595.

<sup>5</sup> Schlesinger, "Biography," 24.



modernization and ability"; he considered the role of the diaspora in the development of civic features as invaluable.<sup>6</sup>

For the majority of Lithuanians who had emigrated to the USA at that time, organized sports was one of these novel phenomena. The commercial culture of entertainment, celebrities, a Muscular Christianity and *strenuous life* ideas, the significance of athletics in colleges, modernization of different branches of sport as well as other circumstances made sports an important and recognizable social practice, while some branches of sport were also perceived as a means of the acculturation of immigrants. Sports organizations and clubs were established by both Americans and German, Irish, Scottish, Czech, and Polish immigrants who tried to preserve national sport traditions by joining together into organizations.

The works of professional historians or amateurs who have hitherto touched upon the sports history of the Lithuanian diaspora are characterized by accentuation of sport achievements, the relationship between sport and national identity, the relations of Lithuanian-Americans with Lithuania, but have devoted very little attention to the social functions of sport organizations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Aleksandravičius, *Karklo*, 231, 238.

<sup>7</sup> The sports of the Lithuanian diaspora in the period under discussion received little attention in Lithuanian academic historiography. Alfred Erich Senn, who, in one of his articles, analyzed the relations of Lithuanian-American basketball players with Lithuania and their organization in the 1930s, attempted to try to understand the feelings of Lithuanian-Americans and the importance for the Lithuanian diaspora of entering into this contact, as well as for the victories won by the Lithuanian combined team thanks to this entering into contact. Senn, "American," 144–149. See also: Senn, "A Visit," 162–163. Alfred Erich Senn presented a more convincing assessment of this episode in the sport relations between Lithuania and the Lithuanian diaspora than Carlson, "Motherland," 1479–1495. Also, more has been written about the achievements and victories of famous diaspora sportsmen than the branches of sport they competed in. For example, Skirius, *JAV lietuviai*, 92–100; Gražulis, *Lithuanians*, 39–43. Lithuanian or diaspora journalists, sport enthusiasts or former sportsmen have written about this even more: Kazakevičius et. al. "Lietuviai," 291–340; Tirilis, *Geležiniai vyrai*; Tirilis, *Lietuvos vyrai*; Tirilis, *Nuo kaimo*; Tirilis, *Lietuvos boksai*; Karalevičius, *Bokso milžinai*, 283–351; Jakubs-Jakubauskas, John,

Therefore, in this article, by choosing sports clubs of Lithuanian-Americans as a certain microscope, we aim to investigate the Lithuanian culture of associations, civic engagement and self-organization. The aim of this article is, based on the periodicals and documentation of some organizations of the time, to reveal the role of sports clubs in the Lithuanian-Americans' social network from the early twentieth century to World War Two. We will try to ascertain the functions of sports clubs in the Lithuanian-American community and the relations of Lithuanian-Americans with other Lithuanian organizations.

Within the framework of this article, we will only concentrate on ideologically unengaged clubs and will not touch upon the sports movements organized by Catholics (in the context of the sport history of the diaspora, the Catholic *Lietuvos Vyčiai* could lay claim to the status of the major organization) and leftists.

## **Origination of Lithuanian-Americans' Sports Clubs and Their Aims**

While hints about Lithuanians active in sports in the USA reach us from the late nineteenth century, the New York Lithuanian Athletic Club (NYLAC) established in 1901, chartered in 1903, and existing until the present day is considered the first true athletic club.<sup>8</sup> A few more organizations were set up in New York

*Amerikos*. These writings are for the most part factographic works, without the intention to research into social, cultural or political contexts; however, they are highly valuable for the information accumulated. A valuable example is the biography of baseball player Peter Gray-Wishner, written by the US historian William Kashatus of Lithuanian origin, in which he deals with this baseball player's relation with the Lithuanian community while playing for the Lithuanian Catholic teams in the small town of Hanover in Pennsylvania; also, the significance of baseball in the everyday life and acculturation process of this community: Kashatus, *One-Armed*.

<sup>8</sup> In the Lithuanian sources, it was for quite a long time called the Gymnast (*Gimnasty*) club, yet later, the name Athletic (*Atletų*) club caught on, and we will use it in this article.

later, for whose activities the sports component was important – Young Men’s and Young Lithuanian Girls’ (*Jaunų Vyrų ir Jaunų Lietuvaičių* (merginų)) societies, which had their baseball and basketball circles. From 1907, a club of Lithuanian athletes was in operation for a few years in Baltimore; however, the Baltimore Lithuanian-American Athletic Club (BLAAC) (Baltimore’s *Amerikos lietuvių atletų klubas*) established in 1915, fared better to the challenges of time than the club which operated from 1907. In the region of Chicago, various youth-oriented and mutual aid sports clubs quite similar to one another were established at a similar time: White Star (*Balta Žvaigždė*), White Clover (*Baltas Dobilas*), Red Rose (*Raudona Rožė*), White Rose (*Balta Rožė*), Bright Moon (*Skaistus Mėnulis*), Brighton Park Athletic Club, Golden Star (*Auksinė žvaigždė*). These clubs were not just sport organizations. The role of the component of physical education and athletics in them varied, sometimes diminishing and appearing in the margins, and sometimes rising as one of the key activities of one club or other. The clubs that operated in Chicago were mostly referred to as ‘benevolent’ (Lith. *pašalpiniai*) (e.g., *Baltos Žvaigždės pašalpinis klubas*), adding the words ‘sports’, ‘athletic’, ‘entertainment’ as often as not.

For example, in 1910, White Rose Club founded in 1908 started becoming famous for its sport activities. In the papers of the time, this organization was often presented as White Rose Athletic Club (*Baltos Rožės atletiškas klubas*). According to the reports in the newspaper *Lietuva*, the club had its own premises where each evening one could learn “to wrestle, lift weights, box”. Membership of the club included famous Lithuanian wrestlers S. Poškevičius, Pranas Norkus, also one of the most successful Lithuanian wrestlers, future champion of the world, Juozas Šimkus. The club was praised for providing “our youth with the opportunity to develop their physical powers and have a good time”, doing “a good deed which is absolutely worth an approval”. The club provided a place to do sports, and organized competitions in which not only Lithuanian wrestlers but those

of other nations participated as well. Later, this club and *Skaistus Mėnulis* club united to become Amity club, which, in 1929, united with *Baltasis Dobilas* to become Unity club. The latter, in 1931, had about 400 members, headquarters at 4558 So. Marshfield Ave., a spacious sitting room, sporting goods, mattresses for wrestling, weights, two uniformed baseball teams, and a small bookstore.<sup>9</sup>

Clubs that operated for a longer or shorter period appeared in Philadelphia,<sup>10</sup> Kenosha, Scranton, DuBois,<sup>11</sup> Cleveland, Binghamton,<sup>12</sup> Bridgeport,<sup>13</sup> Hazleton<sup>14</sup> and other cities. Unlike the Irish, Scots, Germans or Czechs, Lithuanians had no long-established sporting traditions brought in from Europe; therefore, no

<sup>9</sup> "Dar prie lietuvių drutuolių pasirodymo," *Lietuva*, 1914 03 13, 6; Kul-Ba., "Lietuviai Drutuoliai," *Lietuva*, 1914 12 25, 4; "Nuo Town of Lake," *Lietuva*, 1916 04 14, 8-9; Ten buvęs lietuvis, "Nuo Town of Lake," *Lietuva*, 1919 04 10, 4; "Vienijasi du dideli kliubai – Baltojo Dobilo ir Amity," *Naujienos*, 1929 06 10, 3; "Unity Kliubo Darbuotė," *Naujienos*, 1931 12 28, 5.

<sup>10</sup> From press reports, we are aware that at least in 1921–1922 they had a baseball team which, it seems, competed against the Lithuanian athletes from New York. At that time, the team was led by Anthony J. Urban; the names of the team members are also indicated: "Amateur Sports," *Evening Public Ledger*, May 26, 1922, 19; "Amateur Sports," *Evening Public Ledger*, April 24, 1922, 19. Later, we come across information about the wrestling team of this city's Lithuanian Athlete Club which took part in amateur championships: "Lithac Grapplers Down Frankford," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Dec 15, 1933, 30; "Lithuanian Matmen To Visit Y.M.C.A.," *The Evening Sun*, Mar 6, 1936, 22.

<sup>11</sup> DuBois had a solid basketball team: "Notice Manager Lithuanian A.C.," *The Courier-Express*, March 12, 1927, 1; "Litts Prepare Busy Schedule For Crack Team," *The Courier-Express*, December 13, 1927, 2.

<sup>12</sup> It was established around 1922; in the correspondence in *Naujienos*, it boasted of a very good basketball team, played baseball in the summertime, had youth sections: P. B. Balčikonis, Binghamton, N.Y. (Sportas), *Naujienos*, 1930 01 27, 5.

<sup>13</sup> "Lithuanian Club Hold Election of Officers," *The Bridgeport Telegram*, Aug 28, 1922, 9. There is mention of the Sons of Lithuania Athletic Association, its president Giddie E. Duhlis, secretary Anthony Clinck, treasurer James Krietkus.

<sup>14</sup> "Lithuanian Athletic Association Formed," *The Plain Speaker*, May 19, 1922, 10.

system of their own or practices based on modernized folk games were devised.<sup>15</sup> Initially, wrestling, gymnastics, weight lifting were mainly practiced, but shortly, baseball, basketball started catching on, although at a different pace in different organizations.

None of the Lithuanian sports clubs confined itself to athletics. The very objectives they set in their regulations provided for much more different activities of these organizations: in addition to practical sporting and mutual aid interests, the clubs were concerned with the all-round improvement of man. In their regulations, the clubs often accentuated fraternal love, friendship, civic upbringing, obligations to Lithuania and the United States. The athletes of Baltimore set two objectives in their regulations, approved and published in 1916: 1) fraternal love and love for our homeland Lithuania; 2) common mutual development of physical and spiritual endeavors.<sup>16</sup> With the growth and strengthening of the organization, its constitution became wider-ranging as well. In 1927, its regulations provided for four objectives:

- 1) to maintain friendly and fraternal love amongst the members;
- 2) to develop athletic as well as physical and spiritual endeavors in common;
- 3) to foster, in particular, education, culture and art amongst the Lithuanians;
- 4) to foster the love of one's country and all the honorable achievements performed for the welfare of both Lithuania and the United States.<sup>17</sup>

The regulations of some of the Chicago clubs are similar as well. The constitutions of the *Balta Žvaigždė*, *Skaistus Mėnulis* and *Amity* clubs declared that their main ambition was to organize young Lithuanians, develop their body and spirit, maintain their

<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that the ethnic groups listed above cherished their 'own' games alone. Sports, especially baseball, for the German, Irish and many other groups of immigrants was an important part of their acculturation. E.g., about the Irishmen in New York: Darby, "Gaelic," 350–351. The fact that a great number of Irishmen took to baseball, Paul Darby considers an expression of the willingness of the Irishmen to accustom themselves to the cultural standards and values of the host country.

<sup>16</sup> *Instatai Amerikos Lietuvių Atletų Klubu*, Baltimore, 1916, 3.

<sup>17</sup> *Konstitucija Lietuvių Amerikos Atletų Klubu*, Baltimore, 1927, 17.

gymnastic equipment, as well as learn to dance, sing, play music instruments and read “prelectures” [sic]. An ambition to maintain solidarity and fraternal links amongst the members, to aid one another “mentally or materially in sickness or other disaster as much as possible” was expressed. In their regulations, these organizations also undertook spreading Lithuanity and contributing to the good deeds of Lithuanians.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, the main document of the White Clove club, approved in 1915, declared that this organization strived to unite all Lithuanians for mutual aid, “doing memorable deeds for our Lithuania”; its aims included spreading love and honesty for Lithuanians, establishing reading-rooms, contributing to the publication of scientific books, aiding student members of the club, reviving “our Lithuanian nation, guarding our Lithuanian nation against all kinds of oppressors who oppress in different ways, morally and mentally”; it also provided for the physical education of the members, training them “to wrestle, box, and weightlift”. The hope for aiding orphans financially and helping them to become honest members of society was also expressed.<sup>19</sup>

In its regulations, the White Clove club promised its members to help them acquire US citizenship. NYLAC, too, aimed at helping its members acquire US citizenship documents. This ambition of the club was based on practical considerations, the possibilities for holding better positions at work. The club boasted as early as 1903 that it was a place for getting advice on citizenship documentation, learning the English language.<sup>20</sup>

The above-named aims reflected declarations of ethnic identity and American patriotism typical of the period in which the Americans expected this from immigrants. The ideological back-

<sup>18</sup> *Konstitucija ir mokesčių knygelė Lietuvių Baltos žvaigždės klubo*, Chicago, 1912, 3; *Įstatai Skaistaus Mėnulio Pašelpinio klubo*, Chicago, 1913, 3; *Įstatai Amity pašalpinio klubo (Amity benevolent club)*, Chicago, 1925, 3.

<sup>19</sup> *Įstatai lietuviško pasilinksminimo ir pašelpos klubo vardu Balto dobilo*, Chicago: Zemaitis printing house, 1915, 1–5.

<sup>20</sup> B., “Brooklyn, N.Y.,” *Žvaigždė*, 1903 06 11, 376; J. Szunskis, “Brooklyn, N.Y.,” *Vienybė lietuvininkų*, 1903, 297; M. J., “Brooklyn, N.Y.,” *Vienybė lietuvininkų*, 1919 06 26, 3.

ground of the time and various assimilation campaigns made this declaration of ethnicity and American patriotism increasingly necessary. Representatives of ethnic groups and their organizations strived to demonstrate loyalty to the United States, and the wish to become a US citizen or becoming one was one of the expressions of such loyalty. Ethnic groups strived to show themselves as patriots of the United States, boasting of the number of their representatives who had become US citizens, sometimes even restricting the rights of their representatives who did not want to become naturalized.<sup>21</sup> This could also act as a signal for the youth who had been born and/or raised in the United States and had naturally combined ethnic and American identities, that it was possible to be both a good Lithuanian and a good American at the same time.<sup>22</sup>

In 1915, NYLAC, the American Citizen clubs, and the Annunciation Roman Catholic Church parish earned praise from the Brooklyn press for being the first to foster English language courses organized by the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association). These courses were part of the Americanization campaign which aimed not only to teach immigrants the English language but also "to promote better citizenship" and "to teach foreigners American ideas". For the author of the article (and these quotations), full of patronizing rhetoric with regard to immigrants, work in this part of Brooklyn seemed very important as "the races that are reached are of a type that do not possess the virtue of ambition as far as betterment is concerned". The first steps of the above-named organizations won the author's sympathy for Lithuanians. Among "various Slavic people", Lithuanians seemed to him "physically the largest" and "the most active mentally". The author was excited that a fairly large number of them, owing

<sup>21</sup> Alexander, *Ethnic Pride*, 19–20, 29, 39–40 and etc.

<sup>22</sup> These considerations about the meanings encoded in the regulations were in part encouraged by the thoughts of historian J.G. Alexander about the identities and strategies of Slovak-Americans in the context of the time. In many of the activities, texts, and illustrations of those activities of the Slovak immigrants of the time, she sees similar tendencies, for example: *Ibid.*, 86–87.

to this enthusiasm, “have made great strides in the English language”, and the instructors managed to implement in them “a better conception of American patriotism and ideals.”<sup>23</sup>

It should be noted that at the beginning of their founding, Lithuanian youth sports clubs were sometimes looked at askance. Juozas Otto Širvydas, who made a speech in one of NYLAC’s parties in 1912, did not spare derogatory remarks in his diary with respect to the club in 1913. On June 18, a renowned choir conductor Leonas Ereminas was on a visit in his home and invited Širvydas to an outing with this club whose choir he led at that time. It seems, neither the musical/artistic activities of the club nor the renown choir conductor himself helped convince him to go:

Ereminas, too, strenuously invited me, but I did not promise to go and, for God’s sake, I will not go; while I feel quite a respect for Ereminas for his work in teaching our youth to sing, such outings as that of the above-named “Lithuanian sports” club are distinguished by nothing but drinking and, as often as not, fighting. As an outsider, you not only do not have any fun, but find this disgusting to remember in the following few days.<sup>24</sup>

After a decade, he would already mostly give high praise to the Lithuanian sports clubs in Baltimore and New York.<sup>25</sup>

In the Lithuanian press one can come across criticism of youth behavior, use of alcohol, entertainment, fighting, ‘inappropriate’ dancing, ‘Anglomania’<sup>26</sup> and other criticism that sometimes was

<sup>23</sup> “Teach Foreigners American Ideas,” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 4 Apr 1915, 12.

<sup>24</sup> Diary of J.O. Širvydas, book 1, record from 18/06/1913, the Lithuanian-American Cultural Archive (ALKA), J.O. Širvydas’ fond, 169.

<sup>25</sup> Diary of J.O. Širvydas, book 2, record from 23/01/1923, ALKA, J. O. Širvydas’ fond, 23; Diary of J.O. Širvydas, book 3, records from 19/06/1924 and 22/06/1924, ALKA, J. O. Širvydas’ fond, 171–174.

<sup>26</sup> About the ‘inappropriate’ behavior at the *Balta Rožė* club’s ball: „Moteriškos eina į šokių naktinius rubais pasirėdę“, *Draugas*, 1918 01 08, 2; about ‘anglomania’ at *Balta Žvaigždė* club: J.L.M., “Nuo West Side,” *Lietuva*, 1914 05 22, 5; about ‘inappropriate’ dances during a NYLAK boat trip: J. K. Mikas, “Dar apie mūsų sportelius,” *Vienybė lietuvininkų*, 1912 07 24, 3; about *Balta Žvaigždė* club members’ fight with *Lietuvos Vyčiai*: Rep., “Socijalistai užpuolikai. Panaudojo fizinį jėgą,” *Draugas*, 1918 06 11, 1.



an exaggeration and sometimes – just a refusal to accept the reality of the youth growing up in the United States where they live. More than once, Lithuanians were attacked while entertaining themselves<sup>27</sup> and, in some texts, the need to protect themselves comes to light. For example, in 1940, a BLAAC member wrote an overview of this organization's history on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, and it seemed important for him to remind his readers that there had been a time when "persons of other ethnic groups too, distinguished themselves by fighting", and who would come to Lithuanians' entertainment venues "to fight with *greenhorns*" (Lith. *grinorius*). He felt proud that Baltimore Lithuanian societies, when organizing their entertainments, "would be obliged to invite members of the Athletic Club to keep order and to protect them from assailants."<sup>28</sup>

Club figures were conscious of a constant critical attitude towards them. NYLAC athletes who publicized their club in the press admitted as early as 1903 that "it took much trouble and tongue-work before the truth that this club was highly helpful for young guys got stuck into their heads"<sup>29</sup>, that exactly such clubs "are of great benefit and young guys do not go to different saloons but occupy themselves in the club."<sup>30</sup> To protect the image of both themselves and the Lithuanians in general in the eyes of the Americans, the clubs consciously started setting standards of behavior in their regulations, considered their members' behavior at their meetings, and disciplined those who behaved badly. For example, the BLAAC regulations for 1927 provided that "all improper conduct and gambling in the club rooms is absolutely prohibited." They also prohibited "all arguments deal-

<sup>27</sup> A bloody fight took place in April 1919, when a ball of the Lithuanian Clubs Federation (*Lietuvių Klubų Federacijos*) (which brought together the benevolent-sports clubs of the Lithuanians in Chicago mainly dealt with in this article) in an auditorium in Douglas Park was attacked by intruders: "Karė baliuje", *Lietuva*, 1919 04 28, 4.

<sup>28</sup> J. Milūnaitis, "Dar vienas sidabrinis jubiliejus," *Lietuva: Lithuanian monthly*, n. 4, 1940, 25.

<sup>29</sup> B., "Brooklyn, N.Y.," *Žvaigždė*, 1903 06 11, 376.

<sup>30</sup> M.J., "Brooklyn N.Y.," *Vienybė lietuvininkų*, 1912 06 26, 3.

ing with spite, and vulgar talk which may result in disagreeableness.” The members were to respect the club’s property and were obliged to warn those who behaved themselves unacceptably. It had been provided that offences of the members were to be investigated seriously at the meeting of the directors; unacceptable behavior could entail a punishment and expulsion from the club.<sup>31</sup> Standards of behavior were also defined by the benevolent-sports clubs of Chicago in their regulations; the image of the club and each member’s responsibility for guarding its good name was a matter of concern in their regulations as well. For example, the regulations of the *Balta Žvaigždė* club provided that each member “must be a guard of the Club and must not allow disrespect for the Club and its members by their actions.”<sup>32</sup>

A fair number of discussions over the members’ behavior have been recorded in the minutes of NYLAC meetings. Examples of reprehensible, discussible and punishment-inflicting actions included gambling, fighting, impolite behavior, dropping fag ends into a sink and in the club, obscene behavior at venues of entertainment, etc.<sup>33</sup> We can assume that, over time, this contributed to some changes in the patterns of behavior and an improvement in the image of these organizations. Joining the common endeavors of organized Lithuanian-Americans must have served the purpose even more.

## **Sports Clubs in the Social Fabric of Lithuanian-Americans in the First Half of the Twentieth Century**

During the years of World War One, sports clubs had a chance to demonstrate their both American and Lithuanian patriotism. The

<sup>31</sup> *Konstitucija Lietuvių Amerikos Atletų Klubu*, Baltimore, 1927, 3–6.

<sup>32</sup> *Konstitucija Lietuvių Baltos Žvaigždės Kliubo*, Chicago, 1929, 9.

<sup>33</sup> E.g., the minutes of the NYLAC meetings of 02/08/1918, 07/03/1919, NYLAC, the book of meeting minutes from 1912–1920, 340, 393; the minutes of NYLAC meetings of 07/04/1922, 21/04/1922, 05/05/1922, 04/10/1924, 07/08/1925, 04/09/1925, 07/07/1933, NYLAC, the book of meeting minutes from 1920–1934, 88, 89, 91, 92, 95, 100, 232, 301, 561.

United States got involved in the war, and issued Freedom loan bonds in 1917 (and did the same a few times later). This was a good chance for the ethnic groups to prove their loyalty to the immigration country, so they energetically joined the loan bonds purchasing campaign. NYLAC, upon getting a letter from the Lithuanian Freedom Loan Committee in April 1918, considered the matter carefully and decided to purchase loan obligations for \$200. In the fall, the club members discussed it once again and decided by a majority vote to purchase bonds of the Fourth Lithuanian Freedom Loan for \$300. The club had purchased loan bonds in the total amount of \$500 and sold them after a few years.<sup>34</sup>

At the meeting organized during the Third Lithuanian Freedom Loan campaign on April 21, 1918, the Lithuanians in Baltimore collected in an hour and a half \$26,500. BLAAC purchased loan bonds in the amount of \$2,000, yielding in the amount that day only to The First Lithuanian Building and Loan Association. In the fall of that same year, a meeting dedicated to the organization of the Fourth Freedom Loan Campaign was held, as well as a meeting under the auspices of this club at the beginning of October, where the Lithuanian organizations and individuals purchased loans in the amount of \$40,000.<sup>35</sup>

Probably not every member of the club could financially contribute to such actions on an individual basis, but the clubs' jointly generated capital made them feel creators of the general

<sup>34</sup> The minutes of the NYLAC meeting of 19/04/1918, NYLAC, the book of meeting minutes from 1912–1920, 323; the minutes of the NYLAC meeting of 03/05/1918, *Ibid.*, 326. The minutes of the NYLAC meetings of 17/02/1922, 16/06/1922, NYLAC, the book of meeting minutes from 1920–1934, 77, 103.

<sup>35</sup> "Avenge Their Lands With American Coin," *The Baltimore Sun*, 22 Apr 1918, 12; "Lithuanian, Greek and Serb Leaders in War Work," *The Baltimore Sun*, 6 Jul 1918, 4; "Lithuanians On Qui-Vive," *The Baltimore Sun*, 27 Sep 1918, 16. Attorney of State Broening, Jonas Alyta, Jonas Koblis, Vincent Chester delivered speeches at the October 1918 event. According to the press reports, the Organizing Committee included Jonas Alyta (who, by the way, represented BLAAC in the General Seimas of Lithuanians in 1918), Frank Ginkus, A. Meckevičius, Jos. A. Naikus. It is true, though, that the club is not reported to have purchased any additional bonds this time: "Lithuanians Help Loan," *The Baltimore Sun*, 7 Oct 1918, 5.

good, assuming the responsibility for the fate of their own country and even the world. The feeling of significance as an individual could also be strengthened by the democratic ways in which the organizations would take a certain decision. The members took common counsel, voted, and such procedures applied both while collecting patriotic donations and organizing picnics, or attending to the repair of a broken table.

The obligation of the Lithuanian sports clubs towards Lithuania was reflected in their donations, and different artistic and social practices. Donation for "Lithuanian matters" was Lithuanian-Americans' old tradition, which manifested itself in the most conspicuous ways with the strengthening of the sentiment of the independence of Lithuania. Sports clubs did not stand idly by when the Lithuanian-American community began collecting donations in support of this aim; nor did they refuse to financially aid Lithuanians who had suffered in the war. For example, in 1918, the *Balta Žvaigždė* club aided the Lithuanians who had suffered in the war, later donating \$119 to support the Lithuanian independence matter;<sup>36</sup> the *Balta Rožė* club supported the Bell of Freedom action, and sent money several times for the Fund for a Free Lithuania<sup>37</sup> for which the Baltimore and New York Athlete clubs donated as well.

Also, participation of sports clubs in the Seimas of Lithuanians that took place in 1918 and 1919, implies their engagement at that time. The General Seimas of Lithuanian-Americans orga-

<sup>36</sup> "Ataskaita," *Lietuva*, 1918 06 14, 8; "Iš West Side," *Lietuva*, 1919 01 13, 6. This club started the practice of donations much earlier; as early as 1914, it donated for a Lithuanian bookstore: "Ivairumai," *Lietuva*, 1914 02 06, 5.

<sup>37</sup> "Aukautojai ir jų aukos," *Lietuva*, 1919 10 21, 6; "Iš Town of Lake," *Lietuva*, 1918 12 11, 6; "Balta Rožė verta \$20.00," *Lietuva*, 1917 11 09, 1; "Liet. Neprigulmybės fondo ataskaita už birz., 1919 m.," *Lietuva*, 1919 09 11, 3. This Fund was established in 1914 in Brooklyn at a post-Seimas Nationalist (central trend) conference and, initially, was called The Lithuanian Autonomy (*Lietuvos autonomijos*) Fund. At first, quite few donations were collected, but they increased substantially after Lithuania declared Independence. This Fund supported the Lithuanian delegation at the Peace Conference, the Lithuanian Riflemen in the process of their formation, the Lithuanian war mission, and other different matters: Liulevičius, *Išvijos*, 108–109.

nized in New York in 1918 through the efforts of Catholics and Nationalists/Liberals was particularly significant, with the participation of more than a thousand delegates. It adopted important resolutions (including the Lithuanian independence requirement) and took a decision to set up an Executive Committee for the joint work of Catholics and Nationalists/Liberals in Washington.<sup>38</sup> Two representatives from Baltimore (J. Bajoras, J. Alyta), one athlete from New York (J. Gegžna) and one representative from the *Baltas Dobilas* club in Chicago participated in this assembly. The *Balta Rožė* club in Chicago was represented by Juozas Bačiūnas who was later to become one of the most conspicuous figures of the national political wing The Seimas that took place a year later in Chicago was mainly represented by the Nationalist/Liberal trend, and was also attended by BLAAC, *Baltas Dobilas*, *Skaistus Mėnulis* and *Balta Rožė* clubs.<sup>39</sup>

Donations for “Lithuanian matters” did not end with the Act of Reinstating Independence of Lithuania and the end of Independence fights in 1920. Lithuanian-Americans kept looking for ways to contribute to the strengthening of the freedom of their or their parents’ native country, while sports clubs further saw donations as one of the meaningful trends of activity. Clubs supported charity actions (not only Lithuanian), organizations, newspapers, other societies or persons.

The organizations were not indifferent to the trans-Atlantic flight of Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas,<sup>40</sup> the construction

<sup>38</sup> Skirius, *JAV lietuviai*, 34–36.

<sup>39</sup> For the minutes of Seimas, lists of participants, see: “Protokolas Amer. Lietuvių Visuotinojo Seimo,” *Draugas*, 1918 05 04, 3–4; “Protokolas Amer. Lietuvių Visuotinojo Seimo,” *Draugas*, 1918 05 06, 3–4; “Protokolas Amer. Lietuvių Visuotinojo Seimo,” *Draugas*, 1918 05 08, 3–4; “Protokolas Amer. Lietuvių Visuotinojo Seimo,” *Draugas*, 1918 05 13, 2; “A. L. Seimo Delegatų surašas iš Chicagos,” *Lietuva*, 1919 06 09, 2; “Seimo Delegatų Surašas,” *Lietuva*, 1919 06 14, 3; “Seimo Delegatų Surašas,” *Lietuva*, 1919 06 16, 3.

<sup>40</sup> About the *Unity* club endeavors: Commission, “Town of Lake žinutės,” *Draugas*, 1933 01 20, 6. “Bunco party lietuvių lakūnų naudai,” *Draugas*, 1933 04 01, 6. About the NYLAC donation: minutes of the NYLAC meeting of 07/04/1933, the book of the minutes of the NYLAC meetings from 1920–1934, 551–552; minutes of the NYLAC meeting of 05/05/1933, *Ibid.*, 554.

of the Vytautas the Great War Museum in Kaunas,<sup>41</sup> Lithuania's defense matters,<sup>42</sup> and the addressing of charity organizations.<sup>43</sup> On November 11, 1919, the *Raudona Rožė* club organized orations and a ball to commemorate one year after the end of World War One and to "sympathize with the workers' current fight with their employers'. All of the profits on the event (tickets and, probably, donations) were to be assigned to the workers in the steel industry on a strike. The minutes of the organization's meeting that took place after the event specify that \$134 was collected and sent to the committee for the endowment of those on the strike.<sup>44</sup>

This way, clubs would involve individuals in discussions on politics, other hot issues of the time, and acted as intermediaries in combining their endeavors with the wider ones of Americans or Lithuanian-Americans. Clubs served as venues for the issues, topics, and activities that the Lithuanian-American diaspora and, as often as not, the Lithuanians of the world diaspora and Lith-

<sup>41</sup> Minutes of the NYLAC meeting of 02/06/1933, NYLAC, the book of meeting minutes from 1920–1934, 558.

<sup>42</sup> About the \$25 donation of the Lithuanian Golfers Union (*Lietuvių Golfininkų Sąjunga*): "Naujos Aukos Įvairiems Lietuvos Reikalams," *Draugas*, 1939 06 16, 8. Here it is reported that the donation was designated for the "Self-defense Fund." It is likely that the Fund to Aid Lithuania is meant, which was established in 1939 by the businessmen of the Chamber of Commerce of the Lithuanians in Chicago on the initiative of Consul P. Daudžvardis. Justinas Mackevičius was the president of the Fund.

<sup>43</sup> *Raudona Rožė* club donated to the Lithuanian Philanthropist Union (*Lietuvių labdarių sąjunga*) more than once: \$10 in 1932, \$5 in 1935, 1937, 1940: minutes of the meetings of the Lithuanian Red Rose Club (*Lietuvių Raudonos Rožės Klubas*; hereinafter in the footnotes – LRRK) of 05/02/1932, 03/05/1935, Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture (hereinafter – BLKM), LRRK, book 2 of meeting minutes, 329, 488; minutes of the LRRK meetings of 05/11/1937, 01/11/1940, BLKM, LRRK, book 3 of meeting minutes, 91, 207.

<sup>44</sup> "Cicero pranešimas," *Lietuva*, 1919 11 11, 3; A. L. "Graži auka plieno industrijos darbininkams," *Naujienos*, 1919 11 15, 7; minutes of the LRRK meeting of 05/12/1919, BLKM, LRRK, book 1 of meeting minutes, 236. This was not the only time that this club donated to workers on a strike – in 1926 the *Raudona Rožė* club allocated \$25 directly from its treasury to aid workers (it seems, within the textile industry): minutes of the LRRK meeting of 16/08/1926, BLKM, LRRK, book 2 of meeting minutes, 153.

uania were concerned with, to reach their ordinary members. This brought the Lithuanian-American society together, contributed to the Lithuanians of the world community and to the feeling of what we could now refer to as diaspora awareness.

The entertainment element without which even the most ambitious organizations could not do without, had a significant role in the life of the clubs and in the ensuring of success in their initiatives. Picnics, balls, mask and dance evenings were important social practices during which information was shared, acquaintance was made, and contacts were entered into, as well as different barriers dividing society in terms of location, age, sex, worldview and other aspects were therein crossed. The financial stability of societies depended to a significant extent on the effective organization of entertainments, the profits on which could markedly top up the clubs' treasuries and allow them to donate for one reason or another. There had been loss-bearing events, too, yet sometimes, one successful ball could bring a profit of a few hundred, a thousand dollars or even higher.<sup>45</sup> Sometimes, it could be increased by organizing a lottery.<sup>46</sup>

Historian Robert A. Slayton, discussing the dances organized by the then social-athletic clubs in Chicago, emphasized that their organization was a perfect illustration of the youth's "organizational ability, independence, and business acumen."<sup>47</sup> The young club members themselves elected persons to take care of finding a venue, of music, food and drinks; shared the responsibilities; dealt with issues of importance, and took a vote on them together. After each event, they would calculate their finances carefully, the persons in charge would read out their re-

<sup>45</sup> Buves baliuje, "Iš West Sidės," *Lietuva*, 1919 01 23, 6. During one picnic in 1939, *Raudona Rožė* club earned as much as 1,400 dollars: "R. Rožės Kliubo Piknikas Davė \$1400 Pelno," *Naujienos*, 1939 08 10, 7.

<sup>46</sup> *Raudona Rožė* club managed to earn 3,000 dollars on a car lottery in 1926: minutes of the LRRK meeting of 06/08/1926, BLKM, LRRK, book 2 of meeting minutes, 153. The car was worth 1,645 dollars: "Karnivalas su išlaimėjimu," *Draugas*, 1926 06 12, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Slayton, *Back*, 61.

ports, while other members decided as to their acceptability. Going to the events of friendly organizations was a must if one wished to expect that others would come to their events. It was the only way to ensure that the events would be a complete success and bring a profit.

Sporting events were also an entertainment that brought communities and individuals together, and often were not confined to just contests – they could be supplemented with dances or artistic programs (some of the clubs had choirs or tried out theater productions). The very first message about the Lithuanian athletes in Baltimore the author of this article was lucky to come across was exactly about such an event, which took place in April 1907. *The Baltimore Sun* reported that, during the first “annual exhibition and dance”, the club demonstrated an excellent program which consisted of gymnastics exercises, athletics contests, wrestling and boxing. Lots of people came, the hall was decorated with flags, the orchestra played patriotic music. After the sporting program, dances followed, food was served.<sup>48</sup> In the 1920s and 30s in New York, dance and basketball (*šokių ir basketbolės*) parties organized by the *Jauni Vyrai* (Young Men) Society would be attended by hundreds (sometimes more than a thousand) Lithuanians. Dance parties, songs, choir and orchestra concerts followed the Society’s basketball team matches in the so-called Klasčius Hall.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> “The Lithuanian Athletes,” *The Baltimore Sun*, 17 Apr 1907, 8. The athletics contests were attended by the club’s president A.J. Galinaitis and vice president D.C. Stanton.

<sup>49</sup> Buves, “Gražus jaunuomenės sporto vakarėlis,” *Vienybė*, 1927 04 26, 6; Narys, “Jaunų Vyru Draugija pradeda naują darbą,” *Vienybė*, 1928 11 03, 6; “Lietuvių jauktas pradeda basketbolės sezoną,” *Vienybė*, 1928 11 15, 6; Koresp., “Jaunų Vyru jauktas smarkiai ėmėsi,” *Vienybė*, 1928 11 20, 6; Rep., “Jaunų Vyru Basketbolės vakarai eina pasekmingai,” *Vienybė*, 1928 11 27, 6; Koresp., “Puikiai pavykęs liaudies vakaras,” *Vienybė*, 1928 12 11, 6; “Nepamirškite basketbolės vakaro,” *Vienybė*, 1929 10 03, 6; “Sudaryta basketbolo sąjunga,” *Vienybė*, nr. 78, 1935 6. “Basketbolas Maspeth,” *Vienybė*, nr. 26, 1935, 6; “Spalių 6 d. pramoga,” *Vienybė*, nr. 72, 1935, 6. About the commemoration of the Independence Day and basketball “Iškilmingai minėjo Lietuvos nepriklausomybės sukaktuves,” *Vienybė*, nr. 14, 1935, 6.



Sometimes, sporting events brought together people who lived in the same city or in the neighborhood, and sometimes, they were a means to introduce young people, scattered across different locations in the United States, to other people, to make them feel close. Lithuanian sport figures managed to intensify such relations at the end of the 1930s in particular, when the established American-Lithuanian Athletic Association organized Lithuanian national championships in several sports, the final stages of which often took place in one city. The National American-Lithuanian Basketball match in 1941 was even attended by teams from eight states.<sup>50</sup>

The engagement of sports clubs and their visibility in the social fabric of Lithuanian-Americans can be observed at different layers: both in terms of the club leaders' participation in the activities of other organizations and the aim of the athletes themselves to come together with other societies (or even to take up the initiative to bring them together) through various forms of association, and to contribute to different local Lithuanian initiatives.

The Baltimore example can serve as an illustration of this point. The President of the city's first athletic club was Antanas J. Galinaitis, born around 1888 in New York. Having arrived in Baltimore as a child, he finished studies of law there – Loyola College and Maryland University. During the years of studies, he was a member of different basketball, American football, athletic teams; later, already as the president of the athletic club, he nevertheless participated in sports programs. However, he did

<sup>50</sup> "Duquesne Litts Win," *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, 15 Apr 1940, 17; "Chicagos Lietuviai Atletai Šįvakar Vyksta į Pittsburghą," *Naujienos*, 1941 04 18, 8. As often as not, sportsmen visited other sportsmen to play friendly matches. For example, basketball players from Baltimore played in New York against *Jaunų Vyrų* Society in 1926; in 1929, the St. George's Athletic Club of Cleveland Lithuanians went to DuBois (Pennsylvania) to compete with local Lithuanians: diary of J.O. Širvydas, book 5, record from 27/02/1926, ALKA, J.O. Širvydas' fond, 58; "Cleveland Litt Champions Are Here Tonight," *The DuBois Morning Courier*, 2 Mar 1929, 2.

not confine himself to athletics in his activities. As an educated person (in Loyola College he had won medals for his eloquence in debates), he was a welcome guest at different Lithuanian events where he had begun delivering lectures still as a student. It was namely his tireless ambition “to help his fellow-countrymen in the many movements in which they were interested” that was suggested as the reason behind his illness in his obituary that was published in *The Baltimore Sun*. It is true, though, that he did not accept every invitation. During a lecture put on by the Lithuanian National Bookstore (*Lietuvių Tautiškas knygynas*) in the summer of 1908, he chastised socialism and Socialists, and defended the private property institute. Discontented Socialist Lithuanians wanted to arrange his debates with Fortunatas Bagočius; however, Galinaitis, according to *Keleivis*, refused to do so, saying to the representatives who solicited him that “I am ashamed to hold debates with such blockheads as Socialists.” Combining his work as a school teacher and court interpreter, he, it seems, was also a member of the Democratic Party as he was reported to have spoken in front of the Polish audience on behalf of this Party. His death in 1912 may have been one of the reasons why the activities of Baltimore athletes quieted down briefly for a few years.<sup>51</sup>

Baltimore athletes having resumed their activities a few years later, the club became a significant Lithuanian organization in the city, which mainly cooperated with the expat organizations and individuals of the National/Liberal trends; it also participated in the Council of Societies of Baltimore Lithuanians together with the *GDL Kęstutis* and *Mindaugas* societies (*DLK Kęstučio*, *Mindaugo draugijos*), the Citizen’s Club (*Piliečių klubas*), the 64th Chapter of the Lithuanian Association in the United States

<sup>51</sup> “Husband of Month Dead,” *The Baltimore Sun*, 27 Feb 1912, 14. As early as 1907, he delivered a lecture during the orations held by the societies in Baltimore on the establishment of a Lithuanian bookstore: “Iš Baltimore, Md.,” *Lietuva*, 1907 12 06, 3. About the lecture in which he criticized socialism: “Iš Baltimore, Md.,” *Lietuva*, 1908 07 03, 2–3; about the response of the Socialists: “Baltimore, Md.,” *Keleivis*, 1908 10 08, 2.

(64-ta Susivienijimo lietuvių Amerikoje kuopa) and the Lithuanian Women Citizens' Club (*Lietuvių moterų piliečių klubas*).<sup>52</sup> In 1918, the Lithuanian athletes in Baltimore arranged a banquet for Jonas Šliūpas.<sup>53</sup> Baltimore athletes had a home of their own, which served the Lithuanian community in this city. They also contributed to a significant extent to the construction of the Lithuanian Hall in the city in 1921. In the opening event, the club, again, was distinguished for the diversity of its activities, holding an evening *Gymnastics and Concert*, which was comprised of singing and playing different instruments apart from gymnast shows (mention should be made that the club developed artistic activities, had a choir, and tried out theatre productions as well).<sup>54</sup> In 1930, the club took part in the holding of a four-day long ceremony to mark the 500th death anniversary of Vytautas the Great in Baltimore, preparing the celebration's sporting program jointly with *Lietuvos Vyčiai* and the Lithuanian-American Republican (*Amerikos lietuvių Respublikonų*) and the Lithuanian-American Democrat (*Amerikos lietuvių Demokratų*) social clubs. A parade of Lithuanians and a concert took place at that time, and a banquet (hosted by William F. Laukaitis<sup>55</sup>) in the

<sup>52</sup> "Lithuanians Mark Nation's Freedom," *The Baltimore Sun*, 19 Feb 1934, 16.

<sup>53</sup> Prior to that, J. Šliūpas' orations took place, where he spoke about the Lithuanian situation, the harm done by Germany in Lithuania, and urged Lithuanians to aid the US Freedom Loan action; these orations seem to have been organized by the BLAAC as well. "Told of Russia's Plight," *The Baltimore Sun*, 16 Sep 1918, 3.

<sup>54</sup> M. Šimkus, "*Amerikos Lietuvių Atletų Klubas*," 4.

<sup>55</sup> Born in Baltimore in 1900, Vincas (William) Laukaitis was one of the then most outstanding Lithuanians in the city. He was a member of not only the BLAAC but also many other Lithuanian and American organizations. Participated in SLA (Lithuanian Alliance of America), the Lithuanian Republican Club (*Lietuvių Respublikonų klubas*), *Daina* Society, belonged to the Knights of Pythias fraternal organization, after the war was active in the Council of Lithuanian-Americans (*Amerikos Lietuvių Taryba*). He was a Doctor of Law, studied political economy at John Hopkins University (it seems, he aspired to take a doctoral degree, but finding any information on the completion of the studies has failed). During his career, he held the positions of Assistant Prosecutor for Civil Matters, judge at the Transport Court, Chairman of the

Hall of Lithuanians, it seems, with the participation of Bronius Kazys Balutis, Envoy of Lithuania to the United States, and Albert Ritchie, Governor of the State, completed the program. Mayor of the city, William Frederick Broening, made his presence in the events as well.<sup>56</sup>

Other Lithuanian youth clubs, too, came together into similar local councils of Lithuanian societies or alliances (e.g., in New York in 1927), even taking on the leadership. The benevolent-sports clubs in Chicago had come together into a separate Federation. In 1927, it was comprised of eight clubs from different regions of the city with a possible total membership of over 2,000. Among the Federation's top objectives was the ambition 'to develop sports among Lithuanians to the extent possible and organize young people into Lithuanian clubs'; however, it had not developed consistent sporting activities, even though baseball competitions between these clubs had been quite frequent and attracted lots of spectators.<sup>57</sup>

The clubs dealt with in this article, cooperated mainly with organizations that belonged to the network of the National/Liberal trend, yet there had been cases of a shorter or longer involvement in the structures created by other trends. Cicero's *Raudona Rožė* club had for some time been within Chicago's Council of Lithuanian Workers (*Lietuvių darbininkų taryba*) led by Social Democrats and the Cicero Associations Union (*Cicero draugijų sąjunga*) tending more to the Catholic trend, while NYLAC, despite its

Commission for Maryland Immigrants, police court judge, Chief of the Central Post Office. He was also a candidate of the Republican Party to the Congress. For more information, see: "He Has Obtained His Education By Degrees," *The Evening Sun*, 28 May 1935, 3; "Laukaitis Vincas," 574.

<sup>56</sup> "Lithuanians Honor National Hero," *The Baltimore Sun*, 18 May 1930, 14.

<sup>57</sup> About the significant role of NYLAC and the Young Men's Society in organizing an Association (*sąryšis*) in New York in 1927: "Susitvėrė Lietuvių Klubų Sąryšis," *Vienybė*, 1927 04 30, 6; "Lietuvių Dienos rengimas," *Vienybė*, 1927 05 28, 6; V.J. Vičnius, "Visais garsais rengiama Lietuvių Diena," *Vienybė*, 1927 06 16, 3. About the Club Federation of the Lithuanians in Chicago: "Federacija Lietuvių Klubių," *Naujienos*, 1927 03 09; its aims: *Svarbesnės ištraukos iš Federacijos Lietuvių Klubių Įstatų*, Chicago, 1928, 1-3.

always close relations with the national-trend newspaper *Vienybė* and organizations attributable to this trend, would sometimes be involved in leftists' initiatives. In 1935, NYLAC would be invited to congresses of Lithuanian-American workers, which later developed into the Congress of Lithuanian-Americans – mainly Socialist and Communist-organized and aiming to provide support to the Lithuanian people in their fight against dictatorship and for the reinstatement of democracy in Lithuania.<sup>58</sup> In 1936, representatives from the club took part in the conference of Brooklyn organizations summoned to prepare for the General Congress in Cleveland. One of the club's representatives, A. Misevičius, became a member of the Committee elected at the conference.<sup>59</sup>

*Lietuvių Golfininkų klubas* (Lithuanian Golfers Club) (LGC; est. 1922) and *Lietuvių Golfininkų Sąjunga* (Lithuanian Golfers Association) (LGA; est. 1933) which operated at a different time in Chicago attracted a fair number of middle-class intellectuals, doctors, lawyers, and businessmen. Among the members of the LGC and/or golf match participants, we come across doctors Stasys Naikelis, Kazys Kasputis, Antanas Zimontas, Kazys Drangelis, Povilas Žilvitis, Petras Zalatorius, Kazimieras Kiauga, and Alfonsas Lauraitis.<sup>60</sup> All of them were active in many Lithuanian organizations and nearly all of them participated in the activities

<sup>58</sup> Skirius, *JAV lietuvių*, 150–151.

<sup>59</sup> For the involvement of *Raudona Rožė* club, see: A. Liutkus, "Svetainės reikalais. Atsimetė nuo Ch. Liet. Darb. Tarybos," *Žinios*, 1922 01 14, 8; minutes of the LRRK meeting of 05/12/1919, BLKM, LRRK, book 1 of meeting minutes, 238. The club was also in the "Commission for the Liberation of Vilnius" (*Vilniui vaduoti komisija*): minutes of the LRRK meeting of 02/04/1926, BLKM, LRRK, book 2 of meeting minutes, 142. About the NYLAC and the Lithuanian-American Congress: minutes of the NYLAC meeting of 07/06/1935, NYLAC, book of the minutes of the meetings from 1934–1940, p. 21; V. Michelsonas, "Brooklynio Organizacijų Konferencijos Pasiruošimui Prie Liet. Kongreso Protokolas," *Keleivis*, 1936 05 20, 3.

<sup>60</sup> A.K. Menas, "Golfas," *Naujienos*, 1930 10 02, 6; "Iš golfininkų darbuotės," *Naujienos*, 1922 08 30, 5; "Lietuvių Golfo Kliubo darbuotė," *Naujienos*, 1926 02 11, 5; Golfo rep., "Golfo turnamentas," *Naujienos*, 1929 10 11, 6.

of the Lithuanian-American Doctors Association. At least half of the persons listed above, at one time or another, belonged to *Tautinė Sandara*; Stasys Naikelis was also a member of the Lithuanian Alliance of America (SLA, *Susivienijimas Lietuvių Amerikoje*) and the Homeland Lovers Society (*Tėvynės mylėtojų draugija*).<sup>61</sup> Part of this club's participants joined LGA which, in 1933, compensated for the decline of LGC. The following famous figures of the community belonged to it, were members of its Board, and/or played matches: doctor Steponas Biežis (to chair it in 1939), attorneys Jonas Brenza, Jonas Bogdžiūnas-Borden, C.P. Kal, bankers Julius Brenza, J. Mackevičius, owner of "Brothers Bakery" Dan Pivoriūnas (who held the position of Chairman of the Association for a few years), and one of the owners and president of "Vilija Coal Company,"<sup>62</sup> J. Vitkus. The clerk of the Association, Doctor G.I. Bložis, claimed in the press that while young people fond of golf joined the organization, it mainly consisted of "our professionals and businessmen." He emphasized the opportunities provided by this organization for those playing golf "to get into closer contact, to maintain better relations internationally," to achieve "the unity of the Lithuanian intelligentsia". He urged lovers of golf to come together into Lithuanian societies, by persuading that "the more we come together, the more we see one another, the more will we understand each other's thoughts and matters. Then, we will be able to lead a friendlier life."<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> "Naikelis Stasys," 11. Membership of *Tautinė Sandara* included Antanas Zimantas, Povilas Žilvitis, Kazys Drangelis. Milda Budrys provides more information about the social activities of Lithuanian doctors in a cycle of articles, although their participation in golf organizations is not mentioned: Budrys, "Lietuviai gydytojai Amerikoje XX šimtmeityje (1900–1912)," 41–55; Budrys, "Lietuviai gydytojai Amerikoje XX šimtmeityje (1912–1922)," *Aidai*, n. 3, 1988, 208–214; Budrys, "Lietuviai gydytojai Amerikoje XX šimtmeityje (1912–1922)," *Aidai*, 1988, n. 4, 273–282.

<sup>62</sup> About the company: "Vilija Coal Company," *Naujienos*, 1934 01 15, 6.

<sup>63</sup> Dr. G.I. Bložis, "Golfinkams žinutė," *Draugas*, 1934 03 09, 5; Dr. Bložis, "Lietuvių Golfinkų Sąjungos Turnyras," *Naujienos*, 1936 05 21, 7; Dr. Bložis, "Sportas," *Draugas*, 1936 05 21, 6.

## Conclusions

Sports organizations of Lithuanian-Americans in the first half of the twentieth century were an integral part of the social fabric of Lithuanian-Americans. Developing not only physical but also mental and spiritual strength, solidarity, education, culture; development of American and Lithuanian patriotism as well as engagement in the general endeavors to attain these goals constituted part of the clubs' activities that was no less important. Athletic clubs maintained permanent contact with other Lithuanian organizations, donated and thus contributed to the quest for Lithuania's independence and other Lithuanian endeavors. Sports clubs would sometimes become quite conspicuous institutions on a local level, get involved in the relations among local associations, and sometimes, they would appear at the forefront of such efforts. Sporting and other events that these clubs organized or participated in, enabled the overcoming of barriers separating the members of different clubs (location, sex, likings, age or ideological), which were important factors for generating and connecting social capital and resources, and strengthening the social fabric of Lithuanians. Efforts to seek the unity between professionals and the businessmen layer, and closer relations become apparent in the activities of golf clubs as well. These societies became part of the network through which information circulated and issues of concern common for Lithuanian-Americans and even the Lithuanians across the world as well as Lithuania were conveyed, thus involving their members in the awareness of these issues and contributing to the development of what we could refer to as diaspora awareness. It is also important that the clubs dealt with their involvement and other matters in a democratic way, discussing them well, and making one decision or other and electing their representatives by a majority vote. This could help separate members feel more capable, and feel a responsibility for the surrounding environment. This, as well as organizational discipline and responsibility as to the set standards of behavior, improved important organizational skills, and civic capabilities.

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*Translated by DALIA ŠATIENĖ  
and KERRY SHAWN KEYS*

## Moles During The Plague

*There's a procession of velvet-capped moles  
passing by on the dirt road next to my hole-  
in-the-wall. I must have missed the limos  
up ahead, the mole-majorettes, spider-leg drumsticks,  
all because a gregarious mole is dead I intuit  
as these bumpkins in the parade will surely be  
if they don't keep their cool, voracious dignity.  
I had never thought before how mournful moles  
deal with one of their own who's passed away.  
It seems to me they must be burying them above ground  
in a cheerful, carefree air and sparkling sun,  
maybe like a Zoroastrian on top of a mound.  
I'll put on Oxfords, rehearse a song, grab a flask,  
and march along in my masked Sunday best.*

KERRY SHAWN KEYS, 2021

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Povilas Petkevičius. Lithuanian Life Under Polish Occupation: Memoirs of a Political Prisoner.* Translated from the Lithuanian and edited by Zita Petkus. Publisher not given. 2019. Spiral-bound softcover, 153 pages.

### Painful Memories Resurrected

This book was originally published in Lithuanian under the title of *Lenkų okupacijoje ir jų kalėjimuose* in Chicago in 1988 by Draugas Press. In the beginning of the book there is the author's note. In it, he says that his younger son and some friends urged him to record the story of his political activism, interrogation and subsequent incarceration in the Polish prisons in the 1930's. "It was a time when every patriotic Lithuanian was prepared to sacrifice, even to the extreme of giving one's life, to achieve the goal of reuniting Vilnius and the Polish Occupied Territory with Lithuania. We did whatever was needed to hasten that day".

His daughter-in-law Zita Petkus was the translator, dedicating the book to her father-in-law and to his grandchildren. "May his eternal rest be peaceful knowing that his great sacrifice has not been forgotten". She not only translated the available text, but

added photographs, maps, footnotes, and stories that were not in the original book. She also wrote the Epilogue.

An introductory explanation is in order. The author only mentions the Treaty of Suvalkai, assuming that the reader knows the historical context. The translator was kind enough to elaborate on it. In brief, at the conclusion of WWI, the Poles pursued the retreating Russian troops through Lithuania's territory with no regard to established borders. On October 7, 1920, high ranking diplomats from Lithuania and Poland signed a military pact, the Treaty of Suvalkai, defining and agreeing on new borders. However, the very same day the Treaty took effect, Poland's chief-of-state Pilsudski ordered General Żeligowski across the border to Lithuania, violating the newly established line of demarcation. The Polish military had once again occupied Vilnius. The Vilnius Region remained occupied by Poland until October of 1939, the outbreak of WWII.

While the book does not have a table of contents, it consists of 28 chapters and an Epilogue. Chapter One covers the author's childhood during the Great War. He was born on June 30, 1911, in Nedrošliai, Lithuania, then a part of the Russian Empire. It is followed by chapters on his education in Polish and, later, in Lithuanian Schools. This included Vytautas Didysis Secondary School in Vilnius and, later, the Forestry School.

In Chapter Six the reader is introduced to working in the Lithuanian underground, followed by chapters on his arrest, interrogation, awaiting trial in Lukiškių Prison in Vilnius. Chapter Ten describes his trial, followed by his effort to seek justice in the Appeals Court. It seems that there was no place in the legal system for an appeal for political prisoners. By Chapter Thirteen, in early 1933, he ends up in Gardinas Prison. Then his ordeal continues at the Grudziądz Prison in Warsaw and the Koronowo Prison. By Chapter Seventeen the book's author ends up at the Holy Cross Prison in Kielce.

The book details the various prisons in great detail, and includes the similarities and differences among them. It describes the size of cells, the marginal food, the strict control of inmates.

By name, he mentions a number of other Lithuanians in these prisons that he knew from pre-prison days. While they were not allowed to communicate, there was a definite spirit of solidarity and efforts to support each other as much as possible.

With Chapter Nineteen we enter into a more intense agony of what was depicted up to this point. Evacuation and the Death Marches followed. On page 99 there is an inserted note by the author as follows: "After the all-consuming days of writing these memoirs and resurrecting painful memories, my emotions got the better of me and I even had a long cry. This has not been good for my weak heart. Sometimes I doubt I'll even finish this project. I need a break... Several days have gone by and the weight on my heart and my nerves has lightened somewhat. I'll try to go on with the rest of the story" (p. 99). In the chapter on Train to Vilnius he summarizes the ongoing suffering: "Eight plus years of suffering and despair culminating with the two weeks death march of the emaciated and the frail. The brutal killings had occurred. Memories of that horrible time persisted in haunting me for a very, very long time. I could neither talk nor write about them" (p. 107). By Chapter Twenty-Two he is back in Vilnius with Russians in charge. By Chapter Twenty-Five the Lithuanian Army returned to Vilnius. Chapter Twenty-Six declares that Vilnius is Free at Last! Employment in Kaunas and Vilnius follows. Soon, very soon, in Chapter Twenty-Eight, Lithuania once again is under occupation: First by Russians, then the Germans, then Russians again.

Finally, the Epilogue, written by the translator herself. It depicts the rest of Povilas Petkevičius life. It shows him as a war refugee in Germany. After World War II, he immigrated to Australia, and, finally, the US, where, following a heart attack, he died in a fine nursing home 1994 Seattle. While there, he was again in close proximity to his loving son Juozas whose wife is Zita.

What patriotism, what dedication to the values embedded in belief in God and a commitment to his beloved Lithuania!

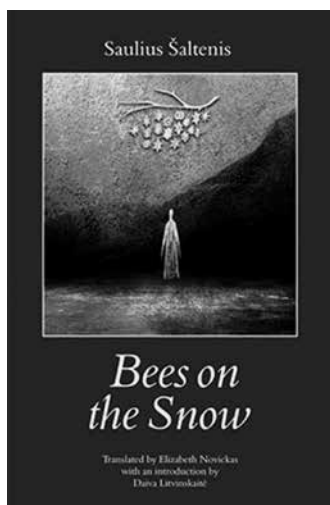
In the Foreword the translator noted that the project of putting together the book has been percolating in the back of her mind

for over thirty years. She feels honored and excited to finally bring it to life. She expressed her deepest thanks and love to her husband Juozas who “put up with me for the seemingly endless days, weeks, and months – the better part of the year – that were devoted to this project...”

Writing this book was a special project to Zita Petkus, but she is not a novice in writing, publishing, organizing and leading, especially in the area of Lithuanian-American affairs in the Greater Seattle area. She organized and lead the folk-dance group “Lietutis” during 1981–2018, and continues her involvement with the group. She started and edited a bilingual magazine *Tulpė Times* (1981–2006). These readily come to mind as some of her outstanding long-term achievements to date. More information about the book just reviewed can be obtained at [kantrybe@hotmail.com](mailto:kantrybe@hotmail.com).

This book should find a place in museums and libraries specializing in first-hand accounts of persons that survived unimaginable ordeals and lived to share them. It is a valuable contribution to anyone interested in living history. Ačiū!

ROMUALDAS KRIAUCIŪNAS



Saulius Šaltenis  
*Bees on the Snow*  
Flossmoor: Pica Pica Press,  
2021, 158 p.  
ISBN 978-0-9966304-5-0

*Bees on the Snow* by Saulius Šaltenis holds its own with the great allegorical novels of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is reminiscent of *The Master and Margarita*, Mikhail Bulgakov's wildly inventive and searing critique of Soviet communism, written during Stalin's regime and published posthumously. Šaltenis' novel first came out in 1990 in Lithuania as *Kalės vaikiai*. (The Bitch's Children? The Sons of Bitches? The title change to *Bees on the Snow* makes sense on a linguistic and literary level—you'll have to read the book to find out why.) It shares Bulgakov's dark humor, elaborate metaphors, and moral seriousness. Both writers present us with a parade of colorful individuals with heavily symbolic names. Examples include Lotė the Betrothed, Limba the Fingerless, and Stinkette in *Bees*; and Behemoth, Ratslayer, and the Master in *M. and M.* Deception is a theme in both novels. In *The Master and Margarita*, masks serve an important representational function; in *Bees on the Snow*, characters hide in the bushes, both literally and figuratively. Nothing is exactly as it seems.

Allegories work on two levels. Firstly, there is what might be termed the primary recognizable narrative with its specific time

frame and location; in *Bees on the Snow*, the action takes place in Lithuania Minor, a territory of the Kingdom of Prussia central to the formation of Lithuanian political and cultural identity. The time period is the 1700s of Kristijonas Donelaitis, the Lutheran pastor considered by many to be the father of Lithuanian literature. Indeed, a Mr. Kristijonas is a major character of the novel. Šaltenis has stripped him of any honorifics and depicts him not as a talented poet, but as a very human clergyman who struggles to shepherd his wayward flock and enjoys working in his orchard. He is loved and even desired by some, and hated or envied by others.

The second narrative, the *overlay*, so to speak, is the one that runs in our heads and can make reading an allegorical work both challenging and mentally satisfying, like solving the Saturday edition of the *New York Times* crossword puzzle. Of course, the simpler the primary story, the easier time we have of constructing these secondary narratives. One doesn't need to be a classics scholar to understand that the animals in Aesop's Fables represent human beings. In more sophisticated allegories, such as George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, a reader familiar with even the most rudimentary of historical movements will understand the broader meaning the author is attempting to convey. *Bees on the Snow*, like *The Master and Margarita*, and unlike Aesop and even *Animal Farm*, is a highly challenging novel, one that forces the reader to pay close attention to the storyline: past and present seem to overlap, themes emerge and reemerge, characters evolve and devolve, and nature itself has agency.

*Bees on the Snow* is also a difficult text in the sense that it deals with the brutal suffering of the poor and oppressed at the hands of the rich and powerful. There are a few scenes of violence that are sadistic in nature, though not gratuitously so. There are no happy endings. (I'm not giving anything away here—one knows fairly early on that this novel is going to be grimmer than a Grimm's fairy tale). Arguably the cruelest character is Grabè, the red-headed tavern keeper, a foreigner to the area who takes what isn't his whether through force or by bribing the local judges. He drives a family from their land because he desires their cot-



tage. Once in place as the new owner, he continues to hound the family, feeling only a momentary twinge of conscience when he tells himself that it isn't his fault he was sent to this Lithuanian region of Prussia by the king: "where the king summons, that's where his faithful subject goes."

It's at moments like this that we realize that Šaltenis is not only writing about people and events of a particular place and time, but is also illuminating the tragedies, struggles, and hardships that have occurred throughout the history of Lithuania; the red-headed tavern keeper may very well represent the Soviets who occupied Lithuania. Šaltenis emphasizes the tavern keeper's red hair again and again, which made me think of the connections to the official color of communism. Šaltenis began writing his novel in 1972, when censorship was pervasive. That the novel was first published in 1990, the year Lithuania declared its independence from the Soviet Union, is telling.

Other recurring themes in *Bees on the Snow* that are also prominent aspects of Lithuania's past include surveillance, censorship, and the attempted eradication of the Lithuanian language. Šaltenis depicts how Lithuanians have coped with (or not) their many sufferings, painting a picture of a collective Lithuanian identity, one that includes a mistrust of foreigners ("The stranger is always suspicious, the stranger is always suspect"), a fondness for drink, a respect for nature, and a persistent stubbornness in the face of continued privations.

Although *Bees on the Snow* is dark and complex, a sly sense of humor and strong narrative voice make it seductive reading. The translation, by Elizabeth Novickas, is excellent. I often begin reading works in translation with some wariness. If I haven't read the original, I judge the translation by how much the prose pulls me in, making me forget I'm reading a translation. For many translated novels, this feeling of *rightness* comes at around page ten. Sometimes it never arrives. With *Bees on the Snow*, I was swept away from the very beginning. A translator must be a creative writer, a linguist, and an editor. Novickas is all three.

The eloquent introduction by Daiva Litvinskaitė to *Bees on Snow* adds important information about the novel and its author.

Check out the selection of books on Novickas' Pica Pica Press website: (<https://www.picapica.press/>). Then buy *Bees on the Snow* at [www.indiebound.org](http://www.indiebound.org) or ask for it at your local bookstore or, if you must, order it from Amazon.

Read it. And then reread it.

DAIVA MARKELIS

## ABSTRACTS

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VITALIJUS LEIBENKA

### **Information War or Information Warfare in Lithuania?**

There have been numerous conflicts taking place in the world recently that have been described in various ways, such as hybrid war or information war. As information technologies continue developing, these conflicts have not spared Lithuania either. However, residents of Lithuania rarely think about the true nature of the conflict in Lithuania and whether it is information war or information warfare. Most people in Lithuania think that information war is taking place. But in actuality, after analyzing the theoretical aspects of the phenomena of information war and information warfare, it may be claimed that only elements of information warfare are taking place in Lithuania.

JUOZAS SKIRIUS

### **Forgotten Vytautas Stašinskas – Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania in New York**

Lithuanian diplomat Vytautas Stašinskas (1906–1967) was appointed to work in Lithuania's general consulate in 1939. While working in the consulate, he was responsible for observing the activities of various organizations as well as taking part in their activities; he took care of refugees. After WW II, he performed

the duties of Lithuania's first representative in the United Nations. After general consul Jonas Budrys died, he took over these duties in 1964. However, the activities of Stašinskas have not been discussed neither in popular nor scholarly publications. This is the first article analyzing his activities during his diplomatic career.

EGIDIJUS BALANDIS

**“To Foster the Love of One’s Country...”:  
Lithuanian-American Athletic Clubs from  
the Early Twentieth Century to World War Two**

Several hundred thousand Lithuanians had settled in the USA before 1914. Among the most distinctive features of this emigration wave was the dense network of voluntary associations. Based on archival materials and the periodic press of the time, this article aims to reveal the role of sports clubs in the social fabric of Lithuanian-Americans from the early twentieth century to World War Two. It tries to find out about the functions of sports clubs in the expat community and their relations with other Lithuanian organizations. The article aims to demonstrate that sports clubs were part of the Lithuanian-American society. They did not confine themselves to just sports but took care of the all-round education, the solidarity of their members. They were involved in and contributed to all kinds of local initiatives and initiatives common for all of the Lithuanian-Americans, aspirations for the independence of Lithuania. By setting standards of behavior and rules by which the members had to commit themselves through organizational discipline and responsibility, Lithuanian-American societies developed important organizational habits for their members, improved their own image and that of the Lithuanian community. Sport and entertainment events organized by clubs helped overcome the barriers among the members of different clubs, which enabled

better cooperation, a generation of resources, and the strengthening of the Lithuanian community. Such societies became part of a network through which information circulated and issues of concern common for Lithuanian-Americans and the Lithuanians across the world as well as Lithuania were conveyed, thereby contributing to the development of what we could refer to as diaspora awareness.

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Park named after Karolis Dineika, Druskininkai, 2020

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FRONT COVER: Park named after Karolis Dineika, Druskininkai, 2020

Photo by Almantas Samalavičius