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Lithuanian Papers

Volume 23 - 2009

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



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Volume 23 - 2009

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COVER PHOTOS: Between October 5, 2008 and July 5, 2009, Lithuanian yacht *Ambersail* circumnavigated the globe, visiting 20 countries and calling on 26 Lithuanian expatriate communities. The 43,427 nautical miles' venture was one of the major events marking Lithuania's Millennium (see pp.5–9 in this issue). **Front cover:** *Ambersail* in action (Photo: Vladas Ščiavinskas). **Back cover:** Sydney Lithuanians welcoming the visitors (Photo: <http://www.1000odiseja.it>)

Greetings, Australia!

A Message by H.E. Valdas ADAMKUS,
the outgoing President of the Republic of Lithuania



Dear Readers of Lithuanian Papers,

I extend my sincere congratulations to you all as we move together with Lithuania into the second millennium of our history.

I thank you all for sparing no effort and emotional strength to spread the glory of Lithuania and Vilnius across the world – like an echo of the howling Iron Wolf in the legendary dream of the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Gediminas.

In its historical journey through the ages, Lithuania's ultimate goal has been to be a part of Europe and to be European in its world outlook and culture. We have sought, and succeeded in gaining, our rightful place in the world community of democratic nations.

Our love of freedom and fundamental democratic values have survived the pain and sorrow of the brutal repressions by foreign occupiers.

As we celebrate the Millennium of Lithuania, let us work together, to make our country even stronger and its name better known throughout the world. Let each of us focus our love of freedom, our responsibility, ability, and our endeavors toward the same ultimate goal.

I have no doubt that the Lithuanian Australian community remembers well the early days of 2009 when the Millennium Odyssey yacht reached Australia. I believe that the tricolor flying high on its mast reminded us all that Lithuania was and will always be with us in moments of joy and sorrow on the voyage of our people throughout history.

Very soon, we will celebrate the Coronation Day of our King Mindaugas. Lithuanians all over the world, wherever they may be, will stand together to sing the Lithuanian national anthem. Let us join in this national prayer that has led us through darkness towards light and truth. Let us proclaim to the world that the love of Lithuania, our homeland, will burn forever in our hearts!

I am sending my greetings to Lithuania as it steps across an historical threshold. My greetings also go to all Lithuanians in Australia and to the friends of Lithuania!

Valdas Adamkus

President of the Republic of Lithuania
27 May 2009

Valdas Adamkus has since completed his two 5-year terms as the President of the Republic of Lithuania, having served from February 26, 1998 to July 12, 2009. After this year's Presidential election, he was succeeded by Dalia Grybauskaitė, Lithuania's first female President.



*Lithuanian Studies
Society Honours
Scholarship*
\$5,000

Are you doing Honours in 2010?

The Lithuanian Studies Society, whose aim is to promote the study and research of topics connected with Lithuania and its people, will offer this scholarship in 2010.

The Scholarship is available to an Honours student from any faculty of the University whose thesis involves an aspect of the study of Lithuania and/or Lithuanians.

Apply now by completing the Honours application form online at www.scholarships.utas.edu.au. Contact the Tasmania Scholarships Office on (03) 6226 2879 or email Tas.Scholarships@utas.edu.au for further information on applying.

For more information on the scholarship contact Dr Al Taskunas from the Lithuanian Studies Society on Phone (03) 6225 2505 or write to PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006 or see him in Room 580 Arts Building (School of Government).

Applications close on Friday, 31 October 2009

Lithuania's Millennium

This year, Lithuania is celebrating its Millennium. Does this mean that the Lithuanian nation has reached the age of 1,000 years? No, the Lithuanians as an ethnic group are considerably older than one thousand years.

The present Millennium celebrates something different. It marks the first time Lithuania was recorded by its proper name in a written historical document. As for the history of Lithuania, it can be traced even further back, to the 7th century B.C. and beyond. However, the earlier writings described the Lithuanians by other names, such as Aesti (*aestiorum gentes*), Aistii, Hestis; this made them more difficult to reconcile with the more recent records.

In 1009, the Quedlinburger Annals (*Saxonicä Annales Quedlinburgenses*) recorded the death of Bishop St. Bruno as follows:

„Sanctus Bruno, qui cognominantur Bonifacius, archiepiscopus et monachus, XI suae conversionis anno in confinio Rusciä et Lituä a paganis capite plexus, cum suis XVIII, VII. Id. Martii petiit cölos.“



° After Poland's conversion to Christianity in 966 A.D., small groups of foreign missionaries started arriving in the pagan regions of Prussia and Lithuania (*pictured*). This bas-relief, showing Bishop Adalbert's arrival, is on the bronze door of the cathedral of Gniezno (relief created in 12 c.).

(St. Bruno, an Archbishop and monk, who was [also] called Bonifacius, was struck on the head by pagans during the eleventh year after his conversion, at the Rus and **Lithuanian** border; and along with 18 of his followers, entered heaven on March 9th).

The Quedlinburger Annals were written from 984 to 1025, in the women's convent of Quedlinburg, a town located not far from Magdeburg. The author's name is unknown. The original Annals have no longer been preserved, but Georg Fabritius of Meissen (1516 – 1571) had copied them by hand in the 16th century; this duplicate set is now held in the City Library of Dresden. In printed form, the Annals were first published by G.W. Leibnitz in 1710.

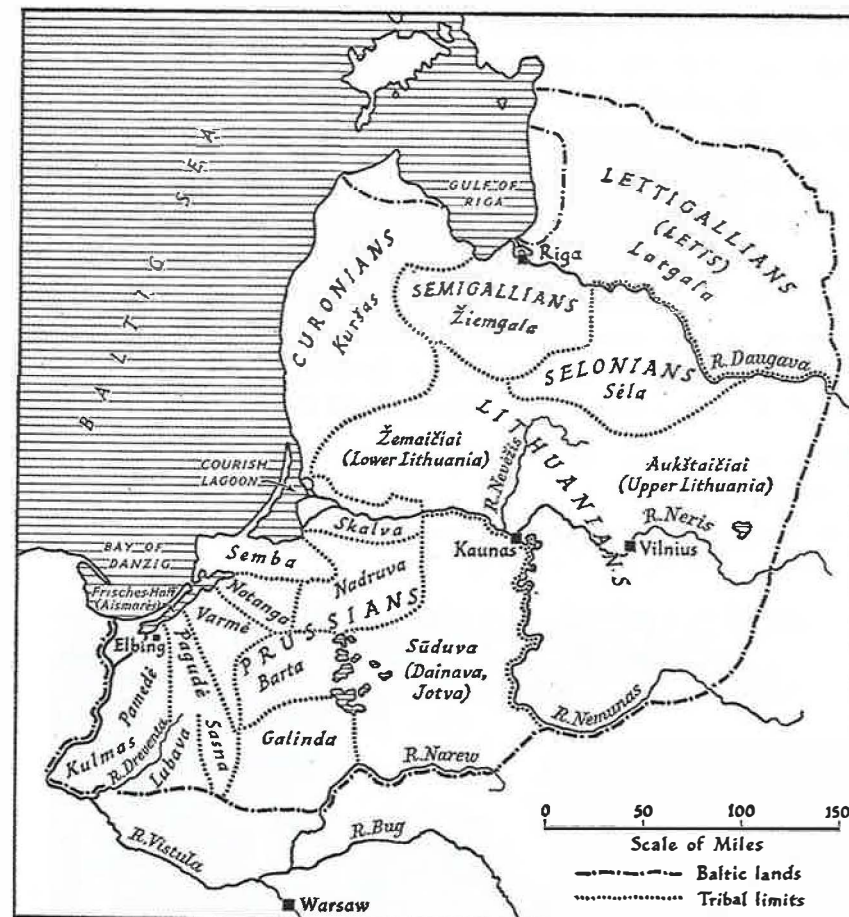
Lithuania was the last European state to adopt Christianity as its religion in 1387. So, one thousand years ago, the Lithuanians and their Prussian neighbours were still practising their own ancient pagan faith, based on animism and the worship of nature.

„Trees and flowers, groves and forests, stones and hillocks and waters were endowed with miraculous life-giving forces... All manifestations of the earth's fecundity were lovingly cared for and protected. The written records from the 11th to 15th centuries repeatedly mention a profound respect for groves, trees and springs and the 'ignorant ones' (i.e., the Christians) were forbidden access to the sacred forests or groves (*sacrosanctos sylvas*). No one was permitted to cut trees in sacred forests, which were referred to variously as *Alka, Alkas or Elkas*¹.

After some unforeseen delays and detours en route, Bishop Bruno of Querfurt arrived in North West Prussia in 1008 or 1009, accompanied by 18 Benedictine monks. For Bruno, the promotion of the Christian religion was not his only task. He was backed by Poland's King Boleslaw the Brave who sought to increase his political influence in Sudavia² and in other parts of Prussia.

¹ GIMBUTAS, Marija (1963), *The Balts*. London:Thames&Hudson, p.193

² Sudavia (*Sūduva*) was one of numerous Prussian tribal regions (see the Map on the next page). Sudavia was sometimes known by its other name, Yotvingia. The area had been usurped by Grand Prince Vladimir of Kiev a couple of decades earlier, in 986 A.D., and Polish princes were anxious to regain their control.



◦ A map of 13th century Prussia and Western Lithuania. - The original inhabitants of this area, known as the Old Prussians, no longer exist. They were ethnically related to the Lithuanians, although there were differences in their languages. As shown here, the Old Prussians were originally divided into a dozen or so tribes living in their own territories. Overrun by the Teutonic Order and its Western helpers during the 13th century, the Old Prussians were finally converted and Germanized. (Gimbuitas 1963, p.23).

At the same time, Bruno was expected to observe and protect the Holy Roman Empire's policies, as practised by Emperor Otto III. (After all, it was Otto who had appointed the Pope of the day).

At first, Bruno had some limited missionary success when he narrowly escaped a Prussian death sentence and only by a

miracle managed to convert „King“ Netimeras, a minor Prussian chief, together with a group of Nemiras's people³ However, the general population - the indigenous Prussians and their Lithuanian neighbours - showed little desire to become Christians.

According to an old legend, the Prussian leaders had urged Bruno to stop trespassing in their country and to cease preaching. Bruno ignored these warnings and continued his missionary activities. He and his team were then arrested and executed.

Another legend claims that Netimeras's brother Zebeden, who was living separately, avenged Netimeras's conversion by decapitating Bruno and throwing his head into the River Alstra.

Either way, Bruno died a tragic martyr's death and was later elevated to a saint.

- LSS Research.

Main sources: *Die Raute*; *Smiltė* and Alfredas Bumblauskas, *Senosios Lietuvos istorija*, R.Paknio leidykla, 2005, p.19.



° „King“ Netimeras is sometimes referred to, as the first known Lithuanian Christian. There are no contemporary pictures of him; but the above 17th century fresco, recently restored at the Pažaislis monastery (Lithuania), shows Netimeras being baptised by Bishop Bruno. As a more recent work of art, this painting does not precisely reflect every detail of life in the 11th century. For example, it was a custom in Bruno's time to baptise new Christians in a tub, although Bruno was also known to immerse some of his converts in a lake. Neither of these practices are evident in the Pažaislis fresco.

³ In his *“History of Bishop Bruno's Preaching”* (about 1020), little known author Vipert claims that 300 Prussians were converted on this occasion.

Vilnius – European Capital of Culture

Harold C. WILSON

*Every year, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe choose one or more cities as the **European Capitals of Europe**. This year, the title was awarded to two cities: the Lithuanian capital Vilnius and the Austrian city of Linz.*

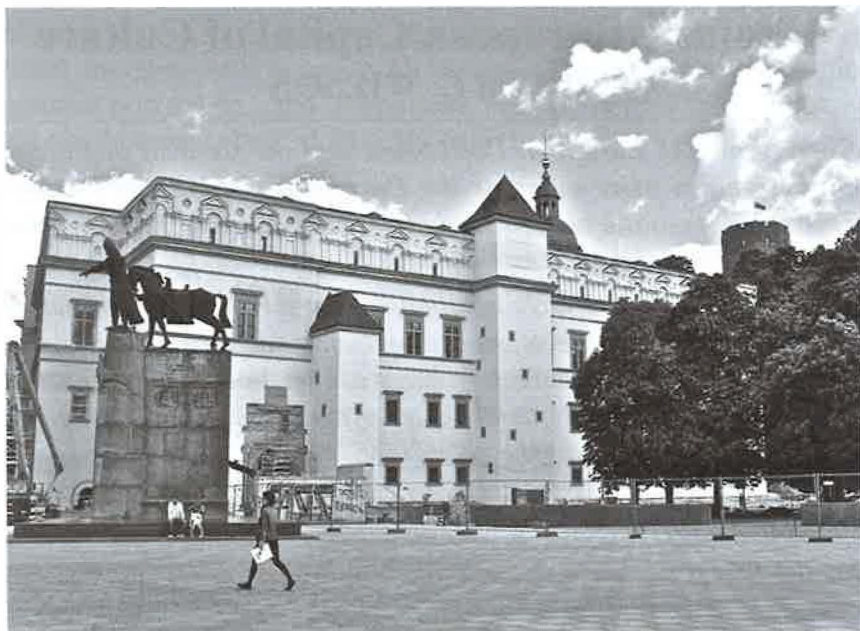
The people of Vilnius have responded with a continuous stream of concerts, 50 art projects, sporting events and numerous other displays of culture. There has been a high public participation. Quite a few of these events are aiming to continue in the medium- and long-term, well past the year 2009.

On this occasion, we have tried to discover the reactions of an individual overseas visitor who comes to Lithuania's capital city for the first time. How does he feel? Below are some impressions of a 70-year-old writer who arrived in Vilnius a few years ago, in search of his family roots – and succeeded in finding them.

I had been longing for this moment for many years – all 70 years of my life! Lithuania: a long history of struggles, glory, nature, fantasy and colours. I could sense it all! I could live it all!

In spite of continuous invasions lasting centuries, the Teutonic knights were never able to conquer Lithuania. After Grand Duke Vytautas defeated the Knights at Tannenberg in 1410, Vilnius began a period of rapid expansion. The medieval Lithuania became one of the largest and most powerful states in Eastern Europe! The little pagan nation of Lithuania once ruled ten times larger Christian lands covering 350,000 square miles, where fifty million people live today.

The ancient city has the characteristics of a cosmopolitan mecca. It is populated with ethnic Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belorussians, Tartars, Latvians, Jews and smaller numbers of other nationals. The city has dozens of beautiful churches and public buildings representing Gothic, Baroque and classical architecture. The „Old Town“ of Vilnius is the largest of any central city area in Eastern Europe. The city's population now is about 542,000.



◦ The historic Sovereigns' Mansion (*Valdovų Rūmai*, pictured above) has been restored in Vilnius, as a major Millenium project.

Photo: Gediminas Zemlickas / *Mokslo Lietuva*.

Early the next morning after my arrival, I was walking the streets of Vilnius. Already many people were promenading the winding cobblestone streets. The young people seemed to be carefree and simply enjoying the city. Outdoor vendors were stationed on the footpaths selling their wares: fresh cut flowers, beads, amber, jewelry, souvenirs and even hand-made apparels. I noticed how clean the streets looked. I could not see litter anywhere!

The people seemed happy, vibrant and on the go. The women, especially, had a statuesque carriage, walking tall, keeping their heads high and proud. Many of the women were in fact strikingly tall! Everyone seemed to have a cell phone. Some people had a command of at least some English, notably, the service staff.

It is apparent that Vilnius is saturated with culture. In a few moments, I passed the Church of the Holy Spirit, the main Russian Orthodox church of Lithuania, located in the middle of a beautiful courtyard. I also saw the main concert hall and the nearby Church of St.Casimir, the oldest baroque church in Vilnius.

It was not long before I was walking north on *Didžioji gatvė* (High street) which seemed to be an extension of *Aušros Vartų* street. I approached the Town Hall, an impressive two storey building built in the 15th century and reconstructed toward the end of the 18th century. At one time, the Town Hall played a significant role in the life of Vilnius: tolling bells would announce the arrival of a king or foreign emissary, the outbreak of a war, the death of a dignitary or any other important event. All types of community activities were held in the vicinity of the Town Hall. It is now an art museum.

History of Vilnius

Vilnius, according to legend, was founded by Grand Duke Gediminas in 1323. Gediminas resided in a castle in Trakai, at the time. One day after a hunt in the deep woods, he and his party set up camp at the confluence of the Neris and Vilnia Rivers. That night, Gediminas had a strange dream. High upon the hill by the River Vilnia stood a huge iron wolf and kept howling with the sound of a hundred wolves.

The next morning Gediminas sent for the pagan priest Lizdeika, guardian of the sacred flame, to interpret the dream. The priest explained the dream this way, „The gods want Gediminas to build a castle on the hill where the wolf was howling. The castle must be strong; and soon a great and powerful city will emerge around it. The city will be most beautiful and will bring glory to Lithuania.“

Gediminas followed Lizdeika's advice and the city of Vilnius was born. Archeological evidence, however, proves that the Vilnius area was inhabited well over 2,000 years ago. Vilnius has an excellent geographical location. Hills and rivers provide protection and the Neris gives access, further down the stream, to Lithuania's largest river, the Nemunas, which empties into the Baltic Sea.

The Republic of Užupis

I next strolled to Užupis, an interesting section of Vilnius, near old town. The Užupis District is like the Greenwich Village of New York City – a Bohemian community where writers, poets, artists and musicians reside. The residents of the area talk about Užupis as their own republic and consider themselves loyal citizens of their community. The Vilnia River acts as a natural border and they can congregate at the Užupio Café to discuss business concerning their Republic.



◦ The „Republic of Užupis“ declared its independence on April 1, 1998. The Republic's central point is the Užupis Angel (*above, centre*). The Republic stages various public events, usually flavoured with humour. (For *Užupis Constitution*, see next Page). - Photo: Algimantas Lekevičius.

Bidding Farewell

During my pilgrimage to Lithuania, I observed the landmarks, monuments, relics and countryside of a Great People. The story of the Lithuanians is a shining light and beacon for mankind. I discovered that the Lithuanian soul is indestructible, and it is impossible to separate it from the land.

Harold C. Wilson (1931-2003) was an American writer, educator, poet and author of seven books. At the age of 70, Harold decided to travel to Lithuania and seek out his own grand-maternal roots. He then wrote and published his eighth, and probably finest, book Lithuania: The Indestructible Soul (Vilnius: Žara, 2002).

Constitution of the Republic of Užupis

1. Everyone has the right to live by the River Vilnelė, and the River Vilnelė has the right to flow by everyone.
2. Everyone has the right to hot water, heating in winter and a tiled roof.
3. Everyone has the right to die, but this is not an obligation.
4. Everyone has the right to make mistakes.
5. Everyone has the right to be unique.
6. Everyone has the right to love.
7. Everyone has the right not to be loved, but not necessarily.
8. Everyone has the right to be undistinguished and unknown.
9. Everyone has the right to idle.
10. Everyone has the right to love and take care of the cat.
11. Everyone has the right to look after the dog until one of them dies.
12. A dog has the right to be a dog.
13. A cat is not obliged to love its owner, but must help in time of need.
14. Sometimes everyone has the right to be unaware of their duties.
15. Everyone has the right to be in doubt, but this is not an obligation.
16. Everyone has the right to be happy.
17. Everyone has the right to be unhappy.
18. Everyone has the right to be silent.
19. Everyone has the right to have faith.
20. No one has the right to violence.
21. Everyone has the right to appreciate their unimportance.
22. No one has the right to have a design on eternity.
23. Everyone has the right to understand.
24. Everyone has the right to understand nothing.
25. Everyone has the right to be of any nationality.
26. Everyone has the right to celebrate or not celebrate their birthday.
27. Everyone shall remember their name.
28. Everyone may share what they possess.
29. No one can share what they do not possess.
30. Everyone has the right to have brothers, sisters and parents.
31. Everyone may be independent.
32. Everyone is responsible for their freedom.
33. Everyone has the right to cry.
34. Everyone has the right to be misunderstood.
35. No one has the right to make another person guilty.
36. Everyone has the right to be individual.
37. Everyone has the right to have no rights.
38. Everyone has the right to not to be afraid.
39. Do not defeat.
40. Do not fight back.
41. Do not surrender.



Double Celebrations



The year 2009 has been the year of double celebrations for the Lithuanians. In addition to their country's name millenium, the capital Vilnius was independently chosen a European Capital of Culture. Scores of huge sporting and cultural events have been staged so far, with many more still to come. Just one of these large shows, the Millenium Song Festival (*pictured*), ran for six days (July 1-6). It featured 40,000 performers from all over Lithuania and abroad. (Photos: D. Dokšaitė [top], R.Vyšniauskas).



Clear-felling the Lithuanian Identity

The smuggling of illegal books into the 19th century Russian-occupied Lithuania helped save the Lithuanian language from extinction. Literature written in Lithuanian was banned from 1864 to 1904, but Lithuania's citizens refused to let it die during the 40-year ban.

A poem that is now considered to be one of the classic works of Lithuanian literature was one of the most popular texts smuggled from the Prussian border during that period. Originally published in 1861, *Anykščių Šilelis* (*The Forest of Anykščiai*), was written by Antanas Baranauskas as a lament to the forest that was cleared near his childhood home.

The intimate relationship between Lithuanians and nature as depicted in the poem was studied by Claire Jansen in 2007, as part of her Lithuanian Honours Scholarship at the University of Tasmania. Ms Jansen compared the classic Lithuanian poem with Australian poetry written during the same period, to see how people from both countries related to their environment.



° Claire Jansen (*pictured*) studied one of Lithuania's most prominent poets as part of her Lithuanian Studies Society Tasmania Honours Scholarship.

- Photo: University of Tasmania.

"Lithuanians see the natural environment and forests in particular, as sacred places and life-giving," Ms Jansen said. "At the time Lithuania was being colonised by Russia and forests were being cleared to make way for development. Lithuanians associated the loss of their forests with the loss of their identity."

Australian poets, who were members of the colonisers, had a different perspective. "Poetry published in Australia during the 1800s described the forest as a threatening thing or as a still-life, like a painting," Ms Jansen said.

Unique Lithuanian Scholarship

The \$5000 Lithuanian Studies Society Tasmania Honours Scholarship funded Ms Jansen's trip to Europe last year to present her research paper at an international conference in Brussels and visit Baranauskas's home; which is preserved in the Anykščiai Regional Park.

Despite Lithuanian studies no longer being formally taught at any university in Australia, research into many aspects of Lithuania continues to flourish in the University of Tasmania. There are not enough students to run undergraduate courses in Lithuanian studies, but an innovative way has been developed in Tasmania to promote postgraduate research into Lithuania and its people. Opportunities exist in many fields, such as history, the environment, literature, sociology, political science, and so on.

One of the incentives for this original research is the \$5,000 Lithuanian Honours Scholarship. It is offered every year to Honours students from any faculty of the university whose thesis involves an aspect of the study of Lithuania and/or Lithuanians.

Although it is the only one of its kind in Australia, this Scholarship receives no income from the governments, educational foundations or any other institutions. It relies entirely on private donations for continued survival. These donations qualify for income tax exemptions in Australia.

Further support is needed now. Please mark your contribution "Donation *for Lithuanian Honours Scholarship*" and post it to Tasmanian University Foundation, Private Bag 40. Hobart, Tasmania, 7001.

- K.G.



EXTRACTS FROM

The Forest of Anykščiai

by Antanas BARANAUSKAS (1835-1902)

Hills stripped of timber, dales shorn of leaves,
In your old beauty who now believes?

Yesteryear's grandeur how did you spend?

Where is that solemn murmur of wind,

When the white woodland's rustling leaves played,

And the tall pine trees in the wind swayed?

Where are the birds, that built their nests here,

Whose happy warbling was sweet to hear?

Where are the beasts and animals brave:

Where are their lairs – cavern and cave?...

Elm, buckthorn, linden, and many more

Tribes of wild saplings thrive in this store,

That only forest-reared people can name...

Where is the forest that once here stood?

Who devastated this sacred wood?...

People loved the forest, of it they sang,

When sons repeated – the echoes rang...

No one hewed timber in this wold now;

People did not touch a dry twig or bough...

Then came Tsar's ranger, ordered surveys:

Placed guards, dug ditches along byways...

Each year the dwellers of neighbourhood

Perforce were driven to clear the wood...

Now but the stump-strewn hills and dales bare

Plaintively skyward day and night stare...

Translated from the Lithuanian by Nadas RASTENIS (1970).

Wood-cut illustrations: J. Kuzminskis.

Source: Baranauskas, Antanas, *The Forest of Anykščiai*. English transl. by Nadas Rastenis, Ed.J.Tininis. 2nd ed. (?) Lithuanian Days, 1970,

VMU: Twenty Years of New Achievements

Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) in Kaunas, Lithuania's second largest city, is a modern example of international academic collegiality. Originally founded in 1922, the University was closed down by foreign invaders twice: by the Germans in 1943 and by the Russians in 1950.

The 1943 German ban was meant to punish the entire nation, because the Lithuanians had refused to form an SS legion for the German war machine. In revenge, the Germans closed all Lithuanian schools of higher learning and sent 46 prominent Lithuanian community leaders to Stutthof concentration camp as hostages. Many VMU graduates and professors were among these detainees.

When the Soviet armies re-occupied Lithuania in 1944, the Kaunas university was opened again, but only for 6 years. It was shut by a directive from Moscow in 1950, charging anti-Soviet resistance. For the following 39 years, the university's gates remained locked; but the spirit of an independent academy lived on. Finally, in the late 1980s, the Soviet political climate warming known as *Perestroika* offered a chance.



* With help from all over the world, lectures resumed at VMU, in 1989.

Lithuanian academics and groups on both sides of the Atlantic started intensive discussions, conferences, planning and reconstruction work. The VMU was formally revived and accepted by the Soviet authorities in 1989. Classes started in the same autumn. The University was initially run by a combined Senate of Reconstruction, consisting of 49 local Lithuanian scholars and another 49 elected from the diaspora. Two Australian Lithuanians served on this Senate for 6 years, 1989-95.

More about VMU today: <http://www.vdu.lt>

Journal Review: A French Delight

What a wonderful publication is *Cahiers Lithuaniens*, translated as *Lithuanian Journal*, an annual French language publication on Lithuania. It is produced every autumn in Strasbourg, under the umbrella of the Alsace-Lithuanian Association!

Issue 9, Autumn [2008], continues the *Journal's* familiar format of dividing its articles into three main headings: History, Culture and Language & Literature. This latest publication includes the following:

History: ° France-Lithuania 1918-2004: Real Friendships and Missed Opportunities.

° French-Lithuanian Relations since 2004.

° Raymond Schmittlein (1904-1974), Bridge between France and Lithuania.

Culture: ° Graphic Arts: the metamorphoses of Stasys Eidrigėvičius.

Language & Literature:

° The Teaching of Lithuanian in Europe.

° Donelaitis, the Greatest Lithuanian Poet.

° The Song of the Ancient Times, Maironis' poem.

° The White Tower.

° Dainalitausch – the language of Lithuanian folk songs.

What rich pickings are contained within. Don't be deceived into thinking 59 pages must mean a superficial treatment of each of the themes is given. Similarly, a cursory glance at the credentials of the authors reveals the relevance and credibility of the positions outlined.

Who better to deconstruct the language of Lithuanian folksongs, to assert that this language is as important as conversational or technical Lithuanian, than the author, Rainer Eckert, Professor of Baltic Linguistics in Berlin. However, his readers don't have to be linguists to find his discourse pertinent; he illustrates his points with simple examples respecting that Balts abroad cherish their folksongs and the richness and vitality of the language contained within.

Examples of his illustrations are interspersed throughout *the Journal* and an article discovers his view of the world, described as mysterious and melancholic.

The history of French-Lithuanian relations continues to be explored having been looked at in previous volumes, although the focus of this volume is on the period from the re-establishment of the Lithuanian State in 1918 to the present. As well as a historical discourse on this period, one of the articles looks at the role of a particular individual, Raymond Schmittlein, in the cultural interactions between the two countries in the middle of the last century. This is a fascinating biographical piece on a little known identity in Lithuanian history, a man who at the age of 30 became the first French lecturer at the University of Kaunas in 1934.



° Pictured above: A poster that was used to advertise „The first Lithuanian Exhibition of Art“, held in Vilnius on December 27, 1906 to January 9, 1907. Originally painted by Lithuanian artist Antanas Žmuidzinavičius, this poster was recently found and reproduced in *Cahiers Lituaniens*, No.8/2007.

Each year, *the Journal* showcases the work of a particular Lithuanian artist; this volume looks at Stasys Eidrigevičius, an artist of Lithuanian/Polish heritage widely known throughout Europe, Japan and Mexico.

To say that the content of this *Journal* is eclectic, is an understatement. Also included is a poem by Maironis, reproduced in both the original Lithuanian and in a French translation.

For those French-speaking Lithuanians, picking up this journal one is invited to follow the heed of Oscar Milosz(1919) who invokes the reader: *“Ce pays, c’est la Lituanie dont le nom remplit ma tête et mon coeur. Je veux vous la faire connaître. Venez! Je vous conduirai en esprit vers une contrée étrange, vaporeuse, voilée, murmurante.”*

Translated: “This country, this is the Lithuania whose very name fills my head and my heart. I want to introduce her to you. Let me transport you to a strange, misty, veiled, murmuring country.”

How can one resist such an invitation. For more information, go to www.cahiers-lituaniens.org

Reviewed by Millie McLEOD.

Millie McLeod, B.A.Hons, Dip.Ed.(Tas.), MAPS, Reg’d Psych., is a Student Counsellor at St.Hilda’s College, Mosman Park (W.A.).

The Robert Schuman Foundation

Cahiers Lituaniens has the support of the Robert Schuman Foundation. Established in Paris in 1991, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this French think-tank works to promote the unity of Europe and the European values and ideals, both within the European Union’s frontiers as well as beyond. The Foundation, which is a centre renowned for its research on the EU, has provided itself with the task of maintaining the spirit and inspiration of one of the “Founder Fathers of Europe”, namely Robert Schuman (1886-1963), a native of Alsace-Lorraine. Robert Schuman was a noted French statesman: he was the Prime Minister of France twice, the Minister of Finance and the Foreign Minister, as well as he first President of the European Parliament.

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Lithuanian Literature in the Light of Independence

Audinga PELURITYTĖ-TIKUIŠIENĖ
 University of Vilnius

The evolution of Lithuanian literature over the past decade can be linked to political and cultural developments in Lithuania and Eastern Europe. The first and evident starting point of changes in Lithuanian literature is the summer of the year 1988, when unofficial meetings of Sajūdis took place, followed by the first official general meeting of Sajūdis on 22–23 October 1988. This was the first period of the Lithuanian literature's liberation from the shackles of totalitarian ideology and censorship. Censorship had been one of the most secret, influential and implacable powers of the *nomenklatura*, which had hindered the natural evolution of literature throughout the years of Soviet occupation.

In Lithuania, Soviet censorship was particularly strict, due to certain geographical and political factors. One factor was



° Vilnius: A lane in Old Town.

Photo: Algimantas Lekevičius.

Lithuania's position on the periphery of the USSR: it was felt that any dissident activity here had to be ferociously attacked and subdued. Therefore, throughout the period of Soviet occupation it never developed some of the aspects that it did in Russia.

Another factor was Lithuania's status as the only Catholic majority country in the USSR, which meant that in its Christian life it undoubtedly attempted to maintain, even if secretly, its existentially important link with the Vatican. Only now is the phenomenon of censorship in Lithuania starting to be studied in depth, at least from a literary studies point of view.

It is important to note that with the advent of Sąjūdis, national rebirth and independence, it was precisely the literary press that was the first to be bold enough to abolish censorship: the weekly „Literatūra ir menas“ (*Literature and Culture*) and the monthly „Pergalė“ (*Victory*) – now called „Metai“ (*The Year*) began to publish the works and memoirs of anti-Soviet partisans and to print literature produced by Lithuanians abroad. During the Soviet occupation, literature produced by Lithuanians abroad was strictly banned; the penalty for copying it, possessing it or distributing it was imprisonment and various social sanctions.

Today we can only smile as we hear poet Marcelijus Martinaitis telling us how he spent his nights writing out, by hand, collections of poetry by Kazys Bradūnas, Henrikas Nagys and Alfonsas Nyka-Niliūnas; and how giving them to other people to read could have made him the target of lengthy persecution and questioning at KGB headquarters. But that's precisely the way it was, right up until the summer of 1988. Today we should be grateful in no small part to Lithuanian literary figures and publishers (who were quickly joined by other daily newspapers and weeklies) for keeping alive the spirit of Independence, and the courage to proclaim it at the risk of one's own personal freedom.

At the beginning of the new Independence period, and now, after 20 years, this achievement of literary figures and other creative artists can be evaluated in various ways. Twenty years ago, Lithuanian poets were seen almost as prophets of freedom who used powerful words to tell people an important truth. Now they tend to be seen as almost perpetual snivellers, fretting over nothing.



◦ Vilnius: Town Hall.

Photo: Algimantas Lekevičius.

With the advent of the market economy for the writing profession as well as every other, there is a new challenge for practitioners of the poetic art: some writers may be able to win over a mass audience, but the poet is left all alone up on the hill with his poems, there being no audience at the bottom to hear them, neither with sighs of approval, nor tears.

„Poezijos pilnatis“ (*Full Moon of Poetry*) (1989), an anthology of poems by one of the greatest of all poets of the exodus, Bernardas Brazdžionis (1907–2002) published in Vilnius in a print-run of a hundred thousand, is a vivid example. Crowds of thousands of people carrying flowers and singing hymns greeted the poet Bernardas Brazdžionis on his travels through Lithuania. The climax of his book presentation took place during the Poetry Festival in Cathedral Square. It was an encounter of the two streams of Lithuanian literature and psychology: that of those who had emigrated, and that of those who stayed at home.

After the welcoming of Brazdžionis' book, books by other Lithuanian émigré authors were received just as warmly, but in smaller print-runs: anthologies by Henrikas Nagys (1920–1997), Kazys Bradūnas (1917–2009), Alfonsas Nyka-Niliūnas (born 1919), Liūnė Sutama (b.1945), Algimantas Mackus (1932–1964), Kostas

Ostrauskas (b.1926) and Marius Katiliškis (1949–1980). Interest in émigré Lithuanian literature has still not completely ebbed away, but it no longer causes the same sensation.

Now we are at the point where we can say that since achieving Independence many good books have been read and their effect can now be assessed in the perspective of time passed. By around the year 2000, the literature of Lithuanians abroad (whether of the *žemininkai* or *bežemiai* movement) had already lived through its heyday of popularity, and the active and very obvious vitality it had at the beginning of Independence had noticeably waned. This effect would be defined by a meaningful encounter of a reader with a new book or publication via periodical literature; by meetings of the author and critics; and by live creative contexts. Meanwhile the lasting effect of émigré creative output strengthens over time. This cannot be denied.

Many authors of the younger generation who are writing today, such as prose writer Renata Šerelytė (born 1970), have lamented that they have only experienced the true flavour of *žemininkai* works after the event, as it were – several decades after the appearance of one or another of the important works, such as „Baltos drobulės“ (*White Shrouds*) (1958) by Algimantas Škėma (1911 – 1961) or „Neornamentuotos kalbos generacija ir Ausintiniai“ (*The Unadorned Speech Generation and Ausintiniai*) (1962) by Algimantas Mackus. The real effect of the *žemininkai* was felt by writers who were born in the 1930s and 1940s: Vytautas Povilas Bložė (born 1930), Marcelijus Martinaitis (born 1936), Sigitas Geda (1943–2008), Tomas Venclova (born 1937) and Judita Vaičiūnaitė (1937–2001).

This is the generation that copied out these works by hand during the censorship period, in secret, lending books to each other. This took place during an era when the creative output of the *žemininkai* was still having an active effect, when these works were still the latest word in Lithuanian literature, when it could inspire new endeavours of language and imagination. And it did.

Today, when reading the works of Martinaitis, Venclova, Vaičiūnaitė, Bložė and Geda, it is possible to find quite a few common ideas and themes.

These authors themselves do not deny these influences, they are even proud of them. The repatriation of Lithuanian émigré literature, led by Brazdžionis, became a very important psychological stimulus of the national renaissance movement toward the end of the 20th century. It was the most important steps in the evolution of Lithuanian literature: a return to the ideas and values of the Western world.

Another important step in the evolution of Lithuanian literature was the publication in Lithuania of the writings of people who had been deported to Siberia and of people who had participated in the resistance against Soviet rule. From the standpoint of today, it could be guessed that in an assessment of which development has had and continues to have the greatest influence on today's literature and readers, particularly young Lithuanian readers – the literature of the exodus or that of the deportees, partisans and resistance movement participants – the latter would probably be greater.



◦ The Cathedral Square: A famous landmark in the City of Vilnius.

Photo: Algimantas Lekevičius.

Although the latter literature may not be equal to the literature of the exodus in terms of cultural and aesthetic value and influence, it remains particularly important litmus of truth and humanity. Dalia Grinkevičiūtė's (1927–1987) account of the sufferings of Lithuanians by the Laptev Sea (*Lietuviai prie Laptevų jūros*), first published in Lithuania in the journal "Pergalė", had, and continues to have, an electrifying effect on readers.

"Amžino jšalo žemėj" (*In the Permanently Frozen Land*) (1989), a book of accounts and memories of deportees, reached Lithuanian readers at the same time as Brazdžionis' "Full Moon of Poetry". (The former was published in Russian by Moscow dissidents in 1979 in issue No. 2 of the journal "Pamiatj" (*Remembrance*) and it then reached the West and was published in France).

A very interesting phenomenon that has not been studied sociologically is that, at the time of Brazdžionis' trip across Lithuania, Grinkevičiūtė's text appeared to be too non-conventional, and it seemed to melt and become invisible in the sea of euphoria about independence.

Grinkevičiūtė's documented memoirs are the product of true existential tribulations. They form a creative work about the limits of human decency being tested under inhuman, but not imaginary, conditions.

There is a sequel to these memoirs in "Gimtojoj žemėj" (*In the Native Land*), a chapter in the book "Lietuviai prie Laptevų jūros" (*Lithuanians by the Laptev Sea*) (1997). Even though it is not a literary gem (while not entirely without some of the features of good literature), this collection of memoirs cuts a definitive dividing line Soviet literature from present-day literature, which is the true, naturally developing Lithuanian literature.

With its content drawn from real life and true experience (including scenes that would have previously been maximally censored), this work, in its own way, also stands in opposition to the experiments of Western modernism, which are from another era and have somewhat fatigued their readers with their subjective, psychedelic world view.



◦ The city planners of Vilnius have managed to create a modern quarter (pictured), without scarring the historic Old Town. Photo: Alg. Lekevičius.

Nor was the Soviet 'socialist realism' writing style an embodiment of truth: it only imitated various politically distorted forms of reality. One can speculate as to why a publication that went almost unnoticed at the time of its release has since come to be considered as a demarcation point, a political and cultural dividing line of Lithuanian literature. However, it is important to understand that around the year 2000, there was an increase in discussions by authors and scholars or critics of literature about literary works based on real experience and true life events, accompanied by critics' responses, votes and synopses of annual evaluations.

These matters are reflected in surveys of authors and literary critics in such journals as "Metai" (*The Year*), "Literatūra ir menas" (*Literature and Art*) and "Šiaurės Atėnai" (*Athens of the North*). The outcomes of recent international book fairs illustrate the fact that, in general, more attention is attracted by various published formats of letters, dialogues and essays imparting authentic experience than by literary works of a more highly developed artistic composition.

In the first decade of Lithuania's new independence, 1990 - 2000, the new books that were published, and their reception in the periodical literature, bear witness to the tendency just mentioned.

“Žydintys lubinai piliakalnių fone” (*Lupines Blooming against a Background of Hill-fortresses*) (1999), Sigitas Geda’s diary-style essays, were read with pleasure and discussed widely; likewise his weekly texts in “Šiaurės Atėnai”. Also widely read and critically acclaimed were Jurgis Kunčinas’ (1947–2002) true to life novels portraying a panorama of everyday dialogues and passions, “Tūla” (1996) and “Blanchisserie, or Žvėrynas-Užupis” (1997). Meanwhile, Petras Dirgėla’s (born 1947) complex historical novel “Litorina, Litorina!” (1996) was met almost in silence; and Juozas Aputis’ (born 1936) novel “Smėlynuose negalima sustoti” (*No Stopping in the Sand*) (1996), which was written secretly over 16 years during the Soviet occupation period, received some rather serious criticism from the younger generation of writers.

This criticism, although it received some professional rebuttals, nevertheless raised issues of authenticity, realism and credible motivation, demanding that literature respond to the genuine needs of today, and that it be motivated by a direct relationship with the truth, even when dealing with the distant past. It is very interesting to note that literature which took a more sophisticated literary approach in dealing with these issues was received by readers and critics more favourably.



* Old Town Vilnius: St. Anne’s Gothic-style church (*left*), the Bernardines Church and the Adam Mickiewicz memorial. Photo: Algimantas Lekevičius.

Leonardas Gutauskas’ (born 1938) poetic novel “Vilko dantų karoliai” (*Wolf Teeth Necklace*) (first part published 1997), received a lot of interest. It is written in a rather complex stream of consciousness style, but it provides an authentic account of this artist-author’s life experiences, his childhood and his coming of age. Producer Algimantas Puipa produced a film based on this novel, which received international recognition (1997).

Also very popular with readers was Romualdas Granauskas’ (born 1939) book “Raudona ant balto” (*Red on White*. 2000), written almost in a diary style. This book was not a true diary, but an imitation of a diary. Critics alleged that this was by no means Granauskas’ best book, and they debated the reasons for its great popularity. They had to admit that that even though the events related were not authentic, the aesthetic way in which they were presented made the book intriguing and very appealing.

The same may be said about “Knyga” (*Book*) (1996, 1998) by Juozas Erlickas’ (born 1953), a stalwart of Lithuanian literature. This famous book received the National Prize and a warm reception from readers and critics. That was an unusual book of a mixed, intermediate genre: nether purely serious prose, nor purely humoristic, but a bit of both. Erlickas’ book reflected the situation of real life, injected with a dose of black humour: the difficulties associated with living in Lithuania, the decline in the standard of interpersonal relations, the excesses of politicians.

Over the past decade, possibly because of the lack of true life stories in the literature of the Soviet occupation period, journalism has flourished, even to the point where it starts to poach on the territory of belles-lettres. Authors are pulled into the gravity field of the news media, from whence they begin a flirtation with potential readers; however, that flirtation is controlled by the mechanisms of market economics. These days, Lithuanian literary critics are generally pushed to the margins of literature evaluation, while the arena of literary life is subjected to attempts at books being advertised as if they were television shows, with effective appearances and controversial topics. A book is presented in such a way as to induce readers to purchase it as a consumer item in high demand.



° The new Art Gallery of Vilnius. - Photo: Algimantas Lekevičius.

Serious literature, faced with this advertising and public relations pressure, is left with little to boast about, unless perhaps its own dignified silence and the acclaim of professional critics in the pages of literary journals.

In reality, serious literature, in attempting to cope with free market mechanisms, faces an uneven playing field with mass readership, purchasing power, demand and quality. Literature of dubious quality is advertised in all the newspapers and lifestyle journals, while information about the work of quality authors has difficulty in reaching the eyes and ears of the mass readership.

This is particularly so with poetry. Poets Sigitas Parulskis (born 1965) and Aidas Marčėnas (born 1960) may have achieved some level of mass interest, but these are isolated examples. Ričardas Gavelis (1950–2002) and Jurga Ivanauskaitė (1961–2007) occupied a risky position in modern Lithuanian literature. In their works these authors managed to embody the new literary ideas and to gain the approval of a mass readership. Jurga Ivanauskaitė's life was an example of intense polemics, centred on receiving severe literary criticism despite being favoured by readers.

There had not been such mass reader adoration in Lithuanian literature since the publication in the 1970s and 1980s of the poetic dramas of poet Justinas Marcinkevičius (born 1930), who was both the official and unofficial favourite during the Soviet era. However, during the course of the first decade after regaining Independence, the adoration of Marcinkevičius' work began to be replaced by scepticism and not always fair critical articles (guided by political, not analytical considerations). continued until his publication of "minora" (*Minor Songs*) (2000), a selection of lyrical miniatures, which was received very favourably by both readers and critics.

In this anthology, Marcinkevičius renounces the title of national bard and pathfinder, so typically offered to poets, such as B. Brazdžionis, who helped lead Lithuania to Independence. In more recent times, the subtle poetry of Donaldas Kajokas (born 1953), Antanas A. Jonynas (born 1953), Nijolė Miliauskaitė (1950–2002), Aidas Marčėnas, Daiva Čepauskaitė (born 1967) and Rimvydas Stankevičius (born 1973) does not have a political or societal dimension, which is seen as strength. Meanwhile, the poets Sigitas Parulskis and Kęstutis Navakas (born 1964), who once sought a more dynamic relationship with the readers, these days more often write essays and novels than poems.

It may be that writing in prose about encounters with objective reality, which began with the Independence era, may for the first time in the history of Lithuanian literature push poetry to the margins. Nevertheless, in present day Lithuanian prose a poetic style of narrative is dominant, even in the work of young prose writers such as Renata Šerelytė, Marius Ivaškevičius (born 1973), Andrius Jakučiūnas (born 1976) and Laura Sintija Černiauskaitė (born 1976).

Translated from the Lithuanian by Gintautas Kaminskas.

Audinga Peluritytė-Tikuišienė is a Docentė (approximate Australian equivalent: Associate Professor) in the Department of Lithuanian Literature, University of Vilnius, Lithuania.

Gintautas Kaminskas, B.A. Hons., M.A. is a professional freelance translator who lives in Kaunas, Lithuania.



° Viktoras Simankevičius, *Indian*, c1974.
Bronze, approx. 210 x 110 x 80 mm. Private collection.

Viktoras Simankevičius – Graphic Artist

<Born St Petersburg Jan. 27, 1921 - Died Melbourne June 29, 2006>

by **Mindaugas SIMANKEVIČIUS**

Melbourne

As a small boy, I'd often watch my father prepare and draw his wonderful illustrations and images on our small kitchen table. Fresh paper laid out with his favourite lead pencils, gum eraser and Staedtler E-blade scalpel, inks and brushes laid to the top and right. Whilst listening to short-wave radio signals from the far reaches of the globe, in some alien language, his ritual was to light up a filterless cigarette, take a solid drag then rest it in his favourite art-deco glass ashtray. Facing the sheet, his eyes would then half close, partly from the smoke rising from the ashtray, and part enveloped in the mystery of his interpretation of the subject at hand, his face would contort a little and his half-closed, half-blurred eyes seemed to me to declutter the subject from all superfluous details and leave an understanding of the basic fabric of the matter at hand.

When ready, he would then place a few soft pencil dots scattered about the paper, marking out a map known only to him, orientating the image to its defining extremities.



° Viktoras Simankevičius

The pause before committing his line seemed pregnant with analysis, like a golfer preparing the million-dollar putt, placing all decision before the act of drawing. And then the moment I savoured, when pen or brush caressed paper – and when begun, he would then work fast, not furiously, but gently and quickly, never correcting a committed line, ever moving, sometimes above the paper, rehearsing the next difficult line, then repeating the motion back onto the paper for perpetuity.

At first I couldn't understand the forming shapes but quickly from holes left in the black areas, positive lines added would explain the negatives and uncannily, defined subjects appeared, amazing me at the magic. A quick flourish here or there, a pause for reflection and then possibly the tiniest of marks would then be added. He'd then sit back, pick up his almost burnt-out butt, take a rewarding drag, and observe the latest image.

When he knew when he'd hit a good one, his face would be as wonderful as the image he had just created.

Every now and again, half way through a spontaneous drawing, a short "Ai" would escape from his quietness and I'd note that the utterance coincided with an elbow drawn as a sharp corner, or a blob of ink dripped unexpectedly, or a shadow line would be too thick – resulting in a not-quite-perfect image for his own liking – but then he'd work with it, reforming his next moves, and finally completing a wonderful image, even with a slight imperfection.

It seemed as if the cigarette was a timing device for his image, and although the period was short, his images were never flippant. The quickness of his capture made postures come alive with poetry of movement and suggestion: people would never be caught in boring posed positions, they would be engaged in activity, from angles encountered in real world action; gestures would have purpose, shoulders would carry the burden of life.

All of his work bar the few studies of direct portraits and from life-drawing classes were pulled from observations and memory, not from direct models or photographs. The images were never political, nor were they strewn with complex social commentary. Viktoras's drawings from his early years would be complete



◦ Viktoras Simankevičius, *Karalaitė (The Princess)*, c1970, Ink wash. 750 mm x 500 mm. Private collection.

images of people, either in clusters or individuals but then throughout his career, these groups would simplify to torsos and finally, the focus was totally on the head.

He once commented, "... My rapturous attention is for human heads. It's the truth, isn't it, that human character is mainly in the face and eyes. Everything else, I feel is just a denouement."

Viktoras's love of black and white endured throughout his life - colour was a rare occurrence and he commented that "in black and white, all shades of life are possible".

His experiments with differing techniques and textures brought a wonderful development of style to his portfolio: from ink to bromide collage, from brush to Xerox copiers, his creative thinking left very striking images, powerfully imbued with high contrast techniques of lino-cut and woodblock techniques. These techniques were learned from his studies at the L'Ecole des Artes et Metiers in Freiburg in Germany in the late 1940's along with a cultural upbringing from Lithuania previous to the war.

A few early pieces survive from his days at college, none from his early youth in Vilnius, but almost all from his period in Australia to which he emigrated in 1949. His first series of brush and ink images were of scenes of life in Melbourne during the 1950's and early 60's, pen and ink work in the late 60's to early 70's with a major ink wash series exhibited in 1972. These 30 or so works were created on wet sheets of paper with applications of indian ink via sponges, fat brushes and an assortment of other implements. All images were abstracted portraits of spontaneous and imaginary people - heads of regal personalities through to the commoner, from manic to the sensitive. The brush style was reminiscent of Japanese sumi-e techniques.

Soon after this Viktoras began working on a wonderful series of metallic sculptures, using his inimitable style of linework, he pushed it from a two-dimensional world into three.

As technology evolved into the 80's, Viktoras began to use some of the reproductive methods to his advantage, working with bromides and Xeroxes, using cotton wool, tea leaves, amongst other textures for drawing and line formation, creating portraits imbued with wonderful shading or simplicity.

His love of languages encouraged him to create delightfully illustrated art books, using his own translations from Ancient

Greek to Lithuanian, attempts from Hungarian to Persian, as textual subject matter. These books were in editions of four, photocopied from original paste-ups, neatly folded and held together with tape, now fragile and precious.

Viktoras hung up his pen in the early 1990's. One of his last books was to illustrate for his grandchildren his interpretation of the classic Lithuanian children's rhyme "*Du Gaideliai*" (Two Little Roosters). These last images remain as a superb specimen of his delightful spontaneous style and through these wonderful images, his genuinely warm personality can be remembered.



**Viktoras Simankevičius, *Abbotsford Brewery*, x1956.
Linocut. 245 mm x 200 mm. Private collection.**

A hard-back collection of over 80 of his works was released in 2008 to commemorate his work and life the year after his passing. It is available from various sources throughout the world. For details, please visit www.dnagallery.com.au

Mindaugas Simankevičius has been working in the graphic design field for over 30 years and is Managing Director of The Imaging Services Group in Melbourne. For further information, he is contactable on 03 9427 7575 or min@imaging.com.au

Tasmanian Research Recognized

Last year (2008), the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science awarded five major prizes in science and arts to Lithuanians abroad. Dr. Algimantas Taškūnas OAM, of the University of Tasmania, received one of these prizes for disseminating Lithuania's achievements and for fostering academic links between Lithuania and other countries.

Dr. Taškūnas is the Editor of *Lithuanian Papers* and the founder of the Lithuanian Studies Society (LSS) at the University of Tasmania in 1987. During the past 22 years, the Society has been encouraging academic research dealing with Lithuania. This has led to impressive results (3 PhD, 7 Honours theses and 5 major research reports completed in Tasmania alone).

Sydney Lithuanian Information Centre (www.sllic.org.au).



° At the prize-giving ceremony in Vilnius Academy of Sciences, on November 14, 2008. *Pictured, from left*, the prize winners: historian Dr. Bronius Makauskas (Poland), engineering academic Prof. Romualdas Kašuba (USA), philosopher Prof. Kęstutis Skrupskelis (USA); Lithuania's Minister of Education Algirdas Monkevičius, Deputy Minister Virginija Būdienė, Dr Algimantas Taškūnas (Australia) and Prof. Kęstutis Jonas Juodkasis (who accepted a prize on behalf of his son, physicist Dr Saulius Juodkasis in Japan).
- Photo: Gediminas Zemlickas / *Mokslo Lietuva*.

Lithuania Needs More Friends

An excerpt from Al Taškūnas's prize acceptance speech, 14/11/2008



I thank you sincerely for remembering us in faraway Australia. Indeed, this prize does not belong to me alone, it belongs to all Australian Lithuanians – the onetime refugees and their families. By now, we have spent more than half a century under the Southern Cross, but we have not stopped loving our birth-place; and we continue sharing Lithuania's joys and troubles.

While living abroad, we have discovered that the world knows very little about Lithuania and its people. That's why Lithuania needs many more friends among the non-Lithuanians - people who understand our problems and can speak up for Lithuania in times of need.

It has been wonderful to meet you all, face to face, here in Vilnius. It is important, however, that you understand why we fled to the West. We were not economic migrants, seeking a richer life; we escaped as a last resort: to save our lives from the Communist horror.

Do not envy us now: we had to put up with a great deal, too. We had to hide our tears and laments from the world. We had to learn that it is not easy to be strangers in a strange land.

In spite of it all, we must look ahead. We must all be united and we must use every opportunity to show Lithuania's positive side to the world.

Pictured above: A. Taškūnas (right) receiving his prize from Lithuania's Minister of Education, Mr Monkevičius. -Photo: G. Zemlickas/Mokslo Lietuva.

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Finding Lithuanians in the National Archives of Australia

Josef ŠEŠTOKAS

Sale, Vic.

The National Archives of Australia (NAA) are a rich source for anyone wishing to trace the entry of Lithuanian's into Australian life. Over the last couple of years I have "trolled" the national archives, somewhat more diligently than the casual archives user. In the process my knowledge of the archives has grown. It is knowledge I am happy to share.

The NAA holds Commonwealth Government records on behalf of Commonwealth Government departments and other entities. The Departments of Immigration and Labour and National Service created most records relevant to Lithuanians entering Australia, as displaced persons (DP's) between 1947 and 1953. Many people access these records to satisfy proof of identity requirements of the modern bureaucracy. Others do it to satisfy their curiosity, trace relatives, construct a genealogy or for serious research.

NAA holds literally millions of records across repositories in most Australian capital cities. An extensive database of the records, called *RecordSearch*, is accessible through the Internet. Begin at <http://www.naa.gov.au> and follow the links to *RecordSearch*, to begin exploring, or go to Facts sheets to learn more about the archives. Due to the popularity of immigration records, NAA has created a *NameSearch* function, and is progressively adding hundreds of thousands more immigration records to the database. NAA charges fees to digitize and copy records. For anyone looking at just a few records about any individual the fees are not unreasonable. This service allows records to be viewed from your home computer, instead of perhaps having to travel across the country. Records are never transferred from one archive repository to another, so if you want to see a record yourself you must order the record and visit the reading room where the record is stored. Through experience I have learned that a *RecordSearch* or *NameSearch* enquiry will not necessarily disclose all records

about an individual. Documents most likely to be found are selection and naturalization files.

Selection files typically contain a card, interview notes, medical reports including chest x-ray negatives and passport style photographs. Between 1947 and 1953, the style of documentation changed considerably. UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) and IRO (International Refugee Organisation) papers sometimes exist within these files. Naturalization files contain forms such as a Declaration of Intention and Application for Naturalization, which show where a person lived and worked in their early years in Australia.

Selection and naturalization files are generally found at the NAA Canberra. Completion of the naturalization process triggered the creation of another file, identifiable by its series name, B78. These files usually contained a person's immigration card and photograph. An applicant for naturalization had to surrender their Certificate of Registration of Alien, which was a booklet each DP was obliged to carry. The booklet contained a photograph and documented the alien's changes of address. B78 files are kept by NAA at Melbourne and can be found in *RecordSearch* or *NameSearch*.

Now I will explain where to find files that a *RecordSearch* or *NameSearch* enquiry will not presently disclose by a name search. A card set, known as the 'Bonegilla Cards' exists at NAA Canberra. As far as I can tell, a card exists for nearly every displaced person, man, woman or child, who passed through the Bonegilla and Bathurst Reception and Training Centres. During the 1949 coal strike some DP's bypassed the established reception centre, due to 'emergency measures', but cards exist for these people, too.

A card has a photograph and basic details of a person's arrival and departure. For some children, particularly babies, there are no photographs. The series name is A2571 and can be found by entering A2571 in the *RecordSearch* 'reference numbers' enquiry box. Some 828 items exist within the series. The 317 boxes of Bonegilla cards for DP's are listed alphabetically. NAA will find and copy a card from this series if you send a request by email, to ref@naa.gov.au

NAA began recording these cards individually, and have done Aa to Adamko, but the enormity of the task seems to have stalled the process. Series MP1492/2 exists at NAA Melbourne and holds boxes of alien registration documents of migrants to Australia, by nationality and in alphabetical order. There is one box, 313, of Lithuanians documents, but this has been split into bundles, alphabetically. Some of the files are for Lithuanians who were deported, died, or otherwise "Left the Commonwealth". I like to think of these records as the 'orphans', which did not otherwise find a home in the bureaucracy. Nominal Rolls recorded the names, and other particulars, of all passengers aboard IRO transports, which carried DP's to Australia. They can be found, usually, by use of the search term 'nominal roll', followed by the name of the transport.

All the aforementioned records were maintained by the Department of Immigration. I have found Department of Labour and National Service records difficult to trace. There are some card sets in the NAA Brisbane and NAA Adelaide, which may have belonged to this department.

Searching the archives, from your home computer, or at an NAA reading room, is an adventure. Staff at NAA reading rooms are very helpful. Professional archive research agents will conduct a search, for a fee. Good luck with your search!

Josef Šeštokas is a Victorian police officer and an active Baltic researcher. His book Welcome to Little Europe: DP's and the North Camp will be published late in 2009. E-mail address: jsestokas@bigpond.com

Lithuanian Anzacs

Did you know that some Lithuanians had served in the A.I.F. (Australian Imperial Force) during World War One? Three such Anzacs were named by Birškys & Birškys et al., in *Baltic Peoples in Australia* (1986): Kalinauskas [William Kalinovskiy], Stasys Urniežius, [Stanislaus Urniarz] and Žygas [Stanley Zygas]. Elena Govor (2005) confirmed these three identities and traced ten further Lithuanian Anzacs: G.B.Brenka, K.Čepkauskas, W.F.Jaks, J.Lovriaen, F.Mačiūnas, A.J.Mekenass (Makeness, ?Mikėnas), A.I.Miškinis, A. Puris, A. Sutkis, K.Val(i)ukevičius. Further research into this little known field of Lithuanian Anzacs is continuing at the University of Tasmania.

– LSS Research.

Why Should You Learn Lithuanian?

As a tourist, you may wish to get to know the Lithuanian people better. As a lawyer, business manager, historian or another kind of a professional, you may be planning to link your career with Lithuania. Maybe you want to study Lithuanian because it is, along with Latvian, the only surviving Baltic language. Or you may be simply curious, ready for something new, different and intellectually fulfilling. Lithuanian will satisfy that need for you.

Lithuanian is noted for its extremely conservative and philologically interesting linguistic forms. For linguists working in comparative Indo-European linguistics, a knowledge of Lithuanian is almost a must. For all other students exploring the Lithuanian language, it is an exciting adventure, full of unexpected discoveries and challenges.

- Based on *Susanne PISCHEL*, and *Leonardas DAMBRIŪNAS et al.*



° Lithuania is 14,000 km away from Tasmania; but this does not stop the Lithuanian Studies Society at the University of Tasmania from offering annual Lithuanian language classes. *Pictured:* Some of the students of the 2009 beginners' class, (from left) Dr Al Taškūnas (teacher), Celia Reader, Alice Nichols Howe, Mary Sarah Kontogoni, Adela Ristovski, John Marro-ne, Patricia Taškūnienė. *Not in this picture:* Robert Budzul, Claire Jansen, Pippa Strickland, Ignas Vaičiulevičius. - Photo: University of Tasmania.

Atlantic Charter: A Promise or a Dream?

Algimantas P. TAŠKŪNAS
University of Tasmania

During the Northern summer of 1944, thousands of Lithuanians fled to the West. They were escaping from the Soviet Russian armies that were pushing back their German adversaries toward the West. The Russians were about to occupy Lithuania. In their haste, some Lithuanian refugees carried very few personal belongings; some were merely clad in thin summer clothes.



* Refugees rarely have the chance to pick and choose their destination. Their primary aim is to get away from the imminent danger and move by any means available, in the opposite direction. The Lithuanian asylum seekers did the same: they ran anywhere, as long as it was West.

These refugees were convinced that their absence from Lithuania would be brief. They expected to be back home within a few weeks and certainly before the winter, because they firmly believed that the Allies would stop the Russians at the Lithuanian border and then restore Lithuania's independence.

As will be explained later in the present article, this widespread belief in the imminent liberation from the West had persisted in Lithuania for quite some time. The idea was shared at all levels of the Lithuanian population, and had been nurtured throughout the three years of German occupation of the country (1941 - 1944).

By the time the Russian troops reoccupied Lithuania in 1944, thousands of Lithuanian refugees had reached Germany, Austria and other Western countries. The people who remained in their native land were to endure another 46 years of terror and fear. For them, the promise of freedom turned out to be but a mirage.

Once firmly re-established in Lithuania, the Soviet authorities wasted no time. On August 1, 1944, they announced a total conscription of all male Lithuanian residents born between 1909 and 1926. The signing up of conscripts was speeded up by the strong-arm backup of the NKVD (the predecessor of the KGB secret police) and by "sribai"⁴ troops.

Lithuania's male civilians had to face Hobson's choice: either be conscripted into the Soviet Red Army, or go into hiding and join the resistance forces ('partisans') that were forming in the woods. Anti-occupation organizations, such as the Lithuanian Freedom Army and the Kęstutis troops, were already carrying out armed resistance. They were hoping that their liberation struggles would not be needed for long, and they would soon receive the support of the democratic Western countries (Dél masinés ..., 8).

To everyone's disappointment, the Western Allies kept away. So, how did this Lithuanian liberation myth start in the first instance? Who was responsible for dispersing the erroneous belief so pervasively? Surprisingly, this is one far-reaching aspect of World War II that does not seem to have been researched thoroughly.

The Start?

To start this investigation, we should wind back the clock by three years, to August, 1941. At that stage, World War II had been raging for almost two years. The Germans were winning on many fronts and they had a large slice of Europe under their control. The fast-moving *Blitzkrieg* was now heading towards Moscow.

Right before the start of World War II, Lithuania had declared its neutrality and strictly adhered to this policy until it lost its independence (cf. Černiauskaitė *et al.*, 2008, p.133).

⁴ *Sribai* was the nickname for KGB auxiliary detachments and their crews. These units were largely manned by local collaborators.



Eight days before Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia jointly started World War II, Germany's Foreign Minister Ribbentrop (*standing, left*) and Russia's Molotov (*seated*) signed a treaty of mutual friendship and nonaggression. On the same day, they secretly divided the three neutral Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) between them. Stalin (*centre, in a light coat*) looked happy.

This did not stop the Russians and the Germans from overrunning Lithuania, by prior arrangement between them. Having survived the first Russian invasion (June 1940 – June 1941), Lithuania was now under the German occupation. In their earlier secret dealings, the Germans had sold Lithuania to the Soviet Union for seven and a half million US dollars in gold. However, the Russian – German partnership collapsed when the Germans attacked the Soviets on June 22, 1941. German troops quickly occupied Lithuania and kept moving East, toward other territories.

As soon as the Russians were driven out of the country, the Lithuanians proceeded to restore their independent state; but the Germans had other plans. The Provisional Lithuanian government was dismissed, and German administration was installed. Arrests and mass murders of Lithuania's citizens were sweeping the country. National organizations, such as *Lietuvių Aktyvistų Frontas* (LAF) and all political parties were banned. Strict censorship of media was introduced. The widespread persecution and pains inflicted by a typical dictatorship followed.

This quickly triggered off the Lithuanian resistance against the German occupation. Large underground organizations emerged, including the Lithuanian Front, Lithuanian Unity Movement and the Freedom Fighters.

Smaller anti-Nazi groups were also active throughout the country (cf. Bubnys 1991, 18-24). We know the titles of at least 21 clandestine newspapers that were published at various centres and distributed widely. No doubt there were more. Three clandestine radio transmitters operated in Kaunas and for a long time defied detection.

The Atlantic Charter

Against this background, the leaders of the United States and Great Britain, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, met at a joint conference aboard a cruiser off the coast of Newfoundland. On August 14, 1941, they issued an eight-point declaration, to be known as the Atlantic Charter, which expressed the post-World War aims of the US and Great Britain.

Principle 3 of the Charter stated that the UK and USA "wished to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them" (Atlantic Charter...1978, p.826). This was reinforced again in Charter's Principle 6, stating that "after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny they hope to see established a peace ... which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want" (Ibid.).

On January 1, 1942, twenty-five other countries, including Australia and the Soviet Union, endorsed the Atlantic Charter.

New Hope 1

To a small nation like the Lithuanians, the Atlantic Charter suddenly opened up a new hope of salvation. Oppressed in turn by two seemingly invincible big powers, Lithuanians were now looking forward to a peaceful restoration of their basic human right of self-rule. The principles of the Charter were translated, disseminated and repeated, again and again, by the mushrooming Lithuanian underground press and by the underground radio, throughout the German occupation from 1941 to 1944.

Lithuanian resistance workers of various denominations were convinced that the Allies would re-instate Lithuania's independence promptly, and possibly before the end of World War II.

This view was also shared by VLIKas, the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania. VLIKas urged the population of Lithuania to boycott the German conscription, and appealed to all Lithuanians to remain in their country. They were needed to stay and fight, under their own Lithuanian command, for a reinstatement of independence, they were told.

They would have to hold the Soviets back at the Lithuanian frontiers until the Germans withdrew and the Anglo-Saxon armies landed to free them.

The leaders of Lithuanian resistance kept expressing their firm belief in the promises of the Atlantic Charter. This conviction was strengthened by the repeated British and US public statements that they did not recognize the incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR (Bubnys, 1991, p.91).



* The Lithuanians, including their underground leaders, were convinced that the American and the British forces would liberate Lithuania, by landing on the Baltic coast, just as they did in Algiers (1942, pictured) and in other places. It never happened, the Atlantic Charter notwithstanding./

In 1944-45, for example, thirty Lithuanian students in a boarding house issued a declaration that "freedom and the rights of men were sacred things...as stated...in the Atlantic Charter. We therefore have not even considered the possibility that the Allies might **not** continue to carry on the fight until that freedom and those rights had been restored" (Daumantas 1975, 40).

When the war ended in 1945, the cruel Soviet rule in Lithuania continued unchanged, and the Atlantic Charter remained silent. Nevertheless, the native people were still hoping for a belated liberation, as highlighted by the partisan's desperate mission to the West and the Lithuanian people's desperate appeal to the Pope. (Daumantas 1975, *passim*).

On August 20, 1945, a group of Lithuanian resistance workers was listening to a clandestine broadcast in Milkalinė forest. The BBC announced that the Americans had just dropped an atom bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. On hearing the news, the Lithuanian patriots concluded that the enormous might of this new weapon would radically change international relations.

The Lithuanians felt that, fearing the atom bomb, the Soviet Union would be forced to withdraw from the countries it occupied (Daumantas 1975, 85-86).

The possibility of an armed liberation was echoed in the highest Soviet ruling circles. In June, 1948, Antanas Sniečkus, secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party, wrote to A. Zhdanov, the secretary general of the Central Committee in Moscow. In his report, Sniečkus described, in some detail, the mass deportations of May 22-27, 1948. He wrote, *inter alia*:

"In all districts, the bourgeois nationalists have sought to create a panic among farm workers, labourers and intellectuals. With this aim, they are spreading provocational rumors that all Lithuanians will be deported, that a war is imminent between the Soviet Union and America/England [and] that is why the Russians are deporting Lithuanians, because they fear [a repetition of] 1941". (Rudis 1994, 259).

Gradually, the hope of liberation started to wane. On March 28, 1949, Lionginas Baliukevičius, a Lithuanian partisans' area commander, wrote in his diary:



"The licence to kill": Stalin kisses the Sword of Honour sent to him by Britain's King George VI, at Teheran Conference, on November 28, 1943. Facing Stalin is Churchill (*left*). Russia's Foreign Minister Molotov is on Stalin's left. The die was cast: Innocent Lithuanians were doomed to die.

"People are looking at the West and they are searching for the tiniest glimmer of hope. But the West is cold. As if the Baltic States had never existed. If you are big and powerful, the justice is on your side". (Baliukevičius 2002, 132).

When the Korean war broke out in June 1950, the Baltic people believed that it "was the world war which they had all expected and [which] would end with the defeat of communism" (Bower 1989, 119). But it did not happen.

Altogether, the Lithuanian partisans continued their resistance for a total of 9 years. They kept their fading liberation hopes alive, to the end; then, betrayed and forgotten, they finally gave up in 1953.

Allied landings

Actually, the Allies did land on the Baltic coast. But they came five years too late (1949), in very small numbers and with a different mission. Their primary task was to gather intelligence for the Western powers, rather than help the desperate freedom fighters.

A white German speed boat No.S208, hired by the British Secret Intelligence Service, landed the first six men at Palanga in the early hours of May 5, 1949. Three of the six died in the shooting that followed; another one died fighting the Russians six months later. The remaining two turned out to be Soviet infiltrators and they safely crossed to the other side (Bower 1989, 103).

A second Western team arrived later on the Palanga beach, and all were killed by waiting NKVD [KGB] officers (Bower 1989, 106).

On another occasion, the Allied men were completely duped when the Soviet agents masqueraded as Latvian partisans, took the visitors under their wing, and offered accommodation in a "partisans' bunker".

There were a few other minor landings and airborne parachute drops, of a similarly small size and with similarly tragic results.

Future research

Quite a few books and theses have been written, analyzing the Russian territorial expansion during World War II and the Atlantic Charter. However, the Atlantic Charter's intention for Lithuania and for the other Baltic States remains unclear.

It is this aspect that calls for more thorough research. We need more facts and we need clear explanations, at least in three directions:

Firstly: What steps did the Allies take after World War II, to fully honour their Atlantic Charter promises, specifically in respect of Lithuania?

Secondly: It seems that certain persons in Lithuania had consistently worked for three years, 1942-1945, keeping alive the promises of the Atlantic Charter and the supposed Allied liberation of Lithuania. Who were these persons? Who paid them? What was their motivation? If there was no intention of keeping the Atlantic Charter promises, were these people deliberately misleading the Lithuanian population? Why?

Thirdly: What lessons can other nations learn from the Atlantic Charter – especially the smaller nations who sooner or later have to seek protection from the big powers?

After Lithuania joined NATO (in 2004), some observers wondered, whether NATO would really protect this small country in the event of an attack by a super power. As Queensland historian Tom Poole put it, "Would Brussels... trade London or Paris or even the Lithuanian-populated Chicago for Vilnius?" (Poole 2000, 24).

The scope for this research is wide and fascinating. And the final findings may well be different from what we expect.⁵

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⁵ This article is based, in part, on a paper the author presented at the 14th AABS Conference, at the University of Melbourne on 6 September, 2008. AABS is an abbreviation for the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies

Letters to the Editor

Distant, but Committed

Please accept my sincere thanks for the *Lithuanian Papers*, as I take up my work as Ambassador to the Holy See. Unfortunately, Rome is still some distance from the Baltic nation states, including Lithuania, but I note the vibrance and commitment displayed in the *Lithuanian Papers* and I commend you on this activity.

Tim FISCHER, AC

Australia's Ambassador to the Holy See,
The VATICAN.

A Wonderful Gift

Thank you very much for *Lithuanian Papers*. We are very happy to receive this journal – it is a wonderful gift.

During our recent visit to Lithuania, we had a marvellous time, getting to know some friendly people, camping in the woods, driving around such a beautiful country and learning a lot of your history.

The picture of Trakai in your latest *Lithuanian Papers* has reminded us of the day we had visited there. We brought back a scoop of sand to our home and put it in a glass bowl, to stand a candle on our table. In this way, our friends can share this great memory with us.

Kengo & Yoko FUJITA,
Yokohama, JAPAN.

Turning the Other Cheek

I was inspired by your article on „Lithuanian missionaries in Africa“ (*LP*, 22/09, pp.5-10). You would think that, after 50 years' of persecutions and mass murders by foreign invaders, the Lithuanians would be full of hatred and revenge. Instead, they open up their hearts and help where even the angels fear to tread.

Margaret DAVIDSON,
Brisbane, Qld.

° *The Editor welcomes letters, especially brief ones, at P.O. Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006 and reserves the right to condense or edit them.*

Book Reviews

Baltic Accession to the European Union

VAN ELSUWEGE, Peter, *From Soviet Republics to EU Member States: A Legal and Political Assessment of the Baltic States' Accession to the EU.* 2 vols. Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2008, pp. 584. ISBN-1875-0451.

Former Estonian President Lennart Meri once claimed that Estonia's border to the east had been, through the centuries, "the eastern border of the European legal system, and will so remain". The accession of Estonia, along with Latvia and Lithuania, to the European Union in 2004 affirmed, in effect, this historical contention and signified the final 'Return to Europe' of the three Baltic republics.

In this magisterial work, Peter Van Elsuwege has narrated and analysed the extraordinary passage of the Baltic countries from forcibly incorporated auxiliaries of the Soviet empire into fully independent sovereign states, welcomed in Brussels at the highest levels of the European Union. With an exceptional grasp of EU regulations, treaties and procedures, in addition to a close familiarity with the main secondary literature on European expansion and integration, Van Elsuwege takes the reader through the principal steps in the laborious and protracted accession process of the Baltic republics from applying for admission in 1995 until the accession treaty was signed in April 2003. Along the way, the Baltic states had to commit themselves to the cardinal EU prerequisites of a pluralistic democracy, human rights and a free market economy, as well as harmonising their legal and administrative culture as best they could with the *acquis communautaire*, the whole body of EU rules, political principles and judicial decisions which comprised a staggering 85,000 pages. Ratification measures proved difficult, as many Baltic citizens feared a loss of national sovereignty in joining the EU, but procedural manoeuvring and somewhat one-sided referenda were utilised to overcome minority opposition. As well, Catholic priests on voting day in Lithuania advised worshippers to go straight from Mass to the polls, and at least one Lithuanian supermarket chain offered a free bottle of beer to voters.

By May 2004, formal membership in the European Union was an accomplished fact for the three Baltic republics.

In the author's view, the Baltic lands are gradually finding their 'specific niche' in the EU and are managing to cope, if uneasily, with their historically difficult neighbour, Russia. The danger always exists that sensitive Baltic-Russian issues might spill over and damage the emerging EU-Russian relationship. For instance, Moscow has consistently refused to accept the Baltic states' position on their legal 'continuity' with the pre-war republics or that the Balts suffered 'occupation' and 'annexation' (not voluntary incorporation) in the Soviet Union from 1940. Contemporary Russian leaders have clung to their mythical view of the 1939-40 period and have ignored so-called 'phantom pains of the past' unless Baltic assertions and acts directly clashed with cherished Russian historical beliefs, such as the Red Army's 'heroic' role in liberating Estonia from Nazi oppression which authorities in Tallinn implicitly questioned by removing in 2007 a prominent Soviet war grave monument, known as the 'Bronze Soldier', to a military cemetery. Moscow was irate.

The minority issue also inflames Russian sensibilities. In the immediate aftermath of independence, Latvia and Estonia, in particular, severely restricted citizenship and voting rights for the large population of Soviet-era immigrants. The European Union's attempts to pressure the Baltic republics into liberalising their citizenship requirements met with some success, but Van Elsuwege estimates (2007) that almost one-fifth of the population of Latvia and Estonia still cannot vote in European parliamentary elections. Language requirements are also a bone of contention, with Riga, for instance, extending language prerequisites beyond official positions into private professions; even dental assistants and masseurs face dismissal if they cannot achieve adequate proficiency in the national language. As a result, a "democratic deficit" exists in these two republics, according to the author.

Lithuania, in contrast, has granted citizenship and voting rights to most of its permanent residents, but it also has a much smaller non-ethnic population than the other two Baltic states. Vilnius has also negotiated post-war border agreements with Moscow and enjoys a flourishing trade relationship.

Most notably, Lithuania has reached an accord with Russia on transit arrangements for the Kaliningrad enclave, with multi-entry documents available for frequent Russian travellers. Despite unresolved energy problems, amongst other bilateral issues, Van Elsuwege still contends that Vilnius remains Moscow's "preferential partner in the Baltic region".

The author is to be congratulated for the many useful tables, detailed annexes, website references and copious citations that make his two-volume work an indispensable source on EU-Baltic relations, although it is curious that so few Baltic or Russian language sources appear in his bibliography. It is also worth noting that these volumes, based on Van Elsuwege's doctoral dissertation at the law faculty of Ghent University (2007), suffer from repeated usage of acronyms and an emulation of EU bureaucratic 'legalese', with such jaw-breaking verbiage as "... the mere transposition of the original derogation ... contained in Annex VI to the Act of Accession as regards Directive 96/92 to the new Directive 2003/54 could be validly adopted on the basis of Article 57 AA" (p. 331). A few errors also creep into the text, for instance the Chernobyl nuclear disaster occurred on April 26, 1986, not sometime in October, and Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the CPSU on March 11, 1985, not in April (pp. 41-42, 95). Moreover, this impressive analysis of the Baltic States' accession to the European Union is generally discussed outside the political context of the time and prominent personages in the process receive little attention. In other words, the patient reader must fill in much of the missing background material. The author's intention, however, is clearly to concentrate on legal issues over political factors in the accession process.

Despite the above nit-picking, this extremely valuable history and reference work deserves to be on the shelves of every serious library with an interest in the contemporary Baltic republics and their relationship to the European Union. I suspect, however, that these volumes will appeal mostly to specialists in the field, and not to a wide reading public. **Reviewed by Thomas POOLE.**

Thomas R. Poole, (Princeton), M.A. (Kansas), Ph.D. (Mass.) is a former Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Queensland. His specialities include Russian-Australian relations and the Baltic region.

*Ann Frank and Lionginas Baliukevičius:
What do they have in common?*

BALIUKEVIČIUS, Lionginas. *The Diary of a Partisan.* Translated from the Lithuanian by Irena Blekys and Lijana Holmes. Vilnius: Genocide and Resistance Research Center in Lithuania, 2008. Soft cover, 182 pages.

The title of this review was meant to get the reader's attention. Now follows the answer to the question, "What does Ann Frank and Lionginas Baliukevičius have in common?" A couple of similarities come to mind. First of all, both of them kept diaries that depicted their life in the 1940's. Both lived under oppressive conditions in countries under a foreign occupation.

Of course, the world knows very well about Ann Frank, but is yet to learn anything about the diary of Lionginas Baliukevičius (1925 - 1950) that describes a year in the life of the postwar Lithuanian resistance fighter who operated under the code name of Dzūkas. His diary lay for forty years in the KGB archives in Vilnius, Lithuania, and shows the tragic personality of an idealist. The book reflects his views, longings and aspirations against the background of bitter resistance and fighting.

The book is well summarized on the back cover: "Out of the context of everyday life crystallise general statements about essential issues for the survival of the nation and the state. Having accurately pointed out the causes which brought Lithuania to its knees in 1940 and during the first Soviet occupation, Baliukevičius analyses the political, national and moral issues of the postwar times and reflects on the problems and everyday lives of the partisans".

The book consists of five sections: Foreword by Algis Kašėta, General Editor of the Lithuanian language edition, Introduction by Guntis Šmidchens, University of Washington, Seattle, USA, the Diary itself, Glossary and List of code names compiled by Kašėta.

In the Foreword, the reader is reminded that the 1944-1953 partisan resistance in Lithuania against the Soviet occupying power is little known in the West. Very little news about their heroic efforts penetrated the Iron Curtain.



* A group of First year Lithuanian medical students, at an Anatomy tutorial in Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas (VMU), on March 6, 1943. Lionginas Baliukevičius is standing, *first on the left*. – He would have hardly guessed on this day that, less than two years later, he would have to live in the forests and defend his country against foreign invaders.

The Foreword also notes that about 20,000 partisans died over the decade. An additional 120,000 people were sent to hard labour camps or imprisoned where many perished.

Algis Kašėta notes that Baliukevičius analyzes the vital political, national and moral issues of postwar times, and that his understanding of the international and domestic situations was very clear. "Like all of the rest of the country, following closely world developments on the radio he awaited signs of hope from the Western democracies, if not of military action, then at least of moral and political support" (p. 8).

The Soviet occupants, unable to annihilate the fighters by force alone, organized secret operations with the assistance of the MGB-MVD. Newly recruited spies and agents were signed up and deployed. The primary targets were the partisan leadership. One of them was Lionginas Baliukevičius-Dzūkas who died a hero's death on June 24, 1950.

He was given the highest partisan award posthumously. After Lithuania regained its independence, he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and received the Order of Vytis Cross, First Degree.

Convinced that the diary will contribute greatly to the understanding of the history of the armed resistance, the publishers have gone against the author's wishes not to publish the diary. The published book also contains photographs of his family and his comrades.

Because of the ever present danger that the diary might fall into the hands of the enemy, Baliukevičius wrote only in passing about some important aspects of the partisans. The diary contains very few names of places, and people are referred to by code names.

The diary itself starts on June 23, 1948. The last entry is dated June 6, 1949. In the diary, Baliukevičius expresses his great love for his motherland. The diary also reflects the problems of everyday life of the Dainava partisan district in Southern Lithuania. The Diary contains 69 dated entries. During the first nine months the number of entries ranged from 1 to 8 per month. March, 1949 was his most productive month, with thirteen entries.

To give the reader a taste of his writing style, I want to quote a few entries from the book. I should also note that the diary translators Irena Blekys and Lijana Holmes did an excellent job in capturing the letter and the spirit of the diary.

November 12, 1948: "It is absolutely quiet, outside and in the bunker. Everyone is asleep and I am on guard, as usual, alone in my torment and in my thoughts. Some commentator in London is lecturing coolly and rationally about the fate of the Ruhr industries. Oh, those English politicians! They talk and talk and they buy and sell everything, even whole nations. If only they talked less, maybe today would have been different" (p. 65).

January 9, 1949: "Banadas, Scout and Maple were killed a few days ago. The last two were fairly new partisans. It looks like the Russians discovered their bunker from the bloody tracks left by the wounded Engineer." (p. 71).

March 13, 1949: "...everyone agreed with my proposal to publish, as soon as possible, a bulletin directed towards the intelligentsia. It was intended to be our first attempt at a more candid presentation of our organization's mission and ideas" (p. 87).

The May 22, 1949 entry in the diary describes the election of the district leader. Dzūkas was one of the three candidates and in a secret ballot he was elected:

"I am now the leader of two hundred and fifty living and about a thousand dead partisans, a ruler of the living and the dead" (p. 160).

One of the briefest entries is dated May 26, 1949:

"Today I finished reading Tolstoy's *Resurrection* and his short story 'In the Caucasus'. What a great writer he is and his books are a pleasure to read! He's been dead for a long time now, but his books will live forever" (p. 174).

I would like to say something similar about this *Diary of a Partisan*. The last entry was sixty years ago and he is no longer among us, but his love and dedication to Lithuania remains a shining example forever.

Reviewed by Romualdas KRIAUCIŪNAS.

Romualdas Kriaučiūnas, Ph. D., is a clinical psychologist and journalist. He regularly writes editorials for the Lithuanian daily "Draugas", published in Chicago, IL, USA.

Much More Than a Travel Book

SMIEDT, David, *From Russia With Lunch: A Lithuanian Odyssey*. St. Lucia, Qld.: Queensland University Press, 2008. 234 pages. ISBN 9780702236563.

In spite of what the main title suggests, this book is really all about Lithuania and will be riveting reading for anyone with any Lithuanian connections. That is not to say that it will not appeal to any other reader, since it is informative and amusing and thoroughly researched, with a real understanding of Lithuania's history and an insight into the character of the Lithuanian psyche.

The writing is evocative and reveals the author's personal connection to the country:

"...the scenery as we dropped into Vilnius slackened my jaw and tickled my neck. Twenty-eight percent of the country is forested and there are over 3000 lakes in Lithuania's 65,000 square kilometres. From above, this topography results in not so much a patchwork but a finely

beaded wall hanging resplendent with intricate stitching, deftly formed fringing and the chance to bust out terms that the vast dryness of Australia rarely occasions. There were glades, there were dells, there were meadows, there were spits which extended like sandy tendrils into passive seas, It was as if all my isthmuses had come at once".

Apart from the author's witty yet penetrating observations, what is so appealing about his writing is that he reveals an affection for the places and people about which he is writing, as well as a genuine admiration for their appearance:

"...One of the most alluring is the Drama Theatre, the façade of which is a fluid masterpiece of concrete and glass topped by a sculptured trio of black stone muses with gold faces. Exquisite and aquiline, each –tragedy, comedy, drama – leans toward the street as if they have a secret to share.

Of equal allure are the Lithuanian women.....The place is a goddess factory. Somewhere in the Vilnius backblocks is a facility pumping out sapphire-eyed Kate Beckinsales and Heidi Klums on an alternating roster".

Apart from descriptions of people and places, the book is full of anecdotes, historical references and conversations with people met in bars and cafes. *The Sydney Morning Herald* summed it up well: "Some of the sharpest, wittiest and most genuinely funny observations you'll find in contemporary travel writing".

Reviewed by Irena (Vilnonytė) GRANT.

Irena (Vilnonytė) Grant studied piano at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She started performing at the age of 9 and was a regular performer on the ABC's Young Australia programme. She is currently President of an aspirant community radio station - World Music Radio - and is the coordinator of the Lithuanian community of Northern Tasmania.



Above: An ornamental page marker, from a new book by NEKRAŠIUS, Jonas, *Lithuania in Bookplates, 16th to 21st century* (Bilingual: English and Lithuanian). Šiauliai: Šiaurės Lietuva leidykla, 2009. ISBN 978-9955-863-19-9.

A Book of Many Facets

SUBRENAT, Jean-Jacques (Editor), *Estonia: Identity and Independence*. Translated into English by David Cousins, Eric Dickens, Alexander Harding and Richard C. Waterhouse. Amsterdam – New York: Rodopi, 2004, pp.310+VIII. ISBN 90-420-0890-3.

This is another book in the series „On the Boundary of Two World: Identity, Freedom and Moral Imagination of the Baltic States“. Jean-Jacques Subrenat, a French diplomat and Ambassador to Estonia 1998-2002, has co-opted 31 eminent Estonian historians and writers to produce essays for this book. Subrenat's skilful, or at times perhaps lucky, choice has resulted in a wonderfully readable collection covering the whole history of Estonia that traces the national awakening and the development of the Estonian identity.

Following the foreword by former President Meri, the editor explains the „Why“ of this „book with several facets“. He takes Estonia as a case to study the links between language, culture and identity; the experience of foreign occupation and the desire for independence.

The book is in four parts: 1) From the origins to mid-19th century. 2) The national awakening and the building of an independent state. 3) The Soviet period. 4) The Singing Revolution and the independence regained. This sequence almost guarantees that, once you start reading the book, you find it compelling to continue on and try to find out what happens next.

Part One starts with a discussion of the genetic identity of the Estonians and the history of the Finno-Ugrians' DNA. The period from the BC-millennia to the 12th century AD is covered next, followed by the 13th to 16th centuries. The first part ends with a chapter on the Reformation through to the National Awakening, 1520 to 1850.

In the second part of the book, Eero Madijainen's contribution on Estonia and the World is one of the most interesting papers, taking the reader from the last years of the 19th century to the fateful year of 1939 and the Hitler-Stalin pact.

In between the essays, there are exchanges of opinions and ideas by such erudite men as Kross, Kaplinski and Rummo. Elsewhere, astute historians and journalists pose provocative questions, e.g., „Was the long German occupation „*the 700 years of slavery*’, perhaps a good thing?“ Or, „What if we gave the Russians an autonomous *canton* somewhere in the NE of Estonia?“

The third part of the book gives a good overall picture of what happened during the Soviet years. It reflects upon the survival of Estonian identity and culture during the Soviet era, „...One way for resistance to further the aims of the national culture was to hollow out the system from the inside“.

The national identity and culture of the Estonians who had lived in the West between 1944 and 1991 are also discussed. There are short contributions by some of them.

It is hard to believe that over 20 years have passed since the Singing Revolution. I was there! I spent just over 4 weeks of that heady summer of 1988 in Estonia. It was my first visit in 44 years; and I remember very vividly the events described in this book (pp.249-252). The large rally *Eestimaa laul* (Song of Estonia) is described, and so are the demands by all three Baltic States to leave the Soviet Union. The events of the late 1980s and early 1990s are also reviewed: the restoration of independence, the process itself, the outcomes and the side-effects.

The book ends with a discussion between Jüri Luik, a diplomat, and J-J. Subrenat, the book's editor. They talk about globalisation, the EU, NATO, national identity and other allied subjects.

There is also a list with brief biographies of the 31 co-authors; and an excellent chronology of Estonia, from ca.9500 BC to 2004 AD.

A book of many facets indeed and warmly recommended.

Reviewed by Ilmar KALA.

Ilmar (Mark) Kala is a contributor to Estonian periodicals. He first arrived in Tasmania in 1948. He later moved a few times between NSW and Tasmania and finally settled in Hobart in 2003. He reads a great deal, likes birdwatching and Mozart. He has written a book about the birds of the Blue Mountains.

Books on Vilnius

A recent book on Vilnius by Laimonas Briedis (*Vilnius: City of Strangers*, Baltos Lankos/CEU Press, 296 pp.) has received critical international acclaim. A fun-to-read book, it deals with the city's rich and multi-cultural history through the words of people who visited the city over the centuries since the founding of Vilnius by King Gediminas in the 14th century. Reviewing the book, the British magazine "The Economist" described Vilnius as "an example to others - a contested city, but not a divided one".

Another interesting book, this time presenting the multi-faceted Vilnius to the German-speaking world, is "The iron wolf in a baroque labyrinth. Awakening Vilnius" (*Der eiserne Wolf im barocken Labyrinth. Erwachendes Vilnius*, Picus 2009) by Cornelius Hell. The "iron wolf" is a symbol of Vilnius. In the legend about the founding of Vilnius, the howl of a mighty "iron wolf" is heard far afield and prophesises the future worldwide fame of Vilnius.

Sydney Lithuanian Information Centre (www.slic.org.au)

Books Worth Reading

Every time you go to your public library, you should ask for books chosen from this list. If a title is not readily available, ask your library to borrow it for you from another library, or buy it:

Angus, M. (1975). *The world of Olegas Truchanas*. 3rd edition (or any other edition). Hobart: OBM Pty.Ltd.

Banks, A. (1991). *Lithuania's environmental problems*. Sandy Bay, Tas.: TUU Lithuanian Studies Society.

Gimbutas, M. (1963). *The Balts*. New York: Praeger, and London: Thames and Hudson.

Kazokas, G. E. (1992). *Lithuanian artists in Australia, 1950-1990*. Edited by Jane Arms. Melbourne: Europe - Australia Institute.

Sabaliauskas, A. (1993). *We the Balts*. Transl. M.Bakšytė-Richardson. Vilnius: Science and Encyclopedia Publishers.

Tarvydas, R. (1997). *From amber coast to apple isle: Fifty years of Baltic immigrants in Tasmania, 1948-1998*. Hobart: Baltic Semicentennial Commemoration Activities Organising Committee.

Taškūnas, A.P. (2005), *Lithuanian Studies in Australia*. Hobart, Tas.: TUU Lithuanian Studies Society. ISBN 1 86295 273 6.

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Lithuania - Main Facts

Location: in Europe, on the Eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. Lithuania borders Poland (103.7 km) and Kaliningrad (290 km) to the southwest and west; Latvia to the north (610 km); Belarus to the east and south (653.5 km) and 99 km along the Baltic Sea.

According to the National Geographical Institute of France (1989), the geographical centre of Europe is in Lithuania, 24 km N-West of Vilnius.

Area: 65,300 square kilometres (25,212 sq. miles), about the size of Tasmania or West Virginia. Distribution: 54% agricultural lands, 30% forests, 2% roads, 3% developed lands, 4% waterland, 7% other.

Time: GMT + 2 hours or AEST less 8 hours. When it is 12.noon in Vilnius, it is 8.00 p.m. in Sydney and Hobart.

Population (2004): 3,384.900 and decreasing. Distributed between urban 66.77% (2,260,200), and rural 33.23% (1,124.700). Women make up 53.3% of the total population. Average life-span 71.9 years.

Population density: 51.8 per 1 square km.

Literacy rate: 98 per cent.

National language: Lithuanian, an ancient Indo-European language of the Baltic group. Lithuanians use a Latin-based alphabet of 32 letters.

Capital city: Vilnius (established in 1323, population 554,400).

Other largest cities (by population): Kaunas 358,100; Klaipėda 185,900; Šiauliai 128,400; Panevėžys 114,600; Alytus 68,800.

National currency: LTL = Litas, equals 100 centas, pegged to the Euro = 3.4528 LTL. Recent exchange rate, AU\$1 = 1.70 LTL (approx).

Visitors: About 3.5 million tourists visit Lithuania every year.

Travel: No entry visas are required for Australian citizens planning to visit for less than 90 days.

Ethnic groups: Lithuanians, 81.6%; Russians, 8.2%; Poles, 6.9%; Belorussians, 1.5%; Ukrainians, 1%; Jews, 0.1%; others, 0.7%. Altogether, people of 115 different ethnic backgrounds live in Lithuania.

Form of Government: Parliamentary republic. – Lithuania has been a member of the European Union and NATO since 2004.

Head of State: President, elected for 5 years. Current President is Dalia Grybauskaitė, elected in May, 2009 as a successor to Valdas Adamkus.

National assembly: Seimas (parliament), consisting of 141 members who are elected for 4-year terms.



Religion: Predominantly Roman Catholic (estimated 80%). A number of other religions are also practised: Lutheran, Evangelical, Reformed, Russian Orthodox, Judaic, Old Believers, Sunni Muslims, Karaims, etc.

Chief Products: Agriculture, forestry, fishing, light industry.

GDP, % growth (2006): 7.5%.

Exports (2006): 38,811 mil. LTL **Imports (2006):** 53,073 LTL mil.

Per capita annual income: US\$7,300.

Greatest distances: East-West 373 km, North-South 276 km.

Highest hilltops: Juozapinė (293.6 metres), Kruopinė (293.4m), Nevaišiai (288.9 m).

Rivers: Total 722. Largest rivers - Nemunas (937.4 km, 475 km of which is in Lithuania), Neris (509.5 km, 234 km in Lithuania), Venta (343 km).

Largest lakes: Drūkšiai (4,479ha), Dysnai or Dysnas (2,400.9 ha), Dusia (2,334.0ha). Deepest lake: Tauragnas (60.5 m). Longest lake: Asveja (21.9 km). Altogether, there are over 4,000 lakes in Lithuania. Of these, 2,830 are larger than 0.5 ha, covering a total of 880 sq.km.

Climate: Temperate, between maritime and continental. Mean annual temperature is 6.7 degrees Celsius. Average January temperature in Vilnius is -4.9 degrees Celsius; July average, 23 degrees Celsius. Annual precipitation, 744.6 mm. Humidity, 78%.

- **Sources:** *Lithuania in Figures 2007*, Vilnius: Statistics Lithuania.

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