

ISSN 1031-3958

Lithuanian Papers

Volume 19 - 2005

ANNUAL JOURNAL OF THE LITHUANIAN STUDIES
SOCIETY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA



COVER PHOTOS:

10,000 Lithuanians came to Australia as displaced persons, between 1947 and 1952. About 300 settled in Queensland, mainly in Brisbane. They joined 33 Lithuanians who had arrived earlier, in December 1940, as part of the scheme to evacuate British citizens from the Baltic States after these countries were occupied by the Soviet Union.

Eve Wicks' report on Pages 51-56 in this issue looks at the Lithuanian migrants in Queensland, then and now.

Front cover: Brisbane and Gold Coast Lithuanians celebrate Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union, at a special Mass celebrated by the late Father Peter Bačinskis, at St Mary's Church, South Brisbane, on 18 March, 1990. Photo: Copyright *The Catholic Leader*.

Back cover: The Lithuanian community marching in a Corpus Christi procession, on Brisbane Exhibition grounds, circa 1951 – 1953.

Photo: Copyright *Queensland Newspapers*.

Why Lithuanian Papers ?

The origin of this journal's unusual name goes back to 1987. During that year, the Lithuanian Studies Society started fortnightly lunchtime lectures at the University of Tasmania, on a wide range of topics connected with Lithuania. Some lectures were given by the University's members of staff; others were presented by visiting speakers and invited guests.

It soon became apparent that many original papers had emerged from this lecture programme, and that it would be a great pity to lose the newly gained knowledge. Although short of money and resources, the Society decided to publish the best papers, chosen from each year's presentations. And so, the *Lithuanian Papers* were born. The annual journal has since grown and is now read by 3,000 subscribers in 29 countries and in all continents.

Professor Alec Lazenby, who was the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Tasmania at the time, wrote in 1988:

"The programme was not only of obvious interest to those members of the University with Lithuanian connections, but I believe, of considerable educational value to the whole University... This is an admirable project; it will enable the culturally enriching influence of the Society to be extended to many members of the University..."

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Volume 19 – 2005

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: **Australia**, single issue, \$7 posted. **All other countries**, single issue by air mail, US\$8. Please direct subscription requests to Post Office Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006 (Australia).

PRINTED in Australia by Print Centre (Tas.) P/L, Ph. 03 6231 1700.

LITHUANIAN PAPERS journal has been published annually since 1987, by the Lithuanian Studies Society at the University of Tasmania. The journal usually appears in October or November.

CONTRIBUTIONS are solicited by the Editors, or may be sent directly to the journal. Articles are normally assessed by independent referees before publication.

The VIEWS expressed in this journal, unless otherwise stated, are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editors or the publishers (the Lithuanian Studies Society).

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The publishers of LITHUANIAN PAPERS welcome ethical advertising and reserve the right to refuse any advertisement, without having to give reasons for such refusal.

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Size	Dimensions	AU \$	or	US \$
2 adjoining pages	mono 170 x 250 mm or 2 x 170 x 113 mm	\$ 250	or	US\$175
Full page	mono 170 x 113 mm	\$ 140	or	US\$100
Half page	mono 80 x 113 mm	\$ 85	or	US\$ 60

Other sizes - by arrangement. Prices are for camera-ready copy.

Typesetting and graphic design are available at extra cost.

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Scholarship Gets a New Lease of Life

By the middle of this year, Australia's only university-level Lithuanian scholarship seemed doomed to die. First awarded in 1997 and worth \$5,000 per annum, the **Lithuanian Honours Scholarship** at the University of Tasmania had operated for eight years and brought excellent results (see list on the next Page).



The scholarship winners wrote original dissertations on a wide range of topics related to Lithuania. In addition, a number of unfunded Tasmanian students took up Lithuanian studies, as well. Unfortunately, the money raised in Tasmania gradually ran out, and the scholarship could no longer be offered after 2004.

The Lithuanian Studies Society at the University of Tasmania – who had initiated the scholarship in the first instance – appealed to a number of foundations and wealthy individuals, but received no support. Ideally, one tax-deductible donation of AU\$100,00 (about US\$75,000) would have been sufficient to set up a perpetual source of funding. In such a case, the lump sum could be invested by the University's trustees and the annual interest would be sufficient to continue the scholarship forever. Regrettably, this did not eventuate.

Just as everyone had given up hope of keeping this Lithuanian Scholarship alive in Tasmania, good news came from South Australia. The late Vladas Morkys, who died in Adelaide last year, left almost one tenth of his estate for "Lithuanian research at the University [of Tasmania] in Hobart". The exact value of Mr Morkys' bequest is not yet known, but it is anticipated that the Scholarship will benefit in the region of \$24,000 - sufficient to finance the Lithuanian Honours Scholarship for the next five years. In recognition of Mr Morkys's generosity, the University of Tasmania has decided to call this scholarship *the Vladas Morkys Scholarship*, for the next five years.

Vladas Morkys was born in Šiauliai, Lithuania. In his early youth, he was a shepherd. After furthering his education, he studied at the University of Tübingen for a while and later migrated to Australia. Vladas spent most of his working life as a steel worker and machine operator in Adelaide. He had wide interests and closely followed scientific developments. He held the patents for several of his own inventions. Vladas was very fond of books. He had a huge personal book collection which he in his later life donated to libraries and schools in Lithuania.

University of Tasmania: Lithuanian Honours Theses

Lithuanian Studies Society was founded at the University of Tasmania in 1987. From the outset, the Society's central objective has been to encourage academic research into all topics connected with Lithuania and its people. In addition to the ongoing Lithuanian research at other levels, the following Honours projects have since been completed at the University of Tasmania:

* BANKS, Amanda J. (1990). *Lithuania's environmental problems*. Graduate Diploma of Environmental Studies with Honours thesis (Environ. Studies). Published by TUULSS in 1991. - ISSN 1031-3958.

* WALDREN, Stephen (1993). *Lithuania: The impact of the Stimson doctrine*. Major research paper (Law). Published as a monograph by TUULSS in 1993. - ISBN O 85901 5475.

* TAŠKŪNAS, Simon R.P. (1997). *Torrens title system for Lithuania?* Major research paper (Law / Commerce). Presented at the International Conference on Property Valuation and investment in Central and Eastern Europe, Vilnius Gedimino Technical University, Feb. 6 - 7, 1997.

** TAYLOR, Sarah (1998). *Development of the conservation movement in Lithuania*. B.A. Honours thesis (Sociology).

* BOAS, Erika (1999). *'Leading dual lives', Lithuanian Displaced Persons in Tasmania*. B.A. Honours thesis (History).

** FLANAGAN, Kathleen (2001). *Creating Lithuania: The historiography of Lithuanian nationalism, 1863-1985*. B.A. Honours thesis (History).

** ROZENTALS, Darien J. (2003). *The illusion of space: Writing cities and reading their monuments [with reference to Vilnius and Užupis]*. B.A. Honours thesis (English, Journalism & European Langs.).

** SHUEY, Madeleine (2004). *Australia's 1974 recognition, de jure, of Soviet sovereignty in the Baltic States*. B.A. Honours thesis (History).

** Winner of the Lithuanian Honours Scholarship, for that year.

A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed

Aldona KRUTULIS
Duncraig, W.A.

My story is based on a faithful and loving friendship, compassion, understanding and sacrifice.

During the first Russian occupation of Lithuania in 1940, we lived in Vilnius, the capital city of Lithuania. One day, my father became very ill. The infection of the carbuncle on his neck caused him great pain and a high temperature. The inflammation continued for days without relief. His Jewish friend, lawyer Abe Dimit, dropped in, being unaware of my father's illness. Father was not in any mood to talk to Abe. So, he asked Abe to leave and let him "die in peace". Abe ran out of the house, declaring, "I won't let my best friend die". Within 15 minutes, he was back with the city's best Jewish surgeon, Mr Zarcen. He took my father to his private rooms and operated immediately. After three days, my father went back to work.



° Aldona Krutulis (right), the author of this article, in a 1942 photo with her stepmother. The picture was taken near the Gate of Dawn, in Vilnius.

Months passed and spring 1941 came. On warm evenings, ladies of the neighbourhood used to sit in our garden, chatting, laughing and gossiping. On one of those evenings a man appeared and walked towards us. We fell silent and looked anxiously at the stranger: he was dressed in a Russian KGB uniform. Our thoughts were, "Who's next for deportation?" He approached our group and asked in Russian, "In which apartment does Joseph Audiejus live?" That was my father's name.

I stood up. My blood froze in my veins, my legs were limp. The look of horror on the ladies' faces made me almost faint. I led the stranger to our place, feeling like a traitor to our family. I prayed, "God, let your will be done". Luckily, neither my father, nor my stepmother were at home. Once inside our unit, the KGB officer gently placed his hands on my shoulders and shook them, saying, "Dear Aldona, don't you recognize me? I am your father's friend".

"No", I said, "in that uniform, that hat and your beard, you look so different". He begged me to tell my father not to spend nights at home, because our family was on the list for deportation to Siberia. His advice was to sleep in the private dungeon rooms of *Uzbek*, a guest house in Vokiečių Street. We followed his advice.

Thanks to this friend of my father's, who was a Russian born in Lithuania, we escaped the first wave of mass deportations to Siberia, in June 1941. I regret that I cannot recollect his name. I only know his wife's name as Nadia. They lived in Kaunas, Ožeškienės Street, opposite the High Court building.

At the end of June 1941, German troops drove the Russians out of Lithuania and remained in Lithuania as the new occupying force for the following three years. In August 1943, the Nazis decided to clear out the Jewish ghettos and eliminate the Jews. On my way home from work at about 5 or 6 p.m., I was unable to cross the road to my street, Aušros Vartų street, where I lived. I was stopped by a long procession of people that started from the ghettos and slowly marched toward Subačiaus Street, straight to their last destination - *BuŃalowa Gura* or Devil's Mountain.

◦ **Right: Joseph Audiejus, the author's father, in his Lithuanian Army Reserve uniform, 1938.**

When the Soviet armed forces occupied Lithuania two years later, national service volunteers like him were automatically listed for deportation to Siberia.

The Lithuanian deportees did not have to be guilty of any specific offences or active opposition to the Soviet authorities. The Soviet aim was, rather, to eliminate any segments of the Lithuanian society that could potentially oppose the Soviet regime.



They walked very slowly, as if they were counting their final steps in this city. The lifeless look in their eyes and yellow faces made them look like corpses. An old lady with red swollen eyes which bulged from their sockets, was constantly beating her chest with one hand and holding a little boy's hand with the other. How I wished I could steal that little lad from her and hide him somewhere – but where? The soldiers were armed with guns, on both sides of the procession. Finally they were all gone... The onlookers dispersed, too.

When I arrived home, my father, looking unusually excited and nervous, met me at the door. He explained the situation and warned me, "For God's sake, and for our own sake, be silent. Do not trust even your best friends". As I walked into the guest room, I suddenly saw my father's three Jewish friends. We shook hands, as if nothing had happened.

At dinner time, we sat around the table, sharing our daily bread and we drank our soup. The tension disappeared, they felt at ease and relaxed. Abe Dimit (who had saved my father during his grave illness), his wife Cila and his sister Olga had escaped during a dark cloudy night, by climbing on to the ghetto's roof and jumping on to the balcony of an old ruined building and then down, into the street.

Abraham pretended to be drunk and both women led him to our place. When they stepped into our flat, both women sank to their knees and Abe, with his voice choking, could only say, "Joseph". He turned to the wall and his shoulders started shaking.

"Stay, Abrasha, stay", said my father. And to his own wife, my stepmother, father said, "If we send them away to their death, our conscience will torture us until the day we die. This would be a hundred times worse than to die in the hands of Gestapo. It would be inhumane".

After a few hours, there was another knock on our door. Two more Jews arrived: Abe ben Ephraim and his wife Rachilla. Both were gaunt, filthy and exhausted. They begged us to let them stay just for one night.

The atmosphere in the city was chaotic. Gestapo men surrounded buildings and searched for escaped Jews. But they did not find our five Jews; and so, they all remained with us - not for one night, but for almost one year. They were very quiet: sitting in their chosen seats, reading father's books, playing games of chess.

Every time there was a knock at the door, they would quietly disappear into our cellar. At night they slept in a big room on the floor, provided with pillows and blankets by us and supplemented by old coats or whatever we could find. I loved the evenings when we sat around the table having our meals. It felt like a big party. Whether the food was good or very poor, we accepted it as a gift from God and we were thankful for it.

On Christmas Eve, we shared *plotkelės* (traditional Lithuanian Christmas wafers) with our Jewish guests. I felt love and joy in my heart. We were like a united happy family. And to this day, I bless my father for letting them stay with us, for this experience filled my whole life with love and compassion for the people who are less fortunate than myself.

But our fear was constant – the fear of being caught, tortured and executed. The Nazis did not differentiate between escaped Jews and the people who harboured them: when apprehended, all were shot without trial.

By July 1944, the Russians were coming back. They bombed Vilnius night after night, causing confusion, anxiety and looting. I packed, ready to leave Vilnius. My father was in Kaunas at that time. My stepmother, who was five months pregnant, decided to stay and hide somewhere in the country. The five Jews locked themselves in our flat and waited there until the battle lines passed..

And so ends my story, but my memories will never be forgotten. When I left Vilnius, my train did not stop in Kaunas where I hoped to meet my father. Instead, the train went to Gardinas, thus separating me from my family, my city and my country forever. I left a note for my father, begging him to leave the country. We would meet somewhere, somehow. However, he stayed in Vilnius and we never met again.

After twelve years of separation, I received his first letter. He would not write about his deportation to Krasnoyarsk (in Siberia), because times were too dangerous to speak or write openly. My father died on November 12, 1972, and I never got to know any details of his Odyssey at all.

Ben Ephraim and Rachilla went to Israel and lived in Tel-Aviv where he had his own office as a lawyer and notary, at 4 Ramhal Street.

Abe Dimit left Vilnius in April, 1945 and went to Italy. In May 1950 he emigrated to Boston, USA. His sister Olga remained in Vilnius. She was a pianist in the Philharmonic Hall and was a constant friend of my father's family. Olga died in 1969, from heart failure.

Aldona Krutulius's university studies stopped abruptly, when the German authorities closed down all Lithuanian universities in 1943, as punishment for the Lithuanians' non-cooperation in the German war effort. Aldona then spent most of her working life as an interpreter in Lithuania and Australia. She now lives in retirement, in Western Australia.



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For more information contact Mr Al Taskunas from the Lithuanian Studies Society on (03) 6225 2505 or write to PO Box 777, Sandy Bay TAS 7006.

Applications Close on **Friday 16 December 2005**

Falsification of History

Zigmas ZINKEVIČIUS

Vilnius

To be wise is better than to be strong; for knowledge is mightier than power.
Proverbs 24,5.

When Lithuania liberated itself from the Soviet occupation, we unfortunately inherited a Soviet attitude to history. Our most prominent historians continue, from habit, to apply the theories of historical materialism and to subscribe to no-longer-existing Communist Party directives that lead to the falsification of history.

It's hard to imagine anywhere in the world that history has been falsified more than in Bolshevik-controlled Lithuania. That dirty work is in effect still being continued. The circumstances described below set the preconditions that enable this dirty work to continue today.

De-Sovietisation not implemented

When Lithuania re-acquired its independence in 1990, a proposed de-Sovietisation statute was never implemented. This circumstance had repercussions on a number of problems to arise later in our land. Without de-Sovietisation (*lustration*) it was

not possible to quickly re-establish a strong polity. Such a statute would have prevented the election of a Communist president, and the ascension of Communist cabinet ministers and other high-ranking officials. A Communist majority would not have been able to form in the *Seimas* (Lithuania's Parliament). The life of the nation would have gone along quite another path.



Left: Professor Zigmas Zinkevičius, the author of this article.

- Photo: *Seimo kronika*.

For example, in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, where Communism was condemned by law as an illegal activity and a crime, Communist functionaries were removed from office. Thus in these countries the way was prepared for new, legitimate governments. De-Sovietisation legislation was needed here too, not to sow discord, not for revenge, but for a better future for all of us: so that no one would ever give in to the temptation of betraying their country. Former Communist Party functionaries should have been made to apologise to the nation and to withdraw from public life for at least several years. They should have done this spontaneously, had they been decent people. But, unfortunately, that did not happen.

The rise of the Soviet nomenklatura¹

In the absence of a de-Sovietisation statute, the Soviet nomenklatura rose to power in independent Lithuania. Power fell into the hands of "the old school". The Party elite, having separated themselves from the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union), renamed themselves "LDDP" ("Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party"). Having been in control of the nation's wealth under the conditions of the Soviet system, they managed to take control of it under free market conditions. The former Soviet "people" got just crumbs.

After the "prichvatisation²" of State property, the selling off of State enterprises for laughable prices, almost a give-away in some cases, the collapse of some banks, the "old school" became the new wealthy class of independent Lithuania, in effect, capitalists. They are as happy as rats in the storehouse. They managed to sabotage proposed legislation on declaration of sources of income, and as a result they have obscured the

¹ *Nomenklatura* was the Russian name for the secret list of a select group of people who held the most sensitive positions in the Soviet system and were chosen by the Communist Party bosses. (H. Smith, *The Russians*, 1973, p. 46.)

² The word "prichvatisation" is an imitation of the pejorative term "prichvatizacija" which means privatisation with a simultaneous grabbing of wealth for one's own benefit. (In Russian *chvatit* means "to grab".)

dubious origin of their wealth and have erased the dividing line between legally acquired wealth and illegally acquired wealth. In just four years a chasm developed in Lithuania between a handful of very rich people and the rest — the toiling masses.

The *nouveaux riches* quickly forgot their not-so-long ago much vaunted "social equality". Former Communist Party activists, hardened atheists, now became Conservatives, even Christian Democrats, not to mention filling the ranks of their own newly-created parties such as the Socialist Party, Peasants' Party, Farmers' Party, and Women's Party. The nucleus of most of these parties was formed by the former Communists, who also ran these new parties.

After the 1992 elections Lithuania became the first of the post-Communist to freely re-elect a (pseudo) Communist party to power. The world called this the *Lithuanian Syndrome* and looked on in amazement. How could we, once having got rid of our oppressors, choose to be shackled again?

Once in power again the Communists could not forget their habits of decades in occupied Lithuania, including their long-declared contempt for the Lithuanian nation and their ignoring of Lithuania's statehood. They attempted to drag our country back into the Soviet sphere of influence, closer to "Mother Russia".

The media

The newly-rich Bolshevik nomenklatura immediately took control of the press and the media in general. From experience they well understood the importance of controlling the media. Once in charge of information services, they guaranteed their own influence over the nation, as had been the case during the Soviet occupation. This was one of the biggest failures of the pro-independence reformist political movement *Sajūdis* — which was supposed to represent the nation.

At first, when *Sajūdis* was exerting pressure, even the Bolshevik mouthpiece *Tiesa* ("Truth") had begun to tell at least part of the truth. During the period of national revival in the late nineteen eighties a number of low-circulation patriotic periodicals were founded.



* Lithuanians should be proud of making their contribution to the European Union – but patriotism is not reflected in the Lithuanian media today.
- Photo: Lina Žilytė, Seimas Public Relations Dept.

However, after a few years the people of Lithuania were astounded to see that nothing was left of the patriotic publications except a pleasant memory. The left-wing press became dominant in the society; it was in the thrall of the nomenklatura and it served them faithfully, even while calling itself "independent" and "free". The nomenklatura-controlled "free" press very quickly became omnipotent and untouchable. It could not be corrected. It could only be bought.

This led to the formation of a powerful "fourth estate". It was served by the so-called *Press, Radio and Television Support Fund*, which supported only the left-wing press on the basis of cronyism. The *Fund* had its own Journalists' Union, inherited from the Soviet occupation era.

The Bolshevik journalist theoreticians continued to groom more of their journalistic cadres for Lithuania, led on by ideologue Laimonas Tapinas. The number of "Tapinoids" quickly increased, and they continued the work of spreading anti-Lithuanian propaganda.

Nothing was sacred to the media. The program *Dviračio Žynios* ("The Bicycle Show") made fun of people such as Pope John Paul II, who had done much for Lithuanians and for the whole world. Such cynicism! They even mocked the Lithuanian coat of arms and the national anthem, changing its words to those of an uncouth Slavic ditty. It is hard to imagine people behaving that way in Poland or France. But here — anything goes! An evening in front of the television would demolish the whole day's work of many a teacher.

To do battle with such media was hopeless. Even an open letter to President Valdas Adamkus signed by 30 Lithuanian intellectuals on 2 May 2001 did not make a lasting impact, despite initially striking like a bolt of lightning at the hell's kitchen of lies and hatred for the Lithuanian people that was the media of that time. The President was clearly afraid of the press. It was not the letter, so much as widespread public support, that finally shook up the media magnates, and forced them to come to their senses and realise that they had gone too far. Slowly the level of cynicism began to subside.

Bolshevik "harmony"

The ruling nomenklatura began to blow the "harmony" bubble, to demand conciliation of abuser and abused, to try to equate them, in other words, to abolish the dividing line between good and evil. They began to equate the partisan and the *stribas*³, thus equating the tortured, burnt alive and cut in four pieces patriot with his executioner, or equating the dissident and the collaborator. In a word, the media were advocating friendship between the wolf and the lamb.

³ *Stribas* was the name for an armed thug, a member of the Soviet civilian militias. These pro-Russian vigilantes operated in Lithuania in 1944-1954 and helped the Soviets to repress the Lithuanian population.

They popularised the myth that the victims (not the executioners) were guilty for the fact that after several years of freedom there was still no harmony in the country. They blamed the victims for allegedly sowing discord in the community. The former communists demanded that all forget, forgive, kiss and make up and live together in happy harmony. They wanted the victims to forget the treachery, the selling out of the homeland, the murder of so many countrymen, the desecration of our Faith, the mockery, the brutality, the deception.

The former communists demanded peace without justice. Discussion about some sort of peaceful coexistence or dialogue can only be based on justice, not on forgetting. How can you demand that the former innocent prisoner love his torturer, or the surviving orphan — his father's murderer? How can you love your former friend, when he betrayed you, or your former teacher, when he terrorised religious students and their parents? Justice demands that the perpetrator be accused as such and punished, at least morally. Not for vengeance, but in the name of justice, without which there can be no order in society.

Victims may, of course, choose to forgive their persecutors; but the evildoers certainly have no right to forgive themselves. Who gave them the right to forgive themselves for the victims that they tortured and killed in Rainiai and _erven_, in the NKVD dungeons and Siberian death camps? Such atrocious crimes, but lo! — no culprits to be found! Hundreds of thousands of people had their lives ruined, the nation's gene pool damaged, incalculable moral suffering — but no guilty parties to be found!

Soviet "justice"

We have inherited a Bolshevik judicial system with Bolshevik judges. We all know very well what they were like earlier. In occupied Lithuania the whole legal structure was in the hands of the Communist Party. No one could study law without previously getting a clearance from the NKVD (KGB). The academic staff were hand-picked by the KGB, as were all staff at all levels in the judicial system.

When the Bolsheviks crushed religion they also destroyed justice and the Christian concept of democracy. Humanitarianism was replaced by genocide, democracy - by Bolshevik dictatorship.

With the fall of the Soviet order, there was no search for Bolshevik criminals, no "Nuremberg trial" was organised for them, the way it was for Nazi war criminals. Those who had committed crimes against humanity were not only not punished, they were not even named. The KGB interrogators and others involved in the mass deportations were not called to account for their crimes. It could hardly be otherwise, as the whole judicial system and its judges and other personnel were still there from the Soviet era.

Ignoring the freedom fighters, the nomenklatura attempts to put on a pedestal the nation wreckers they hold dear to their hearts, they seek rehabilitation for "stribai" (with great difficulty, as the public still remembers their misdeeds), for KGB spies, informants and various sorts of traitors. More than once former President Brazauskas treated Bolsheviks who had committed crimes against the nation as if they were the elite of (Soviet) Lithuania.



* Algirdas Brazauskas, a former President and now the Prime Minister of Lithuania (*pictured, in the centre*): he had his own view of the Bolsheviks who had committed crimes.
— A 1988 photo by A. Sutkus.

Perpetrators of genocide were left unpunished.. Not only those in hiding abroad, like Nachman Dušanski and Pyotr Raslan, but some who had stayed in Lithuania. The nomenklatura-obeying *Themis*⁴ protects them. A few prosecution cases were half-heartedly thrown together, but their result, you could say, was a mere fizzle: for example, the case of the *Antazavy sribai*, and its weak conclusion. The logic was simple: how could we try a handful of sribai when hundreds of them are walking free among us, even working in Government institutions.

As mentioned, one of the most important protagonists of the Russian genocide against Lithuanians — Red Army officer Major Sokolov — lived quietly until his death in a prestigious retirement village in Vilnius. Traitor Antanas Urbonas (a KGB agent by the code name of "Žinomas" ["Known"], who betrayed Lithuanian Partisan chief General Adolfas Ramanauskas [code name "Vanagas" – "Hawk"]) to the Chekists, to be brutally tortured and butchered) is still walking freely around Kaunas.

And what efforts were made to honour poet-murderer Kostas Kubilinskas, who betrayed several freedom fighters! Don't be surprised if the forces of darkness eventually get around to demanding rehabilitation for Juozas Markulis [code name "Erelis", "Eagle"], the worst traitor against the partisans, because of his treachery about 300 partisans, mostly leaders, were killed by the Russians and their collaborators. Lithuania must be the only country in which traitors have not been punished, but protected. It appears that we will have to wait for History, rather than the Lithuanian judicial system, to judge the sribai, traitors and similar criminals. In a sense, they have already been judged: no decent person ever puts in a good word for them, and never will.

Denial of national values

The *Atgimimas* ("Rebirth" – this is the name given to the general re-awakening of Lithuanian national consciousness in the late 1980s) raised a wave of patriotic fervour which Lithuania needed at that time as much as air and water.

⁴ Themis = the legal system (*Themis* was the goddess of law and justice in Greek mythology.)

However, for many people, patriotic feelings began to wane when their hopes were not fulfilled promptly. That's just what the Bolshevik nomenklatura wanted. For the Communists, nothing was worse than patriotic Lithuanian and Christian ideology, the vitality of which was demonstrated by the activity of thousands of post-war resistance fighters, and likewise the blood of the victims of 13 January 1991 (Soviet Army tanks crushing demonstrators for freedom at Vilnius TV Tower). The Bolsheviks involved the ever-powerful media in their campaign to negate national values. They had a measure of victory. Is there any party today that still accents the need to nurture national values and patriotism? The philosopher Arvydas Šliogeris categorically asserted: "The bigger the patriot — the bigger the idiot." In his opinion, there is no nation, just an idol, and respect for the past is akin to idol worship, or worshipping a corpse.

In Poland, unlike in Lithuania, the Poles' endless pride in their homeland, their people, their nationality amazes every visiting Lithuanian. Their respect for their nation's past seems incredible to many a Lithuanian.

Bolshevik terminology

Upon their return to power the nomenklatura attempted to revive Bolshevik terminology, in other words, to twist concepts around to the extent that spiritual values would become distorted, and public consciousness would be confused. For a long time they attempted to avoid the two most important words in the community's topical vocabulary: *independence* and *occupation*. Instead of *independence* they used a foreign loanword not understood by many: *sovereignty*. They talked about *changes of government in 1940 and 1990*, even though in 1940 it was really a question of *loss of independence*, i.e. the occupation of Lithuania, and in 1990 it was a question of *regaining independence*. The word *independence* was, for a while, not only feared, but shunned. Similarly, many Bolsheviks would just say "*the Republic*", instead of *Lithuania*, just like in Soviet times.

One could also mention the derisory and sarcastic allusions to the formerly much-used devout Catholic expression "land of [the Holy Virgin] Mary" to describe our country. This was done to mock the

Catholic church, as were the frequent references to patriotic and devout Catholic women as "the knitted berets".

Denigration of national symbols

As was already mentioned, the nomenklatura for a long time showed disrespect to the national flag, our coat of arms, and our national anthem, which they made fun of, especially on some commercial television programs. Sometimes the organisers of national events avoided flying the Lithuanian flag. In 2002 the Seimas [Lithuanian Parliament] even condoned this lack of respect!

Much fun was made not only of the Lithuanian national anthem, but also of the songs of the partisans (our nation's martyrs). Sometimes the national anthem was sung backwards to ridicule it. In Vytautas Šerėnas's TV program the national anthem was once trivialised by reciting the opening words *Lithuania, Our Homeland!* followed by derisive couplets which vulgarly besmirched Lithuania and Lithuanians.

An extreme low point was reached when the President of the time awarded medals – that were supposed to be for distinguished service to Lithuania – to Soviet era "aces" and other people who had harmed Lithuania, even KGB agents, so that, in the words of Justinas Karosas on television, "both sides would be equally honoured".

Cosmopolitisation of Schools

The nomenklatura hated the idea of schools as a focus for promoting national values – an idea first promoted during the "Atgimimas" ["Rebirth"] period. The idea was also not welcomed by teachers who had done their training during the Bolshevik era. They had been trained to teach children to love Lenin, Stalin, and the "glorious" Communist Party. School Principal positions were regularly filled by former Communist Party bosses and bureaucrats, "Party Instructors" (Indoctrinators) and suchlike. It was hard for them to give up the Soviet "ritual" and falsification of history, which still persisted in many schools.

Even one decade after the re-establishment of independence, a textbook published by Vilnius Pedagogical University for History



* Some of the victims of Pravieniškiai (1941): Lithuanian civilians gunned down by the Soviets. Certain historians are now determined to remain silent about these mass murders.

teachers was permeated by the Bolshevik outlook. In it there was not a word about the Rainiai and Būdavonė massacres, nor the murder of the doctors and a nursing sister in Panevėžys, nor the prisoners gunned down at Pravieniškiai. The essence of the Lithuanian Partisan resistance was not explained, and there was not a word about the much-hated *stribai* or other Soviet era miscreants. Needless to say — there was no mention whatsoever that before the Soviet occupation Lithuania's standard of living was not much different from Denmark's.

The younger generation was growing up not knowing much about their own country, its honourable past, its struggle for freedom, its dreadful suffering and its aspirations. What could these young people learn from teachers such as Valeri Ivanov, an anti-Lithuanian activist who was jailed for his crimes against Lithuania, but who taught History (no less!) in a Vilnius school for some time after being released from prison?

With few honourable exceptions, the students received no moral training. Thus it was hard to expect that such schooling would produce many people of strong character.

The idea of Cosmopolitanism came to the fore in Lithuanian education. The system continued to produce, as in Soviet times, citizens who felt no responsibility for the future of their nation, unable to distinguish good from evil. Cosmopolitanism in education was supported by the Open Society Fund of Lithuania (Soros Foundation), which supported only projects reeking of cosmopolitanism, and did not commit any money for the commemoration of political prisoners and exiles (deported to Siberia), nor other worthwhile literature for the development of patriotic feelings in young Lithuanians. It was very difficult to combat cosmopolitanism.

Closing remarks

A nation cannot exist, much less flourish, without historical memory. It can only vegetate. To be convinced of this, one need only take a look at our neighbours in Belarus. There, the numbers keep dwindling each year of parents who are willing to send their children to a school where the language of instruction is Belarussian.

Distortions of history, for whatever intention they are committed, will sooner or later end up in the dustbin of history. The sooner this happens, the better off we will all be!

Translated from the Lithuanian by Gintautas KAMINSKAS.

Habil. Dr. Zigmąs Zinkevičius is a distinguished academician. He joined the teaching staff of the University of Vilnius in 1946 and progressed to Professor of Lithuanian language, 1973-1988. After several other senior posts, he was the Minister of Education and Sciences of the free Republic of Lithuania in 1996-1998. Professor Zinkevičius has authored and co-authored 30 books and over 500 articles. The above paper is based on extracts from his book Istorijos Iškraipymai (Distortions of History), Vilnius, 2004.

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The Silent Helpers

Ginutis PROCUTA

Toronto (Canada)

The unacknowledged role of the Lithuanian government in sheltering and assisting Poland's Jewish and other war refugees, October 1939 to June 1940.

At last, during the last decade, more books are beginning to appear about the rescue and assistance given to the European Jews during the Nazi Holocaust. However, with the exception of rare mentions restricted to one or two paragraphs, there is a lack of a more substantial acknowledgment or description of the pivotal role played by the government of independent Lithuania from October 1939 to June 1940.

Tens of thousands of desperate and traumatized Polish and Jewish war refugees poured into the Lithuanian territory after the sudden defeat of Poland in September of 1939 – a human tragedy that had resulted from the secret protocol agreement signed in Moscow on August 23, 1939 by Ribbentrop and Molotov, the respective foreign ministers of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

The Lithuanian Government provided food, shelter and medical assistance to all these refugees. In addition, the Lithuanian authorities issued them with internationally valid travel documents: an essential prerequisite in saving the homeless refugees subsequently. Since acknowledgments of Lithuania's help toward Jewish and Polish refugees are exceptionally rare, it is worthwhile to quote Professor Yehuda Bauer of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem:

“The old, liberal element of the Lithuanian government was friendly and understanding. Contrary to Western countries, they did not intern the refugees, although they themselves were in a most precarious situation *vis-a-vis* the Soviet threat. Sooner or later, Lithuania would be swallowed by Germany or the USSR. There was no practical way out for Lithuanian citizens. The Polish

Jewish refugees as aliens had a better chance of leaving the country for a haven abroad.”¹

The exact number of refugees will never be known. As various sources indicate, a considerable number of refugees, fearing they would be returned to Poland, did not register with the Lithuanian authorities. As well, there was a period of twenty years of mutual hostility between Lithuanians and Poles over the possession of Vilnius and its region, both at societal and governmental levels. This may also have deterred some of the Polish refugees from registering.

Since there are widely varying reports of the numbers of refugees, both the lowest and the highest figures will be given here. The lowest figure was 50,000. The highest was “not less than 200,000.” This was reported by the British envoy to Lithuania Thomas Preston who, after the collapse of Poland, took over the interests of the Polish legation in Kaunas.² Preston’s figure is probably closer to the truth. Beside the two important positions he held at that time, he was also closely involved with the Lithuanian Red Cross and mandated by the government to co-ordinate local and international relief work among the refugees.

Another eight months of independence remained, before Lithuania, like Poland, forcibly disappeared from the map of Europe, Lithuania’s central government contributed 66,000,000 Litas to help Polish refugees. The government agreed to add 50 cents to every dollar received by the Lithuanian Red Cross from international welfare bodies (such as the International Red Cross, as well as Christian and Jewish relief organizations) for the upkeep of the war refugees.

The two most senior executives responsible for the welfare and security of the refugees were Dr. Jurgis Alekna, the Head of the Lithuanian Red Cross, and Colonel Brunonas Stencelis, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior.

¹ BAUER, Yehuda (1982). *A history of the Olocaust*. New York: Franklin Watts, p.283.

² PRESTON, Thomas (1950). *Before the curtain*. London: John Murray, p.265.

* **COMRADES AT ARMS:** At the start of World War II, German and Russian troops jointly conquered Poland. and divided that country between them. Thousands of people fled from Poland to Lithuania, to escape both, German as well as Russian atrocities. *This picture* was taken in 1939, at the combined German and Russian celebrations of their joint victory in Poland. The officer at left is Russian, the other two are Germans.



The large numbers and the different kinds of refugees in Lithuania resulted directly from Hitler’s policies of *Lebensraum* (space to expand) and *Vernichtungskrieg* (war of annihilation). By destruction and expulsion, these policies envisioned denuding Poland and part of the Baltic States of 30 million of its local population. Another goal was the complete destruction of the Polish intelligentsia and aristocracy. Poland was to disappear in its historical, political and ethnic sense and to be completely Germanized. This fitted with Stalin’s plans to absorb the parts of Poland inhabited by Byelorussians and Ukrainians into the USSR. Hence, the Nazi-Soviet pact of August 23, 1939 and its secret protocols of dividing Poland and the Baltic States.

Just before the attack on Poland, Hitler told the commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen* (special killing troops) that “whatever we can find in the shape of an upper class in Poland is to be liquidated.” Less than a month later, on September 27, Reinhard Heydrich, the chief of the Gestapo, stated that “of the Polish upper classes in the occupied territories, only a maximum of 3 per cent is still present.”³

³ HÖHNE, Heinz (2000). *The order of the Death's Head: The story of Hitler's SS*. London: Penguin Books, p.299.

The mass murder of the Jewish population of Poland came considerably later.

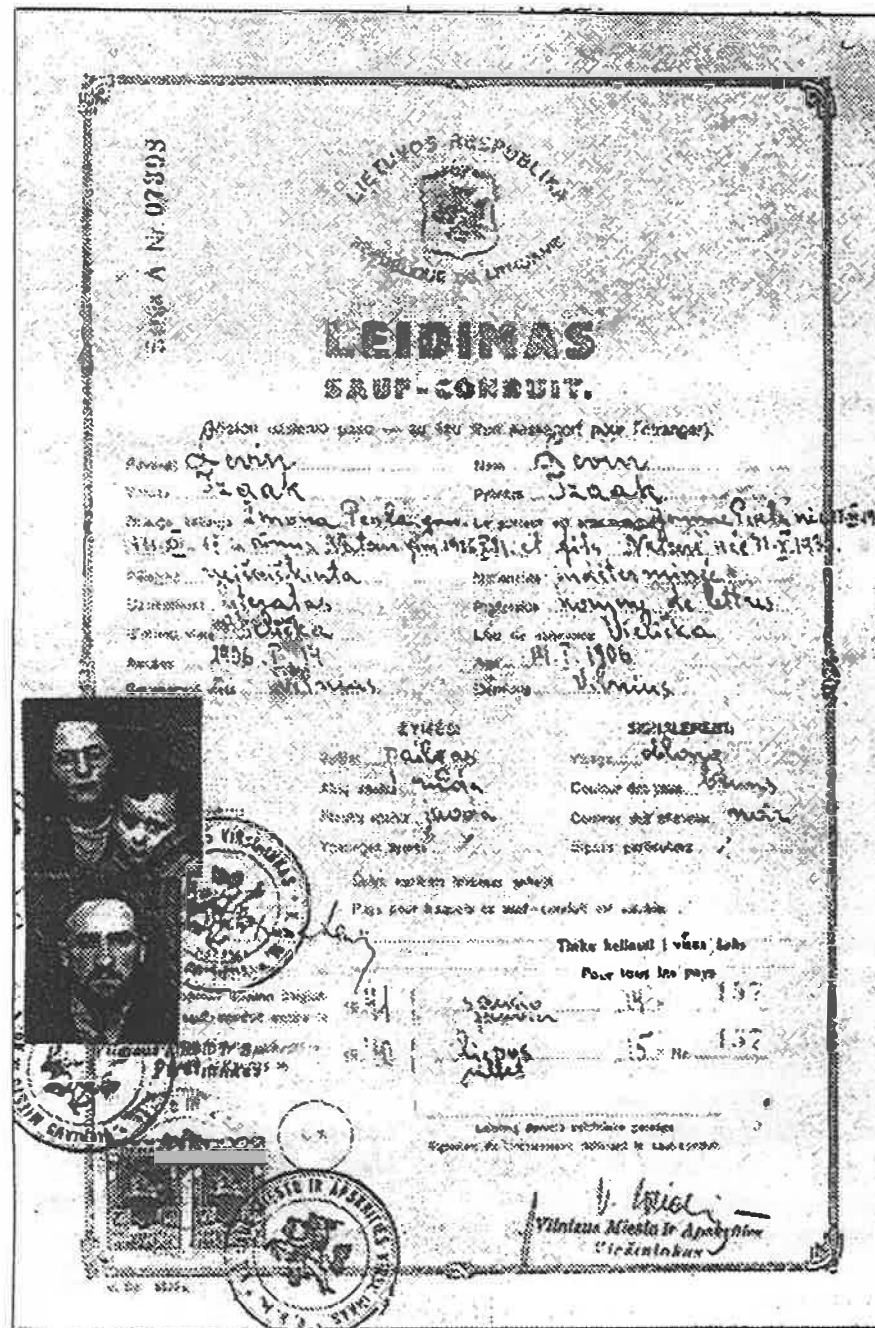
Thus, most of the refugees from the former Poland consisted of the two socio-economic and ethnic groups who were threatened the most by Nazi extermination. However, there were also among them, about 10,000 ethnic Lithuanians, Byelorussians and other nationalities, as well as thousands of "ordinary" Poles. All of them, irrespective of social class, economic standing, education, ethnicity, religion or politics, shared one thing in common. The country they inhabited was destroyed by the design of two totalitarian superpowers — they were made stateless. Their personal identity documents and passports were not only worthless, they had become a dangerous political liability. Identifying them. If caught by the Nazis or by the Soviets, their identity could lead to arrest, destruction, deportation or imprisonment.

And, as the numbers of refugees rose and the international situation deteriorated, this is precisely where the Lithuanian government made its as yet unrecognized contribution to the of the Ministry of the Interior in Kaunas, Vilnius and other districts, the government made a safe-conduct document available to all refugees at a very low administrative cost of 2 Litass (the equivalent of 50 cents U.S.). This was a bilingual (Lithuanian-French) document called *Leidimas/Permission*. It was described as a document replacing a passport and was valid for all countries (see a sample of such a Lithuanian safe-conduct pass, on the next Page. It was originally issued to Isaac, Peppy and Nathan Lewin).

With this Lithuanian document, the refugees gained greater psychological security and regained some of their international rights. A lucky 20,000 of them, including about 10,000 Jews, managed to get visas and left Lithuania before it was absorbed into the USSR in June 1940. A year later, Lithuania was occupied by Hitler's Germany.

* *Right (on Page 29):* A safe-conduct pass issued, in lieu of passport, by the authorities of the free Republic of Lithuania. The document was endorsed "suitable for travel to all countries". It was made available to asylum seekers from Poland, at the nominal fee of 50 cents.

Photo: *The New York Times*, OP-ED, September 20, 1994.



Among Poland's Jews who fled to Lithuania, many of their political and religious leaders obtained these documents in Vilnius, notably Menachem Begin who later went on to become Israel's prime minister. So did the young poet Czeslaw Milosz who in 1980 was to become the Nobel laureate for literature. A high functionary of the Centrist Zionists in Warsaw, Moshe Kleinbaum, attested to the international validity and worthiness of this document. "I obtained a Lithuanian *sauf-conduit* which allowed me to embark upon my journey via Riga, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Brussels and Paris to Geneva, and from there via Trieste to Palestine."

There is clear evidence that the concern for the welfare of the refugees did not end with the issuing of the *sauf-conduit* documents. The Lithuanian authorities were interested in facilitating their search for a more permanent home for the refugees, in a most secure manner. Mindful that the Nazi-Soviet collaboration had destroyed and occupied Poland, they tried to minimize the potential of either German or Soviet authorities of laying claim to the persons carrying Lithuanian *sauf-conduit* papers.

There appear to have been instructions from the very top of the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior as to how the document was to be filled in, especially the lines about citizenship/nationality and the place of birth. Almost all the war refugees who received this document were born in Poland, but this fact was not revealed. For example, in the actual *sauf-conduit* for Izaak Levin (Series A. No. 07308) the line for nationality says 'undetermined'. The line for the place of birth says Vielicka, but Poland is left out. Even the line for profession is filled in very cautiously. He was most probably a journalist. But in times of war, some regimes were suspicious of the journalists crossing borders, so Mr. Levin's profession was given in a more neutral manner as "*homme de lettres*."

This information has been taken from a facsimile photograph of Mr. Levin's *sauf-conduit* issued by the Lithuanian government in Vilnius (*reproduced on Page 29*). It shows the Lithuanian state insignia and bears the seal and signature of the Vilnius City and District chief administrative officer. Clearly marked at the top in capital letters is LIETUVOS RESPUKLIKA/REPUBLIQUE DE LITUANIE.

This was published in the *New York Times* on its op-ed page on Tuesday, September 20, 1994. Yet the caption beside the reproduced document reads incorrectly, "The safe-conduct passes for Isaac, Peppy and Nathan Lewin, **issued by the Japanese consulate** in Kaunas, Lithuania in 1940."

Why would the *New York Times* do that?

Ginutis Procuta, B.A. (University of Auckland, N.Z.), M.A. (Chicago) has taught at the State University of Chicago and at the University of Ottawa; has lectured in Germany and Lithuania; and has published widely.

EDITOR'S NOTE: After Germany and the Soviet Union jointly conquered Poland in 1939, thousands of Polish and Jewish asylum seekers found refuge in Lithuania. Many wanted to keep moving on to more distant destinations, but they had no acceptable travel documents. Poland had ceased to exist as a sovereign state and Polish passports were no longer valid.

The Government of free Lithuania played a crucial part in solving this problem. Lithuanian authorities issued the internationally valid *sauf-conduit* documents to all who needed them. The refugees could then apply to foreign consulates for visas. Japanese consul Ch. Sugihara and the Dutch honorary consul J. Zwartendijk were particularly helpful.

This important historical background is re-iterated here, because several writers have since claimed that Japanese consul Sugihara, and possibly one or two others, had **single-handedly** saved thousands of refugees. As shown in the above factual report, such claims are misleading. Before applying for any visas, the refugees had to obtain a replacement personal document, the Lithuanian *safe-conduct pass* (as described, and pictured, above) from the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior. Only then could the consuls step in and proceed with their contribution, by attaching their countries' visas to this essential Lithuanian certificate.

Even when the refugees' papers were complete and in order, the Soviet authorities did not allow them at first to travel across the USSR territory, from Vilnius to Vladivostok. Once again, the Lithuanian Government came to the refugees' aid and negotiated an easement of this Soviet restriction.

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Pictured above: Rūta Jezerskytė (Aurora) and Mindaugas Baužys (Dezire) in Lithuanian Ballet's production of "The Sleeping Beauty".

Photo: Michail Raškovskij, Vilnius 1998.

Pro Helvetia

Margaret OTLOWSKI

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Present-day Lithuania urgently needs an organization similar to Switzerland's Pro Helvetia. Otherwise, the future preservation of the Lithuanian cultural heritage may be at risk.

Introduction

This short note outlines the history and current activities of the Swiss organization, 'Pro Helvetia Schweizer Kulturstiftung' - the Arts Council of Switzerland ('Pro Helvetia').

The history of Pro Helvetia

This organization was established by the Swiss Federal Government as a foundation pursuant to legislation in 1939. The stated purposes of the organization are to:

- preserve and maintain Switzerland's cultural identity;
- promote cultural creativity on the basis of the energies at work in the cantons, linguistic regions and cultural groupings;
- encourage domestic cultural exchange amongst Switzerland's linguistic regions and cultural groupings; and to
- foster cultural relations with other countries, particularly seeking to generate understanding for Switzerland's cultural and intellectual heritage.

The creation of this organization and its role is best understood in the context of the economic and political situation that Switzerland faced at this time. In particular, Switzerland was confronted with a number of major challenges: an economic crisis due to the crash of the stock market as well as the threat to its borders from Fascist regimes in Germany and Italy.

The conception of Pro Helvetia was part of the 'intellectual defence' (the '*geistige Landesverteidigung*') of the country, in order to counteract foreign Fascist propaganda and to preserve and promote Swiss cultural traditions.

¹ I wish to acknowledge the helpful assistance of Marianne Bauer, from the International Affairs section of Pro Helvetia, Zurich, Switzerland in providing information for this paper.

The structure of Pro Helvetia has been revised and reorganized a number of times since then. However, the grounding principle has never really been questioned: that the underlying purpose of the foundation is to ensure that the preservation and promotion of Swiss cultural values is in the hands of an autonomous federal body, independent of the State administration.

Current Structure and Operations of Pro Helvetia

Pro Helvetia is currently comprised of three bodies: the Board of Trustees (25 members who are appointed by the government from different cultural fields and professions, resulting in a broad expertise base); the executive committee (7 members); and the secretariat (all the employees serving the different arts disciplines, the programmes, the international affairs department, and the administration section).

Pro Helvetia supports professional arts, music, theatre, dance, visual arts, folk or traditional culture, museums and galleries, writing and film and multi-media arts. Its mandate to promote Swiss culture involves Pro Helvetia in a diverse range of activities, including provision of financial support to arts/cultural organizations and to individuals in arts/culture; provision of advice to the Federal Government on matters related to the arts/culture; promotion of public understanding and appreciation of the arts/culture; responsibility at the national level for coordinating international exchanges; and organising and managing cultural activities and events.

Pro Helvetia has built up a network of overseas offices co-ordinated by the international affairs department, through which it seeks to promote its work as a global ambassador of Swiss Culture². It also co-ordinates a mandate received by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in South-Eastern Europe and the Ukraine. This year, it is expected that new legislation in relation to Pro Helvetia will be debated in connection with the new 'Law on the Promotion of Culture,' expected to come into force by 2010. Relationship with the Federal Government and Funding Arrangements.

² Heinz Eckert, 'Culture: A Swiss Export' *Swiss Review*, No 1, February 2005, 3.

Pro Helvetia receives its funding from the Swiss Federal Government. The organisation's closest relationship is with the Federal Office of Culture, which is part of the Ministry of the Interior. Funding is organised on a four year cycle based on a detailed request for funding presented by the organisation for approval from the parliament. The organisation's current status as a foundation established under public law gives it autonomy in decision-making in distribution of those funds towards various activities and programs of financial support for organisations and individuals.

However, the government retains some control through determining the extent of funding and also establishing the overall policies within which the organisation operates. Pro Helvetia is required to file an annual report with the parliament, and has its financial accounts periodically audited by the government auditor.

There has been a recent upheaval with regard to Pro Helvetia's allocation of funds, due to the fall-out from a controversial exhibition of the work of Berne artist, Thomas Hirschhorn, which had been supported by Pro Helvetia at its cultural centre in Paris. The exhibition, which was perceived by many as mocking Switzerland, was not well received by governing political forces and led to an unprecedented cut of one million Swiss francs from the Pro Helvetia budget for 2005 (a total of 34 million Swiss francs for the year). These events have triggered a new debate on the principle of artistic freedom and the independence of Pro Helvetia in the implementation of its artistic programs.³

Inevitably, questions of culture will involve, to some extent, personal values and tastes. Notwithstanding the close scrutiny and at times critique of Pro Helvetia's operations, it unquestionably remains an integral part of Swiss cultural life.

Further information about Pro Helvetia can be accessed via the following websites: <http://www.pro-helvetia.ch>.

Margaret Otlowski, Ph.D. (Tas.) is a Professor of Law in the University of Tasmania, and Honorary Consul for Switzerland, Hobart, Tasmania.

³ Heinz Eckert, 'Culture: A Swiss Export' above.



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Lithuanian Migrants in the United States

Jeanne Shalna DORR

Riverton, New Jersey

The focus of this article concerns the three waves of Lithuanians who emigrated to America. The first wave was composed of the masses who traveled across the Atlantic in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Many of these immigrants initially had no desire to remain in the United States. Their primary objective was for economic gain. Through stories and letters home they were led to believe that the streets were "paved with gold". They expected to work hard and earn sufficient money to return to their beloved homeland. With their hard earned dollars they could purchase what many yearned for all their lives; ownership of land in Lithuania.

It didn't take long before they realized the stories were a myth, for there were no streets of gold. For the most part these people were uneducated and did not speak English. They boarded with other Lithuanians and took the back-breaking jobs they were offered in the coal mines, steel mills and slaughter houses. Their lack of language skills continued to hinder their employment opportunities. Although the parents were for the most part uneducated, they realized the children would have a better life through education. The children quickly became "Americanized" and Jurgis became George while Gené became Jean.

The younger people lived in two separate worlds. However, the desire was strong to preserve their ethnicity. They built Lithuanian churches, schools and social halls often by the sweat of their brows. They established many organizations as well as newspapers. A great debt is owed to this group of immigrants for enduring the hardships and loneliness of the new world while at the same time preserving their religion, language and culture.

The second wave of Lithuanians to enter the United States did so after the World War II. These were the Displaced Persons who fled their homeland because of political persecution. At the end of the war, they ultimately found themselves located in camps, mainly in Germany.

Many had been well educated and prosperous in Lithuania. Upon arrival and settlement in the United States, they were often forced to take menial jobs while they learned English. This group had no desire to leave Lithuania before the war and often found themselves at odds with the first wave over such contentious issues as language, customs and traditions. The second wave established their own organizations with the foremost goal of preserving the way of life that they left behind in Lithuania. This group prospered in America and generally achieved their goals of preserving their cherished ideals.

The third wave entered after the rebirth of Lithuanian independence in 1990. Most were young adults and like the first wave came for economic reasons. Many have blended into the Lithuanian communities by teaching dance groups and singing in choirs while at the same time keeping themselves separated with the ideas of their own generation. At times they seem to be a blend of the first and second waves who preceded them. Some are well educated and are furthering their education in American colleges and universities. These are the individuals who are most likely to return to Lithuania. Others have started their own businesses such as construction and cleaning services. They will tell you they would like to return to visit but that this is probably their new found home.

However, there is one thing that many have a difficult time understanding. They often bristle when asked to buy a ticket for a cultural event or to support a church event. Regardless of how many times it is explained, they don't seem to want to grasp the concept that in America the government gives nothing to the church and that organizations have to work hard to keep themselves afloat. This is especially true when building maintenance, taxes and insurance bills must be paid and building and safety standards set by the city must be met. A steel door can cost many thousands of dollars and requires many *mūgės* (fairs), picnics and concerts to pay for it. Lithuanian churches and organizations rely on many volunteers. Volunteerism seems to be an alien concept to many of our third wave immigrants.

The descendants of the first wave appear to have assimilated the most into the American way of life. Unfortunately, many no longer speak the mother tongue.



* The first Lithuanian brass band of Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. It was formed in 1884 by a Greek, Arthur Grimes, who was a graduate of the Conservatory of Music in Athens, Greece. The idea of organizing the band came from Grimes' Lithuanian wife, Anna Slavikas. In the course of the following 44 years, the Lithuanian band performed on all festive and historic occasions in the region. During the 1900 coal strike, the band played in front of the Cole Colliery while miners left the workplace and joined the strike. During the Great Strike of 1902, the band rode to New York, marched in the City streets and raised \$3,000 in support of the Anthracite miners' strike fund. At the end of the strike, the Lithuanian band led the Shenandoah celebration parade. The ensemble disbanded in 1928, soon after the death of Arthur Grimes.

- Photo and story: *Protėviai* (Forefathers), a publication of the Lithuanian Global Genealogical Society, 222 Thunder Circle, Bensalem PA 19020, USA.

They are, for the most part, very interested in their heritage, tracing their ancestry, and giving generously to support Lithuanian causes.

The second wave continues to work principally at preserving the Lithuanian language and their heritage.

It is still too soon to write the chapter on the third wave.

What qualifies one as a Lithuanian? Is it the ability to speak the language or is it someone who was born in Lithuania? I seriously doubt there is any answer to that question. If you asked ten people that question you would probably receive ten different answers. I have seen children who have spoken Lithuanian at home and who graduated from the weekend Lithuanian schools who seemed to disappear from the face of the earth after their school years were finished. They never attend any events, drop out of dance groups and sporting teams. What happened and why? Yet there are those who don't speak Lithuanian who join the dancers, work at the *mūgės* and picnics and buy the tickets for the concerts. Are they less Lithuanian because they don't speak the language?

The place of one's birth is merely accidental. It should not guarantee anything as far as commitment or love of Lithuania. People should not be judged on where they were born, how well they speak the language or the nature of their inherited class standing. Rather, it is what they have done or are willing to do to help further the Lithuanian experience. Everyone cannot be a great sculptor, writer, or professor. If you are a tourist then in reality you are helping the Lithuanian economy. If you write a cheque to support a Lithuanian cause then you are helping someone. If you are personally involved with an organization or church, dance group, choir, sports, cultural centre, or supporting causes or publications, no one can put a price tag on your time and skills. If you are peeling potatoes for the pancakes at a Lithuanian picnic, you are maintaining a tradition. Every person is needed. In our own way we can all make a difference.

All three waves share a love for Lithuania but often show it in different ways.

In reality, the three waves are the same, yet very different.

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Rebuilding Lithuanian Armed Forces

Jonas KRONKAITIS

Vilnius

After approximately 120 years of Czarist Russian occupation, on Feb 16, 1918 Lithuania declared its independence. During the Russian rule, Napoleon forces had had a brief incursion on their way to Moscow. In 1915 Germans occupied Lithuania, but having been defeated in WW I, they withdrew by 1919.

A serious threat came from the East. Although Lenin had promised freedom for enslaved countries soon after the October 1917 revolution, Bolshevik forces entered Lithuania early in 1919, forcing the Lithuanian government to move its capital from Vilnius to Kaunas. Bolsheviks initiated a move against Kaunas, but with some assistance of German volunteers their attacks were repulsed. German support was short lived and Lithuanians were left alone to confront the Bolsheviks in static defensive positions until January 1920.



* Lithuanian soldiers today: A great leap ahead, since the battles of independence, 1918-20.

The Bolsheviks finally withdrew from Lithuania, after they were defeated by Latvian and Polish forces at Daugpilis, Latvia. In that year Lithuanians fought many small unit skirmishes.

While still fighting the Bolsheviks a new adversary, the *Bermontininkai* appeared in June 1919. This military force had been created by Germans from Russian prisoners whose stated mission was to fight the Bolsheviks, but the true intent was to keep Lithuania and Latvia in the German sphere of influence. This force consisted of some 50,000 reasonably well-armed soldiers. Latvian and Lithuanian forces defeated them in December 1919, capturing large quantities of weapons.

On 8 October 1920, in violation of a treaty, signed on 7 October, Polish forces attacked Lithuania, capturing Vilnius and a significant part of Lithuanian territory, thus becoming Lithuania's main enemy for the next two decades. In a three-year period, 1918–1920, Lithuanians fought, almost concurrently, the Bolsheviks, Poles and *Bermontininkai*. In effect, the Lithuanian armed forces were created from volunteers while in combat. Officers were predominantly Lithuanians who had served in Czarist Russia and who shaped the events to come.

By the end of 1939, independent Lithuania had created a military force of 32,000 soldiers and officers and a 120,000 mobilization reserve. The weapons were up to date and the force was reasonably well trained.

The fact that Lithuanian senior officers had previously served in Russian forces is cited often as a reason why Lithuania's military forces did not resist Soviet occupation in 1940. While loyalty, or the competence, of some of the senior officers could have been questioned, the decision not to fight against the Soviet aggression was political. Lithuania was surrounded by three potential enemies: Russia, Germany and Poland.

The Polish forces were crushed by the joint effort of Hitler and Stalin by the end of September 1939; and Poland ceased to be a threat. Nevertheless, there was no possibility for Lithuania to obtain significant outside support to sustain its mobilization force logistically for more than three weeks of combat, had they chosen to fight against the Soviet invasion forces in June 1940.



Lithuanian soldiers on patrol at the junction of Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

Finland's successful resistance is often cited as an example to support the claim that fewer lives would have been lost, had Lithuania fought. However, it must be remembered that Finland received outside assistance and could sustain its force logistically. Unlike Finland, where the terrain restricted the deployment of large armoured formations, a wide avenue of approach through Latvia into Lithuania and Estonia was suitable for large Russian formations. Secondary suitable avenues were Minsk – Vilnius, and Lida – Vilnius.

Although Hitler and Stalin were courting each other [in the late 1930s], Stalin started planning to conquer Europe as early as 1927. At the beginning of the war against Hitler in June 1941, Stalin had amassed, by some accounts, an armoured force three times larger than Hitler's. Stalin had 6,000 amphibian tanks alone, which was more than Hitler had in all types of tanks, including those he had captured from Greeks, Yugoslavs and Poles. The only significant natural obstacle for Red Army's thrust into the Baltic countries was Dauguva river in Latvia. With amphibian tanks, massive artillery, and airborne force, however, it could be breached easily.

Indigenous partisan resistance started shortly after the Soviet forces entered Lithuania in 1940 and Communists initiated oppressive measures against the population. After the second Soviet occupation in 1944, the local partisan strength reached 50,000 fighters. During the organized resistance period, which ended in 1953, approximately 20,000 Lithuanian partisans lost their lives. Small scale resistance continued and the last partisan known to be killed in action in 1963 was Antanas Kraujalis.

The Communists were able to discredit partisan resistance by organizing bands of traitors (called "*stribai*") who, masquerading as partisans indiscriminately robbed and killed villagers, thus reducing support for the resistance. Poverty in the countryside and a lack of outside material support were the main factors contributing to the defeat of the partisans. Romas Kaunietis has interviewed survivors of both sides, researched archives and published his findings in several volumes describing the severe conditions under which the partisans had to operate, their ingenuity, determination, sacrifice, betrayal and eventual defeat.

Early in 1990, after some fifty years of Soviet occupation, the newly independent Lithuania again started to rebuild its military force. Rank and file volunteers started to organize and acquire weapons by various means, primarily from demoralized Russians. Initiative and determination of volunteers created a force adequate to take control from the Russians who left Lithuania in 1993. The new officers were Lithuanians who had served previously in the Soviet armed forces. Many were careerists with little, or no nationalistic feelings. Many were married to Russian women; nevertheless, the majority showed a genuine loyalty to their country. Approximately 80 percent of colonels and lieutenant colonels, serving in 2004, had joined the Lithuanian Armed Forces after the attempted *putsch* in Moscow in August 2001, an event which signalled the final break-up of the Soviet Union.

The first post-1990 Lithuanian minister of defence was a medic with no management or leadership skills. The second minister, 1993 to 1996, was a former district chairman of the Communist Youth party, again without any qualification for the position. Support for the military from the leftist government, who won the election in 1992, was minimal. Military pay was intermittent.

To support their units, commanders engaged in various commercial activities from providing security to renting facilities to businesses. In the early stages of development, determination and ingenuity were the driving forces; however, there was a lack of direction, organization and necessary legal foundation.

During the period of 1992 through 1996, attention was focussed on establishing international contacts and gaining military aid and advice. Internal development was stagnant. An inordinate amount of time and resources was wasted, following Soviet practice, on guarding various objects such as bridges and government buildings. Battalions were individual corporate bodies financed directly by Finance Ministry. The Leftist government mistrusted the Volunteer Forces and looked for an opportunity to deactivate them. At best, they were ignored while regular forces were being strengthened.

In 1996, the Conservatives won the election. Česlovas Stankevičius, an extremely hard working and dedicated individual, was appointed as the Defence Minister. He established his reputation as a negotiator for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Lithuania.

I arrived in Lithuania in March, 1997 along with two other retired US colonels. I assumed, first the position of vice-minister and later (July 1999 to July 2004) as the commander of the armed forces. Colonel Algis Garsys, USMC Ret. became the Inspector General and Colonel Romas Kilikauskas, USAF Ret. was appointed first as a vice-minister in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and in 1999 he became the Vice-Minister of Defence.

The new Lithuanian parliament (*Seimas*) increased the defence budget from 0.6 percent of GDP in 1996 to 1.3 percent in 1998. Priorities were established and a ten-year military reform plan was created, necessary laws and regulations were written and the armed forces were restructured. The soldier, his training and welfare became first priority. Living and dining facilities were rebuilt. English language laboratories were established. Officers were being sent to Western countries for training and education. Non-commissioned officers' status was elevated and they were given more authority and responsibility.



* **Left: Lithuanian women cadets in formation. Four stripes indicate their fourth year at the Military Academy. Ten per cent of Lithuanian armed forces are women.**

A Basic Training Regiment was established and located in a reconstructed modern training facility. The Non-commissioned Officers' School was reformed and facilities renovated. A Military Academy for officers was completely reformed and facilities were reconstructed. Emphasis was placed on leadership and ethos.

By 2004, the Academy became the most sought-after higher education institution in the country.

1997 through 2001 were the most productive years for the Lithuanian armed forces. Some eight major laws were introduced which made comprehensive changes to the Defence Department's structure, authority and responsibility.

The first military strategy, which was approved by the Defence Council chaired by the President in 2000, envisioned a force of three brigades. Considering that NATO's membership at that time was not certain, a mobile territorial defence concept was selected. By 2000 only two brigades were activated and one of them was deactivated in 2003 when the membership in NATO became assured.

Quite a few projects were initiated to enhance the command and control and to strengthen defence capability. A regional Aerospace Control Centre was activated in 1997 with three Lithuanian radar stations and radars from Latvia and Estonia connected to it.

Three sea surveillance radar stations were established. A strategic telecommunication net was built, connecting all military units and installations. With the assistance of the United States, a high technology topography facility was built to assure the supply of military maps, using Lithuanian language and meeting NATO standards.

With weapons, radars and training provided by Sweden, an air defence battalion was activated in 2000 and immediately after the "9/11" terrorist attack using civilian airliners in the United States in 2001, an air defence unit was stationed to protect the Ignalina nuclear power plant.

Two mine hunter ships with up-to-date equipment, over 100 armoured personnel carriers, M-113, and a variety of cargo trucks were acquired from Germany. Combat units were equipped with the state-of-the-art tactical radios, mortars and Swedish anti-tank weapons. Five Mi-8 helicopters and three Storm class patrol boats were added to the Air Force and Navy inventory, respectively.



* **General Jones, the Supreme Allied Forces Commander (pictured, right) chose Lithuania as the first new member country to visit after its accession to NATO. Major General Kronkaitis, the author of this article, is at left in this photo.**

The period 2001 through 2004 saw a consolidation of the progress made in the previous four years, adjustments to meet specific NATO requirements, such as enhanced unit deployability for out of country operations and an intensive public relations campaign to capitalize on previous achievements. The leftists, who returned to power at the end of 2000, abandoned the commitment to provide 2 percent of GDP to the defence department; consequently, modernization of the force reduced its pace significantly.

By 2004, an active military force of 11,000 and a reserve force (National Defence Volunteer Forces) of 12,000 (to be reduced to 6,000) was created. This meets the requirements for integration into NATO, which now provides the optimal security assurance for Lithuania. Of the 11,000 active duty soldiers, 3,400 are conscripts who serve for 12 months.

Conscripts are provided with housing, food and military clothing; and receive 88 Litass per month after tax. A professional soldier's rate of pay depends on his/her rank and length of service. For example, the following rates apply after 2 years of service and after deducting the tax: A professional private, 1335 Litass per month; Lieutenant, 1859Lt.; Major, 3121Lt.; Colonel, 3980 Lt.

Today, Lithuanian soldiers serve along with their allies in Iraq, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

Major General Jonas A. Kronkaitis (Ret), MBA (Syracuse), BS (Connecticut) is the former Commander of the Lithuanian Armed Forces (from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2004). Born in Lithuania, he was educated in USA and served with distinction in the United States Army for 27 years. He has been highly decorated, including The Legion of Merit and 18 other top awards from 5 countries. E-mail: John Kronkaitis <kronkj2000@yahoo.com>

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Lithuanian Library has a New Home

The comprehensive Lithuanian Reference Library at the University of Tasmania has a new home in the University's School of Government. Associate Professor Marcus Haward, the Head of School, has provided an area for readers and a set of secure book shelves for the Lithuanian collection.

The new facility was officially opened by Mr Andrew Žilinskas, the Lithuanian Consul-General for Victoria and Tasmania on Friday 25 November, 2005. At the same time, he launched Dr Al Taškūnas' latest book, *Lithuanian Studies in Australia* (see p.71).

The Tasmanian Reference Library has over 1,000 books and journals dealing with Lithuania and its people. Most titles are in English. This unique collection has been put together over the past 18 years by the University's Lithuanian Studies Society; and new titles are still being added. Donations of books in English are particularly welcome.

The University of Tasmania has been in the forefront of researching and documenting the Lithuanian culture and the Lithuanian migrants' achievements in this country. The new Lithuanian Reference Library – the only one of its kind in all Australian universities – will facilitate this research even further.



A contemporary map of Lithuania and its neighbours

Letters to the Editor

Crash of an Armed Fighter Plane

The crash of the Russian SU-27 fighter in Lithuania on 15 September coincided with President Putin's negotiation in Washington DC which tried to facilitate the Russian company Lukoil's ownership of the major oil refinery in Lithuania. The Russian warplane crashed after its reconnaissance mission near the coast of Denmark. The plane was armed: it was carrying 4 air-to-air missiles and at least 2 kg radioactive Uranium-238.

The multiple violation of Baltic air space by Russian military planes emphasises the need for a rapid, orderly, and complete withdrawal of Russian military and security forces from the occupied Königsberg (Kaliningrad) region, just as they were withdrawn from Denmark in the 1940s, Austria in the 1950s, and the Baltic States, Poland and Germany in the 1990s.

It is totally unacceptable that all European capitals should remain within a few minutes' striking distance of this illegal Russian military base. Its presence within Europe and NATO is illegal because the Russians were never granted the Kaliningrad exclave (formerly known as East Prussia), either at Potsdam or anywhere else.

Dr Darius FURMONAVICIUS,
Nottingham NG2 6AH, United Kingdom.

Lithuanian Papers

I found your journal very interesting and have read through the articles with a great deal of interest. It enlightens me of the struggle undertaken by people of Lithuania against the Soviet oppression. Thank you for reminding me of these important factors and I wish you well with future publications.

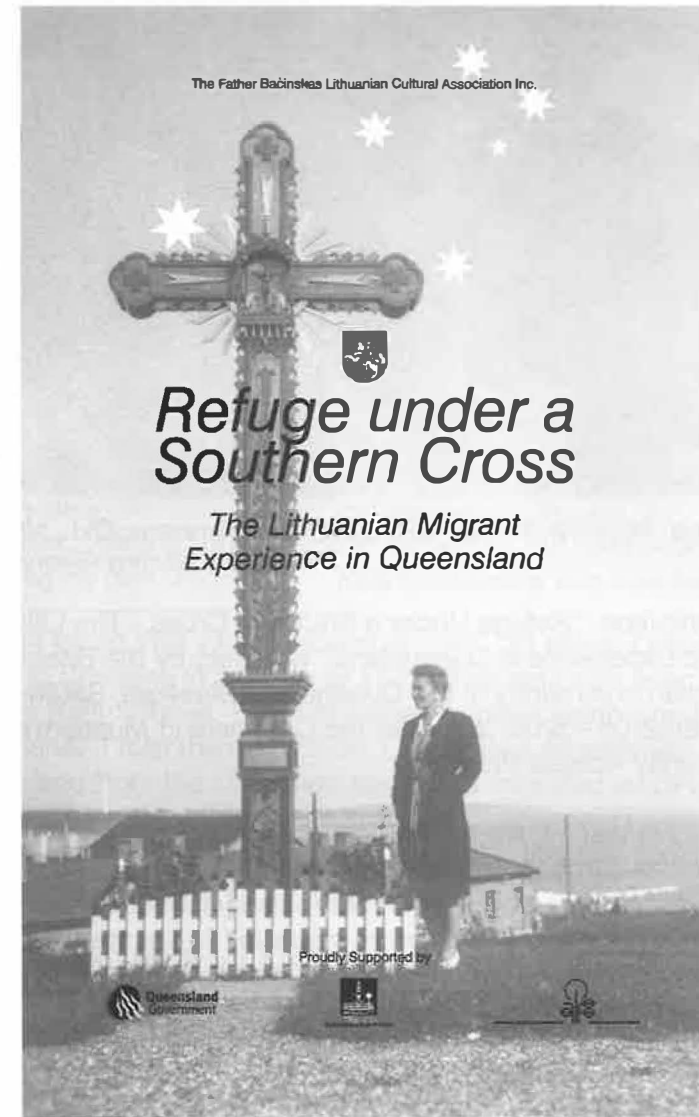
Alan CADMAN, M.P.,
Federal Member for Mitchell, Castle Hill, NSW.

The Editor welcomes letters, especially brief ones, at Post Office Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006 (Australia) and reserves the right to condense or edit them.

Celebrating Lithuanian Migrant History

Eve WICKS (Puodžiūnaitė)

Brisbane



Stase Sagatys beside the wooden cross carved by Lithuanians. Displaced People's Camp, Thisted, Denmark, circa 1948.

Photograph courtesy Stase and Evaldas Sagatys



Lithuanian Migrants, St Mary's Church, South Brisbane, Qld., 1950.

Photograph courtesy Grazina Steinertas

The exhibition "Refuge Under a Southern Cross - The Lithuanian Migrant Experience in Queensland" was held by the Brisbane Lithuanian community at the Queensland Museum, South Bank, from 19/02/05 - 5/06/05, under the Queensland Museum's Community Access Program.

Post World War 11, from 1947 to 1952, approximately 10,000 Lithuanians came to Australia from Europe as displaced people. Significant numbers undertook compulsory labour contracts in Queensland for two years before migrating to southern states. A community of about 300 settled in Queensland, mainly in Brisbane.



Klara

Eve Wicks 2004

Eve Wicks 2004



Roses and icons

"I had never seen such beautiful flowering trees before."

"When we arrived in 1940, we looked after each other, visited each other. We were missing and thinking of Lithuania, our families.... saying prayers, singing our songs...but I was happy having my own children." *Klara Puodziuniene, born Riga, Latvia, 1914.*

Earlier in World War 11, in December 1940, 33 ethnic Lithuanians arrived in Brisbane in a group of 173 British nationals evacuated from the Baltic States. Four Lithuanian families established homes in Brisbane. From the mid 1950s, Lithuanians migrated to Queensland from the UK where some had migrated as DPs. In the following decades, Lithuanians and their descendants moved from interstate to Queensland, for marriage, work, lifestyle, family and retirement reasons.

The exhibition was the culmination of a research project over four years in which the history of the community's experience was gathered through a multifaceted oral history and visual recording and gathering process. Oral history interviews with 71 subjects, recorded on audiotape and film, were enriched by stories elicited while gathering the subjects' historical photographs, documents,



Family and Birch Trees

"I was at the conservatorium in Kaunas studying singing. I liked singing in the cathedral. Then the Bolsheviks came and it was all finished."



Stase

Eve Wicks 2004

"I was a cook in the hospital kitchen.... very hard work, very hot, heavy lifting. I was there 18 years, working shift from 5am until 2pm."

Stase Sagatiene, born Radviliskis, Lithuania, 1909.

and objects. Photographic portraits in subjects' personal environments using an informal expressive style were taken with 46 subjects. The portraits were enriched by culturally and personally significant support images. The choice of colour film reflected the rich colours of the Lithuanian culture and its history. Natural, warm, late afternoon winter sun lighting was chosen: to express the soft light of a northern European culture, the sensitivity of the stories, and the twilight years of the first generation.

The exhibition was designed to produce a strong audience engagement with individual community storytellers presented on story boards. The colourful environmental portrait and support images, as well as sepia toned historical images were present, giving fragments of the present and the past and the meaningful connections between them. First person oral history text extracts



Victor with Lithuanian Tank, Vytyis and Accordion



Eve Wicks 2004

"I wanted to be an engineer, to build things....I decided I would work for myself....so I got a factory at Jindalee called I V Lawrence Sheet Metal and Engineering. I was making stainless steel equipment, cabinets for cooking meat, conveyors, injection needles for Dandy Bacon."

Victor Lawrence born Radviliskis, Lithuania, 1926.

were woven among the images. The image layers with text gave an enriched understanding of the storyteller's identity and life journey. Understanding was extended with a display of personal objects and accompanying stories.

The community's important narrative themes emerged through each storyteller's own words and unique set of circumstances. There were elements common to all migrants - building new lives, and to all displaced people - missing home and fearing war and oppression. As for other non - English speakers, there were difficulties with the new language while other themes involved specific Lithuanian political, historical and cultural circumstances. Many themes related to Australian and specific Queensland contexts, such as the physical strangeness of the continent, labour contracts on the sugar cane farms, living in the sub tropics and tropics; and



Lithuanian canecutters, Ingham, Queensland, circa 1948.

Photograph Courtesy Viktor Bagdonas.

living a Lithuanian cultural life in a small community geographically distant from the larger communities in southern Australian states.

The project has been very beneficial for the Queensland Lithuanian community. Over 200 people including third and fourth generation Lithuanians attended the exhibition opening, many returning a number of times. The community response to having their story exhibited in public has been cathartic. There has been a feeling of pride, and, for the generations who experienced life in Australia under its assimilation policy, relief that exhibition evaluation demonstrated that there is a broad community acceptance of their culture, experience and contribution.

Eve Wicks, MAVA (QCA, GU), M Ed Std, Dip Ed (Qld), B App Sc (QUT), A.T.C.L. is continuing the Queensland cultural project, planning a book and DVD package of the Queensland Lithuanian story, and touring the exhibition interstate.

Lithuania's Image in the British Press

Raimonda JALOVECKAITĖ

Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas

There are many discussions about the image of Lithuania in the world. Obviously, during the ongoing integration process, Lithuania's image is important not only for national consciousness and prestige, but also as an economic indicator. Its development may, in certain instances, become an underlying task which brings quite a large income into the country's national budget.

The purpose of this study is to reveal what image of Lithuania has been formed during the years 2000 to 2003 with reference to particular sources, i.e., certain publications of Great Britain. The following daily newspapers were chosen for the research: *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and a Scottish daily newspaper, *The Scotsman*.

The criterion for selecting the publications was as follows: all articles, referring to the name "Lithuania" and published in Great Britain in the years 2000-2003 were cited. This particular period of three years was chosen for the research because of the political and economic changes that had occurred in connection with NATO and EU, which are extremely important to Lithuania.

Content analysis was chosen as the method for examining the publications concerned with Lithuania. Publications which mentioned the words Lithuania, Lithuanian were chosen as a unit of research. All articles were evaluated according to their content dealing with the political, economic, cultural spheres etc., giving them either a positive, negative or neutral marking.

The thematic analysis was based on image interpretation. According to this, the image is estimated on two levels: *Visibility* - which is based on the amount of information in the press that appears in the country.¹ *Valence* - described according

¹Manheim, B., Albritton, B. (1987). Insurgent Violence Versus Image Management: The Struggle for National Images in Southern Africa. *British Journal of Political Science*, Volume 17, Issue 2. P. 201-218.

to the type of information provided.² This particular dimension introduced in the analysis depicts the positive and negative aspects of the Lithuanian image.

During this study, it became evident that the projection of the Lithuanian image in the daily newspapers of Great Britain was not a purposeful effort connected with a conscious image creation, but rather consisted only of coincidental information.

In the years of 2000 – 2002, the visibility of Lithuania in the four periodicals reviewed increased more than three times (from 92 to 321 articles). This shows that interest in Lithuania was beginning to grow: during the period of research, the number of articles more than doubled each year. Such trend should persist in future now that Lithuania has become a member of EU.

While the visibility was growing steadily, the valence of the publications varied: articles of a neutral nature dominated up to the middle of 2001, whereas quite a big spurt of information favourable to Lithuania appeared toward the end of 2001. This was connected with the active negotiations being conducted at that time for the integration of Lithuania into the EU and NATO.

The publications usually provided British readers with information of interest to them which was directly connected with their political, cultural, and economic life, e.g., The Prince of Wales' visit to the Baltic States, or the film *Atilia*, shot in Lithuania.

The following topics, connected with Lithuania, received the most attention in daily newspapers of Great Britain: sports (29,57 -- 81 % of which is devoted to football), integration into the European Union (26,08%), politics (10,29 %.), the Holocaust (9,3 %). Criminal offences were the most unpopular subject, 2,66%. The popularity of the sports topics can be explained by the fact that the British are famous for their passion for football.

The articles that dealt with Lithuania's domestic economy reflected the most unfavourable evaluation, i.e. the negative valence predominated with a quite low visibility. In later years, Lithuanian economy appeared in the context of EU or NATO.

² Ibid.

Articles connected with Lithuanian political life showed a steady growth of positive information. As with economics, so it is with politics in British publications: they were discussed concurrently with EU and NATO. These structures were the ones which conditioned the spread of positive information about Lithuania. However, Lithuania's domestic policy did not hold much importance in the press of Great Britain.

The expansion of EU and NATO towards the East causes the fear of the "remote and unfamiliar stranger". This fear is reinforced by the stereotypes of barbarous East European and Post-Soviet countries – stereotypes that are still alive in the minds of Western people. The majority of Britons do not favour new countries joining the EU. They fear unemployment (61%), organized crime, drug smuggling (57%) and maybe problems in agriculture (56%).

Publications on Lithuanian culture contained a great deal of trivial, insignificant and neutral information. 75.96 % of the articles dealing with culture were concerned with sports. Besides, they made up 29.57% of all articles which provided information about Lithuania. The predominance of such neutral reports about sports, proves that the newspapers of Great Britain do not bother to project a Lithuanian image of one kind or another.

Articles on culture mentioned only several artists regarded as celebrities abroad (e.g., John Mekas-Mek, Czeslav Milosz).

The British press calls Lithuania a post-Soviet, post-Communist country - the one from the Eastern bloc. Lithuania is mentioned alongside such countries as Belarus and Poland. It is reasonable to say that British daily newspapers do not project the image of Lithuania as an independent and mature country.

In spite of the fact that the general information about Lithuania had shown a tendency to increase, the subject of tourism was still unpopular during the period of research. Some articles describing poorly developed tourist structures and transport facilities created a negative influence on the British public and on tourism possibilities in Lithuania as a whole.

In the daily newspapers surveyed, the topic of the Soviet experience was interwoven with articles dealing with economics, politics and culture. Its positive valence could be perceptible only in the context of politics..

Almost one third of the publications, which did not deal with the main subject matter, revolved around the Jewish genocide. Compared with other topics, this particular theme has exerted the most negative influence on the Lithuanian image, because almost all of the information of this kind points out only the negative aspect. Often the name of A. Gečas (A. Gechas) and his case have been mentioned in conjunction with the killing of Jews in World War II. In this way, the press of Great Britain has projected a generalised stereotype of any Lithuanian as a Jew killer.

Articles dealing with a criminal theme were mainly centred on illegal immigrants. These topics did not seem to cause any indignation in the British press. On the contrary, the topics of illegal immigrants and illegal work evoked feelings of empathy.

It should also be noted that the image of Lithuania as projected in the daily newspapers of Great Britain, does not coincide with the picture painted in the mind of Lithuanians. We often associate our country with basketball. The periodicals of Great Britain, on the other hand, do not present Lithuania as a basketball country.

Statistical data showed that only 21% of the British rely on their press for information on current affairs. Thus, the media image of Lithuania, as researched here, may not influence the society of Great Britain a great deal. Since the British people rely more on television (70 %), it would be interesting to investigate the Lithuanian image as projected on TV in Britain and elsewhere. A survey of public opinion in Great Britain should also be carried out, for it might show a more realistic image of Lithuania which prevails in the minds of the British population.

Translated from the Lithuanian by Sandra JUKŠTIENĖ.

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Sandra Jukštienė is a high school teacher of English, in Lithuania.

Siberia through the Eyes of a Child (2)

Dainora URBONIENĖ

Panevėžys (Lithuania)

In our last issue, Dainora, a young Lithuanian girl, described her forced journey to Siberia. What was her life like afterwards, in this icy exile? Dainora continues:

We were cold and hungry. My mother had managed to get us a little food, by selling or bartering one of her meagre possessions, in exchange for some boiled potatoes and a few other foods, in Barnaul (a town in Siberia).

There was a rumour around that tomorrow they would be taking us to Shipitsyn. However, when the morning dawned, they took us nowhere, and we continued to freeze in the shed. Finally they came for us around midday. Some horse-drawn wagons arrived at the shed, and one open-backed lorry. The trip was terrible. We shuddered from cold, as our clothes still hadn't dried out. We lay on the floor snoozing, huddled together to protect my baby brother Arutis from the cold.



* Deportees carting water for the Tayshet camp in Siberia.

The truck stopped. The driver got out and told us that his truck had a mechanical problem and that we would have to walk to the next *selo* (village) or else stay here and wait for the horse-drawn wagons to arrive. I felt awful. The cold was really getting to me and just wanted to lie down somewhere and sleep. Finally the wagons arrived and Arutis and I were able to ride with the other children, while the women had to go on foot.

The Unforgettable Trip

We spent the next night in some sort of barracks in a forest, in a building similar to a barn. There were no beds of any type: neither bunks, nor *koika* [hammock] to be seen anywhere, just a few old mattresses placed beside the walls. The mattresses were ripped and rotting – just lumps of dingy-coloured cotton stuffing. As mother put Arutis down, she said, “Here the bedbugs will bother us again.” They did, but we were used to them by then, or maybe we were just too tired to feel anything.

On that horrible journey all the barracks were similar: old, rotten, draughty. Some of the exiles stayed in them only overnight, others for longer periods. Nobody knew our plans.

I can no longer remember every detail of the trip from Barnaul, but I will always remember the final stage until the end of my days. It was a warm evening and my baby brother and I were sitting on our bags of clothes on a sledge being pulled by a small horse. The horse was struggling, but the irascible driver kept hounding the poor nag. Every time the tired old hack faltered, the driver cursed loudly and cracked the whip, which flicked me and Arutis. I was afraid, I protected Arutis, but I said nothing.

Mother looked so sad and tired as she trudged along beside the sledge that I did not want to bother her by telling her about the whip. In front of us, and behind us too, were other sledges in this never-ending convoy, with children and old people blue from the cold sitting in the sledges, while the poor old mothers plodded along behind, barely able to drag their feet.

At times I dozed off, but the whip woke me again, and I did my best to protect my baby brother Arutis. He was very quiet that evening, mostly sleeping. I became very afraid.



* Women were also used to float logs down the Angara river. The job was dangerous and exhausting. The death rate was high, made worse by a lack of basic medical services.

For some reason, it seemed to me that here, on this road through great forests, we were all going to die. It was the first time I had this thought. Maybe I was affected by the adult talk, or maybe it was because I had heard the news that old Mrs Aleknavičienė was probably going to die, because she had become very sick on this trip for lack of proper winter clothes. Now, thinking about Mrs Aleknavičienė's condition and possible impending death, I became very worried for Arutis.

I called out to mother and told her that Arutis was very pale. She asked the driver to stop. She climbed into the sledge, took the child into her arms, and looked long at his little face. Then, in tears, she sobbed, “Arutis is ill.” I huddled with them, held them both, and kept quiet. I looked at the sun. It was gently slipping down and disappearing into the fearful dark forest. I have forgotten much of that horrible experience, but every time I see the pale winter sun on a freezing day, I am reminded of that wan Siberian sun. I remember that nightmarish journey, and suddenly I feel very cold indeed.

It was getting dark. The driver said that we had arrived at "Barracks No. 60". As we approached I saw that it was yet another big cold building like all the others we had been in, with a fireplace in the middle and bunk beds around the walls. We could only get a sleeping place further from the fireplace. Late that night Mrs Aleknavičienė died. In the morning some men dug a hole and buried her. "Barracks No. 60" became her graveyard.

Helpless

In the morning a white-coated lady appeared who we hoped might be a doctor, but she was probably just a medical orderly, because she didn't even tell us what Arutis was suffering from. She gave us some powder for Arutis, looked at a few other sick people, and left. Mother dissolved the powder for Arutis to drink and for a while he slept soundly, breathing more easily.

I fell asleep for a while, and when I awoke mother was at the fireplace talking with the other women. They were boiling potatoes, as none of us had eaten anything yet, we had only drunk some boiled water. Mother brought some potatoes over and as Arutis was awake again we offered some to him first. He nibbled at one a bit, then sat for a while and said "Give me". The women gathered around were glad, saying that Arutis must be getting better.

However, after lunch and toward late afternoon, Arutis became restless in bed, he cried and whined, he must have been in pain. It got worse that evening. He kept crying in a strange gargling sort of voice.

Around midnight Arutis began whimpering in his sleep. I saw him suddenly open his eyes and look at me. I was happy for him, and started to talk to him. But he just wailed strangely and began to pant heavily, restlessly. Mother ran over, picked him up, carried him around, with me walking alongside. I held his hand and kissed it, always believing that soon he would settle down, fall asleep, start to get better. But these sweet hopes were suddenly dashed by mother's screams.

I felt that Arutis' hand was getting heavier in mine. Mother was crying out loud. I saw that Arutis' eyes were open, and I was

going to say, "Don't worry, he's looking"... But I remained silent. Arutis seemed to look at mother with a strange calmness. His little hand in mine became ever colder. Mother and I kissed his cold little body.

In the morning some men brought in a little coffin made from rough wooden boards. Mother dressed Arutis in the best clothes she had kept for him: a white shirt and a little blue suit.

Starvation

Finally they dumped us out at Barracks No. 82 and said that here is where we would live. We inspected the area: a courtyard with a few buildings around it, surrounded by forest.

After a few days mother had to start work. Sometimes she worked far away and came home very tired. At night her back hurt, she even complained in her sleep. Once when mother collapsed at work because of the pain, they let her off hard labour for a month. Then she started to work closer to the barracks.

Deportees who worked got a bowl of soup at the mess-hall. They also got a ration of bread. Mother could have brought home our combined ration of bread, but instead she told me to come and get my ration at lunch time. This way she could ask them to give me some soup, and if they did, we could both eat. But they didn't always do it. When mother shared her cucumber or cabbage soup with me I was sad for her, because I knew she must be going hungry.

At first, when we still had some groats and flour, we made a sort of *buiza*. With bread it was quite tasty. But our supply ran out.

When mother was assigned to lighter work or was not working at all, her bread ration went down to 150 grams, the same as for me, a child. When doing heavier work she got 400 grams. The bread wasn't just given to us: we had to buy it. Mother earned very little from her work: it was barely enough to buy bread. When she was not working and not getting that meagre income, we had to get by on what little money we still had from selling a few things in Barnaul.



° Mother had to toil very hard in a timber loggers' brigade, similar to this group from Camp No.030. She had to keep working under all weather conditions, even when the temperature dropped to minus 40 degrees Celsius. Whenever Mother failed to reach her work quota, her daily ration of 400 grams of bread was halved in punishment.

Eventually the time came when we no longer had any food reserves. When we brought some bread home, we discussed how much we would eat that day. Mother used to spread on the table the two scarves that she had brought from our home in Raguva (Lithuania). She used one as our tablecloth, and the other one to wrap the bread in when she put it back on the shelf. She used to slice the bread very carefully, so that the loaf didn't crumble. We used to lick our fingers and press the crumbs on the tablecloth with our damp fingers to pick them up and eat them.

At night in bed I tried so hard not to think about the bread sitting on the shelf. But sometimes I couldn't stand it and I had to get up and beg mother to slice me a little piece. If we could possibly afford to take an extra slice, she would let me have it. But there were many other nights when there was only a tiny bit of bread left.

Mother thought of a way to get some more bread. She started knitting scarves which she took to Shipitsyn to sell to the Russian

women who liked them very much. For the few kopeeks she earned, we were able to buy a little more bread. But in March, as we were waiting for spring to arrive, it started to snow heavily, and blizzards came. No one could deliver any bread to the mess-hall, neither by tractor nor by horse and sledge.

The women wondered what to do, how to get to Shipitsyn. They tried to walk there, but they gave up and came back when they saw the extent of deep snow drifts covering the roads. But we were running out of food. We had only a few potatoes left. Since we didn't know how long the terrible weather would last, we had to go easy on the potatoes. I suggested to mother that we count them and decide how many we could consume each day. At first mother laughed at my suggestion, but she soon accepted it and followed it.

I pulled the bag of potatoes out of its place by the wood stove, and I carefully counted them: 63 potatoes. At first, while we still had a little bit of bread, we said we would eat three potatoes a day. When there was no more bread, we cooked four, or if we couldn't stand the hunger pains, five. But we realised that at this rate the potatoes would soon run out. And they did. We had no more food, only water. We became so desperate we started examining the little bits of potato with sprouting eyes that we had put aside for seed potatoes in the spring. There was very little to be had on them, but we shaved a few tiny bits off and boiled them up in some water to make a very weak consomme. When we could no longer do even that, we just drank boiled water. We tried to move as little as possible to conserve our strength. We lay around, taking naps, talking. We became so weak that it was a major effort even to light a fire.

I remember that starvation very well. We lived on just water for at least five days, maybe a week. Amid my naps, half asleep and half awake, I pondered that I may never see Lithuania again, may never go back to school there. With my eyes shut I could see visions of the school at Raguva, the classroom, the children, exercise books and textbooks. Then it all became jumbled, as Arutis entered the classroom and took a seat next to me. When I told mother about these dreams or visions, or when I complained

about wanting to go back to Lithuania, she comforted me, or just sat silently, thinking all sorts of thoughts herself, or perhaps half asleep from exhaustion. One time she said, "A few more days of this starvation and we will be in a very bad way, because we are already bloating." I don't know whether I was bloated, but when I looked at mother I could see that she had changed.

Tragedy

Oh, how we waited for the berries of spring and summer and the mushrooms of autumn! Even though we were living so poorly, we used these gifts of nature to help us observe the festivals of Easter and Christmas. One day we heard some good news: we found out where father was. An old crippled man arrived at our Barracks No. 82 and he said, he had been at the barracks of Reshoty, somewhere beyond Krasnoyarsk, but he had been moved on because of his age and condition. He had been with the men who had been separated from the women at Naujojii Vilnia. He told us the address of the Reshoty Barracks and the women set to writing letters, including us.

The old man advised us not to complain in the letters, and to keep them short, so as to stand a better chance of getting past the censors. Mother wrote about Arutis' death, and about us, that we were well, that we were living in barracks in a forest. I wrote that I missed him very much.

We got a reply back fairly quickly. We were so happy. We thought now we would find out everything about what was happening to father. But his letter was short. He just said that he was in good health and was doing forestry work. He asked about me, Dainut_ (little Dainora), whether I was well and whether I had learnt much Russian. Not a word about little Arutis.

We were very surprised. But the old man who had given us the address said, father had probably been prevented by the censor from writing anything about the death of his son. Nevertheless, we were happy to have heard even that much from him. We cried with happiness, although we were told that we could not see and hear father. We wrote a reply the same day.

Again we waited. But no other letter ever arrived. Just some horrifying news. I remember the sunny, warm May day. It was at Pentecost. We children were playing our favourite game outside: "hidey". So many good places to hide around there: the barracks, the other buildings, the forest, the shrubs. That day I came out a little later than the other children and I asked whether we were going to play hidey. However, the other children walked around uneasily and looked at me in a curious way. Then I heard the voice of our neighbour, Mrs Gontautienė, calling me to come into the barracks.

As soon as I came in the door of the barracks, I could hear mother crying. I saw women standing around the room and mother sitting on the bed crying. On the table was a letter. When I walked up to mother she stood up, hugged me, and told me that father had died. At first I couldn't believe it. I looked around the room to see the expressions on the other women's faces. Mother took the letter from the table and read, "...Many men died this spring of pneumonia, including Juozas Tamošiūnas from Raguva"...

Mrs Gontautienė took the letter, folded it up, and she and the other women left the room. We were alone. We sat on the bed, talked about father, and quietly cried.

Translated from the Lithuanian by Gintautas KAMINSKAS.

Dainora Urbonienė (nee Tamošiūnaitė) survived her ordeal and is now living in Lithuania.

Gintautas Kaminskas, B.A.Hons. (Flinders), M.A. (Monash) is a professional translator and presently lives in Montreal, Quebec.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

It is a great pity that the English-speaking world knows next to nothing of Dainora's plight or of the suffering thousands of other Lithuanian children had to endure. The remainder of Dainora's 188-page book, written in Lithuanian, is still waiting to be translated into English.

Book Reviews

Interesting Papers with a Broad-ranging Focus

APANAVIČIUS, Romualdas, ed. (2004), *Ethnic Culture: Traditions and Innovations*. Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University Press, 440 pages. ISBN 9955 530 93 6.

This large edited volume contains forty-five papers on a range of Baltic political and cultural issues. The book is organised thematically with distinct sections (ethnic culture; contemporary culture, ethnic identity, national and confessional minorities, and folklore). For someone like myself who has little knowledge of the Baltic region - apart from a brief one-week stay in Estonia back in the late 1990s, there is much that is of interest.

However, a number of papers stand out in terms of their clarity and topicality. For example, in the section on culture, Renata Gražytė and Aušra Kairaitytė provide a short paper on the meanings and signs used by biker communities in Lithuania that explores the tensions within and between community members. Some of the other papers worthy of mention include Aija Druvaskalne-Urdze's paper on visual language in a cultural context. Reading Druvaskalne-Urdze reminded me how the visual sphere is generally neglected in academic studies in preference to the written text. I also enjoyed Tomasz Rakowski's short article on 'The anthropology of poverty'. Rakowski develops a post-modern critique of traditional formulations of poverty that emphasise material deprivation and overlook the more subjective aspects including ontological insecurity and psychological trauma.

As a whole, there is much to commend this book. It certainly provides readers who have little knowledge of Lithuania and other Baltic nation states, with some fascinating insights about everyday life and popular culture. It is also evident that many of the writers draw upon a range of sociological traditions in presenting their arguments and it is possible, even from a cursory reading, to get a good sense of the theoretical influences that inform Lithuanian scholarship.

This said, I think the book could have been improved by some more judicious editing. In particular, it would have been helpful if

the editor had written an introduction and conclusion to the collection of papers. As it currently reads, it is difficult to get a sense of the overall aims of the book other than being a showcase of recent scholarship on ethnic culture. In spite of this, I would recommend the book as a worthy edition that brings together a large number of interesting papers. It will be of most appeal to readers with a keen interest in Lithuanian studies but its broad-ranging focus also makes it an interesting read for those with little or no prior knowledge of the region.

- **Keith JACOBS** (University of Tasmania).

Keith Jacobs, .M.Sc.(South Bank), Ph.D.(London) is Senior Lecturer in the School of Sociology and Social Work at the University of Tasmania. E-mail: Keith.Jacobs@utas.edu.au

The case for low-demand language and cultural courses

TAŠKŪNAS, Algimantas P. (2005), *Lithuanian Studies in Australia*. Hobart, Tas.: Tasmania University Union Lithuanian Studies Society. 200+14 pp. ISBN 1 86295 273 6 (soft cover), ISBN 1 86295 272 8 (hard cover) - R.R.P.: soft cover \$29.95 plus postage; hard cover \$59.95 plus postage.

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These findings are applicable not only to Lithuanian Studies, but also to an entire range of low-demand tertiary subjects, such as certain LOTE (languages other than English) syllabi.

The book is available from the publishers, LSS, PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006 (Australia) . E-mail: A.Taskunas@utas.edu.au

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Many thanks.

Vince J. TAŠKŪNAS, President, LSS.

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