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THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME AUSTRALIA

Lithuanian Diaspora:
An Interview Study on the Preservation or Loss of Pre-World War Two Traditional Culture among Lithuanian Catholic Émigrés in Western Australia and Siberia, in comparison with Lithuanians in their Homeland

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of Notre Dame Australia

2008

Submitted by Milena Vico

Declaration of Authorship

This thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other institution.

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

_____	_____
Candidate's Name	Date

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ABSTRACT

This study is designed to ascertain the cultural changes which have taken place over a period of fifty years within three distinct Lithuanian communities. Of these three, two communities –one in Western Australia and the other in Siberia –were part of the post-World War Two (WWII) diaspora. The third is still living in Lithuania.

I set out to determine the extent to which, during the period of fifty years covered by this study, cultural practices, values and beliefs have been maintained and lost by those who participated in the interviews carried out as part of the methodology of this thesis. This study is an historical empirical investigation which employs qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. In this way, it determines the extent of the retention or loss of those core markers which I have identified as constituting the *essence* of the pre-war Lithuanian culture.

Presentation of the study's research and findings has been divided into four parts:

- an overview of the history of Lithuania from its origins to the end of WWII in 1945;
- a description of the core markers of the pre-war Lithuanian culture in order to set the context;
- three detailed descriptive accounts, one for each group investigated, to examine the difficulties and challenges faced by the participants in each group in preserving their native culture; and
- a conclusion which draws comparisons between the three groups in terms of the study's hypotheses regarding retention or loss of the chief features of the pre-war Lithuanian culture over the set time period.

The findings show that each of the groups investigated has retained at least some of their pre-war cultural heritage. The group which maintains the strongest sense of 'Lithuanian-ness' was the group still living in Lithuania. The two groups of the Lithuanian diaspora in Western Australia and Siberia, although retaining some common core of the pre-war culture, are very distinctive.

The Lithuanian group in Western Australia, has retained a sense of 'Lithuanian-ness', but has also adapted to such an extent to the dominant culture that the traditions, values and beliefs now reflect the new environment. Therefore, although the old *émigrés* were born in Lithuania, they have not been able to preserve their culture in such a way that it could be passed on to their children. It seems likely that the future of the pre-war Lithuanian culture in Australia is close to extinction.

The Siberian group, due to the strong connections formed with the homeland, has continued to maintain a high level of the original culture. The old *émigrés* have been able to keep alive the interest among their children and grandchildren, and thereby preserve a continuity of the Lithuanian culture.

This research reveals marked complexity in the situation faced by the three groups investigated and shows that the broad comparisons implied by the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the study represent an oversimplification of what is actually a highly variable and nuanced reality.

If the language, the customs and traditions disappear
and religion is ignored completely … then you have no hope
of continuing to be a Lithuanian …

(Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, Western Australia, 2003)

We could not fight the Russians … they had the tanks,
but we had our language, our religion, our traditions …
we maintained our national identity …

(Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2,* Vilnius, Lithuania, 2004)

We lost everything … our native language was about
the only thing of value we were able to preserve …

(Jonas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Krasnoyarsk, Siberia. 2004)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> A Lithuanian remains a Lithuanian everywhere and always. A Lithuanian passes on the life of the Lithuanian Nation, sustained by its ancestors, to future generations so that we will live forever. … It is the duty of every Lithuanian to promote the national culture (Lithuanian Charter, in Eidintas, Žalys and Senn, 1998, p. 193)

This thesis is a contribution to the history of the Lithuanian diaspora in Western Australia and Siberia and of Lithuanians living in their homeland in regards to the preservation or loss of the *essence* of their pre-WWII Lithuanian culture, over a period of fifty years living in a foreign land or under a foreign occupation.

After independence was re-established in 1918, Lithuania existed as a nation until 1940. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939) re-shaped Europe. By the end of WWII approximately 60,000 Lithuanians had fled their homeland to the West, because of the advancing Soviet Army (Eidintas, 2003, pp. 212-213). Between 1940 and 1953 a total of 126,817 Lithuanians were deported to Siberia (Racėnas, 2005, p.11) and the remaining Lithuanian population endured Soviet occupation. On March 11, 1990 Lithuania with its 3.5 million inhabitants led by the *Sajūdis* (anti-Soviet movement) proclaimed independence after fifty years of occupation (four years under the Nazi-Germany and forty-six years under the Soviets). In February, 1991 Iceland was the first country to officially recognize Lithuanian independence. In September of the same year, after seventeen months of confrontation and the death of thirteen Lithuanian civilians, the Soviet Union recognised Lithuania as an independent state and began to withdraw its troops. On September 17, 1991 Lithuania become a member of the United Nations. The last Soviet troops left the territory of Lithuania on August 31, 1993 (See in Maps Appendix 11). On March 29, 2004 Lithuania became a NATO member and on May 1, joined the European Union.

Lithuanian identity has always been closely associated with the land, farming practices and village community life. Although Lithuania during the period of independence (1919-1940) had experienced a degree of industrialization, resumed later during the

Soviet occupation, the ethnic Lithuanian population has always maintained close ties with their rural life. Despite their desire for continuity and preservation of their original pre-WWII culture, Lithuanians had to confront a new environment and a different dominant culture which required them to make djustments. After living fifty years in a foreign land or under Soviet occupation Lithuanians found it hard to resist becoming partially or fully assimilated into the dominant culture.

This study aimed to identify the preservation or loss of those core markers which I identified to be the *essence* of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture; to determine the extent of such cultural changes within the three present-day communities investigated; and to speculate on reasons for such changes. This study has measured to what degree pre-WWII Lithuanian culture has survived outside the homeland, among members of the Lithuanian diaspora, and Lithuanians in Lithuania itself under Soviet occupation. In determining the foci and the expected outcomes of this study four hypotheses are proposed which do not intend to exhaust the range of possibilities:

- Each present-day group has retained a substantial common core of pre-war culture.
- Each present-day group has drifted substantially away from their original culture.
- The Western Australian and Siberian present-day groups have preserved some common *essence* of their original culture which is not shared by the present day group in Lithuania.
- Only the present-day Lithuanian group in Lithuania maintained substantial part of the pre-war culture.

The three groups investigated were relevant to the study as they epitomized the three life-style models adopted by the post-war Lithuanians: those who remained in their homeland, those who were forcibly deported to Siberia and those who fled their homeland and re-settled in other countries. The sample of the three present-day groups were drawn as follows:

- The Western Australian sample was drawn from Lithuanian community and Catholic organizations in Perth;
- The Siberian sample was drawn from Lithuanian community in Krasnoyarsk;
- The Lithuanian sample was drawn from Lithuanians living in Kaunas, Klaipeda, and Vilnius.

The retention or loss of the key markers of the pre-war Lithuanian culture was examined through quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Three detailed descriptive accounts have been written one for each of the sample population investigated. So that attention could be drawn to the changes in the participants' cultural beliefs and values from immediate post-war to the existing situation.

To date, little scholarly research has been undertaken on the Lithuanian diaspora hence, there is no extensive literature in this field. Lithuanian post-war emigrants are a minority group which assimilated in a short period of time into the dominant culture of the host country. Studies have been conducted by a few scholars, mainly of Lithuanian descent. The existing comparative works focus on the post-war Lithuanian diaspora in the United States and on Lithuanians in their homeland and on their degree of adaptation to the new culture and the attempt to hand down to the new American-Lithuanian generation the Lithuanian heritage.

This study expands on the work of the Lithuanian historian Alfred, Erich Senn, "*The idea of a Lithuanian state, 1940-1990*" (1998) and the work of the historian Giedrė Van Den Dunden "*Lithuanian Identity in the United States 1950-1985*" (1996), both of whom maintained that the Lithuanian émigrés in the United States (also Lithuanians in Lithuania) strived to preserve the characteristics of their pre-WWII culture. However, by early 1960 it was evident that the struggle to preserve their original culture and language weakened both in Lithuania and abroad by the emergence of a new generation of young adults. They embraced the values of the country in which they were born or brought up. Senn claimed that the new generation of young adults living under Soviet rule should have evolved differently from those living in a capitalist society. However, even if this new generation lived in a capitalist or socialist society, they still shared "a common Lithuanian cultural heritage, dating from the period of independence between the wars that was independent of these political and economic influences" (Senn, in Edintas, et al., 1998, p. 194).

Senn attributed the above outcome to those cautious pragmatists who outwardly submitted to Soviet rule, while under the surface remaining committed to their

Lithuanian heritage. In quoting the historian, Aleksandras Štromas, Senn highlights certain characteristic traits of the Lithuanian people:

> I think that I can say that the pragmatic tactical political consciousness dominant in Lithuania is of a conservationist character … the nation as such decided to end active resistance to the occupation and to accept the condition of existence forced on the country, i.e., it accepted a partial conformism as its fundamental thought. … Such a conformist position does not mean capitulation; it means just a change of tactics to seek the same goals. … In order that the nation could pursue any goals, it is necessary first to protect its life (Štromas, in Edintas, et al., 1998, p. 194).

Senn claimed that the new generation of Lithuanians had been brought up mainly with pre-war heritage and suggested that the original emigrants were successful in maintaining and passing on the *essence* of their pre-WWII Lithuanian culture.

Giedrė Van Den Dungen stated that the Lithuanian refugees had always "considered themselves exiles and felt driven by the need to return to their homeland if it ever became independent" (Van Den Dungen, 1996, p. 55). Thus, they have endeavoured to preserve their national identity by educating their children according to the ideals and values of their traditional culture. However, unlike Senn, Van Den Dungen believes that, in spite of their efforts, the old generation of emigrants did not succeed (Van Den Dungen, 1996, p. 55).

Van Den Dungen attributed the outcome to two distinct factors. Firstly, the children of the first and second generation were raised in a different country. Secondly, the hope of an independent Lithuania began to fade and, as a result, it became more and more difficult to maintain a sense of 'Lithuanian-ness'. Other factors included the influence of school and university leading the children of Lithuanians to challenge the ideals and values which had appeared self-evident to their parents. The new generation began to formulate their own ideas and opinions on the relevance of retaining those so-called crucial factors of Lithuanian history, language and culture, which their parents considered the basis of their heritage. In addition, they questioned the importance of the Catholic faith, which had played such a prominent role in most of their grandparents' and their parents' life (Van Den Dungen, 1996, p. 55).

The Lithuanian language which provided its people with a distinct ethnic national identity was also difficult to maintain in the context of a dominant society which placed

no value on it (Van Den Dungen, 1996, p. 56). Nevertheless, Van Den Dungen acknowledged that the old *émigrés* were able to lay the foundations of a real community. They succeeded in assembling the scattered refugees into local communities such as clubs or cultural organisations. Newcomers were welcomed only if they conformed to the original group's concept of being Lithuanian. Van Den Dungen sensed a changing perception among Lithuanian migrants of what constituted the original Lithuanian identity, since they did not take into consideration the evolution of the Lithuanian culture in Lithuania. As a consequence, the understanding of the national culture among the first generation of emigrants and the Lithuanians living in the homeland underwent a process of divergence (Van Den Dungen, 1996, pp. 55-57).

Van Den Dungen concluded that Lithuanians abroad, who consider themselves Lithuanian, are in fact no longer so, because they have been separated from their homeland for too long. Furthermore, they have assimilated many aspects of the culture in which they live in at the same time, freezing certain Lithuanian characteristics which they originally possessed. Van Den Dungen's findings are indicative of the original *émigrés'* ideological struggle to retain their national characteristics which diminish with each passing generation, reinforced by on going changes in the contemporary new Lithuanian identity. The decline of awareness of one's ethnic origins, kinship and cultural roots is made evident when Van Den Dungen says that American-Lithuanians were surprised at being "regarded as totally American in Lithuania" (Van Den Dungen, 1996, p. 58). These American -Lithuanians did not conform to the expectations of the local people in Lithuania and vice versa. There would be no reason therefore for the original émigrés to return permanently to an independent Lithuania.

Both Senn and Van Den Dungen maintain that in spite of either Soviet indoctrination at home or living in a different environment, Lithuanians constantly struggle in both their own country and abroad to preserve their national identity and culture.

As explained above this thesis is an historical and empirical investigation which focuses on three present-day Lithuanian groups and relies on data from a larger and more varied sample in order to achieve a deeper understanding of how time and circumstances have affected the original culture of the pre-WWII existing generation.

To assist the researcher in obtaining a comprehensive and deeper knowledge of the pre-war Lithuanian traditions, values and beliefs, the existing literature has been widely consulted, in particular the works of authoritative scholars DanuteBrazyte Bindokienė (1989), Irena Čepienė (1977, 1995, 1999), Prane Dundulienė (1991, 1994), Marija Gimbutas (1963, 1974), Birute Imbrasienė (1990), Juozas Kudirka (1991, 1996, 1997) Rasa Račiunaitė (2002) have been used as supporting sources.

While the works of Gimbutas and Bindokienė represent the insight of scholars before the Soviet occupation, both of them fled Lithuania between 1940 and 1944 Dundulienė, Čepienė, Imbrasienė, Kudirka and Račiunaitė provide evidence for the Soviet period between 1945 and 1991. However, all of them have extrapolated views from the works of Gimbutas and Bindokiene to give a post-WWII understanding of Lithuanian folklore and mythology.

For the modern history and contemporary situation this study is indebted in particular to the works of recognized historians Albertas Gerutis (1969), Alfred Senn (1946), Alfred Erich Senn (1959, 1966, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2001), Adolfas Šapoka (1962, 1990), Stanley Vardys (1965, 1978) all of whom fled Lithuania before the Soviet occupation. Recognition is also given to the works of the post-Independence historians Alfonsas Eidintas (1998, 2003), Jurate Kiaupienė, Zigmantas Kiaupa and Albinas Kuncevičius (2000, 2002) who are living in Lithuania.

It is important to acknowledge that all of these sources represent secondary material, because their purpose is only to provide a brief overview of the history of Lithuania as background context for this study. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to rely on these respected secondary sources.

This thesis comprises four parts:

Part 1: Chapter 1 is the introduction to the thesis.

Part 2: Chapters 2, 3 and 4

Chapter 2 presents the overall context of the earliest beginnings of Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the Czarist-Russian occupation.
Chapters 3 and 4 provide a broad analysis of the origin of Lithuanian nationalism and of the first Soviet occupation, the German occupation and the second Soviet occupation.

Part 3: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

Chapter 5 outlines the methodology adopted to explore the preservation or loss of the key markers of the pre-war culture.
Chapter 6 provides a detailed account of the customs and traditions, values and beliefs of the pre-war Lithuanian culture.
Chapter 7, 8 and 9 present for each of the selected three present-day groups what the research has discerned from the interviews regarding the preservation or loss of the pre-war culture.

Part 4: Chapter 10 is the conclusion of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2

LITHUANIA: THE EARLIEST BEGINNINGS

CHAPTER 2

LITHUANIA: THE EARLIEST BEGINNINGS

> An historical culture is one that binds present and future generations, like links in a chain, to all those who precede them. A man identifies himself, according to the national ideal, through his relationship to his ancestors and forebears, and to the events that shaped their character (Smith, 1979, p. 3).

Writings about nationalism emerged in the nineteenth century, the period generally recognised as the period of the birth of the concept of the modern nation state. These theories were as Smith's statement signals, engaged in establishing unbroken links and associations between the past, often a pre-historical past, and the present in order to justify contemporary political and cultural aspirations and practices. To achieve this, scholars of modern nationalism have constructed genesis narratives, which focused and often idealised the search for and construction of origins which would explain and legitimize the modern national claim to a specific geographic space and its resources, human, economic and natural.

This chapter provides a short summary of the history of the Lithuanian nation from the appearance of the first nomadic hunters who came to the areas now known as Lithuania around the tenth millennium B.C., through to the years of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, its collapse, the subsequent Czarist Russia occupation of Lithuania in 1795 and the origin of the Lithuanian national movement. Such a preview engages with and assesses the dominant account of Lithuanian origins as established by pre-war scholars. These scholars exemplified and repeated nineteenth century genesis narratives to build a seamless 'story' which centred these narratives as the significant and recurring patterns of Lithuanian history and culture. This construct follows what is accepted and promoted by these scholars as the organic evolution of the nation from the pre-historical past through to the twentieth century attainment of national status. The model is of the modern nation state, with its attendant political, economic and social movements, parties and governing structures.

I have carefully selected these periods and topics as I consider them to be the keys to the anthropological, social and ethnic understanding of the Lithuanian people for whom this study is concerned.

In writing this introductory overview as explained in Chapter 1, I have examined the works of scholars works of recognized historians such as Albertas Gerutis (1969), Alfred Senn (1946), Alfred Erich Senn (1959, 1966, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2001), Adolfas Šapoka (1962, 1990), Stanley Vardys (1965, 1978) who fled to the West to escape the 1940s Soviet occupations of Lithuania and all of whose views and values were formed in the period of Lithuania's first experience of modern nationhood.

I was also interested to examine the scholarship of the post-war period to assess and compare the possible differences of focus and interpretation of scholars formed by the pre-independence and first independence periods and of those who came to maturity during the decades of the second Soviet occupation from 1944 to 1991 such as Alfonsas Eidintas (1998, 2003), Jurate Kiaupienė, Zigmantas Kiaupa and Albinas Kuncevičius (2000, 2002). Most of their works were written between the period from 1991 to 2002 after the collapse of the Soviet Union and its consequent withdrawal from Lithuania: One of the key historians of this period, Kiaupa Zigmantas, maintained that after WWII only a few historians remained in Lithuania and that their research and published works were restrained and censured by the Soviets (Kiaupa et al., 2002 p. 388).

Lithuania's geographic, economic and political marginality in Western consciousness and its status as part of the post-war Soviet bloc countries has not stimulated a large body of work among non-Lithuanian scholars. This lack of interest in Lithuanian history was clearly felt during the post-war period among the earlier generation of the pre-war Lithuanian intelligentsia who fled the country and saw it as an imperative to record their experiences. The next generation of Lithuanian researchers began to publish scholarly works after 1991. Their experiences formed under Soviet ideological and educational practices, differ to such an extent from the experiences of the pre-occupation period historian generations that significant differences of interpretation and evaluation had to be negotiated. Further, I have come to the view that both groups – *émigré* scholars, most of whom were living and working in the United States of America during the Cold War, and post-Soviet scholars still working in Lithuania – were limited in writing their works

due to the restrictions that applied to accessing and researching relevant documents and records.

As I have argued in my introduction, most pre-war and post-war scholars writing about Lithuania were directly associated with elements of Lithuanian culture and history as members of political diaspora. Many were formerly government or ex-government employees, officials or simply Lithuanians for whom national independence and identity were and are still relatively new experiences. In some of these works the romanticised attitude to country, land, people and language which is a recognizable stage in the development of nationalist movements is present (Smith, 1979, pp. 2-9). The Gimbutas' descriptions of the land, work and life of the Lithuanian people are a reminder that the writing of history, as much as traditions and customs, is shaped by the values and beliefs of those who collect and write it.

The First Inhabitants of Lithuania: The Reindeer Hunters

The first colony of reindeer hunters in the territory of present day Lithuania made its appearance around the tenth millennium B.C. Before this period humans were not present due to inhospitable climatic and environmental conditions. In Lithuania, as in all Northern Europe, the recession of the glaciers which had impeded human settlement, lasted for some thousands of years. In the narrative of Lithuanian origins, the changes in climate and melting of the glaciers favoured the formation of the steppes, tundra and forests. It was during this period that the first solitary reindeer hunters began to appear in the summer seasons. Nomadic reindeer hunters, who came from the southwest coastal region of the Baltic Sea, were called the group of the Baltic Magdalenian culture. The hunters coming from the south were called the group of the Swiderian culture. They were believed to be the first inhabitants of the East Baltic region.

During the Mesolithic and early Neolithic periods from the eighth to the fifth millennium B.C., major climatic changes further modified the geography of the region. This facilitated the development of new cultures, the Mesolithic Nemunas in the southern part of Lithuania, and the Mesolithic Kunda in the northern part and in the remaining Eastern Baltic region. The territorial boundaries of the two cultures, according to archaeologists, could be traced along the Nemunas and Neris rivers where the hunting

and fishing tools of bows, arrows and spears have been excavated from early Mesolithic sites. During the Neolithic period the winter season became milder and the summer period longer, with the vegetation adjusting to the new environmental conditions. The presence of forests, rivers and lakes and the increasing numbers of wild animals in the region encouraged more permanent settlements rather than temporary campsites of sporadic hunters and fishermen. In the early Neolithic period, from the end of the fifth to the third millennium B.C., the Mesolithic Nemunas culture continued to evolve in the Neolithic Nemunas culture in what today is the southern part of Lithuania, the north eastern part of Poland and a large part of the territory of Byelorussia. By the late Neolithic period the Neolithic Nemunas culture covered the whole area of the middle and upper river Nemunas. In northern Lithuania the Mesolithic Kunda culture also continued to evolve in what later was named Narva culture (Kiaupa, Kiaupiene, Kuncevičius, 2000, pp. 17-21).

The Indo Europeans: The Balts, the Amber Collectors

> By its right shore the Swabian (Baltic) Sea washes [sic] the Aistian tribes (Aestiorum gentes), whose customs and robes are similar to those of the Swabians and languages closer to the British. … They cultivate grains and other necessary plants more conscientiously than the lazy Germans. They search the sea, too; in shallows and on the shore they alone gather amber which they called "glesum" (Publius, Cornelius Tacitus, in Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 29).

In the late Neolithic period, the third millennium B.C., the first Indo-Europeans, the people of the Globular Amphora culture, reached the Eastern Baltic area. In the early second millennium B.C., the Corded Ware and the Boat Battle-Axes cultures were brought to the Baltic area by Indo-European tribes coming from the south and southwest (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 44). Thus these cultures converged, to form the early Baltic culture. It was in this period, according to the Lithuanian historian Jonas Puzinas that the Indo-Europeans, as a consequence of the divisions which developed in their protolanguage, began to emerge in different ethnic groups, and the Balts came into existence (Gerutis, Puzinas, Jakštas, Budreckis, 1969, p. 19).

Archaeological findings from the third to the second millennium B.C. placed settlements of the ancient Balts along the coast of the Baltic Sea, and in the lowlands along the Vistula and Nemunas rivers and their tributaries (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 13). The name *Balts* from the Latin *Mare Balticum* (Baltic Sea) was first used in 1845 by the German linguist Ferdinand Nesselmann in his work *The Old Prussian Language* to identify people speaking Baltic languages: Old Prussian, Lithuanian, Lettish (Latvian), Curonian, Senigallian, Selian and related dialects which became extinct. Lithuanian and Latvian are the only living Baltic languages (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 24).

The Baltic tribes first appear in written historical records between the first and the eleventh centuries of the Christian era (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 24). The historical references were, according to Gimbutas, so scarce for the whole of the first millennium that the life and the geographical distribution of the Balts could not be reconstructed without the presence of archaeological evidence. It is the Roman historian Tacitus, in his work *Germania* (A.D. 98), who is credited with the first written reference to these peoples, whom he named *Aestii* or gentes *Aestiorum* (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 21-24). Tacitus located the *Aestii* on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. He described them as cultivators of crops and collectors of amber. It is not clear whether he referred to all Baltic people or Old Prussians (the Western Balts) only.

In later historical records the name *Aesti* or *Aisti* appears in the writings of Jordanes, a Gothic historian of the sixth century A.D. (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 31). Jordanes placed this 'totally peaceful people' (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 21-22) to the east of the mouth of the river Vistula. The German philosopher-historian Einhard (770-840), in his work *Vita Caroli Magni*, indicated that the *Aisti* were living on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, close to the Vistula river. The Anglo-Saxon traveller Wulstan in the ninth century A.D. mentioned that along the shore of the Baltic Sea around Frisches Haff lived collectors of amber. Thus, these writings brought Gimbutas to the conclusion that the use of the name *Aisti* referred to people living in different parts of the eastern region of the Baltic Sea. Gimbutas asserts that: "it had a broader application than to a single tribe" (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 21-22).

Although information about these tribes was scarce, ancient and medieval Western Europe had an early and continuing knowledge about people living to the east of the

south-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea through their main trade-mark, amber (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 18). In his work *History of Nature* the Roman Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.) recorded that after a Roman envoy returned to Rome with amber from the shores of the Baltic Sea, it was possible for the Emperor Nero to have an entire amphitheatre as well as his gladiators' military uniforms decorated with the collected amber (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 29). Kiaupa concludes that the Balts existed as an organised society, notwithstanding the lack of closer contact with the rest of Europe. Their geographical position was away from the main communication and trade routes "at the edge of the civilized world" (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 19). Gimbutas, examining the process of the formation and development of these tribes, likewise concludes that: "through the amber trade [the Balts] were linked with the culture of central and southern Europe from the time of the Bronze Age" (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 19). This reinforced her argument that in the centuries before and after the beginning of the Christian era the people called the *Aestii* had established their territory and begun to develop a distinctive culture in the area of present day Lithuania.

Archaeologists and linguists have used patterns of geographic settlements, agricultural and hunting, art, crafts and linguistic developments to conclude that the first settlements of tribes, today known as the Lithuanians, were found along the course of the Upper Nemunas and Neris rivers. They note that the name Lithuania, in Latin *Lituae*, was mentioned for the first time in the *Annales Quedlinburgeuses*, the German Quendlinburg Yearbooks, in which is described the death of the Archbishop Bruno Bonifatio, who perished on February 14, 1009 with eighteen followers at the Russian and Lithuanian border in the attempt to convert the local population to Christianity (Šapoka, 1990, p. 40). The word Lithuania took its origin from the river *Lietauka*, a tributary of the river Neris, along which most of the Baltic tribes settled and in the passing of time came to call themselves Lithuanians (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 40).

As part of this project of modern nation building archaeologists Gimbutas and Rimantienė (identified by the Lithuanian historians Kiaupa, Kuncevičius, Šapoka, and Gerutis), have argued that in the areas occupied by the Lithuanians,the presence of related tribes which merged with them, at the turn of the millennium B.C., influenced their formation. This influence would indicate, according to Kiaupa, that cultural differences and the process of ethnic assimilation associated with tribal unification

continued to persist in regions in which the inhabitants spoke a common language again marking the language and geographic positioning across time as the key factors in the development and validation of a 'nation'. (Kiaupa, 2000, p. 22), Linguists such as Puzinas and Buga argue that the Lithuanian language separated from the other Baltic languages around the seventh century B.C. to justify the existence of an independent Lithuania (Gerutis, 1969, pp. 11-13).

Gimbutas identifies the Lithuanians as a population living in permanent settlements in remote areas at the edge of forests and in the middle of a network of rivers and lakes, far from the towns and trade routes and "… not much concerned about the outer world" (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 14). Their houses were low with a thatched roof surrounded by a variety of flowers as well as oak, maple and linden trees to protect the dwelling from the wind and frost. Their collective work in the fields was followed by songs as singing was "… as necessary and as easy as breathing … and their songs for all occasions reflect these people's feelings of kinship with mother earth and her many creatures and appreciation of her manifold gifts" (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 15). This account of Lithuanian tribal life two millennia ago in the mid-twentieth century by Gimbutas, however, slides from recording of archaeological and written material into one which inserts its own interpretative and romantic comment on that life. As these quotations show history is never written on a blank page but it formed by the needs of the generation which writes it as much as by the 'happening' of the past.

Gimbutas writes that the pagan religion was universal among the Lithuanians in the centuries before and continuing to be after the introduction of the Christianity and influenced all spheres of their life. The description of the religious practices which follows in this and in later chapters is a summary of Gimbutas's findings and interpretations. Similar accounts I have also recovered in the interviews of Lithuanians living in Lithuania and in the diaspora communities. The custom of cremation, Gimbutas notes, was maintained after the Christianity era began and was abolished only after a struggle against the practice by the Christian missionaries. Each family and house had holy groves on a hill or elevation called *alka* where members of the family and friends were cremated and votive offerings were made to the gods (Gimbutas, 1963, pp.184-193). Lithuanians believed in life after death. The *velės*, the souls of the deceased, were

believed to maintain ties with the living and to be reincarnated in trees, flowers, animals, and birds (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 184-190).

This explains the intimate relationship that most Lithuanians continued to have with particular trees. Oaks and birches, symbols of strength and agility, were associated with men's spirits, and the gentle spruce and linden with women's spirits which they believed to be reincarnated in those trees (Čepienė, 1999, pp. 55-61). For Lithuanians who held these beliefs, 'Earth is the Great Mother' (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 191), and in the accounts of Gimbutas and Čepiene, the peasants are represented as perceiving themselves and their life as part of the natural surroundings. Their close relationship with animals, birds and plants and their profound sense of veneration and respect found expressions in a belief system that associated natural elements with the image of different deities (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 204). Thus, Lithuanians honoured forest goddesses, mountain lowlands, waters, and field spirits. They worshipped springs and trees, hills and mountain slopes, all of which were attributed with magic powers. Gimbutas records as a common cultural practice the planting of a tree at the time of a birth, and notes that the cutting of that tree would cause the person's death (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 192-193). Fields and farm animals were sprinkled with water on the expectation that magic powers from the springs would ensure a good harvest and good health (Čepienė, 1999, pp. 30-31).

Ugnis (fire) was also significant to the early Lithuanians. It was regarded as sacred and eternal and was the symbol of happiness and purification. In each house there was a sacred hearth where the fire was always kept alive. Only on the eve of the midsummer festival, once a year, was it symbolically extinguished and then lit again. *Gabija* (the fire goddess) required offerings and it was the mother of the family's responsibility to feed and guard it overnight (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 203-204). Gimbutas therefore has argued that although the Christian faith in Lithuania was able to infiltrate among the nobility and urban dwellers, the rural population continued to retain traces of the old pagan religion (Gimbutas, 1963, p.179).

The Evolution of Lithuanian Culture and Language

> Nationalism, the ideology and movement must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism (Smith, 1996, p. 10).

Modern concepts of nation and national identity which developed in the nineteenth century and which are still current have centred on the identification, across broad historical periods, with land to establish and validate national claims They also have elevated the centrality of language as a key characteristic of a nation and cultural identity.

Gimbutas claims that the Lithuanian language is "the most archaic of all living Indo-European languages" (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 37). Scholars of comparative linguistics, even before the discovery of Sanskrit in the eighteenth century, have been interested in establishing its origin. When in the nineteenth century philologists began to compare Lithuanian and Sanskrit, they discovered word similarities between the two languages. These similarities, Gimbutas stressed, were an example of the widespread dissemination of the Indo-European languages and their close interrelationship. She cites the following examples to support her view:

> Dievas Davė dantis; Dievas duos duonos (Lithuanian)
> Devas adadāt datas; Devas dāt (or dadāt) dhānās (Sanskrit)
> Deus dedit dentes; Deus dabit panem (Latin)
> God gave the teeth; God will give bread (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 37).

The philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) emphasised the importance of the Lithuanian language in this brief statement: "It must be preserved, for it possesses a key which solves the enigmas not only of philology, but also of tribe magistration" (Thurston, 1962, p. 3). The linguist D. Wright, in his work *Modern Philology* wrote:

> Lithuanian is a language of great value to the philologists. ... It is the most antique in its form of all living languages of the world, and most akin in its substance and spirit to the primeval Sanskrit. … It is at the same time so much like the Latin and the Greek (D. Wright in Harrison, 1948, p. 7).

The eighteenth century German nationalist philosopher Johann Gottifried Herder maintained that "language, culture, inclinations and innate or gradually developing national character as the main characteristics of a nation" (Kemiläinen, 1964, p. 40).

Herder was opposed to the establishment of large states or empires formed by different nations. Thus, philosophers and philologists argue that language and national character are the essential components which unite people to form a nation and legitimise national identity. This national identity in the case of Lithuania can be traced back to the twelfth century.

The Origin of the Lithuanian Nation: The Period of the Grand Dukes

> As in the case with all states which were rooted in the tribal community and whose unification was the result of gradual development, it is impossible to pinpoint the exact period of their geographical and political origin (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 45).

At the end of the twelfth century the consolidation of the Teutonic Order and the Order of Knights of the Sword in adjacent territories, represented a threat to the Lithuanian lands and accelerated the process of unification sought by Mindaugas. Mindaugas observed that although the Roman Catholic Church and the Teutonic Orders brought Christianisation and a new social organization to the neighbouring conquered lands, those territories remained under foreign rule. This created social conflicts between the local populations and the conquerors, who regarded the non-Germans as 'inferior people' (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 34-35).

Historians claim that the unification of Lithuania began in the early thirteenth century at a time when individual princes continued to rule their lands, not yet subject to any central sovereign (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 51). Foreign threats and increasing isolation from the rest of Europe led them towards the organization of a unified state under Mindaugas. The process of unification was completed by the fourth decade of the thirteenth century. After Mindaugas' baptism in 1251, Lithuania was recognised a Christian Kingdom and two years later in 1253 Mindaugas was crowned King of Lithuania (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 35-38).

Kiaupa maintained that Mindaugas' baptism was a political manoeuvre to secure European and Papal recognition of Lithuania. Thus, while the ruling and urban classes adopted Christianity, the peasantry resisted any form of religious change and after Mindaugas' assassination in 1263, the country reverted to paganism. This reversion did

not mean dissolution of the kingdom over which Mindaugas had ruled for twenty years. The refusal to accept Christianity resulted in an outbreak of attacks from the Teutonic Order which contributed again to political and cultural isolation from the rest of Europe (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 43). At the end of the thirteenth century the Grand Duke Gediminas, the first sovereign of the Gediminians dynasty that would rule until 1440, consolidated the boundaries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and founded in 1323 the city of Vilnius, the present capital of Lithuania (Šapoka, 1990, pp. 75-76).

By the early 1380s for the ruler Jogaila and his cousin Vytautas, (the grandsons of Gediminas) the acceptance of Christianity and the alliance with Poland represented a political solution to control the internal and external instability of the Grand Duchy and the opportunity to regain its recognition in Europe (Kiaupa et al., 2000, pp. 127-129). On August 14, 1385 the union between the two countries was sealed by the Act of Kreva, which sanctioned Jogaila's marriage to Jadwiga, the daughter of King Louis d'Anjou of Hungary and Poland and heiress to the Polish throne. Jogaila and the Lithuanian population had to accept being baptized in the Roman Catholic rite and becoming Polish allies against the Teutonic Order. Kiaupa records that:

> Early in 1386, Polish envoys brought him recognition as King. Jogaila entered Cracow with his escort, was baptized, acquired the name Wladislaw, married Jadwiga, was crowned King of Poland on March 4, 1386, and signed a personal union between Lithuania and Poland (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 73-74).

According to Alfred Erich Senn this union meant the conversion of Lithuanians to Catholicism and the Polonization of Lithuanian nobility both relevant factors in the development of Lithuanian cultural identity and nationhood (Senn, 1998, p. 4).

The establishment of the Catholic Church in the Grand Duchy was supported by its rulers. The first parishes and Catholic churches were built in Vilnius. In 1387 Jogaila granted privileges to the Bishop of the diocese of Vilnius and also its inhabitants and to the Catholic Lithuanian nobility. The church received part of the city of Vilnius with approximately fifty villages and land estates which were exempt from taxes. The clergy enjoyed legal immunity. The rights of partial immunity were granted to the nobility with property rights to all estates and land and the right to dispose of them. However, they still had to pay land taxes to the sovereign. Vilnius became the first town in the Grand

Duchy where inhabitants were granted self-government. Jogaila's privileges were maintained by succeeding Grand Dukes. This contributed to the emergence of a privileged class of clergymen led by Polish priests, able to extend their hierarchy throughout the country, while the nobility grew stronger in privileges and in concessions. The Lithuanian peasantry had to embrace Catholicism, taught by Polish priests in a language not understood by the peasants. Thus, despite public observance of Catholic rites, they continued to retain their pagan beliefs, which survived and still emerged in all aspects of rural life through the celebration of rites and festivals (Kiaupa et al., 2000, pp. 123-126).

The Jagellonian dynasty ruled Lithuania and Poland from 1385 to 1572. In 1410 during the joint rule of Jogaila and Vytautas the Teutonic Order was defeated in the historic Battle of Tannenberg (Šapoka, 1990, pp. 127-129). The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, no longer threatened from the west, could pursue further expansion. By 1420, due to the political and military ability of Vytautas, who effectively ruled Lithuania while Jogaila nominally retained the crown but focussed his attentions on Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became the largest and the most powerful state in the region. It covered the area from the shores of the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea (Kiaupa, et, al., 2000, pp. 200-203). As a consequence of this effective kingship in 1430 Vytautas was offered the crown of Lithuania. Vytautas' death on October 27, 1430 prevented him from ascending to the throne. His death brought an end to the Gediminas dynasty and his successors established the Jogaila dynasty: Lithuanian in origin but Polish in orientation. The century following Vytautas' death was a period of consolidation of the Lithuanian State and led to the promulgation in 1529 of the First Statute of Lithuania, a common code of written laws for the whole territory on the model of Roman laws. This statute replaced the norms of customary and written laws which differed throughout the territory; and it defined the political and administrative position of the *bajoras* (gentry) and their estates in the Grand Duchy (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 97).

After the First Statute, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became closer to Western Europe for its social structures and acceptance of Christianity. In the following century its socio-economic and cultural life continued to evolve. The Lithuanian nobility was attracted to the Polish culture for the freedom and the privileges granted to its nobility. Thus, they welcomed the introduction of the Polish coat of arms, language and institutions. These

changes were influenced also by an economic growth, associated with the increasing power of the nobility and by the Reformation in 1520. The Grand Duchy, throughout the sixteenth century, developed a strong economy, based on exports of timber, grain, linen and kemp to Western Europe. This had an immediate effect on the rural areas where new towns and villages were built. The *bajoras* (gentry), an independent class of landowners, demanded equality with the nobility. It was granted to them at the turn of the sixteenth century, by Casimir, the successor of Vytautas. The nobility and the gentry became the leading economic class in the Grand Duchy; the peasantry remained the lowest class. The peasants were restricted in their privileges and most of them depended upon the landowners for their survival (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 68).

Closer ties to the West brought the teaching of Martin Luther into the Grand Duchy. The Reformation came to the Grand Duchy in two waves. The beginning was supported by the most educated gentry and later by the nobility, especially Radvilas's cousins. The first sermons in the spirit of the Reformation were preached in Vilnius in 1525. In 1547 the first book *The Catechism* was published in the Lithuanian language by Martinas Mazvydas (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 131). Political ties with Poland swayed Lithuanian nobility towards Calvinism. Once the nobility had accepted Calvinism, the peasants were forced to follow their example. Their economic and legal situation which made them dependant upon the nobility did not allow otherwise. The peasants were ordered by the nobility to attend Calvinist services just as they had previously attended services under Catholicism, another religion imposed by the Poles. Often the same churches were used because the nobility, exercising their rights of patronage, frequently changed these churches, once taken from the Catholic hierarchy, into Calvinist prayer houses. The Catholic priests were either removed from their posts or had to serve the new religion. Previously under Catholicism, the Polish influence filtered now into Lithuania under Calvinism. The Radvilas and most of the nobility supported Calvinist scholars from Poland to give lectures and to disseminate religious publications in Latin and Polish language (Kiaupa et al., 2000, pp. 175-177).

In 1566 the Second Statute was promulgated. It regulated the position of the gentry and the nobility in the government of the Grand Duchy. The nobility were to renounce all their legal privileges and form one legal and administrative body with the gentry, based on equality of political and legal rights. This Statute gave further evidence of the

growing sense of Lithuanian statehood and functioned as a significant marker of the status sought by Lithuanians as an independent state. It opened a new period in the history of Lithuania, influenced by Poland (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 126-127).

In 1569 the Jesuit Order arrived in Vilnius to launch a programme of educational and religious propaganda to revive Catholicism among the nobility and the Lithuanian population. The Catholic Church was supported by the power of the Grand-Dukes and the authority of the Jesuit Order through laws and diets' edicts. The nobility lacked deep religious conviction and the rest of the population reverted to the Catholic religion. The Protestant reform did not succeed because the Grand-Dukes, the only authority in the country with the power to establish Protestantism as a State religion, supported Catholicism.

The Lublin Treaty: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569)

A new stage in the history of the Lithuanian State was marked, in July 1569, by the Lublin Union Treaty between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland. According to this treaty, Lithuania and Poland agreed to the formation of a Commonwealth under an elective monarchy with a common ruler. Each member state retained its name, separate territory, government, army, laws, and currency (Gerutis, 1969, p. 81). The new Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania, with a population of approximately 7.5 million inhabitants, became one of the largest states in Europe in size (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 226). However, in the second half of the sixteenth century this Commonwealth, with a sovereign who ruled two countries, was in opposition to the centralized national states that started to emerge with a strong government in the rest of Europe.

In a century dominated by a series of significant political developments and statutes, the establishment in 1579 of Vilnius University by the Jesuit Order was the most significant event in the cultural life of Lithuania. The university fostered European culture and became the cultural focus of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Literature and science developed up to the middle of the seventeenth century, bringing cultural life of the Grand Duchy to the same level of other countries in Western and Central Europe. However, in 1773, Pope Clement XIV suppressed the Jesuit Order. In 1781 the

University of Vilnius became a secular institution. The Polish language was adopted as the language of instruction. In time the university led the political formation and development of Lithuanian nationalism (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 158).

During the seventeenth and eighteenth century the nobility with their large estates were the only power recognized within the Grand Duchy. These noblemen were speaking and writing in Polish, while continuing to call themselves Lithuanians, a term with very clear political and cultural meanings attached to it. The adoption of the Polish language by the nobility and the clergy represented a changed political reality but increased the divisions between the ruling classes and the land-based peasantry. The nobility and the gentry demanded also the power of the *Liberum veto* or unanimous voting in the Parliament to change any rights of ownership of land and personal rights enshrined in the Third Statute of Lithuania (1588).

In the seventeenth century the *Liberum veto* began to restrict the work of the Lithuanian Parliament and undermine the cohesion and long-term stability of the Commonwealth (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 169). From 1573 to 1763 there were 137 Parliaments of the Commonwealth, but 53 could not complete their work (Kiaupa et al., 2000, p. 259). This internal friction and instability as well as the continuous demands by both the Polish and Lithuanian nobility to increase their privileges and concessions could not save the Commonwealth, even though reforms were undertaken at the end of the eighteenth century. Thus, the expansionist policies of Russia, Austria and Prussia converted into successful invasions of the Commonwealth territory in 1772 and 1793. In 1795 the Commonwealth was divided, losing the last of its political and cultural autonomy. Lithuania became absorbed into Russia (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 223-224).

The collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth changed the political status of Lithuania. The Lithuanian territory acquired by Russia through the third Polish Lithuanian partition in 1795 was reorganized into administrative units. In 1796 the Russian authorities created the *Litovskaya Gubernya* (the General Lithuanian Province) from the Gubernias of Vilnius and Slomin (Eidintas, Žalys, Senn, 1998, p. 11). In 1801 the territory was divided again into two separate gubernias, Vilnius and Grodno, and in 1843 into a third gubernia, Kaunas. By the mid-nineteenth century the General Gubernia of Vilnius included the Gubernia of Vilnius, Kaunas, Grodno and Minsk (Kiaupa, 2002,

p. 224). The administrative units covered approximately 120,000 square kilometres with a population of 2.5 million of which 1.6 million were ethnic Lithuanians. Another 100,000 ethnic Lithuanians lived under German rule in Lithuanian Minor known as Northern East Prussia (Eidintas, et al., 1996, p. 11). Although their boundaries were not drawn along ethnic lines, the Gubernia of Vilnius and Kaunas were in Lithuanian territory and those of Grodno and Minsk were in Byelorussia. In 1795 part of the Lithuanian territory on the left bank of the Nemunas River was acquired by Prussia, to form the territory of the Gubernia of Eastern Prussia.

In 1807, this territory, in the course of the Napoleonic wars, was occupied by the French and it became part of the newly established Duchy of Warsaw. The Napoleonic Code of civil law was introduced. According to the Code, serfdom was abolished and the former serfs were given personal rights equal to those of the gentry (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 224-229).However, peasants were not in title of any land concession and most of them were forced to remain economically bound to the landowners. Although they were allowed to rent and buy land, such purchases were virtually impossible to attain. A new class of free peasants emerged, in this area, while in Russian Lithuania serfdom continued until 1861 (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 242).

In 1815 under the terms of the Treaty of Vienna, the Duchy of Warsaw entered into the sphere of the Russian Empire and was transformed into the Independent Kingdom of Poland under Czar Alexander I. In 1867 it was renamed Suvalki Gubernia. The historian Jakštas argues that the establishment of free peasants in Suvalki Gubernia, which was attached to the Duchy of Warsaw, may explain the reason for “the cultural lead of the people” in the national movements of Lithuania in the nineteenth century (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 111). The Czech historian Miroslav Hroch claims that the roots of the national movement in Lithuania have to be found in the northern part of the district of Suvalki Gubernia, the region in which serfdom had been abolished and where the subsequent increase in personal and political rights and consciousness provided the conditions which enabled the formation of a nationalist movement (Hroch, 1985, p. 94).

Revival of National Identity: Theorising the Process

> We cannot understand nations and nationalism simply as an ideology or form of politics but must treat them as cultural phenomena as well. That is to say, nationalism, the ideology and movement must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism (Smith, 1996, p. 10).

Hroch's theory of the three phases in the history of national movements in European nations enables one to gain a better understanding of Lithuanian nationalism. Hroch counts as phase A a period of scholarly interest and exploration of the culture of a nation. Phase B is a period of political agitation during which intellectuals promote a national awareness amongst the population whose national culture they have been investigating. Finally, phase C is a period that witnesses the emergence of a mass nationalist movement (Hroch, 1985, pp. 86-87).

Hroch describes the Lithuanian nationalist movement as a 'belated' type and chronologically frames it into three separate phases, spanning the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the classic period of nationalist ideological formation. Phase A, he argues, lasted from 1820 to 1870, when a scholarly interest was developing in the exploration of Lithuanian national culture. Eric Hobsbawm emphasises that "Europe was swept by the romantic passion for the pure, simple and uncorrupted peasantry and for this folkloric rediscovery of the people" (Hobsbawn, 1990, p. 103). Phase B, from 1870 to 1905 according to Hroch, was a period of patriotic agitation when intellectuals promoted national awareness among the peasantry. Phase C, he argues, began in 1905 with the emergence of a mass national movement in the country at a point when Czarist authority was weakened and diverted by the need to respond to its own internal crisis (Hroch, 1985, pp. 86-95). According to Hobsbawm this is the period in which the national idea has been mastered by a population that begins openly to support it (Hobsbawn, 1985, p. 180). Hroch's theory of nationalism could be applied to the national movements in Lithuania if we explore step by step its development.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, concepts of liberalism and freedom, and nationalistic ideas were widespread throughout Europe, influenced by the echoes of the French Revolution and the writings of the philosophers Rousseau, Montesquieu, Burke and Herder (Smith, 1979, p. 158). In Lithuania, Vilnius University became the centre to

infuse the feeling of new democracy and of liberalism. It also fostered nationalistic ideas, and encouraged The Lithuanians to become aware of their present status and their historical past. The growing feelings of nationalism and resistance to the Czarist rules led to a revolt by a group of 400 students who joined the insurgents in the uprising of 1831, in the outskirts of Vilnius. After successfully suppressing of the uprising the Czarist authority closed in 1832 the University of Vilnius, the only institution of higher learning in Lithuania (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 237).

In 1840 the use of the name 'Lithuania' was forbidden. It was referred to as the *Severo Zapadnii Krai*, the north-western territory of the Russian Empire (Vardys, Sužiedelis, Ivinskis, Remeikis, Zundė, Vaitiekūnas, Grinius, Vigneri, 1965, p. 6). The sixteenth century Statutes of Lithuania (promulgated in 1529, 1566 and 1588) according to which the Lithuanians had ruled themselves for centuries, were abolished and replaced by Russian law (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 236). Despite mass arrests of dissidents and the transfer of Vilnius University faculties to the Kiev and St. Petersburg universities, the nationalist feelings fostered by the Vilnius University were kept alive by the intelligentsia of the country.

This is visible in the work of Simonas Daukantas. As a student of history at the University of Vilnius, he continued his studies in Konigsberg and St. Petersburg. He was the first Lithuanian historian who began to formulate the modern concept of ethnic Lithuania in his book History of Lithuanian, in Lithuanian language. His book was not published until 1845 (Gerutis et al., 1969, pp. 113-117).

The uprising from 1830 to 1831 was the first joint resistance of Lithuanians and Poles to the oppressive Czarist occupation since the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Thus, it can be argued that the nineteenth century was a period of struggle for the restoration of the statehood, development and modernisation of the Lithuanian nation and the period of modern nationalist revival. Formulating new political ideas of an independent political existence separated from both Russia and Poland, the Lithuanian nation gradually became a modern nation oriented to the ethnic territory of Lithuania. Values preserved in the sub-culture of the Lithuanian peasants now became the key

social factors in a Lithuanian nationalist movement founded on and promoting the ideal of an ethnic and largely rural Lithuania. The view that Lithuania Minor, which was then part of Germany, should be recognized as part of ethnic Lithuania also gained widespread support among intellectuals.

Conclusion

By the end of the nineteenth century Lithuanian nationalism had already established a base, albeit limited, within an academic core group. This would spread throughout the wider Lithuanian population by the end of the twentieth century, as explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

ORIGIN OF LITHUANIAN NATIONALISM: POWERFUL NEIGHBOURS

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> A people which does not know its past is living merely for the time being in the present of the existing generation, and only through knowledge of its history does a nation become truly self-conscious (Harrison, 1948, p. 7).

By 1922 Lithuania was declared an independent democratic republic. On February 16, 1922 the University of Lithuania was re-established in Kaunas and its re-opening coincided with the international recognition of Lithuania. The national use of its language was re-established and the country developed a culture and economy which re-affirmed the centrality and importance of the land and rural life. However, Lithuania could not be immune to the historical, political and cultural events which shaped Europe in the first two decades of the twentieth century. This chapter provides an overview of the phases of the development of the Lithuanian nationalism and its efforts in the attempt to obtain independence and a brief overview of the historical events which influenced its political, economic and cultural development during the period of independence.

For a grounded understanding of the Lithuanian nationalism and its emergence, I have examined the works of the historians of Robert D. Anderson (1991), Albertas Gerutis (1969), E.J. Harrison (1944), Eric Hobsbawm (1990), Miroslaw Hroch (1985), Vytautas Merkys (1994), Antanas Kulakauskas (1996), and Darius Staliunas (1996). For the historical events which were part of the process of independence, the works of Egidijus Alexsandreavičius (1996), Alfonsas Eidintas (1998) Zigmantas Kiaupa (2002, Alfred Erich Senn (1998), and Stanley Vardys (1965, 1978),have been also examined

The three Hroch phases of the history of national movement analysed in Chapter 2 are clearly applicable to the case of Lithuania and its political, national, social and cultural movements of the nineteenth century. The movement for the abolition of serfdom in 1861, the temperance movement of 1858-1864, the uprising of 1863-1864 and the resistance to the ban on the use of the Latin alphabet in the Lithuanian Press from 1864 to 1904, can all be seen as supporting the claim that Lithuania, despite Russification, was in effect a separate nation from both Poland and Russia in feeling, if not in terms of

political reality. Peasants came to have an active role and participation in a national and a social movement for the first time in the history of the country. This demonstrated the ways in which nineteenth century nationalism encapsulated and expressed the growing individual and democratic nature of this historical period.

The first voluntary mass organization, the temperance movement, reached rural Lithuania between 1858 and 1864 (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 241-242). According to the historian Egidijus Aleksandravičius, Lithuania followed the example of the temperance societies that had been established in British colonised Ireland by the Irish Capuchin priest Theobald Mathew in 1838. The Irish Temperance Movement was concerned with both the abstinence from the use of alcohol and with the influence of the established Anglican Church and English colonial policy (Aleksandravičius, 1991, p. 61).

In 1858, Bishop Motiejus Valančius, promoted the temperance movement in the diocese of Žemaitija and later published a Statute which regulated and established the societies throughout the country. By 1860 the societies in the Kaunas province had 692,000 members (83% of all the Catholics in the province), and those in Vilnius had 429,000 (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 241). These societies were established unofficially and the Czarist authorities regarded them with suspicion. The mass participation of the peasants under the leadership of the Catholic Church was an indication of the peasants' awareness of their social and economic conditions and of their rights in a society where serfdom still existed. Thus, until the abolition of serfdom in 1861, the peasantry joined the movement for improving their social and economic status. After the abolition of the serfdom, their active participation can be attributed to the increasing dissatisfaction with the Czarist regime. The changes in the economic and social conditions that the peasantry expected did not materialize.

According to Kiaupa the peasants were now able to demonstrate that "they were a strong, disciplined force which could think for itself and could not be ignored" (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 241-243). It was one which had also shown itself to be a potential force for decision-making in the economics if, not future life of the country. Thus, the temperance movement became the most important social movement, able to challenge the Czarist regime, and became a serious economic and social threat to the stability of the regime.

National consciousness in the Lithuanian peasantry was first fostered by its participation with the nobility (which was in agreement with the Poles in the attempt to restore a Lithuanian State with its borders marked as the one before the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1772), in the uprising of 1863-1864 which attempted to determine the political future of Lithuania. However, among the leaders of the Lithuanian uprising there was no unanimous consensus. They had on their programme the common issue of the distribution of land to peasants and the re-establishment of Vilnius University. It was the issue of the distribution of land that increased the interest and the participation of a large number of peasants in the uprising. Approximately half of the 66,000 Lithuanians who took part in the uprising were peasants (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas, 1996, p.150). Although the uprising failed, it provided a pretext for the Czarist authorities to outlaw the societies, using the allegation of political and anti-government activities. This failure posed a threat to the position of the Polish and Lithuanian nobility and to the political power that was traditionally granted to them. It also signalled the beginning of the internal division of the Lithuanian nobility in favour of the Polish.

On May 18, 1864 the Governor-General Mikhail Muraviev officially banned the societies (Vardys, 1978, p. 13). However, this social movement was an expression of the growing political self-awareness of the peasantry which had been allied closely with the clergy and nobility. Although most of the peasants remained under church control, they shared a strong sense of solidarity and national unity. This was also the last time that the Lithuanian peasantry fought alongside the Poles under the common historic banner (Wandycz, 1993, p.164).

The Language Contest: Lithuanian or Russian

The repression and intensified Russification following the uprising of 1863-1864 forced both Lithuanians and Poles to abandon their political demands. From 1864 the Lithuanian nationalism became a more linguistic nationalism (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 12). According to Hobsbawn, “linguistic nationalism was and is essentially about the language of public education and official use” (Hobsbawn, 1990, p. 96). In his theory, Hobsbawn maintains that “linguistic nationalism essentially requires control of a state or at least the winning of official recognition for the language” (Hobsbawn, 1990, p. 110).

From 1863 the free press, and most of the national cultural activities, were suppressed and the use of the Latin alphabet in the Lithuanian Press was banned (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 250-252). The Lithuanian Catholics, considered politically unreliable, were subject also to an intensified Russification programme through the official press, the schools and the Orthodox Church. Thus, all methods of Russification imposed on Lithuania after the insurrection of 1863 were justified and presented as a natural process to suppress Lithuanian national identity. The Finnish historian, Ea Jansen, argued that since the time of the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Czarist authorities considered the Grand Duchy of Lithuania a Russian province (Jansen, 1994, p. 147). Thus, if removed from the Polish cultural and political influence, it would submit to Russification (Merkys, 1994, p. 6). However, according to Hroch, Russification provided "an impulse towards a more rapid growth in linguistic, and indirectly also national awareness on the part of the Lithuanians, and their differentiation from the Polish ruling class" (Hroch, 1985, p. 95).

The ban on the use of the Latin alphabet within the Lithuanian press was thought to be necessary for the successful implementation of Russification. The Czarist authorities replaced the use of the Latin alphabet publication by insisting that the Lithuanian press use instead the *grazdanka* (Cyrillic Russian alphabet). A total of fifty publications were printed with funds from Czarist authorities (Merkys, 1994, p. 9). However, the Lithuanians refused to accept such publications and the Czarist authorities found it difficult to distribute them, even free of charge. Neither intellectuals nor peasants supported the ban, since it carried the danger of losing access to Lithuanian literature and damage to the written and inherited culture (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 253). As a result, the intellectuals sought to overcome the ban against local publication in the Lithuanian language by organising the printing of books and periodicals in Lithuanian language abroad, in East Prussia (Lithuania Minor) and their distribution in secret.

Merkys estimates that during the period of the ban from 1864 to 1904, approximately 4100 books were published abroad in addition to periodicals (Merkys, 1994, p. 9). In the same years Lithuanian immigrants in the United States published 720 books for distribution in Lithuania. A network of *knygnesiai* (book carriers) smuggled the books throughout the country. From 1889 to 1904, the Czarist police confiscated 390,000 copies of Lithuanian publications. Approximately 3000 people, of whom 79.6% were

peasants, were arrested and charged for possessing and distributing banned publications (Merkys, 1994, p. 200). The penalty for smuggling was exile to Siberia, for a period of four or six years. Thus, the *knygnešiai* (book carriers) became great national heroes (Senn, 1959, p. 9). So important was the dissemination of material published in Lithuanian language, that in 1940, the government of independent Lithuania extended the pensions granted in 1925 to the book carriers in recognition that they had risked their lives in the attempt to maintain Lithuanian language and culture throughout the country (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 254).

There was also resistance towards the replacement of the Lithuanian language with Russian language in the schools. The intent of the Russian authorities was to create "an intelligentsia with pro-Russian sentiments [and] to use the school to instil a sense of the Russian state and to make the local population loyal subjects of the empire" (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 251-252). The 1864 ban on the use of the Lithuanian language in primary schools was largely a fruitless exercise in the rural districts, as "secret Lithuanian schools sprang up and by the end of the nineteenth century, few self-respecting villages or small towns were without one" (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 263). These secret schools were an indication of the growing cultural and national resistance to Russification policies. Based in rural areas, they often shifted location from one farmhouse to another, teaching both adults and children. The student and teacher groups were mainly drawn from the peasantry and their instruction organized for the period after farm work. These schools were an acknowledgment that the national movement had mass support. The Lithuanians were determined to protect and promote their language and culture in ways which confirmed the continuing influence of the past on the future of Lithuania.

The 1897 Russian census indicates that 87.3% of the total population lived in villages and small towns and only 12.7% lived in cities, while of the rural population 58.3% spoke Lithuanian as their primary language (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 258). These statistics show the importance of the secret schools as a way to receive an elementary education and also to promote conscious resistance to Russification among the rural population. Over the next four decades the existence of such schools helped to lay a solid foundation for national revival. The number of participants in the fight against the ban on the use of the Latin alphabet on the Lithuanian press, together with the use of the Lithuanian language and its social fabrics, demonstrate the growing alliance between the Lithuanian

intelligentsia and peasant classes and their separation from the Polish. According to Hroch "the secular intelligentsia stood at the head of the national movement … [but] the peasants played a greater and greater part in the movement" (Hroch, 1985, p. 94).

As a consequence of the press ban, in 1883, the first Lithuanian language national newspaper *Aušra* (The Dawn) was published in Lithuania Minor (East Prussia) in secret. Edited by Jonas Basanavičius, the newspaper aimed to consolidate the unity of the Lithuanians, to increase national consciousness, and to stop the Polonization of the country (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 263-265). Basanavičius believed that Lithuanians had, like other nationalities, equal right to freedom of the use of the national language, freedom of the press and the right to teach in their national language in Lithuanian schools. Basanavičius's supporters maintained that the nation was formed from all social strata and based on equality and encouraged the Polonized Lithuanian nobility to reject the influence of Poland and to return to the Lithuanian nation.

In 1889 the radical newspaper *Varpas* (The Bell), published by Vincas Kudirka, called on Lithuanians to move to urban centres and to engage in trade and industry to develop the economy of the country. The aim of these newspapers was to awaken the national consciousness and to build the need for self government within the ethnic territory. According to Hroch, the birth of the newspaper *Aušra* marked the separation between Lithuanian and Polish intelligentsia and the beginning of the organization of Lithuanian patriots (Hroch, 1985, p. 86).

It can be argued that the Lithuanian-Polish separation and the formation of patriotic organizations in Lithuania appeared earlier. As early as the 1860s Lithuanian intelligentsia participated with the peasantry in a national movement which aimed to protect and preserve the language and the schools. According to Merkys, the past Lithuanian historiography and the present day historians are of the opinion that the Lithuanian national awakening started with the newspaper *Aušra*. However, this argument is challenged by the struggle for a free national press which resulted in the lift of the ban on the press on May 7, 1904 by Czar Nicholas II (Merkys, 1994, p. 396). This clearly was the result of the effective resistance of the Lithuanian population to the Russification policy.

Weakening Russian Control (1905-1914)

At the turn of the twentieth century, ineffective Russian foreign and national policy began to threaten the stability of the Russian Empire. Dissatisfaction spread in other European nations where unrest among the population had started against the Czarist nationalist policy. In Czarist Russia, territories' movements for independence had become strong by the time of the outbreak of the First World War. The aggravated national and international relations at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Russian Empire and the imperialistic policy of the major European state which brought on the First World War, gave rise to aspirations of independence in the small occupied nations of the Russian Empire.

In the early years of the twentieth century changes were noticeable in the national movements in Lithuania. Firstly, Lithuanians began to advocate political demands in addition to their cultural demands. Cultural nationalism in Lithuania thus turned into political nationalism. At that time the idea of an autonomous Lithuanian nation began to be shaped. Therefore, in politics was formulated the concept of national self-determination which led to claims political and cultural autonomy and a right to a separate state.

Secondly, the intelligentsia increasingly was able to bond together all strata of the population in the common struggle for independence and the creation of a modern nation state in Lithuania.

Finally, the people understood that in order to become truly independent, Lithuania first had to acquire its own national, political, economical, social and cultural independence. This project of building a nation state was attainable only with qualified people prepared to lay the foundation of an adequate programme of self-government. The political and cultural Lithuanian programmes of this period, which were affected by the foreign policy of the history of the Lithuanian national movement, can be divided in three phases.

The first phase of the Lithuanian national movement can be placed from 1904 to 1915. In this period the Lithuanian intelligentsia developed a programme of political and

cultural autonomy, and the idea of a national university took shape. Its mechanism was based on three major occurrences.

Firstly, there was the continuation of mass national movements during the revolutionary year of 1905, when the programme for Lithuania's autonomy within the Russian empire was formally advocated. This programme was presented at the Great Vilnius Diet in 1905, where 2000 Lithuanians representing all social classes gathered in Vilnius (Senn, 1966, p. 6). It was the first convention in which the peasants (60% of the participants) and intellectuals (35% of the participants) met together to formulate demands, to be submitted to the Czar (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 284-285). In their resolutions, the participants expressed the necessity for the autonomy of Lithuania: a Lithuania encompassing all the ethnic territories and with a parliament in Vilnius elected democratically and federally linked to its neighbouring countries. This demand included the need for reforms in regard to land ownership, education and the recognition of the Catholic Church as a state religion (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 19-21).

Secondly, there was the constant demand for a higher education institution, such as University of Vilnius, to ensure a continuity of education in the country. Restoration of the University of Vilnius was claimed as a historic right. The country had had this institution in the past (Staliunas, 1996, p. 97). Historian of nationalism, Robert D. Anderson, claimed that: "The use of the educational system for national integration was a European phenomenon in this period" (Anderson, 1991, pp.114-115). In the case of Lithuania, the re-opening of the University of Vilnius was associated with the needs of the country to have more qualified specialists in different disciplines and areas able to rule Lithuania if it successfully regained its independence. Re-opening of the university was also considered vital for the development and preservation of the Lithuanian intellectual and cultural life.

Finally, there was the re-establishment of the Lithuanian cultural life after the lifting of the ban on the press and on the use of Lithuanian language. This encouraged the establishment of private schools with the teaching being in the Lithuanian language, and the development of cultural organizations and political parties.

The assassination of the Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo in June 1914 hastened the military conflict between the Austrian-Hungarian and German alliance, and the Triple Entente of France, Great Britain and Russia. The hostilities between Russia and Germany had devastating effects on the Lithuanian people living along the moving front of the retreating Russian army. Lithuania became a battlefield and parts of its territory were either destroyed or burnt, forcing the rural population to abandon their farmsteads. The Russian authorities had also begun the deportation of individuals who were considered 'unreliable' into the depths of the Russian territories from areas close to the front, while a number of intellectuals, students, clergymen and public servants fled the country. The Lithuanian Jews were targeted also, with the pretext that in the 1907 elections they had supported the election of Lithuanian representatives to the Russian Duma by forming electoral blocks in the urban areas. The electoral system of the Duma was preferential towards the upper-class. The peasant voters in Lithuania could achieve seats in the Duma only with the vote of the Jewish urban population (Eidintas, et al., pp. 20-21).

By the summer of 1915 the Russians had almost completely retreated from Lithuania and on September 19, 1915 the German army entered Vilnius. The old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth territories were now occupied by the German and Austrian armies. The Czarist control over this territory, which had lasted from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, was coming to an end and a new nation was moving towards the final stages of its independence.

The German Occupation (1915-1918)

The second phase in the history of the Lithuanian national movement was developed over the period from 1914 to 1918, at the time when Lithuania was under German occupation. In this period a programme for independence was formulated and the activities of the Lithuanian intelligentsia first started to bear fruit.

Throughout the war, Germany planned the annexation of Lithuania through a gradual process of colonisation and Germanisation, or through the organisation of formerly independent states. An occupation administration followed by subsequent Germanisation was the strategy adopted by the German authorities. The German occupation lasted three

years. During this time the country was divided into districts: (thirty-four counties and two hundred-thirty rural townships) upon which a policy of Germanization was forced. Freedom of movement and communication between different districts was restricted. Postal correspondence and newspapers published in the Lithuanian language were forbidden, with the exception of the newspaper *Dabartis* (The Present) which was in agreement with the German administration. In 1917, the German authorities did allow the publication of another Lithuanian-language newspaper, the *Lietuvos Aidas* (Echo of Lithuania), albeit under strict censorship.

By the end of 1915, the effort of the Lithuanians to improve their education system was successful. Approximately one thousand primary and secondary schools had been established as well as teachers' training courses, although the new German administration kept the entire Lithuanian educational system under tight control. Compulsory German language classes were introduced. German Lutheran teachers replaced Lithuanian Catholic teachers and no new schools or courses were introduced (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 21-26).

During this period the Lithuanian political parties were divided into two main currents, the Conservatives, which included the *Tautininkai* (Nationalists), and Christian Democrat Parties, and Radical Democrats, which included the Social Democrats and the Democratic Parties. The conservatives, in pleading for Lithuanian autonomy, sought compromise and followed a moderate course. The Radical Democrats instead put forward socialist reforms that sought social, economic and political changes.

Nevertheless, the parties in both streams shared the concept of national self-determination linked to the historical traditions of the Lithuanian state. Their territorial aspirations included the historic ethnic Lithuanian territories of Vilnius, Kaunas, and Suvalki and the Grodno provinces. The legacy of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was still securely established among the conservatives who placed their hopes in Lithuanian landowners to preserve the traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Most of the landowners were still gravitating in the Polish cultural orbit. They were not prepared to return completely to their Lithuanian origins since that would not give them any further privileges. The radical democrats on the other hand, considered the Polonized aristocracy as a cultural aspect of the country, not indicative of

ethnic origin and favoured civic integration of Lithuania's ethnic groups on the basis of their loyalty to Lithuania.

In August 1917 the Germans granted to the twenty members of the *Taryba* (Council of Lithuania) led by Antanas Smetona, the right to participate in a conference to discuss the German demands for a Lithuania linked to Germany. This was the first occasion for Lithuanian leaders to gather since the German occupation. The conference was held in Vilnius from September 18 to September 22. Lithuanian representatives announced their programme to establish an independent Lithuania within ethnic territories and the restoration of a national University. The re-opening of the University of Vilnius was not only a political issue to be discussed, but a plan for its re-opening was forged.

The *Taryba* began its work on September 24, 1917 and it was responsible for the political programme of the independent Lithuania. The primary concern was to obtain German recognition of Lithuania as a separate national unit, which Germany eventually recognised on March 23, 1918. On November 2, of the same year a temporary constitution was adopted and a provisional government was formed with Augustinas Valdemaras as Prime Minister. Finally, on April 4, 1919 Antanas Smetona was sworn in as the first president of independent Lithuania. On May 15, 1920 the Constituent Assembly replaced the *Taryba* (State Council of Lithuania) (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 24–30).

Lithuanian nationalism had thus finally succeeded in its struggle for independence. On February16, 1918, in Vilnius, the Council of Lithuania formulated the Act of Independence. The Statute of Vilnius University was adopted in the State Council on December 5, 1918.

The third and final phase of Lithuanian national movement was from 1918 to 1922 when a programme for a nation state was formulated. The most relevant events in this period were the continuation of mass national movements in the fight for independence against the Germans, the Russians and the Poles in which the idea of the nation state was protected.

When the German western front collapsed, the German army retreated, and Lithuania had to form its own military defence. The Soviet revolutionary government annulled the peace treaty of Brest-Litovosk (1918) which renounced any territorial claim to Lithuania and the Red Army moved towards Lithuania while Vincas Kapsukas formed a provisional communist government that proclaimed Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic. The Republic, however, was not recognized by the existing Lithuanian provisional government. On November 22, 1918 Prime Minister Valdemaras declared a general mobilisation to resist the advance of the Red Army. The Russians occupied Vilnius on January 5, 1919 while the Lithuanian government withdrew to Kaunas. In August of 1919 the Lithuanian army forced the Red Army out of the country. On July 12, 1920 the Russians requested an armistice renouncing all claims on the Baltic countries (Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania) and new eastern boundaries for Lithuania were established (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 20-27).

Throughout the years of European military conflict, the collapse of empires and the consequent re-alignments of territories and allegiances, it was difficult for Lithuania to develop a stable independent national identity or existence, situated as it was, between powerful neighbouring states. In late 1920 disputes between Lithuania and Poland over territorial claims intensified and resulted in military confrontation. The military conflict with Poland led to the loss of the capital Vilnius which was occupied by the Poles since April 19,1919 and a third of the territory that had been assigned to Lithuania by the July 1920 Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia. The city of Kaunas became the provisional capital. On July 27, 1922 the United States recognised Lithuania *de jure* followed by England and France on December 22, 1922 (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 28-31).

It was, however, a depleted Lithuania. Absent from the new nation were a third of its ethnic territories and its traditional capital. In this situation the national movement had two major tasks: to translate a national movement into one capable of ruling and administering the newly independent nation and to maintain the struggle to reclaim the traditional lands and capital which had been lost to Poland.

The three phases in the history of Lithuanian nationalism show some similarities with the three Hroch phases analysed in Chapter 2. Firstly, independence in Lithuania was achieved with the joint efforts of the mass movement of the Lithuanian population and

of the intelligentsia of the country which elaborated a programme of independence and developed the concept of a nation state with the participation of all social strata in the struggle. Secondly, intellectuals demonstrated their political maturity and their ability, together with the rest of the nation, to fight to defend independence and to lay the foundation for the nation state. They succeeded in proving to the other European states that Lithuania, like any other state, had the right to be independent and to achieve recognition both *de facto* and *de jure.* Lastly, the foundation of a national university was conceived as an integral part of the political programme for the building of a nation state.

Declaration of Modern Lithuania's Independence (1920-1939)

> The Lithuanian Independence started in rather unfavourable conditions, which were aggravated by the needs of military and, later, diplomatic defence. The twenty-two years of political freedom, however, gave the country's young leaders the opportunity, unique in Lithuanian history, to carry out a program of fundamental social and economic reform (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 23).

In 1923 Lithuania covered an area of 55,670 square kilometres with a population of 2.17 million of whom approximately 80% were ethnic Lithuanians, 7% were Jewish, 6.8% were Polish, 3.2% were Germans and 2.3% were Russians (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 347). The economy relied heavily on agriculture with 50% of the population making its living from farming as the country was poor in natural resources. As a result the vast majority of the population remained in rural areas despite the migration of approximately 10 % of the population to urban centres throughout the nineteen years from 1920 to 1939 (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 22). Within this limited context, the *Foundation Seimas* (Constituent Assembly) had to carry out the task of building the new state.

A series of reforms covered all aspects of civil and political life. The major concern was the country's economy and the living conditions of the rural Lithuanian population that had been stifled by 120 years of Czarist rule. The regime had ruled within a conservative land-based system in which the landowners and nobility formed a privileged class holding the rights of land ownership and government. The country's Lithuanian culture had been repressed by a variety of measures, among them the ban on printing in the

Latin alphabet imposed in 1864 and enforced until 1904, and the associated language measures which prohibited education in Lithuanian language (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 22). This conservative system in which Polonised Lithuanians and absentee Russian landlords controlled the economy, coupled with economic measures which left Lithuanian territories underdeveloped in comparison with other parts of the Russian Empire, had put Lithuania at a disadvantage. The government of independent Lithuania focused on reforms and legislation to address issues of land ownership, education, the use of the language, the role of the Roman Catholic Church and the divisions of the ethnic Lithuanians and Lithuanian Jewish communities.

Land Reform

> To return to the question of land reform, I must emphasise and repeat what I have said many times that the author of land reform was not a person but a collective. The whole of Lithuania was that collective, and not only these who earned their living from the land, but also the Lithuanian intelligentsia and craftsmen, all those who wanted to see Lithuania to lessen the poverty among Lithuanians, to change the face of Lithuania. Land Reform is the vox populi, called for by the whole nation. I only had the great honour and fortune to turn it into reality. No truly patriotic Lithuanian could ignore that voice without sinning against his nation and country. … I as the minister of agriculture, carried out the hopes of the nation and the decision of the expresser of the national will (Mykolas Krupavicius, in Pauliukonis 1970, p. 14).

According to the census of 1923, the Lithuanian population, without the Vilnius and Klaipeda, regions was estimated at 2,028,975 people. Of the total population 15.8 % lived in cities and towns whilst 84.2 % lived in villages and smaller country towns (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 45). Before the First World War, the lack of raw materials and the limited supply of skilled technical labour available in the country hindered the establishment of heavy industry and, as a consequence, the economy of Lithuania was forced to rely on specialised industries based on farming products. These conditions continued to influence the government's decisions in the late 1920s to promote dairy and livestock farming. As a result, the national economy continued to be heavily reliant upon agriculture during the period of independence (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 25).

In 1919, approximately 75 % of the total Lithuanian population was engaged in farming (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 349) notwithstanding that 40 %, of the land was still in the hands of a small group of landowners, with 20 % owned by only 450 families with holdings averaging 490 hectares (Vardys, 1968, p. 23). Peasants' farms (40,000 families) with an average of fifteen hectares covered 25 % of the remaining land while 60,000 families, representing one fifth of the rural population, were landless (Pauliukonis, 1970, p. 1).

The resolution of the issue of land ownership was a priority for the reform programme of the new Lithuanian Government. Indeed, from the first days of independence in 1918, the political parties began to lay the foundation for a land reform and introduced fundamental changes in the re-distribution of land among landless peasants and small landholders. The intent was to improve the national economy, the living conditions of the rural population and to win the support of the majority of the Lithuanian people (Eidintas, 1998, et al., p. 45). The purpose of the land reform was clearly stated in the preamble of the bill:

> The land reform bill is being enacted in order to supply the landless and the small holders with land, to regulate the control of land in such a way as to create conditions for the development of agriculture and first of all of small and medium sized farms, and to nationalize that which the state can better use and safeguard than private individuals (Pauliukonis, 1970, p. 6).

During the first months of independence, a number of decrees were passed as an introduction to the Land Reform Bill. The drafting of the land reform was left to the Constituent Assembly under the chairmanship of a Roman Catholic priest Mykolas Krupavičius. On August 14, 1920 the Introductory Land Reform law was promulgated and known as the 'Small Land Reform'. According to this act, the Government acquired the property of forest and timber stands of over sixty-seven acres, swamps and peatbogs, rivers, lakes, natural resources and mineral water sources larger than seventy hectares (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 200). In addition, entailed estates, properties of the former Russian state, estates of absentee Russian landowners and the most neglected land became part of the Lithuanian Government acquisition (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 45).

The main Land Reform Act was passed on April 3, 1922 under Krupavičius who became the Minister of Agriculture. A State Land Fund was established to assume ownership and to redistribute the land acquired by the Lithuanian Government among landless

peasants, small landholders, labourers, artisans, schools, hospitals, towns and parishes. Army volunteers were given priority in the redistribution of land and repayments to the State Land Fund were not immediately required (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 45-47). Furthermore, army volunteers were given timber grants for building purposes (Rutter, 1926, pp. 49-50). Peasants who had been given land were to repay the government over a period of thirty-six years beginning in the ninth year from the date of the concession of the land. The landowners and the holdings of the monasteries and churches were to be compensated for their expropriated lands over the same period. The compensation was determined by law on the value of the land from 1910 to 1914. As a result the land value was denoted in currencies that were later debased by inflation. Forest grants and debt write-offs were a form of compensation as well as the cash payments. This payment in devalued currencies meant that landlords received significantly less than the market value of their land for compensation payments as well as being left with no more than eighty hectares of land each. The number of landowners grew by 18% whilst another 13% of Lithuanian peasants added to their holdings. On average new farmers received 9.4 hectares and small landowners 2.5 hectares. Most of this land was distributed from 1923 to 1926 and the small size of the majority of the holdings would become an important issue in a country which was to rely on agriculture to generate export income as well as to maintain its social fabric (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 46).

Eidintas asserts that land reform was necessary and made good economic sense. Prior to the reform about 60% of Lithuanian peasants still lived in hamlets and not on individual farmsteads. This impaired the growth and prosperity of Lithuanian agriculture. Eidintas stresses that in those areas of Lithuania where individual farmsteads prospered, agricultural productivity was relatively high. In Suvalkija, a region in South Western Lithuania where almost all peasants were living on individual farmsteads, the productivity in livestock, poultry breeding and grain was much higher than that of the larger estates. In comparison to the rest of Lithuania this region was the most productive. This was in contrast to the central regions of the country where only half of the rural populations lived on farmsteads and the agricultural productivity was lower; while in eastern regions the productivity was even lower as the majority of peasants worked on estates as hired labourers (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 47). The re-distribution and ownership of land and the conversion of hamlets into individual farmsteads encouraged, for the first time, independence in the peasants and sense of initiative in methods of

farming, and eliminated unproductive strips of land on the edges of some villages that had impeded the introduction of crop rotation (Pauliukonis, 1970, p. 6).

Eidintas argues that the land reform was seen by the Lithuanian Government as a continuation and further development of the Land Reform introduced by Pyotr Stolypin (Russian Minister of Agriculture) in Russia at the turn of the twentieth century aimed to create individual landowners. In addition, this reform also sought to increase the number of medium and small holdings but at the economic cost of the size and productivity of the larger estates (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 48). As such, the programme conformed to the conservative politics of a predominantly Roman Catholic Lithuanian Government. The redistribution of land continued to be a marker of national pride and achievement and was a continuation of Lithuanian rural national identity.

Former landowners received compensation as their economic power was reduced while peasants who had been granted land were often unable to establish themselves despite loans and subsidies from the state. These two circumstances had an impact on the economy of the country, which resulted in a gradual migration of the peasants from rural to industrial urban areas (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 47). Despite this trend and the fact that the Lithuanian economy was not immune to the repercussions of the world economic crisis of 1929-1932, the redistribution of land resulted in an agricultural economy able to sustain a new class of farmers holding small and medium sized farms. By 1930 approximately 6% of Lithuanian territory belonged to 1,602 landlords and new farmers. Peasants from ten to twelve hectare farms (92,808 peasants) owned 30% of the land which constituted 32.3% of all farming land. While peasants with farms from thirty to hundred hectares (27,073 peasants) owned 27.5% of land which comprised 9.4% of the remaining farming land. Lithuanian agriculture, however, still employed 150,000 hired labourers (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 116-120). Although the land was in small holdings, it enabled the majority of peasants and the nation to survive the economic crisis, while at the same time achieving a key objective of the national movement.

The adoption of modern methods of farming and the introduction of higher yield strains also led to an increase in productivity while peasants gradually shifted from grain production to dairy and farming products. Livestock breeding was given special consideration and by 1932 the high standard in stock breeding improved the quality of

dairy products. The establishment of dairy industries as " the government promoted the transition from grain culture to stockbreeding and dairy farming, based upon large-scale co-operatives whose initiative and enterprise stimulated the expansion of foreign trade" (Harrison, 1948, p. 13). The first sugar factory was built in Marijampole in 1932 and a *Pienocentras* (dairy factory) was established in 1926, holding a virtual monopoly of exports of dairy products and eggs. These new agricultural patterns of production resulted in an increase in the income of wage earners and improved the young nation's export earning capacity, while still keeping faith with the nationalist ideology of a modern state based on traditional, rural and ethnic Lithuanian ideals and structures of organization (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 117).

Lithuania remained a predominantly agricultural country, where industry and towns grew slowly. Kiaupa maintains that The Great Depression, which engulfed the world economy in 1930, had serious negative repercussions on Lithuanian agriculture, which still accounted for 70% of national production. Owners of small farm holdings went bankrupt and there was consequently heavy unemployment (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 356). His argument ignores the nationalist political imperative behind these reforms. The argument needs to include more than economics in considering Lithuanian land reform. Eidintas indeed, argues that although the Lithuanian economy clearly suffered from the effects of The Great Depression, the "land reform had laid a solid foundation not only for Lithuanian agriculture, but for the rest of the economy, and for the state in general" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 48-49). The land reform had brought land into active production which had been previously part of the large estates often controlled by absentee landlords. It also gave a valued national identity and place in Lithuanian society to the peasants who had been so important in the nationalist and reform movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Land reform of this nature was a national and cultural necessity as stated by Rev. M. Krupavičius (Pauliukonis, 1970, p. 3).

Currency Reform

A new Lithuanian currency was an important part of the process of national renewal and economic reform. Lithuanian independence occurred in 1920 and its first years were marked by a continued dependence on the Czarist and Duma roubles and the German mark, both heavily devalued currencies. This position meant that Lithuania indirectly

supported German reparations to the Allies after the First World War and put even more pressure on the new nation's economy. As a result of the instability, Lithuania received very little aid from the Western powers. Instead its major source of aid came from Lithuanian Americans who paid $1.9 million for Lithuanian Liberty loan bonds continuing the pattern began earlier by Lithuanian Americans who had sent books to Lithuania during the period of the ban on Lithuanian publication in Lithuanian language (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 41).

The introduction of its own currency, the *litas* (based on the gold standard of August 16, 1922, worth 0.15 of 426g of pure gold), was an important step in Lithuanian cultural and economic independence. In the years from 1922 to 1938 the *litas* was regarded as one of the most stable of the European currencies (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 49-51). The American dollar was established as the standard (US$1 equal to 6 *litas*). The right to issue currency was given to *Lietuvos Bankas* (Bank of Lithuania). The *litas* kept its value until the first Soviet occupation (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 202). Lithuania distributed paper and metal currency. Coins in denominations of one, two, five, ten, twenty and fifty cents were minted using bronze; but one, two, five and ten *litas* coins were minted in silver. Banknotes were distributed in denominations of ten, twenty, fifty and hundred *litas*. At first the coins were minted in England then in 1939 a State mint was established in the city of Kaunas (Bindokienė, 1989, p. 100).

Education Reform

> First feeling the need to speak and write Lithuanian and then dreaming of possible independence (Basanavičius, in Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 5).

During the period of independence the Lithuanian Government fostered and encouraged the establishment of a system of public education aimed at developing, in the words of Eidintas, "the country's spiritual and material culture" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 129), which had been severely hindered by 120 years of Russification policies imposed by the Czarist regime (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 250-252). The Smetona government fostered the development of the economic, cultural and the scientific life of the country through a network of schools and universities, the establishment of the Institute of Arts and the Conservatory of Music, both founded in 1935.

Under Russian rule, attendance to primary school education was not compulsory. This resulted in a high number of illiterate and semi-literate people (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 250). After 1922 this number decreased as a Primary Schools Law was passed making primary school attendance compulsory for children between seven and fourteen years of age (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 215). Children were required to attend primary school for a minimum of six years instead of the previously required four years.

In Lithuania in 1919 there were 1036 primary schools with an attendance of 45,540 children. By 1938, the number of schools had reached 2,319 with 5,110 teachers (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 129); primary schools alone accounted for 283,773 children (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 250). Furthermore, minority language schools were maintained for Lithuanian Jews, and for Polish, Russian, German and Latvian minorities. Secondary education provisions increased by thirty-one public schools and twenty-nine private gymnasiums, with a combined population of approximately 18,000 students (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 129).

After 1925 secondary public schools, in which Latin was not taught, required two compulsory foreign languages, German and either French, English or Russian. When the programme of a six-year minimum primary education was introduced in 1936, French replaced German as a foreign language "in part because of the deteriorating relations with Germany" and Eidintas further added that the study of compulsory foreign languages also made possible "a closer acquaintance with the standards of higher education in other parts of Europe" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 130). Eidintas emphasises that the study of compulsory foreign languages also was important in fostering the sense that the newly independent Lithuania was indeed a part of the Western European culture. In October 1919 a programme of higher education was established in Kaunas and by 1922 had evolved into the University of Lithuania. The University of Vilnius, closed in May of 1832 by Russian authorities, could not be restored after Vilnius was seized by the Poles.

The Church during the Period of Independence

> The [Roman Catholic] Church's traditions and customs were part of the folkways; its moral code dominated public opinion. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Church … and its clergy provided much of the leadership of the movement for independence and, afterward, for radical social reforms … during the period of independence, the Church became indissolubly wedded to Lithuanian nationalism (Vardys, et al., 1965, pp. 29-30).

Article 14 of the Lithuanian Constitution of August 1, 1922 proclaimed the right of the Lithuanian people to "equality before the law, inviolability of person and property, freedom of religion and conscience, freedom of correspondence, word and press" (Gerutis, 1968, p. 198). The Constitution was passed by the *'Lietuvos Krikščionių Demokratų Partija'* or LKDP (Christian Democratic Party) the largest and the most influential party in the country and whose members and parliamentary representatives were drawn largely from the Roman Catholic clergy and community, with the support of Jewish minority representatives (Vardys, 1978, p. 21). Thus, from its very beginning the influence of the Catholic Church on independent Lithuania was significant as the Church itself was a key element in nationalist and legislative politics.

The Christian Democratic Party directed their intention on "stressing the role of the Catholic Church in the national life of Lithuanians [and] vigorously pressed for the religious rights of the faithful" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 40-41). Members of the party had fought for the development and use of the Lithuanian language and the clergy, among the supporters, had provided leadership for the movement for independence, instilling nationalist ideas in their congregations. Furthermore, the party was anti-Polish, still resenting the historical "Polonising influences of the Polish clergy in Lithuania" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 41).

After independence the Christian Democratic demanded that Catholicism be recognized as the State national religion. Although this demand failed, clearly Lithuania's first permanent constitution was favourable to religion and protected the traditional position of the Catholic Church. The rights granted to the Catholic Church under Article 84 were also guaranteed to all religious denominations, the right to self-government, to perform

services, organize schools and charitable institutions, and to establish monasteries on their own property. Furthermore, Articles 83-87 granted churches exclusive jurisdiction over marriage laws and religious birth and death certificates. The Lithuanian government kept no such records. Through these powers granted to the Churches, the State surrendered sovereignty over significant aspects of Lithuanian life and society (Vardys, 1978, pp. 22-23).

The religious influence over Lithuanian life was further consolidated through the provisions of Article 80 which regulated the teaching of religion in schools. The article stated that "religious education [was] obligatory with the exception of schools established for children whose parents do not belong to any religious organization" (Vardys, 1978, pp. 22-23). Thus, the state equally supported, in financial terms, teaching of the Catholic as well as the Protestant and Jewish religions in public and minority ethnic primary and secondary schools. However, Catholicism was considered the dominant national religion. Similarly, the state supported a Catholic theological-philosophical school and a Department of Protestant Theology at the University of Kaunas.

The articles involving the compulsory teaching of religion in schools and the recognition of only religious marriages became the object of controversial debates as Leftist parties protested against the compulsory aspect of the teaching and the lack of recognition of civil marriage and divorce. In 1927 relations between the Catholic Church and the State were further defined by a Concordat with the Holy See which gave the Church still more control over education and freedom of the Catholic Action Organizations (Vardys, 1978, pp. 27-29). This agreement also provided financial support for the seminaries, salaries of the clergy and partial compensation for church properties seized by the Czarist government (Savasis, 1966, p. 14).

The Constitution of independent Lithuania conferred equal rights on and protection to all religious denominations. In practice, the constitutional provisions and laws in favour of religion worked to strengthen the position of the Catholic Church, already strong from its economic independence due to land ownership, and its closeness to the religious congregations. Vardys argues that the Church's landed property was not large, with churches and monasteries, churchyards, rectories, orphanages and other social

institutions comprising only about 20,000 hectares of land, approximately 1.5 % of total arable land of the country (Vardys, 1978, p. 33). While perhaps not large, this ownership was conspicuous. Most of the farms were well managed and their usefulness was argued on the grounds that without them it would be difficult to support the priests.

The Catholic Church was supported by 85% of the Lithuanian population. Catholic societies and organizations attracted various age groups. By 1939 the rural youth group *Pavasaris* (Spring) alone had 90,000 members (Vardys, 1978, p. 32), the children's organization, *Angelas Sargas* numbered 60,000, the Catholic Women's Society, numbered 42,000, the *Ateitininkai*, an organization of high school, college and university students with graduates numbered about 12,500, and there were 1500 Catholic teachers, making a total of 106,000 out of a population of 1,898,000 (Savasis, 1966, p. 14).

Catholic publications had the largest circulation in the country. By 1931 the St. Casimir Society, founded in 1906, had published 530 books in 2,294,000 copies. In the following years of independence the number of Catholic newspapers and publishers increased due to the work of the Marian Fathers, the Jesuits and the Franciscan Brothers (Savasis, 1966, p. 14). Furthermore, Catholic intellectuals and the clergy involved themselves in the publication of journals and magazines, which helped to build the bridge between politically different segments of the society. The growing weight of church organizations, their involvement in the nation's cultural, educational and political life and the vigour of the new secular and clerical leadership, kept the Church close to the Lithuanian population.

This situation was not accepted by the socialists and younger generation of nationalists who opposed the Church's control over political and secular life, particularly its control of education. They tried unsuccessfully to fight that power and influence through a programme of atheistic education that attempted to secularise Lithuanian life and through the removal of financial support for private schools (Vardys, 1978, p. 23).

Equally fruitless were the efforts of the authoritarian regime of Antanas Smetona to curb the Catholic Church's influence by banning and restraining Catholic organizations and by restricting the work of the Catholic theological-philosophical school. The Catholic Church during the period of independence was too closely identified with Lithuanian

nationalism, as the majority of the clergy including its senior hierarchy, had already supported the nationalist movement before the First World War. Instead, the Church opposed any form of authoritarism imposed by the Smetona regime. Indeed it has been argued that the Church was able "to contain the regime from swerving to extremism and to Fascism" (Vardys, 1978, pp. 30-34). So extensive was the Catholic influence in the country that in 1939 Pope Pius XII, accepting the credentials of Stasys Girdvainis, the new Lithuanian diplomatic representative to the Holy See, called Lithuania " a frontline fortress of the Catholic faith in northern Europe" (Savasis, 1965, p. 15).

The Lithuanian Jewish Community

> The Egyptians were not Aryans, yet no one can deny their great culture. The Japanese are a yellow-skinned race, yet their power today is undeniable, and their culture is exceptional. The Jews are Semites… and how great their impact has been on mankind. They gave us the bible (Smetona, in Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 135-136).

By the 1930s the shape of the Lithuanian state in which traditional religious and social values were given priority had been defined. The nation was now able to conduct its own cultural, economic and political life. By the late 1930s Lithuanians began to perceive a full national life within the framework of a now established and independent Lithuania incorporating minority groups.

In the year of independence the Jews of Lithuania were the largest ethnic minority in the country. The census of 1923 recorded a population of 154,000 Lithuanian Jews, representing 7.6% of the total population. They were mainly concentrated in cities and towns and engaged in business and trade (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 133). Jews who had previously settled in urban areas by Czarist Regulation for Jews of 1804 had to confront the new government policy to increase the presence of ethnic Lithuanians in commerce, industry and professional life while maintaining their traditional domination in agriculture. These policy decisions meant that ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians would find themselves increasingly in competition in an historical period in which the racialization of Jews was a defining component of European politics.

In Lithuania, Jewish communities appeared as early as the fourteenth century with well established communities throughout the country from the second half of the sixteenth century. In 1766, approximately 157,000 Jews were living in Lithuania, mostly settled in cities and towns. In the eighteenth century it was common for more than half of the population of a small town to be Jewish and this pattern as stated above was reinforced by the Czarist *Regulations for Jews*, of 1804 which compelled Jews to live in towns and cities in order to strengthen the economic base of the urban centre (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 228). The even harsher regulation of 1882 had forbidden the Jews from living in rural areas or working in farming (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 228). Thus, while the Jews were concentrated in urban centres and occupations, Lithuania remained a predominantly agricultural country for the entire nineteenth century.

The Russian census of 1897 indicates that of the 300,000 Lithuanian Jews living in the country, 212,600 established themselves in the Kaunas Province (13.7% of all the residents of the area); of these people, 43.4 % lived in the cities, 53.8% in towns and 2.8% in villages. At the end of the nineteenth century the separation of ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians into predominantly rural and urban areas, was paralleled to the work categories in which they were associated (Eidintas, 2002, pp. 27-28).

During the first years of independence two Jewish Organizations were established: the Official Ministry for Jewish affairs and the Jewish National Council. Both regulated the cultural, religious and social welfare of the Jewish community. By 1925 a network of Yiddish and Hebrew language schools was also operating throughout the country. It educated 93% of Lithuanian Jewish children and contributed to the preservation of the cultural and social life of Lithuanian Jews. Vilnius became the centre for the publishing of Hebrew language textbooks (Steinhardt and Botwinick, 2004, p. 33).

Jews also participated in the political life of Lithuania, as members of the Independence Volunteer fighters and later volunteering for the newly created Lithuanian army. The first provisional Lithuanian Government recognised the contribution made by the Jewish minority in securing independence, by appointing Jacob Wygodski as the Minister for Jewish affairs and by inviting Jewish representatives to join the *Lietuvos Taryba* (Lithuanian Parliament) in November 1918. However, new political circumstances prevented these positions from lasting more than a few years and by 1924 the Ministry

for Jewish Affairs and the Jewish National Council were dissolved by the government which considered them 'unnecessary'. In spite of these measures, the Jewish religious community continued to be subsidised by the government and was able to retain the freedom to run its social, religious and educational affairs (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 134).

At the same time the concept of the newly established nation state as one in which the national language and ethnic Lithuanians would be central, influenced Lithuanian policy across areas of business, economic policy and education. This new strategy generated friction between the ethnic Lithuanian and Jewish communities. The government continued to support agriculture, while striving to create a new urban Lithuanian managerial and professional class. The large or medium sized industrial enterprises were allowed to organize themselves, as they were, "after all … not owned by ethnic Lithuanians but were owned by German and Jewish industrialists" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 119). The medium sized industrial enterprises were not supported by the Government as the country was still focused on a systematic development of agricultural industries dominated by ethnic Lithuanian firms. Domas Cesevičius, the Secretary-General of the *Tautininkai* party stated:

> The economy would only be national and Lithuanian only when agricultural industries led by [ethnic] Lithuanians would grow to such an extent that they would naturally dominate non-agricultural, i.e. non [ethnic] Lithuanian industries (Cesevičius, in Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 119).

After independence ethnic Lithuanians also began to increase their participation in higher education which had been traditionally an area of Jewish endeavour. The policy adopted by the Lithuanian government, in the early years of independence, to institutionalise the use of the Lithuanian language in public life, commerce and state education represented a challenge for the Lithuanian Jewish community. They were accustomed to speaking Russian or Polish and had a limited knowledge of the Lithuanian language. As part of this policy the Smetona government introduced a Lithuanian language entrance examination which effectively reduced the number of Jewish students attending higher education institutions. Such provision could only undermine the relations between ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians and make clear that the position of Jewish Lithuanians within the new state was one which both groups would have to confront and resolve. Jewish community leaders responded to the government's

efforts to promote Lithuanian nationalism through language and suggested to the members of their communities that they refrain from using the Russian language in public or in business, particularly as ethnic Lithuanians perceived Jewish difficulties in speaking Lithuanian in these early days as "an indication of disloyalty to the Lithuanian State" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 135).

Although divisions and difficulties were surfacing and perceived by both ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians, nationalist sentiment, and business and professional competition, rather than religious beliefs, formed the basis of the problems. Because the Lithuanian Jewish community played an important role in the country's economy, displays of intolerance based on religious creed which could lead to anti-Semitism, did not occur as strongly in Lithuania as they did in other European countries. "Indeed Jewish educational, cultural and religious life thrived [and by] the standards of the time, the situation of Lithuanian Jews was relatively good" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 133-136). Smetona's independent Government strove to maintain these favourable conditions and in the mid 1930s the Smetona regime "spoke out against increasing anti-Semitic rhetoric" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 133-137).

Furthermore, the Lithuanian minister of National Defence, Balys Giedraitis, issued a decree in 1939 reinforcing the government stance, that all persons fomenting anti-Jewish activity be punished. In 1935 Smetona stressed that "Lithuania's ethnic minorities were not foreigners, but fellow citizens; they belonged to the Lithuanian nation, although their ethnic backgrounds might be different [and] gave public assurance that minority cultures would always be respected" (Smetona, in Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 133-136). However as well-meaning and sincere as these sentiments may have been, the outbreak of WWII and the arrival of Soviet and Nazi-German occupying forces would soon demonstrate the inability of the new Lithuanian State to survive and to protect the Jewish Lithuanian minority.

Conclusion

Due to its geographic position between German, Polish and Russian territories, Lithuania's history was shaped, after the period of the Grand Dukes, by the contests between these neighbouring countries. The fight for its own national independence and

identity was sustained by national movements, whose key characteristics were a focus on land and language, the repossession of which was necessary for the creation of an independent state based on the concept of the restoration and continuity of the Grand Duchy. The goal, once achieved, lasted only two decades.

The next chapter explores the effects of the Nazi and Soviet occupations and the resistance to these authoritarian regimes which affected the ethnic and Jewish Lithuanian populations, stifling the open expression and development of the Lithuanian culture and economy.

CHAPTER 4

LITHUANIA DURING THE PERIOD OF OCCUPATIONS

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LITHUANIA DURING THE PERIOD OF OCCUPATIONS

> If the Russian Tsars, beginning with Ivan the Terrible, were trying to reach the Baltic Sea, they were doing this not for their own personal ambitions, but because this was required for the development of the Russian State and the Russian Nation. It would be unpardonable if the Soviet Union did not seize this opportunity which may never recur. The leaders of the Soviet Union have decided to incorporate the Baltic States into the family of the Soviet Republics (Molotov, in Harrison, 1944, p. 27).

This chapter presents an interpretative account of the periods of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact (1939), the First Soviet occupation (1940-1941), the Nazi-German occupation (1941-1944) and the Second Soviet occupation (1944). I have decided on these events in the history of modern Lithuania as I consider them to be crucial in the development and character of the Lithuanian diaspora and which have shaped the experience of Lithuanian *émigrés* and exiles that are the focus of my study.

As noted in Chapter 1, the available scholarship can be broadly divided into two streams. The literature written by historians and scholars shaped in the pre-WWII period such as Michael Bordeaux (1979), Albertas Gerutis (1969), E.J.Harrison (1948), Jonas Savasis (1966), Alfred Erich Senn (2001), Stanley Vardys (1965, 1978), Vittorio Vigneri (1969), who foreground traditional liberal, religious and cultural practice and interpretations of the Lithuanian experiences' and the work of those scholars of the post-WWII period, such as Alfonsas Eidintas (1998) and Zigmas Kiaupa (2002), formed by the education and political system operating in Soviet occupied Lithuania.

In the works of Zigmas Kiaupa and Alfonsas Eidintas the analysis and evaluation of the partisan movement, the Roman Catholic Church and the development of Soviet education policies are fragmented or absent. I have found it difficult to deal with this more recent scholarship that largely ignores or provides minor analysis of historical data and facts which are relevant to my present study. For statistics and figures I have had to rely principally on the findings of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of

Lithuania (2004) based in Vilnius and on the work of Rimvydas Racenas (2005), a member of the former Siberian Lithuanian deportees' community

In my consideration of all these works, however, and in the topics which are the focus of my study, I argue for the recurring importance of land, religion and language to the cultural and national formation of the Lithuanian people. I demonstrate how they continue to retain the critical influence which they exerted in the centuries and decades before and during the first period of independence and which they still exert over the cultural beliefs and customs of the Lithuanian communities in Lithuania and abroad.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of non-aggression signed on August 23, 1939 between the Soviet Union and Nazi-Germany appeared to seal the fate of Lithuania in the context of developing European politics and history. It contained supplementary secret protocols demarking the future spheres of influence of the two countries in Eastern Europe. According to this secret agreement, Finland, Estonia and Latvia would fall into the Soviet sphere of influence, while Lithuania fell into the sphere of influence of Germany. On September 1, 1939 Germany attacked Poland and WWII began. The defeat of Poland and the Nazi-Soviet partition of the country changed the future of Lithuania. Lithuania entered the sphere of interest of the Soviet Union and Poland under German military control (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 362).

From 1940 to 1941 approximately 50,000 Lithuanians of German ethnicity were allowed to leave Lithuania for Germany. Significantly, among them was a large number of high ranking Government and military officials who served Independent Lithuania (Eidintas, 2003, p. 204).

On June 15, 1940 Soviet troops entered Lithuania after having delivered an ultimatum that demanded Lithuania "to guarantee the free entry of Soviet military units into the territory of Lithuania and their deployment in major centers in such numbers as to guarantee the necessary execution of the mutual assistance pact" (Eidintas, et al., 1998, pp. 174-176). At the same time the Lithuanian president Antanas Smetona with members of his government, fled to East Prussia. Contrary to the assertion made by the Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov the previous year, that the Soviet Union would confirm Baltic Independence, the Soviet Army wasted little time in asserting its authority.

> The Pacts with the Baltic States in no way imply the intrusion of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania. … These Pacts are inspired by mutual respect for the governmental, social and economic system of each of the contracting parties….and [we] declare that foolish prattle of Sovietisation of the Baltic States is of use merely to our common enemies and to all kinds of anti-Soviet provocateurs. (Molotov, in Harrison, 1948, p. 24).

The first acts of the occupying forces, even before the official incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR, were the arrest and deportation to Siberia of the Lithuanian Prime Minister Antanas Merkys as well as a large number of other Lithuanian leaders with their families, and the beginning of the systematic elimination of those who opposed the New Order.

On July 21, 1940 Soviet rule in Lithuania was declared and the Sovietisation of the country began with Lithuania officially annexed into the Soviet Union as a Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (Eidintas et al., 1998, pp. 152-158). This put an end to the brief period of independence which had been so long in the making. Once again the people of Lithuania had to negotiate the issues of cultural identity and continuity in a shifting political context.

The First Soviet Occupation (1940-1941): The Elimination of the Intelligentsia

> Vilnius belongs to us, but we belong to Russia – *Vilnius mūsu, o mes rusu* (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 364).

The policy adopted by Moscow was to isolate Lithuania from the rest of the West, suppress any form of democracy and begin Sovietisation on the Stalinist model of socialism (Eidintas, 2003, p. 204). The Soviets dissolved the Lithuanian Parliament; abolished the Lithuanian currency, the *litas*; the national army became the Red Army's 29th Riflemen's Corps; and the police force under a changed leadership became a Soviet militia (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 185). Even before the official incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR and the election of the Lithuanian representatives to the new People's *Seimas* (Parliament) in July 1940 the Soviet authorities arrested all those elements who opposed the New Order or who had campaigned against the elections. The country's

intelligentsia, the leaders of political parties, government officials, civil servants and military personnel were all targeted.

This process of systematic elimination of the social structure associated with the class system anathema to socialism was in clear opposition to the stated aims of the 1939 Mutual Assistance Pact. It revealed the Soviets to be another Russian authoritarian regime which, like its Czarist predecessors, considered Lithuanian territory and its population as a device to be used to protect and promote Soviet interest. Soviet supporters denied the ideological outcomes which these policies were designed to achieve, arguing that Lithuania, as part of a worker's state, would develop eventually a culture, 'national in form, socialist in content' (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 188).

To achieve their objective the Soviets divided the population into the "people workers, whom they represented and defended and the enemies of the people" (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 377). This enforced Sovietisation affected all aspects of Lithuanian life. Massive arrests soon began to take place and it is estimated that by August 1940 about 1,300 people were imprisoned and without any formal trial or conviction some were summarily sentenced and deported to remote areas of the Soviet Union (Kuodyte and Tracevskis, 2004, pp. 5-6). From October to November of the same year, expanded lists of so called anti-Soviet elements were drawn up, this time targeting a wide range of people including members of religious congregations and anyone who was considered a potential political and or class danger to the New Order.

During the first mass deportation from June 14 to June 18, 1941 a total of 16,246 people were deported (Kuodyte, and Tracevskis, 2004, pp. 18-19). The NKVD (Soviet Secret Police), assisted by local collaborators, carried out the whole operation. The people listed were notified that according to a government decision, they were to be resettled in other regions of the Soviet Union. Moscow's instruction required the separation of men from their families. Thus, 3,915 men and 12,331 women, children and elderly people were deported to the territories of the Altaij Mountains, the Komi Republic, the Krasnoyarsk, Kolyma and Tomsk regions, to Kazakhistan and Tadzhikistan (Racėnas, 2005, pp. 1-20). Formal procedures for carrying out these deportations are shown in Appendix 1.

Official data has established that an additional 3,542 people were arrested, imprisoned and sent to Siberia directly from prisons. A further 450 children disappeared from summer camps, as well as 426 soldiers and 54 members of military families (Eidintas, 2003, p. 206). Further deportation plans were disrupted by the outbreak of the Soviet-German conflict on June 22, 1941. Prior to evacuating the country, the Soviet Army massacred a large number of political prisoners at Petrasiunai near Kaunas and in the Rainiai Forest in the Telsiai and Panevezys counties (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 63). The severity of these massacres even in a time of war was such that they have become symbols, for continuing generations of Lithuanian scholars, *émigré* Lithuanians and those still living in the country, of the brutality and injustices which they associate with Soviet rule.

The first Soviet occupation lasted one year from June 15, 1940 to June 22, 1941 (Vardys, et al., 1965, pp. 61-63). Those members of the government who fled Lithuania, left behind a country in a political vacuum and in a weakened position to organize, from within the country, any effective political or military resistance to the Soviet occupation. As most of these refugees went to Germany it was from there that the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) was formed on November 17, 1940. Contacts with the LAF were maintained by Lithuanian underground and these groups emerged when German-Soviet hostilities began in June 1941 (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 378-381).

The German Occupation: The Lithuanian Jewish Holocaust (1941-1944)

> The subject of the holocaust in Lithuania exemplifies the arguments of those who insist that there is no such thing as "objective history". …The moment a historian begins to analyse the larger context, his findings become unacceptable to one or another group of readers (Senn, 2001, p. 1).

On June 22, 1941 Germany attacked the Soviet Union and the German army crossed into Lithuania. A popular uprising against Soviet rule broke out throughout Lithuania in the same month. The re-establishment of the Lithuanian state was declared by the anti-Soviet Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) which established a Provisional Government (Senn, 2001, p. 23). The uprising demonstrated to the Germans the Lithuanians' will to regain their independence.

In a short period of time the German Occupation Authorities suppressed the Provisional Lithuanian Government. The Nazi authority's objective was to include the Lithuanian territory with its population into the German war machine (Senn, 1998, p. 189). Although the *Ober-Ost* (German Occupation Directorate) approved the partial re-establishment of pre-Soviet administrative forms and practices, the introduction of a German civilian administration, the dismissal of the provisional Government, and the failure to restore the Lithuanian currency, the *litas*, were signs that Lithuania was to be just another occupied territory. Independent political or economic life was not tolerated and German rules were *de rigueur*.

The country was divided into districts and local Lithuanian authorities were recruited to oversee them. While, for the Germans, Lithuania represented a territory for later colonization, in keeping with the German policy of *Lebensraum*, their immediate focus was to mobilize and conscript labor to serve in Germany and to establish military and paramilitary corps to support the German war effort. The Lithuanian economy was also organized to meet German war needs. Farmers were required to fulfill requisition quotas of agricultural products and livestock. All industries previously nationalised by the Soviets were now controlled by the German authorities, with all farms that had formerly belonged to the State, deportees of the First Soviet occupation, Jews and Germans who were repatriated to the *Reich*.

The German failure to return confiscated properties to their legitimate owners provoked anti-German feelings among the rural population, which intensified when the authorities allowed German citizens to settle on some of these properties, while only a small number of Lithuanian farmers were entitled to regain their land. Indeed, most of the remaining land was retained by the Germans as state property. On May 2, 1942 Germans demanded the mobilization of 100,000 Lithuanian men for labor service in Germany (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 387-388). This was followed by a second mobilization in autumn 1942, for military reinforcement of the Eastern German front. All men of seventeen years and over had to register for the *Waffen SS Force*. The military recruitment as a whole was not successful, leading to random arrests and deportations to Germany. Lithuanians again demonstrated through this passive resistance their sense of identity and nationhood.

The retreat of the Soviet army aroused anxiety in the Lithuanian Jewish community. Although the Soviets had deported thousands of Lithuanian Jews in June 1941, identifying them with the Lithuanian intellectual and middle classes (Reitlinger, 1962, pp. 260-267), most of the Jewish Lithuanians perceived Soviet rule as far more acceptable than Nazi occupation. Ben-Cion Pinchuck, in his study *Shtetl Jews under Soviet Rule*, stated that "Pogroms and Nazi terror, not enthusiasm for Communism, were the dominant forces that drove the Jews towards the Soviets" (Ben-Cion Pinchuck, 1990, p. 22), adding that the more affluent Jews had found it difficult to adapt to the New Order. The less affluent often associated with small rural communities and younger and more secular Jews had seen the possibility of finding a better opportunity for them in Soviet-occupied Lithuania. This was their hope after their experiences with the government policies which had sought to promote the interests of ethnic Lithuanians over other sections of the population.

For ethnic Lithuanians who had previously exercised political and administrative power, the Jewish participation in the government under the Soviets led to tension and to an increase in conflict between the two ethnic groups. The interpretation of Soviet rule from 1940 to 1941 held by these two groups therefore differed sharply. Jews erroneously saw Soviet rule as a possible protection against the Nazis, while for the Lithuanians the Soviet suppression of their culture and political independence was the primary reality. As a result, at the time of German occupation tension between ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians was at a dangerous level, with some, according to Senn, even complaining about the 'Jewish Government' (Senn, in Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 189).

When Jews tried to follow the retreating Soviet army in a desperate attempt to avoid the approaching Germans, they were turned back at the Soviet border. Their attempt to escape was perceived by the ethnic Lithuanians as confirmation that Jews were anti-Lithuanian and therefore Soviet collaborators. Thus, they started to be subjected to violence by elements of the ethnic Lithuanian population in addition to the anti-Semitic laws introduced by the Germans and their Lithuanian and Soviet collaborators (Senn, 2001, pp. 6-7). Anti-Semitic German propaganda, calling on people to join the fight against 'Jewish bolshevism' resulted in 'spontaneous' pogroms. In Kaunas alone, partisans from June 25 to June 26 killed 3,800 Jews (Reitlinger, 1962, pp. 260-267). Nazi propaganda which equated Jews with Bolshevism appeared credible to a people

who had endured Soviet rule and who wanted a scapegoat for their hardship and losses. As a consequence, thousands of Jews were killed even before the Germans took control of the so-called 'Jewish Question'.

The Nazi occupation with its military and racial agendas had a different outcome for the ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians. The systematic repressions, arrests and massacres of Lithuanian Jews organized by the special German group *Einsatzgruppe A* with the recruitment of ethnic Lithuanians in carrying out its actions, resulted in the annihilation by the end of the war, of more than 80% of Lithuania's pre-WWII Jewish population (Eidintas, et al., 1998, p. 190).

The Second Soviet Occupation (1944): The Mass Deportation of the *Kulaks*

> Their official guilt was their social class; they were owners of private farms (Kuodyte and Tracevskis, 2004, p. 20).

When the Soviets regained Lithuania from Nazi-Germany in autumn 1944, mass deportations to Siberia were resumed. The Soviets argued that the action was necessary to eliminate the outlawed anti-Soviet partisan movement and their supporters. Significantly, the farming and rural classes, which during the war had provided both fighters and tactical support to the partisan movement, whose operations were mainly based in the rural areas, were also targeted. Mass reprisals were launched against entire villages whose inhabitants were said to have given help and shelter to the partisans. In some small villages not a single person was left behind (Kuodyte and Tracevskis, 2004, pp. 19-21).

Arrests followed by deportations took place throughout the remaining period of the war and for many years to follow. In 1944 approximately 1,338 Lithuanians were imprisoned. In 1945 under more systematically organized repression 7,368 Lithuanians were exiled and 31,661 imprisoned. From 1946 to 1947 approximately 4,864 were exiled and 36,506 imprisoned. These figures do not include the 18,000 partisans and guerilla fighters who died from 1944 to 1953 (Racėnas, 2005, p. 11).

In 1947 a campaign began for the introduction of the *kolkhozes* (co-operative farms) under Soviet control while the *kulaks* (small landowners) were burdened with progressive taxes and forced to make large requisition payments. These measures made their ability to remain on the land as independent landowners increasingly untenable. In spite of this initial Soviet campaign, only twenty *kolkhozes* were formed and in March 1948 a new resolution was passed enacting the Organisation of Collective Farms in the Republic. The resistance to join the *kolkhozes* among the Lithuanian farming class induced the Soviet authorities immediately to begin a new programme of deportations to purge those who opposed the decrees and farm holders who employed paid laborers, the latter being seen as *buozės* (bourgeois) exploiters of working people (Gerutis, et al., 1965, p. 299).

The landholders' classification as class enemies meant that the deportations were aimed at whole families. The largest deportations took place in May 1948, March 1949 and October 1951. In May 1948 more than 41,000 people were deported (12,100 families). In March 1949 another 30,000 people with more than 8,000 children were exiled while in the third operation, in October 1951, almost 17,000 people with approximately 5,000 children among them were deported (Kuodyte and Tracevskis, 2004, pp. 20-22). These deportations continued until Stalin's death in 1953. After his death the period of physical terror slowly began to ease and by the late 1950s his successor, Nikita Khrushchev, allowed deportees to return home following a series of amnesties.

About 50,000 deportees were unable to meet the criteria imposed by the Lithuanian Communist authorities for returning to Lithuania, and they were forced to settle either in Latvia or Kalinigrad, or had to remain in Siberia (Kuodyte and Tracevskis, 2004, pp. 20-31).

During these two Soviet occupations Lithuanians were deported for sentences of varying lengths of time: twenty years in June 1941; ten years in 1947 to 1948; and for an unlimited period of time from 1949 to 1953. Data from the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania records that 132,000 Lithuanians in total were exiled from 1940 to 1953, to remote areas of the Soviet Union; and that they were not allowed to leave these isolated zones during the whole period of Stalin's rule (Kuodyte and Tracevskis, 2004, p. 5). The high numbers of women and children among the deportees

clearly indicates that the action was taken against a class and not individuals, the aim being the control and re-organization of both the social and economic fabric of the Lithuanian state.

But this is not to say that armed resistance was not mobilized amongst the Lithuanian population.

> The Lithuanian nation, separated for more than three years from the outside world by a wall of bayonets, desires that the world should hear the true voice of the Lithuanian people (Harrison, 1948, pp. 46-47).

Partisan groups and opposition to the Soviet and Nazi-German occupations had been active since the beginning of WWII both in occupied Lithuania and outside its borders among the *émigrés*. At the time of the second Soviet Occupation (1944) Lithuania was predominantly a rural country. Most of the ethnic Lithuanian population was engaged in farming and living in villages and small country towns. The rural areas became the stronghold of Lithuanian national identity and provided both fighters and tactical support to the partisan movement which opposed the collectivization of the country's agriculture, and protected the cultural and religious values of the ethnic Lithuanian population. The resistance movement, although based in rural areas, drew supporters from all different social and political backgrounds of the Lithuanian population who shared the same goals. On January 16, 1944 – the twenty-sixth anniversary of the declaration of Lithuanian independence – a supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania was established. The stated objectives were:

> To liberate Lithuania from the occupation and to restore the functioning of Lithuania's sovereign organs, temporarily impeded by foreign forced … [and called on Lithuanians] … to imbue themselves with the spirit of unity and collaboration in this unequal struggle for the liberation of Lithuania (Harrison, 1948, p. 47).

While the organizational structure of the partisans' groups differed from region to region, all individual organizations were built around the principle of secrecy and military discipline. The partisans worked against the establishment of Soviet cells of local Lithuanian collaborators and on sabotaging all Soviet institutions including the NKVD (Secret Soviet Police). The official Declaration of the Supreme Committee of Liberations is shown in Appendix 2.

Active partisan resistance under the second Soviet occupation lasted for eight years from 1944 to 1953. By the spring of 1945 the resistance's operative forces were estimated at around 30,000 fighters (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 85), with partisan units of varying sizes operating actively all over Lithuania except for areas near the Baltic Sea and the Prussian borders where Red Army contingents were stationed. Being familiar with the local area and armed with automatic weapons left behind by the retreating German army, the partisans inflicted heavy casualties on the Red Army through their guerilla strategies of ambushes and night raids. The repressive measures adopted by the Soviets aimed to defeat the underground guerillas included the mass deportation of the *kulaks* with their families, and the establishment of local militias known as *stribai* (people's defender) to undermine and paralyze the activity of the partisans.

Open warfare could not be maintained and consequently, the partisans who had been always associated with the Lithuanian nationalism started a new type of resistance, sabotaging the attempts of the Soviet authorities to repress key national symbols. In the early 1950s the singing of the national hymn and displaying of the tricolour yellow, green and red as well as the use of national symbols such as the knight on horseback or the schematised representation of the pillars of Gediminas, were banned. Partisans retaliated with symbolic actions such as tearing down the Soviet flag and raising the tricolour in its place.

In spite of such sporadic and symbolic resistance, by 1952 the partisan movement had failed to reverse the second Soviet occupation. Two factors appear to have been pivotal in this outcome. Firstly was the miscalculation by leaders of the partisan movement of Soviet resources and therefore of the chance of a military and political victory. A long guerilla war against the Soviets was militarily impossible without support from abroad. Secondly, an incorrect interpretation of international developments led the leaders of the partisan movement to erroneously rely on the idea that support would come from the United States and Great Britain at the time when war-weary nations were dividing Europe and looking to their own internal re-construction. Although the partisans failed to achieve their primary political purpose of restoring Lithuanian independence, their resistance encouraged nationalist ideas and loyalties in Soviet Lithuania making it more difficult for the Soviet authorities to re-shape Lithuania in their own image.

The Church during the Second Soviet Occupation

> Our goal is to put into practice the real freedom of conscience. Let the believers believe, but the non-believers should not be forced to study religion, marry in Church, be baptized, or pay for the support of the church (Vardys, 1978, p. 46).

The Church was another significant mobilizor of resistance and its clergy received corresponding attention from Soviet authorities. Following the Soviet occupation in June 1940, the control of religious practice and the consequent elimination of the Roman Catholic Church were the objectives for a Soviet administration determined to re-shape Lithuania as a people's Socialist Republic. In June1940 the Soviet authorities decreed the separation of Church and State and annulment of the Concordat of 1927 with the Vatican State (Vardys, 1978, p. 47). Although these initial measures signaled secularisation rather than the systematic destruction of the church and religious life, subsequent actions and decrees made evident that the Soviet position was far more hostile. Church property was confiscated and parishes were only allowed to retain 7.5 acres of land, which included the ground occupied by the church and the parish cemetery. State financial support for the clergy instituted by the Smetona government was discontinued (Bordeaux, 1979, p. 4).

On October 31, 1940 all private buildings owned by the Church were nationalized including parish housing, so that priests were forced to rent their accommodation from the state. A significant number of churches, religious buildings and monasteries became state property, used by the Soviet army stationed in the major cities or converted for other administrative purposes. See photographs in Appendix 13. The clergy's survival depended increasingly on contributions by the parishioners, whose ability to sustain the clergy during a time of war was made even more difficult by the collapsing value of the *litas* (Vardys, 1978, p. 53).

Having acted against Church property, the Soviet authorities turned their attention to the teaching and practice of religion in the country. On June 28, 1940 the Communist Party banned the teaching of religion and its practices in public schools, with the removal of all crosses and religious objects from the classrooms. All private schools were nationalized and the Catholic Faculty of Theology and Philosophy at the University of

Kaunas was closed. Chaplains were dismissed from their positions in hospitals, the army and prisons (Savasis, 1966, pp. 16-20). Faced with a clergy and a population who continued to conduct and receive religious instruction in secrecy, the Soviet authorities demanded each individual priest to sign a declaration in which they renounced to disseminate religious instruction.

> I, the undersigned, a religious servant, residing at _____ village, _____ county, testify by my signature, that on April _____, 1941 I received a formal announcement forbidding the giving of religious instruction to school children and those of pre-school age, at school, at their homes or at my quarters – in a word, anywhere. Similarly, I have no right to discuss religious questions with them. I also understand that, failing to observe this order, I shall be liable to legal action (Savasis, 1966, pp. 17-18).

A programme of intensive surveillance was established in the cities. The aim was to intimidate the population and, in particular, public servants and teachers, preventing them from attending religious services and having any form of association with the clergy (Bordeaux, 1979, pp. 6-10). The battle against the superstition of the masses was also fought through the abolition and re-naming of religious feast days. Christmas and Easter were declared working days and those who missed work or school on these days were threatened with dismissal. Sundays were often declared working days, particularly when a Party celebration had been held during the week (Savasis, 1966, p. 72).

The Soviet authorities believed that, as a result of these measures, Lithuanian priests would be persuaded to leave the priesthood and take up civilian positions in some 'productive area' (Savasis, 1966, p. 19). Most of the clergy, however, continued to resist these measures and to pursue their ministry, with some choosing prison or exile in Germany rather than recruitment as government respondents against other priests or parishioners. All priests themselves became the subject of organized surveillance through the NKVD and were targeted in a systematic programme by the State-controlled press as 'enemies of the people' and 'exploiters of the working class' (Savasis, 1966, p. 19). As part of the Soviet recognition of the threat posed by the clergy's position and influence on Lithuanian population and the strong identification with the Nationalist movement, most priests were among the groups selected for deportation in the mass operation which occurred on June, 1941 (Vardys, et al., 1965, pp. 218-220).

From 1946 to 1949, approximately 180 priests were deported to labor camps in remote areas of the Soviet Union (Vardys, et al., 1966, pp. 220-222). By 1947 only one bishop, K. Paltarokas of Panavežys remained in Lithuania. The seminaries that had been re-opened during the period of the Nazi-German occupation of 1941-1944, were now closed for the second time, with the exception of the seminary in Kaunas. Student admissions were strictly monitored and limited and some members of the administrative and academic staff were arrested and later deported, effectively neutralizing the Church's ability to prepare a new generation of priests. By 1947 all convents and monasteries were closed, and their members dispersed, imprisoned or deported, so that within three years of the Soviet return, the ground work for the achievement of the stated goal of a secular society seemed to have been laid (Vardys, et al., 1966, pp. 220-222).

With Stalin's death in 1953, a new phase and strategy began in the war against religion. His successor Nikita Khrushchev, (1953-1964) in a speech in November 1954, acknowledged that a brutal anti-religious assault had been inflicted upon Lithuanian priests and believers, and argued that: "In the future the fight against religion must be conducted on a purely ideological basis by persons especially trained for the purpose" (Savasis, 1965, p. 28). This ideological warfare against religion advocated by Khruschev was subject to various interpretations and created a climate in which people felt able to express their religious convictions openly. The Soviets soon realized that the situation had gone far beyond that which they had intended, and tried to regain control through a new programme of education.

This plan aimed to isolate the clergy, to restrain religious practice and lastly, and perhaps most importantly, to establish a programme of atheistic propaganda (Vardys, et al., 1966, pp. 225-232). 'Schools of atheism' were established throughout the country in which the youth were educated about the dangers of religion and the crimes perpetuated by the clergy, through a programme of lectures and the distribution of relevant literature. The following excerpt from an article published in a Lithuanian Teachers' Journal of 1958 encapsulates both the philosophy and the approach used to achieve these ideological goals.

> One of the most important tasks of a teacher is to implant in the child a materialistic outlook on life … teachers of biology, physics, chemistry, history, and literature … they must show by convincing facts and examples how priests tried to distort

> scientific truths and used them as a means to keep the people in ignorance. They must show the pupils the irreconcilability of science and religion, and religion's reactionary role in the advancement of science (Savasis, 1966, p. 52).

The young Lithuanian generation constituted the main focus for the Soviets as the older generation was seen by them as entrapped in the religious 'web' and so in need of other more formal measures to control and change their religious practices (Savasis, 1966, p. 32). Under these circumstances it was virtually impossible for young Lithuanians to maintain their religious beliefs. Religion was banned in the schools and openly attacked and no overt support was available from the Church. In its drive to eliminate religious practices and beliefs the Soviets sought to control and re-order family life in ways which would separate religious parents from their children during the formative education years. A system of boarding schools and vacation camps, work on collective farms and lectures all functioned to undermine the traditional roles of the Church, family and parents and to centre instead the Party and its version of scientific and materialistic truth (Vardys, et al., 1965, pp. 226-228).

The re-organization of the calendar with the abolition and re-naming of religious feast days which began in the year of the first Soviet occupation (1941) were introduced and became law until the Soviet withdrawal in 1991. Their religious character was stripped, and these feast-days were used as an instrument of the Communist Party. Thus, Easter Day was considered a Spring Festival, Pentecost was a celebration of a shepherd and his herds, St John's Day a summer solstice festival and New Year's Day a festival of the Russian 'Old Man Frost'. Christmas Day proved to be difficult to change. When substitutes for Saints' day were not found, the Soviets organized music and dancing festivals directly in front of the church when the services were held.

Pupil's parent meetings and film showings were also held on Sunday to discourage church attendance. Lithuanians had to accept Soviet holiday celebrations such as The First of May, The October Revolution Day and A Lenin day. After one of these holidays, the following Sunday was declared a work day (Savasis, 1966, pp. 72-74).

The Soviet's severe repression of the clergy and of overtly religious practice, together with the significance of and the continuing emotional ties to traditional cultural

practices, beliefs and festivities, took on an even greater importance as a way to assert and maintain cultural and national identity during the years of the Soviet occupation.

The Church's sole authority to perform, register and preside over birth, marriage and death was removed and these events came under the cultural and later, legal control of the State (Savasis, 1966, pp. 76-81). Sanctions against those who ignored the civil ceremonies were introduced, with the religious ceremonies banned, rather than discouraged. Communist data had revealed that after almost twenty years of Soviet rule, while Church attendances had decreased by approximately 50%, the number of Church baptisms, weddings and funerals had only decreased by approximately 10% to 15%, and more significantly, they were still being performed for Party members (Savasis, 1966, pp. 74-75). The propaganda bans and sanctions carried out by the local Communist Party to fight religious beliefs appeared to have failed in a country whose history and sense of national identity had been forged in close association with the Roman Catholic Church.

> In the area of people's education, the Communist Party's main purpose is to complete the work of the October, 1917, revolution, transforming the school into an instrument of Communist education (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 178).

Like their Czarist Russian and Lithuanian Nationalist predecessors, the Soviets knew that the ideological formation and control of the people had to be achieved during the formative years of education. This meant that the control of the structure and programmes of all levels of schooling and the language in which education occurred, were seen as essential components of the Sovietisation policy to build a communist society free from the 'cobwebs' of religion and nationalism (Savasis, 1966, p. 32).

Education in Occupied Lithuania

The Soviets from 1944 onwards began a wholesale re-structuring of education across the sectors of kindergarten, primary, secondary and higher education. In 1940, the year of the first Soviet occupation, all private schools had been closed, a move which radically weakened the Church's role in education and cultural formation. In 1944 the years of attendance in primary school were reduced from six to four years, thus cutting the total

number of years at school from thirteen to eleven again and reversing the reforms introduced during the period of the independent Lithuania (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 173).

A system of State Boarding Schools was developed to complement the radical re-structuring of courses and instructions that occurred. The new boarding schools or *Internat* which were first established in the 1956 and 1957 school years aimed to eliminate parental and religious influence, and to produce a system in which children were available for farm and factory work during the week. This would diminish the time spent with their families and decrease the hours of instruction allocated to traditional subjects, including history and Lithuanian language, as well as making available an extensive programme of after hours lectures, youth groups, camps, concerts and other activities formulated to achieve 'the civic education, of children as good Party members' (Vardys,1978, pp. 173-182).

A network of evening and correspondence courses started in the 1940s and then continued in the 1950s with the Khrushchev's education reforms which allowed workers to be available to help to re-build economies and land damaged by six years of intense warfare, but facilitated the provision of basic levels of education in the impoverished country. After having completed this level of education, the students were channeled into a series of specialized technical schools organized to meet the economic and ideological objectives of the Soviet State aimed to educate children for a range of specific jobs required in the economy. Those who proceeded to higher education had a choice of a polytechnic institute; medical, art, or physical education; a conservatory, agricultural, or veterinary medicine institute; or of one of the three pedagogical institutes at the University of Vilnius (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 176).

At all levels of education text books, language, course contents and examples centered and promoted Soviet culture and values, often being translated from original Russian texts. The subjects were progressively taught by Russian teachers who, with large numbers of Russian students, were brought into the Lithuanian education system to promote the "friendship of Soviet peoples" and to fill the places of those class enemies who had been deported and so removed from positions of influence in Lithuanian schools and communities (Vardys, et al., 1965, p. 180).

All these measures were a deliberate attempt to deny and silence Lithuanian cultural identity, language and nationalism. Indeed, from the start of schooling, Russian language and literature studies progressively occupied larger periods of the school week thus, diminishing the time available for Lithuanian language classes (Gerutis, et al., 1969, pp. 305-306). Article 121 of the Soviet Constitution guaranteed the right to education in the native language while Article 93 of the new Lithuanian S.S.R. Constitution also guaranteed this right. In opposition to these stated rights, however, a new law allowed parents "the right to decide in what language their children would receive instruction" (Vardys, et al., 1969, p. 190), so allowing them the right to choose schools in which Russian was the language of instruction.

In these ways the Soviet programme for education undermined the survival of the Lithuanian language and culture. In March 1985, the Soviet Central Committee elected Mikhael Gorbacev as its General Secretary. A programme of reform engulfed the Soviet Union and its Satellite Republics. This was the beginning of the period of *Perestroika* (re-structuring) and *Glasnost* (openness) that implied a new relationship between the State and its citizens. Gorbacev wrote "We want more openness in public affairs, in every sphere of life" (Strayer, 1988 pp. 98-99).

The intelligentsia and the professional class in the Soviet Union that had for a long period of time hungered for cultural freedom supported Gorbacev against the Orthodox bureaucracy. In June 1988 a Lithuanian *Perestroika* movement known as *Sajūdis* was formed in Vilnius. This group of intellectuals was opposed to the Soviet regime and reflected the national sentiment of most of the Lithuanian population. *Sajūdis* supported Gorbacev's reforms in Lithuania but demanded Lithuanian autonomy.

On March 11, 1990 Lithuania with its 3.5 million inhabitants formally declared its independence from the Soviet Union, after forty-six years of occupation and the unlawful presence of Soviet troops in its territory. This independence was ultimately successful after seventeen months of confrontation with the USSR which was reluctant to grant this demand.

By the end of 1991 over ninety countries including the USSR recognized Lithuanian independence. In the same year, Lithuania became a member of the United Nations and

on March 29, 2004 was officially accepted as a member of NATO (National Atlantic Treaty Organization). Finally on May 1, 2004 Lithuania became a member of the European Union. This was the end of a long and difficult struggle to re-gain independence.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the political, cultural and economic changes which took place during the period of German and Soviet occupations, the Lithuanians were able to challenge the power of the Nazi-Germans and the Soviet-Russians. Central to this was the development of the partisan movements working in close association with the ethnic Lithuanian population and the Roman Catholic Church, whose common goals were the restoration of an independent Lithuania and the protection of the Lithuanian culture with its traditions, values and beliefs.

The primary focus of my thesis was to ascertain the cultural changes which have taken place in the three distinct Lithuanian communities of Western Australia, Siberia and Lithuania over a period of fifty years and to discover to what extent the core markers of the pre-war Lithuanian culture have been maintained, lost or adapted in the existing situation in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of cultural changes. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were selected as the most appropriate methodologies for this empirical, historical investigation. The complete description is explained in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

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METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The concern of this study is the challenge presented to Lithuanian immigrants in Western Australia and Siberia and Lithuanians in Lithuania in regard to their maintenance of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture over a period of fifty years while living in foreign lands or under foreign occupation. The main focus of this historical, empirical investigation is on the preservation or loss of those core markers which had been identified by the researcher to be the *essence* of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture, and which have shaped the generation of the Lithuanian participants in the study. Moreover, this study focuses on the extent to which such cultural changes have taken place within the three communities and to what degree the members of each of the three communities investigated are able to speculate on reasons for such changes.

The phenomenon of retention or loss was examined through the use of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and three detailed descriptive accounts were written, one for each group investigated. These draw attention to the difficulties and challenges that the participants of each group have encountered in the effort to maintain, adapt or inevitably lose the key markers of their original culture in the existing situation.

Moreover, this comparative study has determined the extent to which cultural practices, values and beliefs have been maintained or lost and has established to what degree the participants in the study have distanced themselves from their original culture. This study has sought to discover, within its transcribed interview data, the *essence* of the process each Lithuanian group engaged in as they tried to maintain their pre-WWII Lithuanian culture and adapt to a new environment and circumstances.

This chapter describes, using the context of the present study, the methods employed for data collection, data analysis and the writing of the descriptive accounts which have allowed the researcher to draw a comparison, embracing the differences and similarities in the preservation or loss of the key markers of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture,

between the three distinctive groups. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity are also described and respected since the participants in this study revealed private and often personal and controversial political opinions related to the phenomenon under scrutiny. Political sensitivity has been dealt with according to each individual case.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study set out not only to determine the extent to which cultural practices, values and beliefs have been maintained or lost within the participants in the study. In order to determine to what extent each of these three groups may have changed culturally and to what degree individuals were aware of such changes, four hypotheses have been formulated by the researcher. Which were offered to illustrate the range of possibilities.

Hypothesis 1

Each group has retained a substantial common core of pre-WWII Lithuanian beliefs, values and practices, which each group would acknowledge and accept as the essential core of being Lithuanian. However, these three groups will have also slowly adapted to their new, and possibly very different, environments, changing in various ways over the last fifty years. This hypothesis was also expressed by Senn (1998) as illustrated in Chapter 1.

Hypothesis 2

These three groups have changed to the extent that they have drifted completely away from their original *essence*. Each group is now quite different from the others and none of the groups has retained anything of the original culture that is authentically Lithuanian. This assumption underpinned the line of thinking of Van Den Dungen (1996) as explained in Chapter 1.

Hypothesis 3

Some common *essence* of their original culture has been retained by the Australian and Siberian Lithuanians, which is not shared by the Lithuanian home group. The common *essence* may include strong religious beliefs and the retention of the language. There is, however, no significant similarity of religion and language retention between, on the one hand, the Australian and Siberian Lithuanians, and on the other, the Lithuanian home group. This shift should also be evident in some aspects of the pre-war Lithuanian customs and traditions.

Hypothesis 4

Only the Lithuanian home group has retained at least some characteristics of the pre-war culture. The Siberian and Australian groups have drifted from their original culture to the point that they have not retained any of the *essence* of their original culture.

Research Strategy

In order to test and validate these hypotheses the researcher, through an in-depth study of the works of authoritative Lithuanian scholars of pre-war period presented in Chapter 1, as well as of the British Diplomat James Harrison and the British Historian and traveller Owen Rutter, has identified a select number of customs and traditions, values and beliefs which are the chief characteristics of the pre-war Lithuanian culture. Subsequently, the data was collated and summarised in a table of customs and traditions, values and beliefs as shown in Appendix 3.

I then proceeded to collect empirical data from the members still living in the three present-day Lithuanian, Siberian and Australian population groups in order to obtain their first-hand recollections. The interview data within each group has also been merged similarly in the same table to facilitate easy comparison across the three study groups.

Developing a Working Definition of Culture

In order to design an interview method which focuses on the key cultural features of the pre-war Lithuanian culture it was necessary to establish a working definition of culture and its components. Traditions, beliefs and values are, according the American psychologist David Matsumoto, the key components of a culture. Matsumoto in his work *Culture and modern life* defines culture as "a set of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours shared by a group of people, communicated from one generation to the next via language or other means of communication" (Matsumoto, 1997, p. 31). There are "no hard and fast rules" of how to determine what a culture is or who belongs to that culture (Matsumoto, 1997, p. 13). Individual differences in culture, it may be argued, can be observed in the degree to which the individual adopts and engages in those phenomena that by consensus constitute the culture. Matsumoto claims that if an individual does not share any elements of that culture, then he or she is not part of it (Matsumoto, 1997, p. 13).

Traditions

The American psychologists Jocelyn Linnekin and Louis Poyer in their work *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in the Pacific* define **traditions** as a "body of practice passed down from one generation to the next" (Linnekin and Poyer, 1990, p.152). Linnekin supports Matsumoto's views on culture while emphasising that traditions are continually re-interpreted and experienced by people in the present and are not passed down unaltered from one generation to the next. Linnekin argues instead that "tradition is a selective representation of the past, fashioned in the present, responsive to contemporary priorities and agendas, and politically instrumental" (Linnekin, 1992, p. 251).

Beliefs

In respect of beliefs, the American sociologist and psychologist Milton Rokeach in his work *Beliefs, Attitudes and Values* defines **belief** as "any proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase, I believe that ..." and asserts that all beliefs are predispositions to action. Rokeach argues that such ideas or opinions are taken into account when an individual, a group or a nation, chooses a line of action (Rokeach, 1970, pp. 112-113).

Values

Conceptions of **values** will differ, depending on the ideological positions of those defining them. To a religious person or even to a secular humanist who believes that some aspects of life are eternal or 'essential' or 'natural', a value will have an uncontested status. To others who see life as culturally and historically produced and so relative and changing across time and culture, values will likewise be culturally and historically relative. In his review of values, Rokeach cites a 1918 study by the psychologists Thomas and Florian Znaniecki which argues for values as "a psychological concept, a natural object that has in fact acquired social meaning and, consequently, is or may be an object of activity" (Znaniecki, in Rokeach, 1970, p. 124). He continues on to offer his own definitions of values:

> A type of belief, centrally located within one's total belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave, or about some end-state or existence worth or not worth attaining. Values are thus abstract ideals, positive or negative, not tied to any specific attitude, object or situation, representing a person's beliefs about ideal modes of conduct and ideal terminal goals. … A person's values, like all beliefs, may be consciously conceived or unconsciously held, and must be inferred from what a person says or does. A value system is a hierarchical organization - a rank ordering - of ideals or values in terms of importance (Rokeach, 1970, p. 124).

Such definitions, whether stressing the individual or the cultural group, identify values as a core sense-making and internalised set of responses to the conditions, choices and actions which confront both individuals and social groups. For instance the conscious and unconscious 'value' attached to the land, the inherited language and cultural and economic practices and modes of organisation in rural Lithuania are clearly evident, in the lifestyle of the ethnic Lithuanian as analysed in this study.

The working definition employed in the present study is expressed operationally in the table of Appendix 4.

The Characteristics of Pre-WWII Lithuanian Culture

The key markers of pre-war Lithuanian culture that I identified from the works of Lithuanian scholars have been presented in detail in Chapter 6 in order to allow a comparison of the findings of the three groups under scrutiny. The first column of the

composite table provides a convenient base-line description against which the three present-day samples have been compared.

Identifying, Selecting and Negotiating Access to Present-Day Interview Samples

The participants in the study consisted of cross-sections of the present-day Lithuanian diaspora communities in Western Australia, Siberia and Lithuanians living in their homeland, each selected on the basis of specific criteria related to share personal characteristics and experiences which the researcher believed were of significance to the principal research question, namely the maintenance or loss of the pre-war Lithuanian culture.

Individuals in the three study populations whose parents were both of Lithuanian origin were the priority interest for the researcher, on the assumption that an individual who had been raised by two Lithuanian-born parents would more likely have gained a broad knowledge of and exposure to the pre-war customs and traditions, than would one for whom only one of the parents was Lithuanian-born.

At the time of the study the selected participants ranged in age between 75 and 85 years, a span expected by the researcher to maximise the likelihood that they will have undergone similar life changes and experiences. A clear and dependable memory was also considered important to the success of the study in order that the participants' reported recollections of events and aspects of their lives pertinent to the study would be both valid and reliable.

Being married to a Lithuanian partner and having had children was a condition that the researcher considered valuable in terms of potential for maintenance of the culture. Family without children presumably would have less opportunity, and possibly less incentive, to pass on Lithuanian customs and traditions, values and beliefs.

Having had at least some formal education in Lithuania before the time of migration was considered to be another attribute which would likely have helped the participants to develop, early in their lives, a more extended understanding of Lithuanian culture in a

more formal environment than would be acquired through the home and the family alone.

It was also considered likely that through formal education the participants would have acquired most of the important aspects of their cultural heritage. Moreover, those with significant formal education would presumably be able to express abstract feelings and beliefs with greater facility and openness.

From the key Lithuanian literature sources consulted for the study, it was evident that although there were a number of religious denominations extant in Lithuania during the period of Independence (1919-1940), the Roman Catholic Church always played a predominant and fundamental role in the maintenance of the Lithuanian ethnic identity. The life of the rural Lithuanian population in particular has always been deeply intertwined with the Church. For this reason, those in the *émigré* populations who had maintained a continuing relationship to the Catholic Church after their emigration were of priority interest to the study.

The access to participants in Western Australia, Siberia and Lithuania was gained through various organisations in the relevant countries and the researcher's personal contacts.

Contacts with the Lithuanian-Australian participants, all of whom were living in Perth, Western Australia, were established through members of the local Lithuanian Club, members of the Perth congregation of the Lithuanian Catholic Church, and through the researcher's personal contacts with key members at the helm of these associations.

Contacts with the Lithuanian-Siberian participants in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia were organized through the Department of Ethnic Minority in Vilnius and Mr Rimvydas Račenas, a member of "The Former Deportees Organisation" in Vilnius.

The contacts with the Lithuanian participants in Lithuania were made through members of the Lithuanian community in Perth, the Lithuanian Catholic Chaplain in Perth and the researcher's personal contacts.

Confidentiality and Ethical Clearance

Each prospective participant was contacted by the researcher who described the nature of the study, guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity and outlined the interview procedure. Participants who agreed to take part in the study were advised that their participation was voluntary, so they could withdraw at any time. Explicit consent was required for each interview, tape recording of the interview and field note-taking. Each participant who agreed to take part in the study was requested to sign a consent form that indicated that the information sheet had been read and that the consent was given. See Appendix 5.

All interviews were conducted by the researcher working alone, without the use of translators or other mediators. Interviews of the members of the Australian sample were conducted either in English or in the participant's native Lithuanian (a language in which the researcher is personally fluent) depending on the participant's preference and retained as English transcriptions taken from the interview tapes or the researcher's interview notes. While some of the Australian respondents were comfortable being interviewed in English, the majority of the Australian sample found they could respond more readily and expansively in their native language. I conducted the interviews with Lithuanian and Siberian samples in Lithuanian language and subsequently I translated into English language transcripts for inclusion in the primary data records of the study.

Additionally, I maintained a daily field notebook for recording relevant contextual details and situational nuances concerning individual interviews, and also my own reflective observations and tentative emerging interpretations as the study progressed. All consent forms received with the tapes of each participant interview and field notes were kept in safe-keeping throughout the period of the research and will be retained in secure storage for five years beyond completion of the study.

As soon as an interview had been transcribed, the actual names of the participants were replaced in the transcript with codes to preserve anonymity, and contextual information that may potentially allow inference of the identity of the interviewee was either modified or deleted. At all times, access to the identifying personal data of the

participants was restricted to the researcher alone. The Human Research Ethics Committee of the Notre Dame University granted ethical clearance to the study.

Within the text of Chapter 6, where interviews have been used to substantiate scholars' data, and in Chapters 7, 8 and 9 where the written accounts are presented for the three *émigré* groups investigated, the assigned transcript codes for the participants have been replaced by first name pseudonyms in order to make the reading of the text more fluid for the reader. And, as noted above, because of the smallness of the Lithuanian communities in Western Australia and in Siberia, care was taken to exclude the possibility of situations being described in such a way as to make any participant recognisable to others through the context of the situation, thus further assuring anonymity.

Designing and Implementing the Interview Strategy

The data for this investigation was obtained through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data and methods of the kind advocated by Miles and Huberman (1984, 1994) for situations in which the purpose is to explore specific themes and develop arguments, rather than through more formalised and structured approaches used in approaches such as grounded theory development Corbin and Strauss (1997) and ethnography Spradley (1979).

The use of quantitative data was appropriate where my interest was in available census data which established the broad contour of migration, deportation, settlement or work pattern for Lithuanian immigrants in Australia and Siberia. Census statistics were useful sources of information about patterns in the life of Lithuanian *émigrés* and allowed the researcher to determine the configuration of the groups, their religious affiliations and educational levels in order to contextualize the qualitative elements of the research. For instance, it assisted the researcher to establish the ratio of males to females at the time of migration to Australia or deportation to Siberia, although these data alone did not provide insight into the inevitable stress and strain on relationships caused by separation. In order to explore the more complex aspects of this, the researcher relied principally on the use of in-depth, qualitative interview methods.

Although the study was not ethnography in the formal sense or in its purpose, the study used elements of the ethnographic interview technique formalised and described by Spradley (1979). Spradley is an internationally recognised ethnographer who has published original ethnographies from his own studies and also written extensively on ethnographic methodology, which he has developed and refined over many years. The open-ended interviews in the present study have incorporated Spradley's descriptive questions and contrast questions as appropriate. Of further value for the researcher was Spradley's technique for sequencing questions in the interview process. Spradley's sequencing technique, supplemented to some extent with the recommendations of Rubin and Rubin (1995) regarding the interview process, has been used as the principle logic underpinning the structure and assembly of the interview.

To develop the participants' accounts of how they have retained elements of their Lithuanian culture, the researcher enquired about the participants' present family life and cultural practices, and encouraged them to share their perceptions of which (if any) of their former practices have been carried forward and retained from their pre-WWII Lithuanian upbringing. Both the various practices and customs the participants believe have been preserved more or less intact, and those which have undergone substantial modification or adaptation over time and circumstance, have been considered. In addition, participants were invited to reflect on what had, in their perception, encouraged or facilitated the preservation or adaptation of any retained practices or, conversely, on what might have explained why other cultural practices of their original Lithuanian culture have been lost or discarded.

Some participants found these forms of reflective comparison difficult, especially if they were left to review their past essentially through the perspective of their current life experiences. In order to assist the participants in this regard, the researcher has attempted to 'take the participants back' in a psychological sense to situations and experiences of their childhood in pre-war Lithuania from which they had, and were prepared to reveal, personal vivid memories. See Appendix 6.

Through carefully chosen focus questioning, and structured prompting on the part of the researcher, the participants have been encouraged to describe concrete memories that were representative of real events, in real surroundings, with real people, and to share

what they believe was characteristically Lithuanian in those experiences and memories. The participants' memories of childhood experiences have been used as a recollected context against which the comparison between *'then'* and *'now'* could be drawn more readily. Having heard the recalled accounts, the researcher obtained a personalised context within which concrete prompts meaningful to the participants might be framed for the contrast questions.

The researcher has concentrated on the experiences that the participants would have had during their pre-war and wartime Lithuanian existence, and their experiences in the environments in which they have eventually settled. See Appendix 6.1.and 6.2. The questions encouraged the participants to focus and reflect on what may have influenced their lives at the time and induced them, voluntarily or involuntarily, to maintain their Lithuanian traditions or gradually drift away from them.

As recommended by Spradley (1979), priority in selecting participants was given to those able to make themselves available for the time required for the respondent-centred interview approach being used and who had evidenced a genuine interest in the study. Although the interviews would in principle require between one-and-a-half hours and two hours, participants were permitted to set their own time limits or to spread the interview over a number of shorter sessions, as most were elderly and often fatigued easily. From the outset it was assumed that the total interview time for most individuals typically would be in the order of two to four hours in aggregate, spread over two or three separate sessions. Beyond that, follow-up interviews were necessary in a number of cases for clarification of emerging issues or progressive refinement of the gathered data (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, pp. 150-152).

As the researcher was regularly involved in the social and religious activities of the Lithuanian community in Perth, direct observation of some participants was a significant additional means of data collection. As noted by Spradley (1979), researchers who have been able to enter the social environment of their participants are in a better position to observe, understand and interpret their culture. The researcher had decided to undertake the study after having already been accepted as a member of the Lithuanian community in Perth for other reasons, and thus was in a position to collect data as an observer already legitimately immersed in the culture of the group which had undergone and was

continuing to undergo change. Saville-Troike suggested that one of the advantages associated with studying one's own culture from the inside is the researcher's ability to use himself or herself as a direct source of information and a basis for valid interpretation of it (Saville-Troike, 1982, p. 114). In the present study, the researcher was clearly accepted as a bona fide and trusted member of the community and most participants appeared to be unconstrained in their reactions to the researcher and able to give their responses openly and freely.

In order to develop and validate the above interview methodology, the researcher conducted several pilot interviews among members of the Western Australian Lithuanian community. The participants included both males and females, and were interviewed at least twice, with each interview lasting an average of one-and-a-half hours. All questions were open-ended and had no time limits placed on them. Participants were asked to recall events of their childhood in pre-WWII Lithuania as well as to describe their present family life and cultural practices.

The participants were open and spoke freely with the researcher, and at no time appeared to feel uncomfortable about discussing their lives. Being herself fluent in Lithuanian helped the researcher to establish early rapport with the participants. At first the participants focused mainly on their own life stories, revealing in the process much information on their traditions and customs, but little on their beliefs and values. One early challenge for the researcher, therefore, was to find a way to encourage the participants to reveal or express these beliefs and values. After extensive trial and error and experimenting with both the interview technique and questioning format the researcher devised three different question types – descriptive, explanatory and emotive – to be employed in the interviews. See Appendix 7.

Descriptive questions encouraged participants to reveal information on particular events and practices. Questions focused on *what*, *when* and *how* certain traditional customs are still practised today and which of these, if any, have been ceased.

Example:

Researcher: *How do you celebrate Christmas?*

Participant: *Well, one of the things we do is to have a special traditional meal on Christmas Eve.*

In providing the answer, the participant describes a particular practice.

Explanatory questions stimulated participants to give reasons for the cultural practices described, and to explain *why* particular practices have either continued or ceased.

Example:

Researcher: *Why do you have this special meal on Christmas Eve each year?*

Participant: *Because it's something that my family always did when I was a child, and also it has a religious meaning, because the meal consists of twelve different dishes, which represent the Twelve Apostles that partook in the Last Supper.*

In this example the participant explains the particular practice, and in doing so reveals the importance of family values and religious beliefs.

Emotive questions were employed in order to stimulate participants to express *why* and *how* they feel about certain events or aspects of their culture. To the extent that these questions encouraged responses born of feelings of anger, frustration, joy and sadness, they often served to reveal or imply participants' underlying beliefs and values.

Example:

Researcher: *Do your children generally join in this meal?*

Participant: *No, because they are married to non-Lithuanians that are not interested in and don't really care about our traditions and religion.*

Researcher: *So how do you feel about this?*

Participant: *I'm quite sad and angry, because I know our traditions will be lost when I'm gone."*

In this answer, the participant reveals her emotions – sadness and anger – surrounding the underlying value –the importance she ascribes to preservation of her culture – and through the explanation offered she highlights why the matter is of concern to her – that others to follow her will not share the same commitment to that preservation.

Although all participants were willing to take part in further interviews, the researcher chose to pre-test the questioning sequence on one highly articulate 75-year-old female member of the community who had shown a strong level of personal interest in the research and was willing to participate in the development and refinement of the interview process. However, after four two-hour sessions of asking direct descriptive,

explanatory and emotive questions and intensive probing, the researcher was still finding it difficult to elicit responses that reflected or disclosed this participant's underlying feelings and values. Because the researcher's ability to uncover a participant's underlying feelings and values was central to the purpose and likely success of the interview strategy, the researcher decided to include what Spradley (1979) has termed "contrast questioning" as an additional element in the interview structure.

In **contrast questioning**, the researcher leads the participant to compare, or contrast, past practices with the way they express their culture today and, in doing so, to share their emotional reaction to any experienced changes. This strategy often helped to bring to the surface the participant's underlying beliefs and values, especially where the participant had not been consciously aware of these feelings and was unable to verbalise them in response to direct questions of the form *what/when/how* and *why*.

The combined use of direct and contrast questions proved successful in that the pre-test participant was eventually able to reveal (though not without some attendant stress and pain) her underlying feelings, thereby providing deeper and more meaningful information to the study. With practice, the researcher found that she was able quite easily and reliably to apply the contrast questioning technique to all three of the original question types – descriptive, explanatory and emotive – in order to provide the extended, more-deeply reflective responses being sought. For example, while most respondents in later pilot interviews found it difficult initially to express their underlying beliefs or values in relation to a specific matter such as family values, they found it relatively easy when asked to compare how a non-Lithuanian (for example an Australian neighbour) might feel about the same matter.

Language: Quotations and Translations

The participant data was collected through interviews. In most cases the language used by the Lithuanian-Australian population group was Lithuanian or broken English. For the Lithuanian and Siberian population groups the language was exclusively Lithuanian. The interviewer's language spoken was that of the interviewees.

For the purpose of this study translation was, accordingly, required of nearly all the material provided verbally by the participants. The researcher made these translations. All quotations presented in the text of the thesis are literal and absolutely faithful to the spoken text of the participant, albeit in translation to English.

It is therefore important to note that quotations and or extracts by participants disclosed in the text of the thesis are presented literally. That is, the literally translated English has not been modified or corrected by the researcher. It would be inappropriate to do so; and such corrections are deemed unnecessary for the reader to gain a clear sense of the participants' intended meanings.

Interview Settings, Timing and Locations

The researcher interviewed a total of fifty-four Lithuanians: of these three males and six females have been discarded. The transcripts of those rejected were discarded because, despite my frequent affects to guide the interview these participants insisted on redirecting everything to allow them opportunity to expand on their personal political views. Of the thirty-six Lithuanians interviewed that were left, twelve were in Perth, Western Australia, twelve in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia, and twelve in Vilnius, Klaipeda and Kaunas, in Lithuania. See Appendix 8. A minimum of ten participants for each of the target samples is normally considered a reasonable number for studies employing in-depth qualitative interviewing (Cresswell, 1998 p. 122).

Interviews of the Australian sample were conducted in Perth over a six month period in 2003. The twelve participants had come from a variety of different regions in Lithuania and had migrated to Australia in 1948 and 1949. The average participant age was 84 years. All were (or had been) married and with children. Most had received between seven and twelve years of schooling in Lithuania or in Germany in the Displaced Person camps prior to their arrival in Western Australia. Others had completed their education in Perth. Two of the participants, one female and one male, had come from rural areas.

The interviews in Siberia were carried out in the Altaj region of Krasnoyarsk in the northern summer of 2004. The researcher was able to spend a total of forty-five days in Krasnoyarsk, the maximum time permitted on the available visa. The average age of the

Siberian participants was 86 years, slightly older than their Lithuanian-Australian counterparts and slightly younger than the corresponding Lithuanians sample. The majority of the group had been deported to Siberia between 1946 and 1948, the only exception being one male participant who had been deported some years earlier in 1941. All had received between seven to ten years of schooling in Lithuania prior to their deportation and had come from different Lithuanian regions and rural areas. All of the males had met and married Russian women since arriving in their new homeland. Two participants had German spouses.

Interviews of the majority of the Lithuanian sample were completed in June 2004 in Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda, the balance having been interviewed one year earlier during a preparatory visit by the researcher. The average age of the Lithuanian participants was 88 years. All the twelve participants come from different regions, villages and towns in Lithuania. All were (or had been) married, with an average of two children. Most had received between seven and fifteen years of schooling. With the exception of one male participant, the rest of the participants were practising Roman Catholics.

All the interviews of the Lithuanian sample were conducted in the living rooms of the participants' homes. While signing of the consent form had been accepted without hesitation by the Western Australian participants, five of the Lithuania sample and six of the Siberian sample felt uneasy and nervous about signing and initially were disinclined to participate in the study. Although the researcher attempted to allay the concerns to the best of her ability it was clear that any strict insistence on signing the forms would threaten the viability of the samples. Accordingly, where there was clear reluctance to sign, the researcher chose not to insist and instead to accept simple oral consent. Evidently, the hesitancy was a reluctance to sign anything on paper, and not an unwillingness to participate in the study per se.

Most participants in the three samples were happy to have their interviews taped for the researcher's personal use, with the necessary assurances that the content would not be disclosed to any other individual or agency in a way that would leave participants individually identifiable. However, there were four instances (two in Western Australia and two in Siberia) in which the participants refused to have their interviews recorded

and asked also that the researcher not take notes either. The researcher in these cases kept the interview relatively short (not more than an hour) and immediately after the interview wrote notes from her direct recollections of what had been said. The recurrence of political issues was a common feature in all interviews. Most participants evidently found it difficult to refrain from offering political observations and commentary during the interviews, and most also requested that the recording be stopped, at least temporarily.

Most of the interviews lasted between one-and-a-half hours and four hours. All participants were interviewed twice, primarily to keep the duration of individual sessions to a level more comfortable for and less tiring to the participants. Obtaining as much data possible in the time available was the main concern of the researcher with the participants in Siberia and Lithuania, whom it was thought may not have been able to saturate the categories which were examined. This recurring concern was documented repeatedly in the researcher's field notes from the early stage of the interviews.

Although the majority of the interviews completed in the study provided the researcher with important insights into the life experiences of the participants, the narratives shared were often distressful to the participants as they recalled details of their sometimes traumatic earlier experiences. In some cases the distress was sufficient that the participant spent quite some time crying, which required that the interviews be terminated prematurely. To lower the emotional tone of the interview in these obviously sensitive and distressing cases, the researcher usually attempted to direct the conversation back to earlier topics that had been discussed and asked for further information (Rubin and Rubin, pp. 137-138). The stages of an interview are shown in Appendix 9.

Data Analysis

Preliminary data analysis commenced more or less immediately, even while the interviews were still in progress. After completing each interview, the direct transcription of the English language of the interviews in Australia and the transcription and translation of the Lithuanian language interviews in Siberia and Lithuania, the researcher proceeded to identify and select a number of customs and traditions, values

and beliefs that have been identified as being the core markers of the pre-WWII rural Lithuanian culture through in-depth study of the various Lithuanian sources identified in Chapter 1.

The researcher then analysed each interview transcript in detail to identify, in the recorded testimonies of the participants, occurrences or absences of each of these previously identified core cultural markers. For each sample group, the resulting data were then pooled for that sample as a whole in order to establish the frequency across participants of the occurrence of each of the core markers. As will be seen in subsequent chapters, this analysis allowed the researcher to develop individual descriptive profiles for each of the three sample groups to characterise the extent to which the defining attributes of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture have been retained, transformed or lost since the time of the diaspora. Moreover, by comparing the cultural profiles of the three samples it was possible to discern the extent to which the patterns of retention, transformation or loss have been similar or different for the three diaspora samples.

To facilitate these comparisons, the researcher assembled a table consisting of separate columns for each of the groups, each column profiling in summary form the cultural characteristics of the group it represents, with the entries in each profile recording the presence or otherwise of each of the cultural markers of interest. Included also was a separate column that summarised in terms of the same markers a description of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture. In constructing the table it was necessary to divide the descriptions of the Lithuanian and Siberian samples each into two component columns to provide separately for the rural and urban sub-groups in those two samples. This was not necessary for the Western Australian sample. The six-column table, included in Appendix 3 of this report, highlights the significant similarities and differences in what has been retained, lost and modified of the key features of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture in the three communities studied.

Chapter 6 provides a detailed description of the customs, traditions, values and beliefs which the researcher has identified as the key characteristics of the pre-war Lithuanian culture. This data have been used to lay the foundation for the comparative table described in the foregoing paragraph.

Chapter 7, 8 and 9 present for each of the group samples in turn what the researcher has discerned from the interviews. The data obtained has been collated into the comparative table to facilitate the comparisons between the cultural characteristics of its sample and the characteristics of the pre-WWII analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the way in which qualitative and quantitative methodologies has been used to determine the extent of the retention or loss of those core markers which constitute the *essence* of the pre-war Lithuanian culture.

CHAPTER 6

PRE-WWII LITHUANIAN CULTURE

CHAPTER 6

PRE-WWII LITHUANIAN CULTURE

> So completely absorbed were they by the life bringing natural forces, the rotation of the year's seasons, and by their work in the fields, that their way of life, their language, beliefs, and customs remained little changed down the ages (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 14).

As the previous review chapters of Lithuanian history have demonstrated, Lithuanians lived in a border zone where different ethnic, national and cultural groups met, a zone in which the terms and the forms of their existence were determined not only by their own agendas and imperatives but also by the proximity and claims of expansionist Polish, German and Russian neighbours, each with their own political, economic, class and race ideologies and imperatives which have impacted on, and to some extent defined, the forms and character of Lithuanian life.

As a 'nation', both in the imaginative sense and in political actuality, Lithuanian culture, during the two decades of independence from 1919 to1940, has always defined itself through a rural lens. The construction of Lithuanian identity in terms of what may be argued is an idealised image of rural, village, community and farm life in the first four decades of the twentieth century, is considered in this chapter through an examination of the core markers of Lithuanian rural customs, practices and values. I have examined them in the context of the anti-modernism and romantic primitivism of the first decades of the twentieth century. These two movements registered in their own different ways, the widespread European anxiety with the scale and direction of modern urban and industrial culture, and in opposition to this valorised what was represented as the re-generating power of rural life. I argue that in Lithuania the post-independence attempts by nationalist scholars to employ idealised notions of the peasant, rural life and landscape have been used to construct and secure cultural identity and re-iterate the national pride felt in the recently won political changes through the construction of a 'Lithuanian-ness' based on rural and ethnic Lithuanian characteristics and ideals in opposition to the metropolitan culture and politics of the Czarist Russian Empire which had conquered and ruled the country for more than a century, the last in a long line of foreign colonising powers.

Such attempts to rekindle nationalist sentiment through the construction of traditional rural values were not confined to Lithuania alone. They were part of a wider cultural phenomenon represented in the development of nationalisms and nations. The Irish scholar, Catherine Nash, in examining Irish colonial and nationalist experience, observes the place of the peasant woman and rural landscape in the production (construction) of Irish national identity, and argues that "Irish nationalist attempts to revitalize and revivify the nation … intersected with the idea of national identity and gravitated around the notions of place … [and specifically, of] landscape" and the idealised image of the rural peasant woman (Nash, 1993, p. 44). Nash further notes that "these issues overlapped with concerns of cultural purity and preservation, [and] centred on the image of the West of Ireland as an Irish cultural region, whose physical landscape provided the greatest contrast to the landscape of Englishness" (Nash, 1993, p. 45). The use of traditional land based village life, customs and culture in association with the native language, religion and other key cultural markers such as the cottage, the family farm, the community lifestyle and rituals have come to bear a symbolic weight and signification in the construction of a preferred 'Lithuanian-ness', and thus can be seen as part of a larger European discourse and experience of national and cultural identity.

To obtain a broader understanding of pre-WWII rural Lithuanian traditions, beliefs and values, I have again examined the works of expatriate scholars of the pre-war period such as the archaeologist and ethnographer Danute Brazite-Bindokiene (1989) and Marija Gimbutas (1963, 1974), the historians and ethnographers and as well as the British Diplomat James Harrison (1948) and the British historian and traveller Owen Rutter (1926). Their views and values were formed during the first decades of the twentieth century, a high mark of European imperialism and nationalisms, and Lithuania's first period of independence as a nation-state.

I then reviewed the works of scholars of the post-war period again to assess and compare the differences of focus and interpretation of those scholars formed by the pre-war independence period and those who received their education and training in the decades of the second Soviet occupation from 1944 to 1991. The key scholars of this period have been the ethnographers Irena Cepiene (1992), Birute Imbrasiene (1990), Rasa Račiunaite (2002), and Juozas Kudirka (1991). All their works were written from 1991 to 2002 after the Soviet military withdrawal from Lithuania. Significantly, although formed in a

different cultural environment, these scholars consistently refer to and accept many of the key data and interpretations put forward by Marija Gimbutas. Interviews with members of the present day sample living in Western Australia, Siberia and Lithuania have also been employed to substantiate and validate the data.

As I have argued in the previous chapters most pre-war and post-war scholars writing on Lithuania were, or are, directly associated with elements of Lithuanian culture or history as members of earlier political diasporas or simply as Lithuanians for whom questions of national independence and identity have continued to be topics of major cultural and political exploration in the changed socio-political and economic world. As previously stated, in some of these earlier works the 'romantic' attitude to land, rural life and language, which is a recognizable stage in the development of nationalist movements is clearly present in both the tone and vocabulary used. While it may be argued that in the post-war works, this 'romantic' attitude and vocabulary are less obviously present, the continuing reference to and acceptance of key findings by Gimbutas and Balys in particular, who argue for the continuing power of Lithuanian rural life as a marker of Lithuanian identity and value systems. In presenting the folkloric traditions of work and song and the rituals associated with death and funerals, scholars such as Rasa Račiunaite accept and recapitulate the studies and findings of Balys and Gimbutas (Račiunaite, 2002, pp.114, 128 and 136).

In all writing about the life of the pre-war rural Lithuanian population, the decisive role played by the Roman Catholic Church in the negotiation of rural Lithuanian identity, beliefs and values is strongly evident. The memories and records of Lithuanians interviewed for my research in Lithuania, in Siberia and in Western Australia also confirm the central and enduring role of religious traditions and beliefs in the daily life of the rural population.

Lithuanians are a people whose informing national narratives, values and economic bases are centred in the imaginative and actual terrain of a rural landscape. Geographically and politically, Lithuania is divided into four regions: Žemaitija, Aukštaitija, Dzūkija and Suvalkija. The customs, traditions, verbal folklore and religious and festive practices that characterise and define these four regions of Lithuania, as well

as the defining elements of their rural architecture and patterns of farm organisation, exhibit a common core of Lithuanian ethnic culture (Kudirka, 1991, p. 23).
In contrast are the city of Klaipeda and the surrounding villages and country towns located in the western part of Žemaitija known as Lithuania Minor. These are the only parts of Lithuania to have direct access to the Baltic Sea. Until 1924, five years after Lithuanian independence (1919), they were still part of Germany, marking them as a region of German influence in patterns of social and economic organisation and linguistic and religious allegiances (Harrison, 1948, p. 15).

The development and evolution of the Lithuanian regions and the cultural and nationalist consciousness which grew were determined not only by the characteristics and traditions of those who settled these terrains over the centuries but by the geographic nature of the land itself. The Lithuanian landscape is that of open plains, covered by forests and lakes intersected and crossed by a network of rivers and their tributaries. The character of this land with its many waterways facilitated not only the development of an agriculturally based society but in the pre-industrial period, provided a major means of transport and access to areas and remote communities from the political and governing centres of Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda. In this way the rivers also functioned as political highways. Along the rivers the nationalist activists travelled to reach the people and began the process of constructing a resistant cultural and national narrative.

Theatrical performances and literature readings which represented their construction of the historical Lithuanian past were held in barns to promote interest and pride in Lithuanian customs and language. It can be argued that in Lithuania between 1864 an 1904, as in other contested and colonised settings, the farms became the centres of the awakening of national consciousness and were influential in the development of the nationalist movement (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 259-268). The farms and the landscape came to carry the weight of the cultural and nationalist idealisation of traditional rural family life, with its fixed morality and gender roles, as the main place for the preservation and reproduction of the Lithuanian language, customs and traditions.

The Rural Lithuanian Family

Like all major Lithuanian institutions in these rural ethnic regions, the family with its clearly defined roles and positions, was marked by traditional patriarchal and gender divides and hierarchies. Men were accepted as the head of the family, responsible for its economic and physical well-being and protection. Women occupied supporting and relational roles with specific responsibilities in the domestic, moral and spiritual spheres. The Lithuanian family maintained close cross-generational relationships in this period; however, not all the elderly lived on the same property with younger members of the family. Some grandparents for instance lived on their own farms, generally not too far from their children's farms. Alfonsas remembered:

> Grandparents at my time were respected for their age and experience and their opinions and advice were sort and carefully considered by both children and grandchildren (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2006).

Grandparents living on the same farm would look after the grandchildren and the grandmother typically would help the young future mother with both childbirth and subsequent care of the infant.

The Built Environment: Characteristic Pre-WWII Rural Settlement Patterns across Lithuania

In the nationalistic imagination and in the legislative programmes enacted to reflect this image, the core place of family habitation in pre-WWII rural Lithuania was the farmstead. It was structured around the core buildings of the family farmhouse with its physical and symbolic hearth, as well as the related barns, outlying buildings, orchards, vegetable gardens and fields under production. The farmstead was considered to be the basic social and economic unit of a distinctive Lithuanian settlement pattern and therefore symbolic of the type of social organisation sought by the Lithuanian nationalists, for whom these individual family farmsteads represented the realisation, both in their physical character and in their cultural, moral and spiritual associations, of the ideal form of Lithuanian society in the early decades of the twentieth century. As such, the farmstead conferred distinctive meanings in both the formation and uses made of Lithuanian national and gender identities, making the farmstead the most important

site of cultural and economic self-expression for the Lithuanian rural population and those whose privileged rural life in the construction of Lithuanian independence.

The symbolism attached to the farmstead was intensified by the uniformity of design that characterised the typical visual image of the farmstead in the rural landscape. A square, non-fenced compound with one single-storey farmhouse facing the main road, with a well to supply fresh water was not far from the front of the house. The farming buildings, the numbers of which varied according to the wealth of the farmer, were typically positioned behind the farmhouse and included the stable for the horses and cows, the cowshed, the barn, the granary, the hen-house and the *pirties* (sauna). A pig-sty was situated a certain distance from the farmhouse and beehives, for those farmers who had them, were placed at the edge of the property, well away from people and animals. Lithuanians were known as beekeepers and great consumers of honey. On most farms it was popular to have linden trees as a decorative tree and with the blossoms used to produce honey. Family sanitary and bathing needs were also generally accommodated outside, in a small sanitary shed, as well as in a small dam for bathing, usually situated not far from the farmhouse. The dwellings were constructed mostly from pine logs, with only the pig-sty being made from straw and clay. Given its availability, timber from the forests, which covered large areas of the Lithuanian regions, was the primary material used in the construction of rural and farm buildings and fences. See photographs in Appendix 13. Such timber could often be sourced from the farmer's own property but, in view of the fact that all timber on properties exceeding twenty acres belonged to the State, it may often have been purchased from the government (Rutter, 1926, p. 39).

In close proximity to almost all farmhouses and to a visible part of the built environment of the farmstead compound were the *koplitelė* (religious shrine) or iron crosses. These were decorated with the symbols of the sun, moon and or snakes, all of which significantly retained the potency of their symbolism in both a pagan and a Christian context. Lithuanian countryside tradition consisted of carved wayside crosses and statuettes of Christian saints carved of wood, with oak most frequently used. These religious symbols and shrines still stand in the central regions of the country in open areas adorning the landscape. In many cases, the crosses were not necessarily built by the farmer individually but were a joint project of the farmer and his neighbours. These shrines and crosses functioned as sites of religious worship and once again demonstrate

the ways in which the rural population unconsciously lived with a fusion of pagan and Christian traditional and religious practices and beliefs in their daily life. Practices and beliefs that drew much of their significance from their identification with the forces of nature shaped the life of the community.

The farmstead property was also marked by an arrangement of maple, linden, oak, cherry and grey green willow trees planted at the front, birch trees near the barns and rowan trees at the edge of the property, not far from a pine or fir forest. Lithuanian farmers in this period still believed that these trees possessed magical healing powers, (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 194). Again this indicates how the geographic and physical organisation and structure of a terrain not only exhibits present physical and social characteristics but is part of a continuing web or chain of beliefs and traditions stretching back into the history of the pre-Christian era and looking forward to the continuing evolution of the culture and its sense of identity. Both of these were constructed in significant ways through the continuing interpretative interaction between human and natural environments.

It is perhaps another marker of the resistant and defensive character of the Lithuanian rural family so adapted to survival in a contested environment that these square family compounds included also a small kennel. A sturdy pole would be positioned adjacent to the cowsheds or the barn with long chains to enable strong guard dogs to be restrained while still being able to cover a large amount of terrain promptly in defence of the family and its property.

The traditional farmhouse was a single-level building divided into two sections: the first consisted of the guestroom, while the rest comprised a large kitchen, and usually also a living room, a dining-room, a workroom and bedrooms. There were plank beds in the kitchen-dining room for the men, while the girls slept in the bedrooms or in the workroom. In the houses of the more affluent farmers, bedrooms were attached to both parts of the house and set up for use throughout the year. Alfonsas, one of my Australian respondents who was living on his father's farm, maintained that: "Most farmhouses had a well ventilated cellar, with an outside and inside entrance, where food was preserved and stored during winter" (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2006).

The farmhouses had double-glazed windows for better protection against the weather and, in some regions, a porch with intricate gables.

Although the external and internal structure and layout of these timber farmsteads were generally consistent across the country, a different territorial cultural identity was noticeable in each single region and in the territory of Klaipeda.

In Žemaitija, a western region of rich fertile soil, the farms were rather large with more buildings than in other ethnic regions of Lithuania. The farmhouses were solid and large with thatched roofs and typically divided into eight to fifteen rooms. A chimney with an open fire was built in a separate room in the centre of the farmstead. It was used for smoking, storing meat and drying wood. The outside of the farmstead was without decorations. Traditionally on these farms there was a pillar-type cross erected on the property (Kudirka, 1991, p. 25).

The picture was again different in the eastern region of Aukštaitija, the largest region of Lithuania. It was the size of the building, not the number of rooms as was the case in Žemaitija that indicated the wealth of the farmers. Traditionally, the layout of the farms retained the characteristic of the old villages, stretching along the main road introduced by the Valakas Land Reform in 1557 (Kiaupa, 2002, pp. 227-229). The farmhouses were built on one side of the road, the farm buildings on the other. A cross was erected in the vicinity to mark the entrance to the farm. These farmhouses had windows and also a heavily decorated porch. The porch provided shelter from the harsh eastern climate while simultaneously announcing cultural allegiances and status.

In the Suvalkija region farms were mainly built in flat areas and surrounded by a number of trees which both moderated the farm environment and defined its boundaries. The farm buildings were long and narrow, traditionally with a carved and decorated roof. The farmhouses were divided into three sections each with four to eight rooms. Again by the side of the road which lead to the farmstead, an iron cross was erected or a *koplitelė* (religious shrine) was fixed to the trunk of a tree at the turn of the road leading to the farmstead. The spiritual life of the Lithuanian rural population was represented through the socially symbolic signs of the crosses and shrines that they built. It is a reminder not only of how strong the role of religion was in daily life and of the bond between the

Catholic Church and the rural population, but also of the way in which these rural communities predominantly believed that they lived in a spiritual environment (Kudirka, 1991, p. 26).

In Dzūkija, the south-eastern region of Lithuania, the landscape is characterised by forests and sandy, poor quality soils. Traditionally, most of the farmhouses replicated the general design and layout of those in Aukštaitija. They were smaller, with three to six rooms made of slatted timber, generally painted a drab brown and usually lacking the decorative finishes that were possible in the richer, more-fertile and productive farming areas. The farms' associated buildings and granaries were also characteristically smaller and simpler, with potatoes (for example) being stored in holes dug into the ground instead of in constructed bunkers (Kudirka, 1991, pp. 26-28).

The Klaipeda territory, still known in the pre-WWII period as Lithuania Minor, is situated along a narrow stretch of land in the far west of the country facing onto the Baltic Sea. Seafaring and fishing industries, as well as the farming practices that define the rest of Lithuania's regions, are found in this region. Strong links are maintained with the German territories from which many of German cultural and economic markers can be traced. The Klaipeda people have traditionally been Lutheran Christians since the spread eastward from the central German regions of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. This contrasts with the ethnic Lithuanians of the other regions, who are overwhelmingly Catholic. The houses and farms in this region were built on German structural and visual models, the immediate appearance of which signalled their historical ties with German culture and control. The English traveller and historian Owen Rutter observed this German influence and noted that the villages and country-towns of the Klaipeda territory were "Neatly and tidily laid out to form an obvious contrast with the low thatch buildings of the rest of the country" (Rutter, 1926, p. 70). Rutter further observed that this contrast had deliberately German connotations, organized before the war by the German authorities to demonstrate the difference between the German *kultur* and the Russian 'lethargy' (Rutter, 1926, p. 72).

In his comments Rutter appeared to ignore the linear and grided layout of farmsteads and villages in the eastern region of Lithuania as well as the ordered patterns of farms and villages throughout the country. Rutter's descriptions privilege German models of

towns, farms and village layout over Lithuanian traditional models but, in doing so, ignores key elements of Lithuanian rural organisation, focusing on the level of visual symbolism, noting the colour and decorative elements but ignoring the similarities of structural layout and function.

Throughout eastern and south-eastern rural Lithuania, individual *pirties* (sauna) was a feature of the wealthier farmstead. Algirdas, another male respondent, explained that "they were used once or twice a week and often shared with neighbours who were not able to afford their own" (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003). For the rest of the week all families would use the outside small dams for major washing needs. The *pirtys* were built of timber and were designed for use as a cleansing and stimulating sauna or bath in the Lithuanian style. They consisted of a small entry area where the rural people would undress and leave their clothes, and a larger room containing an open stove filled with hot coals to produce the necessary steam for the user who sat on timber benches arranged along the inside of the walls. Lithuanians traditionally used dried birch branches which they dipped into a bucket of warm water before flicking them across their body to stimulate the body's circulation and to augment the effects of the steam and the heat of the coals. In the far western regions of Žemaitija and Suvalkija, where links to Polish and German cultural and political territories were strong, the *pirties* did not exist (Kudirka, 1991, p. 27). These traditional practices represent the continuing intimate relationship between nature and the people which characterises pre-war rural life.
The granaries played an important role in Lithuanian folk culture. They were often used by newlyweds for their honeymoon. They were used for storing grain, clothes and beddings, and also as sleeping quarters for seasonally hired working girls from spring to winter (Kudirka, 1991, pp. 27-28).

The decorative garden was an important element in the presentation of every Lithuanian dwelling. In the village it was at the front of the house facing the road. On the farm, it was at the front of the best part of the farmhouse and it was visible from the road and from any guest room. Typically, it was arranged as a simple grid with ordered lines of flowers, shrubs and berries dissected by a central path leading to the house. The most common flowers grown in spring and summer were seasonal lilies, pansies, violets, marigolds and nasturtiums and the perennial rose bushes, lilac, peony and rue shrubs. The *rūta* (rue) was grown in almost every garden. It was accorded a special reverence

due to its strong medicinal properties and for its symbol of maiden chastity and youth. The young girls of the family looked after it (Račiunaitė, 2004, p. 97).

Interestingly, the rue is not native to Lithuania. Franciscan missionaries brought it in the sixteenth century to the Catholic Rokiskis Rectory, in Aukštaitija and, given its strong cultural history associating it with chastity, dedicated it to the Virgin Mary (Bindokienė, 1989, pp. 318-320). In Aukštaitija it was a tradition for the mother of the bride on the morning of the wedding day to put a small wreath of rue, as a sign of the girl's unmarked chastity on the girl's veil, just before the wedding as the daughter asks "*Motinele mano gimdytoja, uždek man ant galveles ši paskutini ryteli rūtu vainikeli* [Mother please put this small wreath of rue on my head]". The removal of the wreath as part of the marriage ceremony marked the girl's passage from virginal maidenhood to her new status as a married woman (Račiunaitė, 2004, p. 97). It is significant that the rue with its accumulated cultural association of homeland and moral purity has become a key marker of Lithuanian identity still visible and grown in the gardens of Lithuanians émigrés (Bindokienė, 1989, p. 68). Here again these spiritual customs survived into the twentieth century often alongside Catholic religious practices in the lifestyles, traditions and beliefs of the Lithuanian rural population.

For rural Lithuanians, the soil and everything that grew, propagated and lived in it was valued. The vegetable garden was important to both urban and rural communities. It was vital for survival during the winter time in the absence of transport and fresh goods. It also played a cultural role in supplying basic traditional healing. Indeed, plants and herbs then took on a cultural significance. Linden and birch leaves, camomile, thyme flowers and leaves, raspberry and various berries were grew in the vegetable garden were dried and preserved, so that they would be available for using as ointments, drinks and remedies all year round and especially during the winter seasons.

Scholars like the archaeologist Gimbutas, when dealing with Lithuania's pre-historical and historical periods of beliefs, highlight the continuing influence of the role of nature in tribal and rural Lithuanian culture. An example is the tradition of the *inkilai* (bird nesting-boxes) which were built and placed on trees to feed and encourage birds to nest in the vicinity of the farm or home. In his recollected memories, Algirdas, a present-day Lithuanian émigré living in Western Australia noted: "These *inkilai* were mainly built

for the *špokas*, the first bird to return to Lithuania after the winter" (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2006). Lithuanians believed that a close contact with birds would bring good luck. As a result of these beliefs, for example, *sviblys* (swallow) were welcomed to nest under the eaves of barns and cowsheds as it was believed to offer a good protection against lightning.

Similarly if a pair of *gandras* (stork) chose a particular farm as their home it was believed to indicate that a good man was living there and that it was safe for a traveller to seek shelter for the night (Kudirka, 1991, p. 28). The rural population would therefore prepare a large nest on the roof of the barn, in the confident knowledge that the storks would return preferentially to the same place every year. The stork was also believed to be a symbol of fertility, promising babies to those who lived in the farm and took the initiative to make a nest for the storks. Algirgas also recollected that "the *balandys* (dove) were also kept as pets for the boys of the family and were so domesticated that they were willing to perch on the boys' shoulders" (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2006). In contrast to the domesticated *balandys*, the *gegutė* (cuckoo) and *lastingalas* (nightingale) were the two forest birds most loved by the rural people and valued both for their singing and as harbingers of a good season (Bindokienė, 1989, pp. 40-42).

The complex web of built and natural environments formed a significant front of influence on the evolution of a sense of communal identity. A number of ancient pagan historical traditions continued to influence the daily life of the rural community leading to WWII.

One result of the Agrarian Reforms of 1920 in independent Lithuania was that the class of middle-size farms began to emerge. Near the old pine log farmsteads, built with roofs of thatch or wooden shingles and surrounded by fields of rye, wheat, barley and potatoes, appeared the more modern red brick building of the new farmstead style, often with a tiled or on occasion tin roof (Harrison, 1948, p. 15). In the memories of Algirdas:

> When my family returned from United States, my father that worked as a butcher made a lot of money and we all returned to Lithuania, he built a big farm with lots of buildings the farmstead had a tin roof … it was the only one in all area and he was very proud of his farm … they call him the American (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2006).

These new dwellings began to modify the visual and imaginative landscape, augmenting the old narrative with a newer one.

Lithuanian Rural Daily Life

> So completely absorbed were they by the life-bringing natural forces, the rotation of the year's season and by their work in the fields that their way of life, their language, beliefs, and customs remained little changed down the ages (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 14).

Gimbutas' description of the old Lithuanian rural life foregrounds the way nationalism has become embedded in the academic discourse of archaeology, in privileging lifestyle and customs as markers of Lithuanian identity. In Gimbutas's account of rural daily life, nature dominates and determines the pattern of life and activity with unchanging characteristics. Arguably, it is more productive to catalogue the ways in which daily farm and village life were organised by people with little economic or industrial resources but a strong and established tradition of knowledge of their natural and cultural environment, and of the ways in which these could be used to provide for and protect their lives and families. In this traditional agrarian pattern of living and working, the seasons did play a significant part as they do in any agricultural society.

Rural families were generally large. Most families had on average five children, although ten was not uncommon as the children provided help to the parents in the management of the farm. Mothers usually breastfed their children for at least a year, as it was the responsibility of the mother to look after the wellbeing of the new born. Breast feeding was believed to be essential for a healthy child. Parents also played an important role in the upbringing and development of the child. Children from their early childhood identified themselves with the father or the mother as the model from whom they learned and naturalised their concepts of personal and social identity, roles and values (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 72). Grandparents living on the farm and elder brothers and sisters, also minded the younger children while the parents were working or ill or otherwise unable to look after the children, again allocating and naturalising duties in accordance with defined age and gender.

During much of the winter, the country was typically in the grip of extreme cold weather as Alfa, who participated in this study, remembered:

> The temperature was from minus 6 to minus 20 degrees it was so cold and there was so much snow that it was so difficult to go to school, we could not walk we went with a sledge … the classroom was also cold but all the farmers used to bring some fire wood (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

For months on end, the country was covered by thick snow and rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes became frozen and choked, as the snows, fine and dry-blown by the incessant winds, blanketed everything. The days in this time of the year were short and dark. The rural population spent the most part of their day by necessity inside the farmhouse. Through the short dark days the whole family rose between six and seven o'clock in the morning. Men started the day by lighting the wooden stove and then going out to attend to the cattle and the horses. Using a roster system, the men of the area were responsible for transporting the children to school in the closest village. A sledge pulled by horses was used to collect all children in the vicinity, as the thick snow typically made walking impossible.

During the day men collected wood from the forest, mixed fodder for the cattle and provided water to the animals. Using axes, they would break the ice that had formed on the ponds or streams during the night and, transferring some of the water to buckets, would carry it to the animals. They then would shovel the snow and lay planks from the road to the front of the farmhouse to provide access for the family and the horses. In the winter evenings men would make and repair their wooden farm tools, kitchen utensils and in the region of Žemaitija they would make clogs, many of which were designed with simple traditional decorative patterns (Kudirka, 1991, p. 33). Throughout the years of independence, newspapers were available and not costly. Thus, men often finished the evening by reading, before retiring to bed at around 9.30 or 10.00 o'clock. Algirdas remembered his father reading the newspapers every night before going to bed and discussing some important events with his mother, in particular the new political events.

> My father liked to read not only newspapers but books that he brought with him from America … he was interested in politics and the economy of the country … he was a very clever man … we also had the radio … and this was a real novelty (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Females tended small farm animals and prepared the heavy meals needed for sustenance in an extreme climate. Hearty soup and pancakes with milk constituted the main meal of the day. Everyone participated and it was eaten around seven o'clock in the morning. Women, after their housekeeping duties, dedicated the rest of the day to their needle works. In the evening women wove, spun, knit or mended clothing by the light of a large kerosene lamp in the kitchen. In the recollection of Alfa:

> My mother was a very good woman she always worked on the farm and for us children we were only three but she always was knitting, mending our clothes … I remember her at the light of the lamp put in the middle of the kitchen table … she was working but she was also telling us stories … I remember her always happy but with us children she was very strict and very religious (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Along with making clothes for all members of the family, women generally made napery like sheets, towels and tablecloths, mostly in linen (Kudirka, 1991, pp. 74-75). It was an accepted part of their female responsibilities and a key way in which women, either married or unmarried and of different ages, contributed to the domestic economy and management of the farm and the family. For this purpose, there was in almost every farm, a spinning wheel, a spindle and a loom (Rutter, 1926, p. 47). Young girls would use these tools to prepare their dowry from an early age, firstly making simple items and then more elaborate ones as they grew older and more skilled.

Oral traditions of the folk culture survived through elderly members of the family. Traditionally the grandmothers, if they were living with the family entertained the children, particularly in winter, with *pasakos* (stories) and *misles* (riddles) handed down from generation to generation. In this way they gave centrality and importance to the sense of a shared, unbroken cultural terrain and identity. This sense of shared culture was reinforced and consolidated by the customary practice whereby groups of families from the village and surrounding farms would come together in a *troba* (farmhouse) at the end of the winter working day. The women would knit or sew, singing old traditional songs and re-telling old legends and stories to the youngest about the past of the country, while the children in their turn recited short poems. Participation in these communal gatherings promoted patterns of behaviour that strengthened the sense of a shared cultural belonging and solidarity among the families (Račiunaitė, 2002, pp. 70-72).

The arrival of the first migratory birds marked the onset of spring and farmers began to make plans for spring plantation. The call of the *gegutė* (cuckoo), the marked and much-awaited messenger of spring was heard. Venturing outdoors in bare feet, a practice which was common among the rural working population of all ages in the period, was considered dangerous by the farmers as the earth underneath was still frozen and caused frost bite. The bird thus became a portent of spring, a gauge against which the opportunity to sow seed for the next harvest, and the family's consequent survival, could be measured.

With the arrival of spring, the first ploughing could begin. Men and animals would go into the fields each morning to sow the flax, rye, wheat and oat ears gathered in the previous summer and which they sprinkled with water to facilitate germination. The animals were taken out of their winter shelters by the men of the family and moved to open fields as the spring grasses reached maturity. The women tended the family orchard and vegetable garden; planted vegetables that later would be preserved; and looked after the berry and strawberry shrubs whose fruits would be made into conserves and syrups. Rural Lithuanians in this pre-war period as well as later both inside and outside the national boundary cultivated and then preserved these berries as a conserve and syrup. Algirdas recollected:

> In early Spring the *samdininkai* [hired farm labourers] arrived at the farm they were both men and girls and would remain on the farm working until just before Christmas and were usually paid accordingly four *litai* per hour (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

In summer the men, who predominantly slept in the house throughout the remainder of the year, would often transfer outside to sleep on the hay in the barn where it was cooler, as would young children, both male and female. Late summer was the busiest time of the year for all the members of the family. The men were in the fields by four in the morning and, apart from a break for a few light meals, they remained in the fields until sunset. It was the time of the rye, wheat and oat harvests and the period for gathering honey and the picking of fruits (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 92). The women would start to prepare conserves and pickles for the winter. Traditionally, the farmer's wife would prepare a pail of pickled beetroots and *sauerkraut* (cabbage). During this period there were often celebrations after the end of a long working week, and particularly after the successful conclusion of the harvest, with everyone barn dancing and singing folk songs,

drinking and eating until late at night. Algirdas, who was a young man at that time, explained:

> It was the time not only for courting but for showing the ability to attend to farming duties as this signified to the community that the young boys were ready for adult life in marriage as a man capable of attending to and protecting a family's needs and interests (Algirdas*, Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

In autumn the farm work was dedicated mainly to flax pulling and breaking. Seasonal workers and available neighbours would gather together to accomplish the task, often working long hours. It was a difficult process but it was from the flax that the farmers obtained the linen necessary for clothing the family; and income from sale of the surplus allowed the family to purchase products that the farm could not produce.

In addition to cultivating crops they also harvested naturally occurring food sources, not least of which were mushrooms. In autumn the forests were rich in these mushrooms, which provided another important nutritional source readily available without cost to the rural community. Mushrooms were preserved by the farmer's wife, who salted and pressed them in wooden pails. The better mushrooms were dried with sugar and used to flavour other dishes. Often the whole family would go to the nearby forest to pick the mushrooms after a rainy day, but children were usually the main mushroom pickers, going to the forest in groups to pick mushrooms and play. Aldona remembered how happy she was when she could go to the forest to play with other children and collect mushrooms and wild berries:

> I was so happy when in the afternoon with my brothers and other children we could go in the small forest not far from my parents' farms and we could play and picked up mushrooms especially in autumn … I was so proud to present them to my mother (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

Children were expected to work on the farm from a very young age. At first they were given light duties, progressing later to more complicated and skilled tasks. From the age of seven the boys looked after the geese and a year later the pigs and the sheep were taken to pasture daily. At the age of nine they were allowed to tend cattle. Gradually the boys were introduced to men's work such as manuring, mowing and threshing, and by the time they reached twenty years of age, they were allowed to sow, a difficult and delicate operation performed by hand. The girls were taught light household duties at first; later they were taught to cook, sew and knit; and when they turned fourteen they

learnt to spin and weave and began to prepare their dowry. At this age, they also helped the mother in the making of the bread (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 87).

From the time of its independence, attendance at primary school was compulsory and free for the first four years for all children from the age of eight years. However, the work of the children on the family farm was indispensable, particularly in summer, given that public schools were closed from May to September. This early end to the school year was welcomed by the parents and the government's attempt (then subsequently abandoned) to shortening of this non-school period provoked resentment amongst the farmers (Rutter, 1926, p. 55). Children provided essential labour at the harvest time with no financial outlay to the family. They would rake the refuse of the harvest into small bundles to be collected by the adults, look after small farm animals, collect eggs, pick the low-hanging berries, attend to the hives by driving the bees back into the hives with wetted brooms, to douse them and encourage production activity within the hive. Alfonsas remembered how he was happy at the end of the school to go to the country and spend the holidays on his grandfather farm.

> We lived in Kaunas it was a big city but all my relatives lived in the country … my father was the only son who moved to the city … after school the day after I used to go to my grandparents farm and I used to help in small works … I liked to be like the other people, my uncles and my grandfather always were giving me the task to look after the bees it was fun but also you have to be careful that they did not escape the beehive … if they go on an other property the farmer did not give them back … it was difficult but I learn looking at my uncles (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2004).

Once again the whole family worked together in an organised way, unchanged across the years, and these rigidly conventional roles and duties demarcated by strict gender and age were accepted as a natural part of their life.

Rural Access to Modern day Facilities: Electricity, Plumbing and Sewerage.

During the period of independence, access to modern day amenities such as electricity, plumbing and sewerage systems was mostly limited to urban areas and country towns. Electrical power was only available to sectors of the city and to country towns where the power grid extended. Sewerage and plumbing were yet to be available in any location.

In large cities power stations were extensively built to further develop industry. In contrast, in small country towns power stations were built only for mills and public buildings such as the hospital, the school, the police station and the town hall, and were not designed to service farms and homes. On the farms, rural people relied instead on kerosene lamps and lanterns that could be purchased at the local hardware shop in town. Small torches with dry batteries were also available at a reasonable price. Algirda's family, for instance, had a lamp within the house and a lantern which hung on the wall next to the door for use when going outside to the stable and to the sanitary shed.

> At home we used to have a kerosene lamp on the table in the living room. It was enough for the size of the room. In the evening my father after dinner used to play cards with some neighbours while my mother was cleaning the kitchen or sewing. I used to do my homework and get things ready for school next day. To go to bed I did not need any light because the light in the living room was enough, my bed room opened in the living room. My mother used to prepare the bed before and I did not need to do anything, just to enter in the bed … [Algirdas further added] …"I had also a small torch that my father bought for me. I liked it and I used this torch all the time" (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

According to Alfa, nobody had a telephone on the farms, not even wealthy farmers.

> It [the telephone] was not just available … telephones were in the cities and towns. They were in the hospital, and in the police station … I don't even remember if my school had one, but I think so, because it was a big gymnasium (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

During this period Algirdas, a young boy, believed that the radio was a luxury and not many people could afford it. Only wealthy *kulaks* with more than thirty hectares of land were able to purchase a radio.

> My father was not rich but was well off. He had a bit of land. He bought a radio from a salesman in town. My school had one as well the teachers out of their salary bought it. They used to listen to it, but not us. The radio was for their private use (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

Algirdas explained how the radio of his father was functioning in absence of electricity on the farm.

> The radio had dry batteries connected to the radio by small cables and were re-charged by wet batteries. All of them were bought at the local hardware shop the wet batteries were recharged regularly at the local power station which provided electricity to the town. My father used to go there … he had to pay but I do not remember how much. Dry batteries lasted approximately a year depending on their use and then they were disposed. They were not very expensive (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

According to Alfonsas: “Lithuania did not have plumbing and sewerage facilities at all” (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008). In the cities, towns and rural areas a network of wells, provided fresh water for the family’s necessities. On the farm typically the well was not distant from the farmhouse. Alfonsas further added that:

> The water was collected from the well with wooden buckets. These wooden buckets in number of two were tied with a rope to a wooden thick stick which a member of the family was carried across the shoulders and then brought into the house. This fresh water was used for cooking and washing. In my family both my father and my mother carried these buckets full of water … the woman on the farm are very strong they can do the same work of the man … my mother did not wait for my father if she needed water … but also she had a young girl helping her … she used to carry the buckets. In town as well young girls were carrying the water. The Jewish families in town they used to have young Lithuanian girls to carry the water … I used to see them in the streets. … The Jewish had shops in the main street of the town and these girls were their made (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

Almost every farm had a dam. The water of the dam was used as drinking water for the animals. During the good season the men of the family used to bath and swim in the dam, while the woman would take a bath in a wooden tab in the proximity. Alfonsas, speaking about the dam on his father’s property, claimed that: “The dam was approximately two metres deep and supported all around by wooden planks … it was large and we could swim in it” (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

Wealthy farmers had a *pirties* (sauna). It was used for social gatherings of friends and neighbours were invited to join in. Alfa revoked those days with clear memories.

> We had a pirties and once a month just before the sunset my father’s friends and neighbours used to come to our farm to join my father in the pirties. They were man about three or four. They used to come at that time of the day because there was still light. After they used to have a drink of *samagonas* and talk about politics or things that at that time I did not know. I remembered they used to stay for long time, just talking or playing cards (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

Family sanitary facilities, both in the cities and in rural areas, were built outside the dwellings. They consisted of wooden shed which included a wooden toilet seat with a removable container below that from time to time was removed and the contents disposed. Alfonsas recollected that:

> On my father’s farm the content of the box was disposed in a deep hole dug in a remote area far from the farmhouse. In the cities and towns the disposal of the body waste was done by men that were hired from the family. They used to

> empty and replace the container for few *litai* (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

Electricity, plumbing and sewerage were further developed throughout Lithuania during the Soviet occupation.

Food and Beverage Staples

The staple dishes and beverages of the rural Lithuanian diet were produced on the farm which was traditionally self-supporting. Special and everyday food varied according to the season. Animals born and raised in the spring and summer were slaughtered in autumn and winter, both to regulate the numbers which had to be wintered in the barns, and to provide the meats for preservation to carry the family through the winter months. There was thus more meat on the table in winter, while milk, fresh vegetables, berries, mushrooms and various flour-based dishes were more frequent in spring and summer.

Bread and cereals formed the basis of the Lithuanian rural meal and were consumed daily throughout the country. In particular, rye, barley, buckwheat and oats were used to make breads, soups and porridges. Bread was the most important commodity for the farmer. Home-made *duona* (dark rye bread) was eaten regularly at each meal. *Piraga* (white bread) would be baked and eaten only on special occasions (Ambrazienė, 1944, p. 15). Until the middle of the twentieth century, the pattern was for the farmer's wife to make bread once each week in large quantities, according to the seasons and the number of the family members at home. During the harvesting period, when more labourers were expected to be on the farm helping with different duties, more bread would usually be baked. Typically, the fifteen or sixteen years old daughter would assist the mother. It was a very significant time in the life of the young girl. She was accepted officially in the community as a mature young woman ready for marriage (Račiunaitė, 2002, pp. 88-90).

Bread making was an important ritual, taking at least two days to complete. Rye bread was made by mixing rye flour with warm water in a big *medinis kubilas* (wooden container) in which some dough from the last batch had been left. It was left to ferment over night, then mixed with more flour, covered with a cloth and left to rise in a warm place. Then the dough was shaped into loaves and on a wooden board with a long handle

and was put into a wooden oven. Traditionally, the farmer's wife would make the sign of the cross over the first loaf of bread and press the sign on the last one. Customs related to bread indicate the respect and value attributed to it. If visitors arrived at the farm on the baking day, they typically had to wait until the bread was baked and loaves or slices were given to them to sustain them over the rest of their journey (Ambrazevičius, 1994, p. 12). Children were taught to pick up bread that had fallen to the ground, make the sign of the cross, kiss the bread and eat it. Throughout Lithuania the parents of newlyweds used to greet the couple on the threshold of the house with bread. One loaf of bread would also be presented to the closest neighbour, who in return would exchange a loaf on their baking day. Every *bakana* (loaf of bread) had a different taste and the exchange of breads allowed the bread-makers to savour the differences (Kudirka, 1991, pp. 28-29).

Pork dishes occupied the second place of importance in the traditional Lithuanian meal. Meat from slaughtered pigs was generally preserved in brine in big wooden barrels and kept in the cellar, although some was smoked, except in the region of Dzūkija and Suvalkija where farmers preferred to dry the meat in ventilated rooms (Kudirka, 1991, p. 29). While the process of smoking varied between each region, in all areas it was common to add a juniper branch to the fire to give the meat a pleasant taste. *Skilandys* (smoked sausages) made from a pig's stomach filled with minced meat, onions, salt and various herbs, and *lašynis* (bacon) were very popular delicacies, mostly served with slices of rye bread during feasts. *Lašynis* was also cooked in beetroot soup, the staple meal for the men during rye harvesting as it was considered to provide further energy.

Milk and other dairy products were available in abundance on the farms and widely consumed on a daily basis. Women after the milking would make dairy products which were such an important part of the family's diet. Milk was drunk fresh while butter and both fresh and sour cream were consumed almost every day. Farmer's cheese, another widely used home-produced dairy product, was easy to maintain throughout the year. It was made by heating sour milk, straining the curd through a linen bag to produce a triangular shape and pressing it into a hard piece. In Žemaitija, according to Alfa:

> Caraway seeds were added to the curd to produce a flavoured cheese … sweet cheeses were made by adding some eggs and sugar to the mixture. Cheese was commonly served with coffee and with honey on special festive occasions during the honey season and it was also given to guests as a present (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Beetroots, turnips and potatoes and other root vegetables have always been important to the diet of the rural Lithuanian population and were a major characteristic of the daily food consumed by rural Lithuanian communities. Beetroots and beet stalks were eaten freshly cooked or pickled during winter and eaten in hot soup with mushrooms during the Lenten fasting period (Kudirka, 1991, pp. 30-32). In summer, cold beetroot soup was served with side dishes of pickled cucumber and boiled hot potatoes sprinkled with dill. Until the middle of the twentieth century the farmer's wife would prepare a pail of pickled beetroots and *sauerkraut* for winter. To add a different taste they used to mix caraway, carrots, sour apples and cranberries to the *sauerkraut.*

Soups made from various vegetable and root bases were the most common dish during winter and often a fresh or pickled cabbage soup or even a milk-based soup with such vegetables as potatoes, carrots, and cabbage was served. Potatoes arrived in Lithuania only in the eighteenth century, but they soon became a staple food due to the ease with which it was possible to grow this vegetable (Kudirka, 1991, p. 30). Boiled potatoes were served in different ways and accompanied almost every meal. Grated potatoes were used to make *blynai* (pancakes), *kugelis* (grated potato combined in a baking dish with onion and bacon) and *cepelinai* (grated potato folded around minced meat), which was prepared for guests and during harvest time. Porridge was another staple prepared from these common farm ingredients. It was commonly cooked with peas (Ambrazevičius, 1994, p. 15).

In autumn the forests were rich in mushrooms, which provide another important nutritional source readily available without cost to the rural community. Mushrooms were preserved as Alfa described:

> By salting and pressing them in wooden pails by the farmer's wife. The better mushroom were dried with sugar and used to flavour other dishes. Often the whole family went to the forest to pick the mushrooms after a rainy day but generally the young members of the family enjoyed doing it (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2004).

While the major dietary sources for most rural Lithuanians were dairy products, together with vegetable and grain-based foods supplemented by smaller quantities of fresh and smoked meats, freshwater fish as well as smoked fish for storage became another valued food source for those who lived near water. Smoked eels were considered to be a

delicacy and were consumed with guests or on special occasions. (Rutter, 1926, pp. 30-35) In all regions, the daily and seasonal food patterns depended on what could be readily sourced from or grown successfully in the local environment by a people whose lives were largely based on a self-supporting economy.

Teas made from camomile flowers, linden leaves and various herbs gathered by women during spring and summer were drunk regularly. Coffee, which had to be purchased, was consumed only with guests (Rutter, 1926, p. 44). Aldona maintained that:

> A popular drink even today was *salde* made of germinated rye, diluted with water and birch sap … it was flavoured with blackcurrant leaves, the crust of brown bread or germinated barley or oats and cider made on the farm from dried apples and pears (Aldona, Klaipeda, *Interview Transcript 2,* 2004).

It was usually only on festive days, or when visitors arrived, that the rural Lithuanians drank alcohol. *Krupnikas,* a home-made drink of honey, sugar, alcohol and a number of herbs and spices was served at meal times, but only on particular occasions (Rutter, 1926, pp. 40-43). Lithuanians learned how to brew beer from barley in the sixteenth century and beer-making continued to be a common practice in most families in the North part of Aukštatija (Ambrazevičiu, 1994, p. 15). Unlike the home production of beer, which was always legal, the home production of *samagonas* (spirits) was outlawed during the period of Independence when the authorities sought to maintain strict social controls over the consumption and sale of all spirit beverages in the country. Given the widespread tradition which marked the consumption of such spirits, Alfonsas stated that: "Lithuanians living in the country continued to produce them on their farms even though, if discovered by the police they would have had to pay heavy fines" (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2006).

Rutter referred to these patterns of alcohol consumption and social attempts at control of excessive alcohol consumption. He described at length a conversation which he witnessed in 1926 while celebrating the festival of St. Anne at Mariampole in the Suvalkija region with a well-to-do farming family. While they confidently consumed alcohol at each stage of the meal, a Roman Catholic priest was also at the table and heatedly lamented the extent to which drunkenness was a feature of Lithuanian peasant life. As Rutter observed at the time, apparently with disapproval: "Drunkenness is an

evil in the Baltic States, as it is elsewhere, and it becomes worse as you go north" (Rutter, 1926, p. 43).

Such criticism of the widespread actuality of excessive alcohol consumption in the peasant and rural classes, reminds one of the strong temperance movements of the nineteenth century and of the alliance between the Catholic Church and this movement. The alliance which soon developed into a political and nationalistic movement was dedicated to protecting not just the physical and economic health of the people but also their cultural health and independence.

National Costume

The Lithuanian national costume grew originally out of the everyday clothing of the peasants. These clothes were traditionally made from heavy wools and linens that could be sourced from regional farm flocks and crops, and woven and sewed at home or bought occasionally from the village shop. The weight and roughness of the fabrics were affected both by climatic conditions and economic and production realities as families predominantly used looms and spinning wheels capable of producing garments strong enough to withstand the weather and wear of many years. With the progressive introduction of colourful additions such as aprons for women and sashes for both women and men, decorated and embroidered with patterns and details unique and distinctive to each of the Lithuanian regions, these clothes were worn by the peasants for festive occasions.

Before Lithuania gained independence from Russia in 1918, the Lithuanian national costume was worn by the educated upper class for folk cultural performances. It was based upon folk costumes that had been worn by peasants in the different rural regions of the country during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Lithuanian national costume started to gain recognition and be accorded value at the turn of the nineteenth century with the birth of a nationalist movement and the awakening of a national self-consciousness. It was in this period that a need for a national costume to signify a national identity that unified Lithuania as a nation was felt among the nationalists.

During the period of the ban on the use of the native language, folk theatre productions of works of contemporary Lithuanian writers were held in the country barns as a form of protest against the Czarists oppression. In these productions, folk songs and dances were performed together with patriotic songs. The actors and singers would wear costumes made at home based on the patterns and model of the clothing that their parents and grandparents had worn. The first formal Lithuanian choir groups were formed in the late nineteenth century in Lithuania Minor, and the style of their folk costume soon became well known throughout Lithuania, effectively becoming the Lithuanian national costume, even though at that time there was no official consensus on the exact style of the costume (Saliklis, in Linda Welters (ed.), 1999, p. 214)

In 1904 when the ban on publication in the Lithuanian language was lifted, the nationalist newspapers such as *Dabartis* and *Varpas* started to advocate the importance of having a national costume that could be a visible the marker of national identity.

A few years later in 1908, attempts to generate a popular consensus on a national costume were made by the Lithuanian Art Society which organized an exhibition of folk dress, with the artist composer M.K. Čiurlionis as curator, by inviting the peasants to contribute sashes, and aprons styled in the old Lithuanian patterns with which they were familiar.

At the turn of the twentieth century the costume known as *Birutes Kostiumas*, established by the Birute Society in Lithuania Minor (in honour of the daughter of a Grand Duke of Zemaitija, who married Kestutis, a ruler of Lithuania), gained wide acceptance throughout Lithuania and remained popular for several decades. The yellow, red and green tulips on the apron of this costume were considered to be highly patriotic, since they were the three colours of the Lithuanian national flag.

> …a black velvet vest and a dark red skirt with thin vertical bands of yellow. The hem of the underskirt was decorated, and the skirt had white work embroidery. The apron was embroidered with yellow, green and red tulips …a thin sash … and a beautiful amber necklace and bracelet (Kargaudiene, in Ruta Saliklis, Linda Welters (ed.), 1999, p. 215).

In 1926, Antanas Tamosaitis, a student at the art academy in Kaunas, was asked to collect ethnographic material in an attempt to create national costumes. Tamosaitis was

searching for the most characteristically Lithuanian textiles, and for the most beautiful examples of regional differences, which could be used later as models for new creations. In 1930 a book on Lithuanian Folk Art, was published. Most of the patterns of weaving represented in the book were from Tamosaitis'collection. However, in this book only women were portrayed wearing Lithuanian national costumes, while men were wearing military uniforms. Thus, the need for men national costume was felt particularly for the performance of folk dances. Tamosaitis, then designed men costumes and became very influential in the development and acceptance of the Lithuanian national costume, and although some of the emerging costumes were "the author's own creations, they came to be accepted as traditional and authentic" (Welters, et., 1999, p. 215).

Men's costumes were almost uniform throughout the country. They were generally soberly coloured. The outfit consisted of a shirt, generally made of thick white linen, with long cuffed sleeves, and with an inverted collar, both the cuffs and the collars being embroidered with cotton stiches. The costume was also characterized by a pair of long trousers with a waistband, a vest, a lightweight coat, an overcoat, a short jacket and sheepskin coat. Winter trousers were made of dark grey or black heavy woollen cloth, while summer trousers were made of lightweight checked linen or cotton cloth. All men's costumes were completed by a bright woven sash, tied under the collar, while trousers and overcoats were girded with sashes around the waist (with the exception of the region of Žemaitija where sashes were not worn). These sashes were decorated with both geometrical designs and designs featuring the essential natural motifs of the sun, earth and vegetation - all of which reflected the pattern of their lives.

With their festive costume, men also wore a felt hat decorated with peacock and rooster feathers and flowers. In warm weather, in all Lithuanian regions the preferred head covering was a functional wide-brimmed straw hat. Socks were mainly striped and worn with boots or with soft-soled leather shoes. In the region of Žemaitija, popular footwear were the *klumpes* (wooden clogs) which were economical, solid and could be made by the peasants themselves for use by all members of the family. The peasants wore *klumpes* instead of boots or other footwear until the mid-twentieth century (Kudirka, 1991, p. 33). Many people in rural areas in these decades of the twentieth century wore no footwear at all. This is made evident through photographic records of the period,

cataloguing rural Lithuania at home, at work and at communal events (Juodakis, 1971, pp. 20-21).

Women's clothing was more colourful and varied than the men's and displayed more traditional regional characteristics. Female festive costume typically consisted of a white linen shirt, a loose skirt, a bodice and apron, a sash and a large shawl, completed with a head-covering and jewellery made mainly of *gintaras* (amber). Head-coverings were an essential element of the costume as they symbolised the position of the woman in the family and community. In all regions a shawl, bonnet or cap was usually worn as a head-covering by married women, while girls wore a head-covering made of ribbons, usually different from the ribboned head-covering worn by unmarried adult women. In the nineteenth century, married women were expected not to appear in public bare-headed, but to wear instead either a shawl, or a cap as a sign of social position and respect. Once again, with the emergence of the nationalist movement and the role attributed to women the projection of the woman's appearance was vital for the recognition of her special position as mother in the family and as a woman in the nation. The footwear was made by the local village shoemaker out of home-treated leather. The main regional differences were in the patterns and in the methods of weaving and wearing; and in the colours used, with red the dominant colour in most regions.

In Aukštaitija, the women's costumes were marked by light colours, with white the dominant colour. Their skirts were mostly checked, while the aprons were woven in light-coloured linen and decorated with a red embroidered pattern at the edge. The bodices were made in wool and decorated with gold and silver borders. Married women in this region wore *nuometas* (a tied, white linen sash) as a head covering, which was the mark and symbol of the rite of initiation into their status as married women (Kudirka, 1991, p. 35).

In Žemaitija a women's costume was again brightly coloured. It consisted of a tailored bodice, a vertically striped skirt, an apron with red vertical stripes with horizontally patterned bands, and a shawl. The women and the men manly wore *klumpes* (wooden clogs) while wealthy women wore leather shoes with laces.

In Dzūkija, the costume was colourful, with checked skirts and aprons decorated with bright designs, although in the eastern part of the region white linen aprons were more common. The women of Dzūkija completed the costume with fine lace, crochet, interweaving and embroidery, all of which gave some indication of the woman's economic and social position.

In Suvalkija the skirts were richly coloured with vertical stripes, while the aprons, although dark, were decorated with stylized tulip motifs and patterns of lilies, clover leaves or peas, again emphasising the close association between landscape, nature and regional identity. The most decorative sashes were also made in this region and neighbouring Dzukija.

In contrast to the brightness of the costumes throughout the Lithuanian ethnic regions, in Klaipeda and surrounding territories the costumes were mainly dark and sober and with some characteristics which distinguished them from the other regions. Skirts were straight with vertical stripes or checks and aprons were mainly white, made in a single panel with vertical stripes and a wide-patterned band at the bottom edge. The shirts were white with a gathered neckline unique to the region and marked by embroidery on the sleeve cuffs and shoulders. Characteristic elements of these costumes were the intricate patterned sashes and stoles which consisted of two panels, with a narrow lengthwise insertion usually embroidered in contrasting patterns. Almost every woman and girl wore a *delmonas* (a decorative handbag) which was fastened at the side or at the front of the waist band. Colourful knitted gloves, mittens and stockings completed the costumes (Kudirka, 1991, p. 34).

Children's national costumes were similar to those of the adults. Boys' costumes were without vests or jackets. Young girls wore short checked or patterned skirts with aprons embroidered with traditional regional patterns, but without sashes. Adolescent girls wore calf-length skirts and a small crown made of ribbon loose on their shoulder.

The national costume continued to have symbolic significance and was worn by Lithuanian women well into the twentieth century. Rutter, in his record of his trip through the region of Klaipeda in 1926, describes what he presents as a typical Lithuanian woman in the following essentialist terms:

> Being of pure Lithuanian type –fair hair, blue eyes, fresh complexion and full figure and fine and even teeth – the national costume became her perfectly. The pleated skirt in coloured stripes, blue and red predominating.… Over the skirt was an embroidered apron in blue and red wool on white. Her flaxen hair, worn in plaited coils on either side of her head, was bound with a narrow ribbon of yellow and blue - to match her hair and eyes. … an amber necklace completed the costume and made her a very lovely picture. These costumes are still made in the country and it is to be hoped that the example of Lithuanian ladies will lead to a revival (Rutter, 1926, p. 86-87).

One can argue that Rutter's description of rural Lithuanian women during the period of independence is based essentially on the ideology of the 'pure race'. In depicting this image, however, Rutter ignored the fact that Lithuania was more than the Klaipeda region and its people, as can be seen in the maps in Appendix 11.

Dainos and Folk Dances

Dainos (song) and folk dances were part of the rural Lithuanian daily life.
Dainos would narrate the journey through the Lithuanians' life, would regulate the family and community relationships, and define people's feelings of kinship with nature and its creatures. This intimate relationship is underlined in Gimbutas'works.

> Songs, sung in rotation by several voices, and with refrains which harmonised with the rhythm of harvesting and flax and hemp plucking and drying … man's life was inseparable from daina [song] (Gimbutas, 1964, p.15).

Lithuanian folk songs, *sutartinės* and *raudos* (lamentation songs), were expressions of feelings of deep joy or deep sorrow. They were handed down from generation to generation by the women of the family, and these women thus, played an indispensable and had an active role in their creation, preservation and performance. *Sutartinės* are old polyphonic songs sung only in the north-eastern part of the Aukštaitija region and still survived at the turn of the twentieth century. Typically, groups of three or four women sang and danced the *sutartinės* with slow movements. The men would accompany them, playing the melody with a *kanklės*, a five strings instrument, one of the most archaic Lithuanian string instruments

Raudos (lamentation songs) were sung throughout the country also to the turn of the twentieth century. *Raudos* were used to celebrate sad time in life; for example the departure of the loves one through death, marriage and unforseen events. The lyrics were

determined by the social standing and family position of the person. In *raudos* that celebrated death, the deceases were addressed as they were still alive, and the cause of their death was questioned (Kudirka, 1991, p. 58). *Raudos* dedicated to the bride or groom and would describe the pain felt by the parents as their children left the family home and lost their youth.

Rural Lithuanians loved dancing. Young people gathered to dance in the field in summer or in the local school hall during winter time. Typically the elderly and youngest members of the community would join in to enjoy the social events. In the recollection of Alfa:

> We used to go to dance at the local school hall, we did not have many entertainments when I was young we had to work or study … but for some occasion as Name's Day, we used to have parties and dancing. My father did not have any on the farm but we used to go to the school … sometimes even at the house of some relative an uncle's farm not too far from where we lived (Alfa, *Interview Transcript* 1, Perth, 2008).

The oldest Lithuanian folk dances were the *sutartinės* which accompanied the *sutartinės* songs. Other folk dances were the *rateliai* (ring dances), *žaidinai* (game dances) and *šokia* (ordinary dances) which included waltz and polkas.The latter were danced mostly by the Lithuanian émigrés in Western Australia. Algirdas, with feelings of happiness, had fond memories of watching people dancing.

> I was only a teenagers but I enjoyed to go to see people dancing, I used to dance a bit of polka … I was clumsy but I liked to go because I could meet girls. My brother that was ten years older he used to play waltz and polka … he was very good (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2008).

Lithuanian folk dances were dominated by ring and game dances centred on harvesting, growing crops and livestock, or on the relation between young people and matchmaking. *Žaidinai* (game dances), similar to *rateliai* (ring dances), were not sung and were based on creative improvisation of the lyrics and performance. Movements were limited by walking in rows or in a circle. The number of the participants was not restricted. The style of dancing changed during the evolution of the dance; from a slow beginning, to faster movements towards of the end of the dance (Kudirka, 1991, pp.62-64).

Šokia (ordinary dances), were accompanied by instrumental music. Separate couples danced without following a larger plan or structure as required in group dances. The

couple would embrace each other, as in the polka or waltz, or would hold each other when facing or standing in a circle. Leg movements were dominant, the steps were short and the feet were not raised high.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries game dances were gradually replaced by ring dances. During the period of independence young people favoured polkas and waltz and other fast-dances, the steps and movements of which were brought to Lithuania from new contacts with Western European countries.

Religious Beliefs and Practices

Religious education played an important role in the life of the family. It was left to the mother to introduce the child to the values of the Church. This formation was considered vital for a moral upbringing and for acceptance as a member of the community. Catholic Church traditions and customs dominated the moral code to which most Lithuanians conformed. From an early age the children were thus introduced to the parents' moral code and religious belief system. In later years these teachings assumed special importance in the formation of the girls' future lives. The girls would eventually have the task of the bringing up their own family according to the accepted customs, rites and values of their community. The children were brought up with a strict moral code reinforced by the principle, "*Dievas viska mato ir uz blogus darbus baudzia*" (God sees everything and punishes you for the bad deeds) (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 79).

At the age of just two years, children were able to recite brief prayers, and by the age of three had been already taught the 'Our Father' (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 73). At the age of nine, Catholic girls and boys made their first confession and received their First Communion. Children would go to services with their mother every Sunday as well as attend all the other church celebrations. See photographs in Appendix 13. They participated with all members of the village community in the *Gegužinės ir Birželinės pamaldos* (prayers for the months of May and June dedicated to Our Lady) and would recite *Rožinio spalio menėsi* (rosary in October) and again participate in the days of *Kryžiaus dienos* (Days of the Cross) and *Žolinės* (The Feast of the Assumption).

In Žemaitija, during the month of May after work most of the families of the village would meet in a *troba* (house) to pray and recite the rosary and the *Marijos Litanija* (Litany of Mary). Young people also participated, and sang and from time to time danced old folk dances. Again this is an instance of how religious and broader national cultural tradition and rites seamlessly mixed together in pre-WWII Lithuania. During *Gavėnia* (the period of Lent) people gathered in procession and, while praying and singing, would go to a hill called *Kalvariju* (Calvary) to recite the Stations of the Cross in front of a small chapel, each station recalling a stage on Jesus' route to crucifixion on Calvary.

In Dzūkijia, every day during the period of *Adventas* (Advent), families would observe *Švenčios Mergele Marijos Valandas* (a one hour prayer in honour of Our Lady). The father of the family would start the prayer and the family would then join in (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 18).

Religious education was considered to be among the most important school subjects and was taught throughout the entire period of a child's schooling. During primary school religious education occupied one hour a week, most often on Monday. A sign of its importance was that it was taught by a priest. In secondary school, religious education increased to two sessions per week, for a total of two hours. Some participants in the study remembered the social embarrassment of being questioned on those Mondays about their family's attendance or otherwise at the mass held on the previous day, a clear instance of both the authority accorded to the priest and of the ways in which individuals felt that their identity and standing in the community was a subject for general discussion. In the memories of Alfonsas:

> I was always asking to my parents to go to church on Sundays because I was scare of our priest … he used to call us by name and tell in front of the entire class if you have been to the church … the village was small and he knows everybody … it was very embarrassing and I remembered that on Sunday I was always the first to be ready to go so the priest could see me (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

During the period of Independence an essential role in the life of the child was played by education, which previously was denied by a century of Czarist oppression.

Hospitality and Charity: The Rhetoric of Idealisation

After centuries of cultural, political and economic domination by the interests and needs of more powerful neighbouring countries, the periods marked overt nationalist activity, and finally the rebirth of the nation from 1919 to 1939, were characterised by an impulse to celebrate, idealise and re-privilege a version of life which had been previously suppressed by a colonial or imperial power. In the associated narratives, the way of life of an idealized imagined community is developed and fore-grounded (Said, 1993, pp. 70-79).

In this nationalist narrative, which is shared by Lithuanian émigrés, nostalgia and memory are key contributors to the construction of this idealised and lost homeland. The studies of exiled and pre-Soviet Lithuanian scholars and the memories of Lithuanian émigrés (interviewed in Western Australia and Siberia), as well as the memories of a people who lived under Soviet rule for half a century, represent the pre-WWII Lithuanian rural population as one which was not only the repository of the nation's culture, religion and linguistic heritage but one that was marked by a community ethic of warm hospitality and charity. They write and speak of the rural community as one which formed an extended family and in which members helped each other and shared their material goods with those in need. Victoras maintained that beggars were never sent away empty handed: "A thick slice of home-made bread with a slice of *lašinys* (bacon) was given to the less fortunate without hesitation" (Victoras, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

If a traveller knocked at the door in need of shelter he was not refused even if sometimes, for lack of space in the dwelling, the stranger had to be accommodated in the barn (Ambrazevičius, 1994, p. 16). An uninvited guest who arrived while the family was having a meal would be invited to join in. In the case of invited guests, mainly relatives who lived some distance from the farm or close friends, the hostess would take particular care in the preparation of the meal. Hospitality was always generous and pressing food on visitors was considered the mark of a good host. Alfa remembered a tailor coming regularly to the farm.

> At our farm used to come a tailor with an assistant that was a young girl … I remembered my mother ordering some clothes for my father and the tailor stayed

> at the farmer and made them … they were paid but my mother gave them shelter and food over the period of time that they were working (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

Neighbours would often join the party that lasted for hours and people would sing traditional songs and dance barn dances (Rutter, 1926, p. 70). Those farmers in stronger economic circumstances reserved the best room of the house for the guests. This room would have a comfortable bed, a small table and a tablecloth. In contrast, the family would only use a table cloth on special occasions and to celebrate festivities (Imbrasienė, 1994, p. 12). Individual behaviour was based on cultural and religious tradition and belief systems. Alfonsas recollected:

> My mother was a very Catholic woman who always gave to the poor some bread … the *ubagai* [beggars] were mainly men from forty to fifty years of age with some sort of physical disability. They recited some prayers inside the house, and after my mother will [sic] give some sausages, or a piece of cheese or a slice of *lašynis* with bread (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Qualifying his initial statement, Alfonsas added:

> The beggars did not come to the farm very often, only once or twice a week and that they were both male and female, while the larger number of beggars gathered mainly around churches where people who came to worship would give them some coins (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

The work of the contemporary Lithuanian scholar Imbrasienė supports these recollections of a strong tradition of Lithuanian hospitality. She claims that this is also confirmed by literary sources dating back to earlier centuries. Like Gimbutas and Bindokienė, Imbrasienė invokes the authority of time to naturalise this view of pre-WWII Lithuanian culture (Imbrasienė, 1990, p. 74). According to Bindokienė, Lithuania strove to live in peace and she writes that: "*akis uz aki* [an eye for an eye] was not a practice ever embraced by the Lithuanians" (Bindokienė, 1989, p. 50). This claim, of course, might not survive historical scrutiny of the politics of mid-twentieth century Lithuania. The account of a participant in the study also undercuts the idealised view. Victoras in contrast to the other recalled that:

> Farmers always had fights with neighbours or other people in the village, often over something as trivial as a neighbour's cow trespassing on one's property or causing damage on other properties (Victoras, *Interview Transcript 3*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

It can be argued that Bindokienė is an ethnographer coming from an émigré family and thus her account of the Lithuanian people and customs is based on the memories of people who chose exile rather than live in a Sovietised Socialist Lithuania. It follows that these memories may well have a nostalgic quality and may express personal views based on a romantic vision of the lost homeland, not the realities encountered in daily living. Again, according to Rutter, Lithuanian hospitality was: "not of the cutlet for cutlet variety … but of the kind which means befriending a man you have never seen before and may never see again" (Rutter, 1926, p. 75).

Lithuanian Family: Customs, Rituals and Celebrations

> Thus, by means of *rites de passage* the woman as an integral part of family and community, joins the global process of creation – of humankind, nation and family (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 141).

The most important means of preserving their customs and values for the rural Lithuanian population was through the family. The role of the woman in the family therefore was fundamental. It was socially accepted that her duty was to accompany and support each member of the family throughout the whole of their life. Mothers, sisters, daughters and *bobutė* (the wiser women in the village) were considered to be the *essence* of the family and, indeed, of the wider community. They were responsible for the biological process of creation and for the social procreation and shaping of people, family, community and nation. Furthermore, in the inherited traditions of the rural Lithuanian value system, women were also given status as protectors and transmitters of national values and identity. This of course ehoes the role accorded to women within the wider frame of the European Nationalist Movements (Nash, 1993, pp. 44-46).

Childbirth and Christening

Childbirth was an important occasion for the whole extended family and village community and one which brought the community together, especially in small villages. After a child's birth only the female relatives and close friends would visit the mother and the newborn. This act of a visit would confer to the mother her status and role as a woman in the community in relation to age, marital status and sexual experience

(Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 69). Each visitor would bring a present, as a sign of respect and affirmation. Alfonsas maintained that:

> To go empty handed was believed to compromise the lifelong happiness of the infant and to reflect poorly on the values of the individual making the visit (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

It was customary in Žemaitija to erect a cross on the property where the child was born, to celebrate the birth and to invoke God's blessing on the child. In the other regions it was more common to plant a tree to celebrate the child's birth (Račiunaitė, 2002, pp. 58-60).

The first important religious event in the Lithuanian child's life was its Christening ceremony, during which the formal naming assured their entrance and acceptance into the family, and into the wider community of the Church, the village, region and nation. Customarily, it took place between one and two weeks after the birth, and was celebrated in accordance with the Roman Catholic Rite. If the children were weak or ill, their Christening was immediate. The urgency with which the rite was performed marks the force exerted by religious belief in the life of a people who accepted without question that without being baptised the child could not go to Heaven. The Christening was followed by a party at the house of the parents of the newborn with all members of the family, relatives and friends, up to an average of thirty to forty guests, being invited. Alfa recollected that: "For a special event such as a Christening, the wealthier parents would hire a woman to bake a *tortas* [cake] mainly with nuts" (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2006).

The choice of the godparents was crucial. The godparents became closely tied to the family and would take upon themselves the full responsibility for raising the child, in the case of the death of the parents (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 54). A person who was asked to be a godparent could not refuse. It was believed that refusal would mean that the child would be unhappy throughout its life (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 70). Having accepted the role of the godparent it was then incumbent upon that person to visit the children during religious events, as well as bringing them small presents.

From the introduction of Christianity, and especially for the rite of the Christening, the Lithuanians in most parts of the country began to name their children after a saint as a

sign of respect and religious devotion. The Catholic Church had never recognized the old pagan and historical names, but to ease the initial resistance from the Lithuanian people to the new practice, had accepted a compromise in which both Catholic Saints' names and Lithuanian epic rulers' names and old pagan names, were given to the newly born child. For instance, the girls could be given first a Catholic Saint name such as Anne or Mary, and second a name such as *Aldona* (gifted with all), *Dana* (the gift) or *Birute* after the name of the wife of the Grand Duke *Kestutis*. Boys similarly were given names such as John, George and Joseph, from the Catholic tradition, with the inclusion of a second name such as Vytautas, Algirdas or Gediminas after the names of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania. Here again, the influence of religion among the rural Lithuanian population, which started for each member of the community at the time of their birth and baptism, is visible in the imposition of Christian names necessary for acceptance into the communities of Church and nation.

Marriage and Weddings

The average age for a man to marry was between twenty-five and thirty years, whereas for girls it was between twenty and twenty-five. In the period of Lithuanian independence, a man was usually considered to be ready to marry only after he had finished the two years of compulsory military service required of all young men (between 21 and 23 years of age). In principle, both men and women had freedom of choice, but the consent of both sets of parents was essential if the family were to continue to live in peace and harmony with each other and the neighbourhood. Should parental consent be withheld, young couple intent upon marrying would normally have to leave and renounce all claims to inheritance (Rutter, 1926, p. 56). Girls were often pressured by their parents and relatives to choose men who were regarded by the community as being of strong moral character and economically secure, as safeguards for a happy marriage and the wellbeing of any future children.

Throughout the country, the wedding was an event, to which the whole village would be invited and which was celebrated in accordance with the Roman Catholic Rite (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 100). Generally, the wedding was celebrated on Sundays to allow relatives and friends to participate. The groom would wear his best suit, the bride a white long dress embellished with a small branch of the customary rue pinned on her veil or

dress. After the religious ceremony it was common practice for the parents to greet the newlyweds at the threshold of the bride's childhood home, offering bread, salt, a glass of wine and a small branch of rue. It was believed these gifts would ensure the couple's fertility and prosperity (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 108).

The wedding, particularly for the wealthier farmers, would usually be organised by the *piršly* (matchmaker) and *svočia* (matron of honour). These roles were typically undertaken by older relatives or by elderly members of the community. The *piršly* would take care of the official offer of marriage and the financial aspects. The *svočia* would be responsible for the organisation of the wedding party and the guests. Festivities would usually extend over most of a week, three days at the house of the bride and three days at the house of the bridegroom (Rutter, 1926, pp. 56-58). The round shaped *raguolis* was the traditional Lithuanian wedding cake which represented faithfulness and eternity. Family members would share it with the whole village assembled to celebrate the beginning of the young couple's new life and to officially mark the acceptance of this new family into the community (Račiunaitė, 2002, p. 109).

The marriage of a son who was to succeed his father and inherit the farm would bring great change in the life of the farm itself. Before the ceremony would take place, the father would transfer the ownership to his son and would arrange for him to pay certain shares to any brothers and sisters based on the value of the property. After the wedding the young man and his wife would become master and mistress of the farm, although they generally would not immediately start farming independently, especially in an extended family.

The parents would retire from ownership and ultimate responsibility for the farm. In most cases they would remain on the farm until their death and would continue to receive the support of food and shelter. They would reserve the right to keep a few farm animals of their own and would help with farm and family duties, particularly the socialisation of the young. Younger siblings predominantly remained on the farm until the girls married and the boys often would go out to the world to make a living (Rutter, 1926, p. 57). In more prosperous families or in family with wealthy relatives this may well have involved formal study at a secondary and, occasionally, tertiary level of the

second son. Preferred occupations involved working as teachers, government employees, and police, or in the armed services. Alfonsas maintained that:

> Unsurprisingly, in a deeply religious culture like that of the pre-WWII rural Lithuania, many boys also chose to become priests, especially the second son was encouraged to enter in the priesthood, as this profession was regarded as very highly. The family as well would have gained more respect among the community (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Death and Funerals

Lithuanians considered death to be a natural part of the life cycle and children participated with the adults in its rituals from a young age. When death was imminent, a priest was called to the house to hear the dying person's confession and to administer Holy Communion and the last rites. The death of a member of the community was announced by the tolling of the local church bells. Once a death had occurred it was the woman's responsibility to wash and dress the deceased in their best clothes. If the family were in need, friends and neighbours would help with the purchase of good clothes. It was a tradition in most regions to dress deceased adult women in dark clothes with a white or black head-covering. Deceased young girls would be dressed in white clothes, with a white head-covering on which would be pinned a small wreath of rue or myrtle, symbolising their status as an unmarried woman (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 189). The deceased person would have a set of rosary beads or a small image of Our Lady placed in their hands as a sign of Christian hope and piety (Răciunaitė, 2002, p. 125).

As there were no funeral parlours in the villages, the deceased was kept at home for three days in the best and largest room of the house to ensure time for relatives and friends to come and pay their respects. In particularly hot weather this period was abbreviated. The body would lie in an open coffin on a plank surrounded by flowers, and with two lit candles at each side of the coffin. On those days relatives and visitors would come to recite the rosary. It was customary to kiss the deceased goodbye, and children would have to kiss the feet of their dead parents as a sign of respect (Kudirka, 1991, p. 51). Aldona asserted that: "This practice was strictly observed and often caused distress among children who would hide or run from the room" (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2004). It was also a common practice to take photographs of the deceased with relatives and friends. Jonas maintained however that:

> This custom involved a certain cost not all families could afford to do this but was observed in most of the case, as it was seen as a sign of the bond between the deceased and the living (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

At the *šermenys* (wake), and in addition to the rosary, it was customary to praise and bid farewell to the deceased through the singing of the ancient *raudos* (lamentation songs), a practice which, because of the active rural oral tradition, continued to survive in the villages. These songs, performed by hired professional lamenters, were believed to ensure the safe arrival of the soul of the deceased in the kingdom of the dead and the continuity of the soul's presence among both the members of the immediate family and other relatives. Despite having been officially banned by Christian missionaries on their arrival, in Lithuania the 'raudos' were still preserved and performed in villages in the pre-WWII period (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 186-187).

Adolfas as a young boy did not like to attend funerals. "It was terrible, I was scared" (Adolfas, *Interview transcript 2*, Perth 2003). However he maintained that some of his older friends used to go to the church and to the cemetery to watch them.
Adolfas, out of curiosity, used to watch through the window of the room where the people would gather for the occasion.

> I remember a man that was a friend of my father … he used to work I don't remember where but he got sick … he was so thin and the colour of his face was some sort of green and grey. He was on a sort of table, before he was put in the coffin. Three or four women were around him mostly dressed in black. …. They were singing and crying with a loud voice together. They had a book in their hands an old black and thick book. They remained there for three days. When they finished singing the body was put in the coffin and taken to the church. These women were called *Kantička* … they used to do this as a job. They lived in the village. From the family they had food, drinks and some money (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

The family, and most of the community village, would accompany the coffin to the church where it would be re-opened and blessed by the priest outside the door before the commencement of the *gedulingos mišos* (funeral mass). From there, it would be resealed and taken to the cemetery for burial. See photographs in Appendix 13. If the deceased had lived not far from the church and the cemetery, it was a custom that the coffin would be carried by four male friends or relatives; otherwise it would be carried in a cart. The coffin would be covered with a black banner with a white cross in the centre. After the funeral, relatives and neighbours would all be invited to the house of the deceased for a

burial dinner. Here again, the funeral was an occasion that brought together relatives, friends and neighbours in a form of continuous socialising and sharing in each stage of life.

The period and rituals of the *gedulas* (mourning) were considered to be a sign of respect towards the deceased. A set period of mourning was observed according to the status and position of the person in the family. For parents, one year's formal mourning was observed. For a wife or a husband, it was one year or half a year, while for brothers and sisters one year, half a year, or three months. Dark colours were considered to be the colour for funeral mourning. Women would wear a black dress with a black or white scarf, while men and children would wear a black band around one arm as a sign of mourning and respect (Račiunaitė, 2002, pp. 134-136). Here again, the rituals and customs which defined and regulated the entire life of the rural Lithuanian people evolved in ways that linked strong religious practices and beliefs with older traditions.

Calendar Religious Celebrations

The significance and continuous maintenance of religious practices, beliefs and festivities as part of the everyday family and community life underline the emotional ties between cultural, national and religious identity and values. In these ways, the relevance and the authority of religion and family structures remained the core of the Lithuanian rural culture. Christian (specifically Roman Catholic) feasts and old Lithuanian festivities and celebrations such as *Kūčios* (Christmas Eve meal), *Verbo Sekmadieni* (Palm Sunday), *Velykos* (Easter), *Joninės* (Feast of Saint John the Baptist) were recorded and enacted, often fused together. The most significant days of the year in this predominantly Catholic and agricultural country were often related to farming and land husbandry, or to the seasons which were already associated with the beginning of life and death. Holidays were not uniform across the country, but the main celebrations retained the same core characteristics for all of the country.

Kūčios (Christmas Eve Meal)

Approximately 92% of the Lithuanian population is Christian, the rest being mostly of the Hebrew faith. Of the Christians, almost (approximately 93%) are Roman Catholics,

and this determines the character of their Christmas celebration (A.Senn, 1946, p.132). The celebration of *Kūčios* (the Christmas Eve meal) for rural Lithuanian people was, in terms of customs and traditions, more meaningful than Christmas Day itself. Moreover, in contrast with other religious celebrations of the Church, the Christmas Eve celebration retained elements and features of the pagan pre-Christian period. For instance, it was thought that on this night the souls of the deceased would return home. Nobody would go out in fear of meeting hostile spirits (Ambrazievičius, 1994, p. 12).

The day before Christmas, December 24, was not officially declared by the church as a day of obligation. However, it was a day of fast and abstinence and "no one eats anything before supper" (A. Senn, 1946, p.133). It was considered to be a family celebration and visitors would not be expected or invited. In the rural areas all labour would be limited to the essential, both around the house and in the stables. Preparation for *Kūčios* (Christmas Eve meal) would take all day from the early hours of the morning. The family would work together for such preparation. Firstly, the house would be thoroughly cleaned and then women would prepare the evening meal, as well as the Christmas and Boxing Day meals. The men of the family would generally not directly help in the preparation of the meal, except for "the last minute rush to the fish market or liquor store" (A. Senn, 1946, p.133). After having attended to their respective tasks, all members of the family would change into festive clothes. For that evening, the *Kučių Stalas* (dinner table) would be covered with a white tablecloth under which an armful of hay would be spread by the head of the family as a reminder that Jesus was born in a stable. Foreign to Lithuania was the Nativity Scene which played an important role in most other Catholic countries of the era such as in Italy and Austria (A. Senn, 1946, p.132). Places were set for the absent members of the family and marked by a fir twig or sprig of myrtle. For the recently deceased, both the twig and a burning candle were added.

The meal would commence late in the evening at the time the Evening Star first appeared in the sky. Once everyone was at the table, the father would make the sign of the cross and recite a short prayer to thank God for the food and for the harvest, and would ask for a blessing over the household for the coming year. The meal would start with the family sharing a *ploktelė* (a thin wafer), also known as *Dievo Pyragas* (God's bread), brought home after having been blessed earlier at the church. The meal would be

based on a selection of twelve different dishes, each representing a different month of the year. Each was served without meat, fat, eggs, or dairy products, being based instead on *silkės* (herrings), mushroom, and *kišelius* (cranberry pudding) with poppy seed milk. The specialty of the meal was the *kučios* dish, a mixture of cooked wheat, barley, rye and peas or beans (A. Senn, 1946, p.133). Homemade cider and water took the place of alcohol, as alcohol was not allowed at the meal (Imbrasienė, 1990, pp. 10-12).

After the meal it was customary in some regions to leave any remaining food on the table until the following morning, in the traditional belief that the souls of the ancestors and deceased members of the family would return home for supper that night while the family was asleep (Imbrasienė, 1990, pp. 12-13). The animals also took part in the celebrations of the night by eating the hay from the table and some leftovers of their masters' food brought to them the following morning. The hay was given only to the cows and sheep as it was believed that only the cows and sheep kept warm the Infant Jesus with their breath (Senn, 1946, p.133). This was again demonstrating the close relationship between the farmer and his animals. The horses were considered to be essential for the work in the fields and for the maintenance of the family (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 187).

After the meal, the young people would enjoy making predictions for the coming year. Unmarried girls would take as many fence pickets or logs into their arms as they could, and count them. Even numbers meant that they would be married soon; odd numbers meant that they would remain single for the following year (Kudirka, 1991, p. 39). The farmer would be concerned with his next year's crops, his beehives and his cattle. It was believed that if on Christmas Eve the snow flies the bees would thrive and produce a bountiful quantity of honey in the following summer (A. Senn, 1946, p.134). Later in the evening most of the people would attend the midnight *Berneliu Mišos* (Infant Mass).

The Christmas tree was the biggest treat for the children, although it was more common in the city than in the rural areas. Alfa, who was living in a farm, remembered that in rural areas:

> Teachers would make a school Christmas tree with the help of the children and parents … decorations were made of straw strung together on a thread and arranged into geometrical figure ... apples, fir or pinecones, nuts and paper

> cuttings were also used for decorations (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2004).

Although widely adopted in the city, this tradition of a decorated Christmas tree was not accepted by the majority of the rural Lithuanians in their own homes. Instead they strongly abided by the old Lithuanian Christmas traditions of the table with its hay and places set for the dead and absent family members. The tradition of decorating a Christmas tree had developed in Germany and England in the mid- nineteenth century and was introduced into Lithuania only at the beginning of the twentieth century during the period of independence (Imbrasienė, 1990, p. 19). This was the period in which the new government tried to establish contact, cultural and economic ties with other European countries.

Kalėdos (Christmas Day)

Kalėdos (Christmas Day) was celebrated over two days: Christmas Day, December 25, and Saint Stephen's Day, December 26. After attending the morning service people would return home and spend the rest of the day with the family only, as Christmas Day was another day reserved for family celebration. The meal was rich and mainly based on the consumption of meat, shared in happiness; and the weather was one of the most relevant elements of the day. It was believed that if Christmas Day was white, Easter would be green (Imbrasienė, 1990, p. 20) and spring was coming soon. St. Stephen's Day was also a day of rest, although, unlike on the previous day, time was spent visiting friends and receiving visitors.

Užgavėnės (Shrove Tuesday)

Užgavėnės (Shrove Tuesday) was a festival celebrated on the eve of Ash Wednesday, to mark the beginning of the period of Lent, and was marked by rituals of both food and theatre. It was a special day for eating pancakes made from potatoes or flour. Pancakes were the symbol of the sun, a premonition of the arrival of good weather and the renewal of life. It was also the last opportunity for eating rich foods, as a very strict Lenten fasting period had to be observed in preparation for Easter. People would work only until midday on Shrove Tuesday and then would go to visit friends, spend time together

and enjoy sledging down the slopes while others tried to pour water on them. It was believed that such merriment would cause the hens to lay more eggs, and would prevent the birds from damaging the fields of corn. Eggs and corn took on added importance as they would be the staples of the Lenten diet. The people denied themselves meats and other richer food sources in religious observance of the Lenten rituals (Kudirka, 1991, pp. 40-42).

The other central element of the *Užgavėnės* festivities, especially popular in Žemaitija, was the use of the traditional characters of *Kanapinis* (skinny character), the *Lašyninis* (fat character), and the *Morė* (old maid) who symbolised the difference between winter and spring and caricatures of the Jewish traders and gypsy figures. The *Morė* with a broom in one hand and a flail in the other, was brought around the village as if she were uncertain whether she should continue flailing last year's harvest or start the spring cleaning by sweeping the yard. It was a tradition on this day for people to wear masks of wood or bark, and costumes representing beggars, animals, the devil and death (Kudirka, 1991, p. 40).

Culminating these celebrations marked by jokes, superstitions and fortune telling related mainly to the coming harvest, was a procession of the three characters through the village. While Lithuanian historians and ethnographers such as Jouzas Kudirka and Danute Bindokienė have focused on the jocular nature of these celebrations, their descriptions ignore the cultural and racist undercurrents implicit in the use of caricatures of marginal Lithuanian groups like the Jewish traders and the gypsy. This became a core part of the Shrove Tuesday carnival in the Lithuania of the late nineteenth through to mid twentieth centuries. Bindokienė described the use of a Jew offering his goods in broken Lithuanian and a Gypsy looking for something to pilfer, adding that on Shrove Tuesday people made fun of all the social groups of the village community (Bindokienė, 1989, p. 154). Such statements in their unconscious acceptance of and participation in this custom are blind to and collude in the re-inscription of the political edicts and language laws which regulated and constrained the lives of these groups in a community. This authentic 'Lithuanian-ness' was being increasingly defined through group identity as membership of the predominantly Catholic, ethnic and rural Lithuanian community.

Didzioji Savaite (Holy Week)

The pre-war Lithuanian people considered Easter to be the most important and significant religious celebration of the year. This was because of the belief that through the sacrifice of Christ and his resurrection mankind would achieve salvation. In a country with such numbers of believers, the Easter Week observance and celebration could only be seen as a period firstly of penance and abstinence, and then celebration. The commemoration of Christ's death was followed by that of his resurrection. This week also had significance in terms of the agricultural cycle as after the full moon of Easter, the time was signalled to commence sowing and working in the fields. Yet again, we see core cultural festivities fusing religious and natural elements in and for this pre-WWII rural Lithuanian community.

Easter Week observances began with the *Verbo Sekmadieni* (Palm Sunday) rites. On this day, one week before Easter, it was customary for people to attend the Sunday Mass with a bunch of greenery to be blessed by the priest during the service. Alfa remembered that: "In place of the palm or olive tree branches traditionally favoured by Mediterranean Christians, the Lithuanians would bring juniper branches and bunches of pussy willows" (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Later, it became a tradition in some regions to also take a branch of an oak tree to be blessed as a symbol of strength, or a branch of birch tree as a symbol of respect. Again, the influence of nature on the life of the rural population and the intimate relation between trees and people is noticeable in the meshing of these Christian and rural Lithuanian traditions (Čepienė, 1999, pp. 61-70). The greenery once blessed, would be brought home, dried and subsequently burnt, as it was believed that the smoke would protect the house from evil and bring good luck (Kudirka, 1991, p. 42).

Palm Sunday would start very early in the morning, and it was customary that whoever rose first would strike those who were still sleeping with the prepared green branch and would sing *"Ne aš musu, verba musa, ne tau šopa, verbai šopa, už nedelios bus velikos* [I do not hit you, the green twig is hitting you, I do not hurt you, the twig is hurting you, and in a week it will be Easter]" (Imbransienė, 1999, p. 46). Aldona recollected that after church: "It was also a tradition for the participants to tap each other on the shoulder or

hands with the blessed twig, exchanging wishes of good health and youth for the coming year" (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2004). Palm Sunday marked the beginning of the Holy Week and the final preparations for Easter. Much of those days of the Holy Week would be spent in prayers and attendance at church services.

Svariuoju Ketvirtadieniu (Holy Thursday) was traditionally a day of spring cleaning, during which both the home and surrounding farmstead buildings were thoroughly cleaned and tidied. It was believed that on this day the water of the lakes, springs and rivers had some magic powers that helped to restore or maintain good health. It was a tradition for people who had a rash or similar skin disorder to seek healing by bathing in these waters (Čepienė, 1999, pp. 39-44). Again, the influence of natural elements in the life of the rural population was a determining factor from which the people could not detach themselves. Although the people were ready to observe strictly the teachings of the Catholic Church, the old pagan beliefs enjoyed a continuing and prominent position in their life.

Didysis Penktadienis (Good Friday) was reserved as a day in which noise was not allowed in the home. People would strictly observe *pasnikas* (fasting) and, in some families, adult people would not even drink water. The practice of fasting on Friday was followed by most Catholic Lithuanians. They would spend the day in prayers and church attendance. In the church, all pictures or statues of the saints would be covered with a dark cloth as a sign of sorrow. Alfa maintained that:

> In some regions it was also a widespread custom to recreate Christ's tomb and sometimes even to post guards at its side who would be dressed as ancient Roman soldiers. Churches also remained open to allow people to observe an all-night vigil … [Alfa remembered that with her mother] she used to go to the church and stay there for many hours praying … we spent two or three hours often, I used to go outside and play with girls of my age and then go back into the church … I liked to go there I could also meet with some of my friends (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2004).

Didysis Sestadienis (Holy Saturday) was set aside as a day for church. After the morning's church service, people would often take home some pieces of blessed coal. It was believed that these would help to keep misfortune and evil away. It was also believed that if blessed fire were taken home early in the day, the farm work would begin early in the season and would be successful. Blessed water would also be taken

home and used for sick people and animals and would never be thrown away. Children, helped by their parents, would prepare *margučių* (traditional dyed and decorated Lithuanian Easter eggs).They would go to the nearby forest or garden to gather leaves to use to form a pattern on the eggs or to give them different colours. Eggs were dyed commonly in hot water with peeled onions, oak or birch leaves, or hay, and different patterns were drawn on them. Such natural dyes would be used, as artificial dyes were available only in city stores.

The most popular colours were yellow, orange and green, obtained from different combinations of leaves. It was a custom to give *margučių* (Lithuanian decorated Easter eggs) as Easter presents, as it was believed that they brought good health, good luck and happiness to the people who received them. In Aukštaitija, the Easter table was decorated with a small fir or pine tree with nine or twelve small branches which it was believed had magical powers. Nests with eggs and birds made of multi-coloured paper were fixed on each of the branches. It was believed that eggs from that tree would bring good luck and good health. After having completed the formal preparation for Easter, most people would spend the rest of Holy Saturday in church, and remained together most of the night until Easter Sunday, praying and singing hymns as they kept vigil (Čepienė, 1999, pp. 70-73).

Vėlykos (Easter Sunday)

Velykos began early in the morning, with people attending the Resurrection Mass which included a procession that would encircle the church three times while young girls would throw petals of flowers or greenery in front of the procession. People would come to the church from far away and as early as four o'clock in the morning families would already be up and ready to start the journey to the local village church by cart or on foot. At the end of the Easter Sunday service everyone would return home in a hurry. It was believed that the family which arrived home first would have a successful year and complete all farm work on time (Kudirka, 1991, p. 35).

Easter Sunday was again a celebration within the family and, like Christmas, guests would not be expected or invited. After the long fasting period of Lent, rich food such as a head of pork, piglet and roast lamb, with game, cheese and butter would be part of the

meal, as well as the traditional eggs. Aldona recollected that: "Children enjoyed the hunt for the Easter eggs hidden by the *Veliku Senelė* [Easter granny] or the Easter bunny, which the children would never meet as they were told that it came before sunrise" (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

The day after Easter children would go to *kiaušinauti or velikauti* (to collect eggs) from godparents first, and then from other relatives and neighbours. All over Lithuania it was a custom to exchange eggs and then to hit the eggs together in a show of good luck and strength. In Dzūkija people used to say *einam mušyniu* (let us go to hit eggs) and test the eggs' hardness (Imbrasienė, 1990, p. 50). Children would win the eggs that they broke. Algirdas had memories of a popular Easter game:

> Another popular game was *margucius rikineja* [to roll eggs].Children would roll their eggs down a slope made out of bark. The aim being to hit another egg on its way or to the bottom of the slide, and any egg that was hit would be won by the child who had rolled the egg onto it (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

According to the contemporary ethnographer Prane Dundulienė, it was also an Easter custom for young unmarried men to walk through the village playing music and reciting poems. This custom was called *lalavimas.* The young men would stop at each house of the village and wish the family a good year, a rich harvest and good health. *Lalinka* (a special song) was addressed to unmarried girls. The song praised the girl for her beauty and her virtues, and wished her a happy marriage (Šaknys, 2005, pp.60-61). The young men received Easter eggs as a reward for their music and singing (Imbrasienė, 1990, p. 51).

Sekminės (Pentecost)

Sekminės was the celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit held seven weeks after Easter and an occasion to greet the arrival of spring. On this day, young girls in some villages in the western part of the country would go to the forest to gather flowers and greenery from which they made garlands. It was a tradition in those parts to adorn the house, fields, and garden with birch branches and cows were also decorated with a wreath of wildflowers as it was believed that this would make them more productive. Young birch trees would also be placed on both sides of the house entry, as it was

believed that this would bring peace to the home and the family (Čepienė, 1999, pp. 75-77). Greenery would again be taken to the church to be blessed and, once dried, would be kept all year as it was believed that smoke from the dried greenery and birch would keep the evil spirits away (Imbrasienė, 1990, pp. 56-57).

Joninės (Feast of Saint John the Baptist)

The celebration of *Joninės* coincided with the Midsummer Solstice. It would take place the night before June 24. This period marked the shortest night and the longest day of the year and was a very popular and joyous summer festival celebrated all over Lithuania. It was also known as *Rašos Šventė* (Holy Dew), the ancient name given to this particular night of the year. With the introduction of Christianity the Church disapproved of this pagan festival and accepted its celebrations only in relation to the Christian Feast of Saint John the Baptist whose feast day coincided with the Solstice. This night was dominated by the symbol of the sun in the form of a burning cartwheel fixed high on poles and adorned with wreathes of herbs and flowers that symbolized growth. Magical powers were attributed to Midsummer Day and the period immediately before *Joninės.* In some villages of Lithuania Minor it was a custom on the day before the celebration for the women to gather different types of herbs, as it was believed that after the night of June 24, these herbs would acquire healing properties (Imbransienė, 1990, p. 64). Young girls in colourful dress would go to the fields to collect different flowers and make garlands and keep them all year round.

By midnight it was a tradition for people to gather on the highest hill near the village and light a fire which would burn all night to shed light on the fields and keep away all the evil spirits and witches which could harm the animals and the crops. The lighting of the bonfire was a privilege given to the men who had been named Jonas, (John) as the Soltice celebration was also the celebration of their name day. Water was believed to have magic power as well. People would go swimming so that they would be healthy and beautiful and so that young people would be married soon (Gimbutas, 1963, p. 196). The fields were sprinkled with this magic water to ensure good crops and the animals were bathed in rivers or lakes to keep them healthy. Girls would float wreathes on rivers to learn of their likelihood of marriage. Sometimes a burning candle or a bowl filled with burning tar was fixed in the middle of the floating wreath. Saint John's night was a night

full of superstitions, with the bonfires being the centre-piece and symbolic essence of the whole celebration.

Žolinė (Feast of the Assumption)

Žolinė was observed on August 15. It coincided with the coming of autumn. It was a custom all over Lithuania for people to gather flowers and greenery from their gardens and fields and bring them to be blessed in the church. The custom came from a legend about Mary's burial, in which both Mary's body and soul were taken into heaven and only the flowers remained in her tomb. Bunches of cornflowers, daisies, red clover and poppies were brought to the church to be blessed, then dried and kept around the house and in the farmstead buildings. It was believed that they would protect the home from storms, lightning, fire and bad spirits. Flowers blessed during the Assumption mass could not be disposed of otherwise a great calamity would descend upon the family. On this day, families gathered together and hoped the coming year would be a productive one (Imbrasienė, 1990, pp. 72-74).

Vėlinės (All Souls' Day)

Vėlinės was celebrated on November 2, in honour of the deceased members of the family. Most rural Lithuanians believed that after death the *velė* (soul of the deceased), would continue to remain among the living. Thus, *Vėlinės* was seen as an occasion to reinforce this bond (Gimbutas, 1963, pp. 189-191).The *velės*, never left the earth, the village and the community. They went to live on 'a sandy hill' in the neighbourhood of the village where Dievas (God) resided. On the night of November 1, the souls of the deceased would go to the church to pray and then would come back home. To make the return to their homes easy, the dogs would be locked away and the doors and windows would be left unlocked (Imbrasienė, 1990, p. 76). People would go to the church and attend commemorative services and would light candles. It was believed that the soul not only would expect prayers but would demand them (Bindokienė, 1989, pp. 202-204).

At the cemetery, graves would be decorated with candles and it was customary in almost all Lithuanian regions to have a procession led by a priest through the cemetery on the night before *Vėlinės.* It would stop first at the grave of the most recently deceased

person. A candle would be left to burn on each grave throughout the night and neglected graves would also be visited and decorated with flowers and candles. Lithuanians would spend this day at the church or at the cemetery in prayer and would not hold or attend joyful functions. It was believed that to do so would cause suffering to the soul of the deceased. Furthermore, trees grown in old Lithuanian cemeteries would never be touched by a pruner's hand, as people believed that to cut a cemetery tree would hurt the deceased (Čepienė, 1999, p. 60).

Superstitions

Customs, traditions, values and beliefs are all core markers of a national identity. However a nation's traits can also be found in the way in which people express their feelings of anger, happiness and in the way they curse.

In most of the interviews I noticed how the respondents who took part to this study used colourful expressions to add more meaning to their interviews. A sense of their expressions is relevant since it offers an insight and better understanding of the Lithuanian people and their culture. Most of my interviewees went through a great deal of detail in explaining when and how to use such expressions, words and curses in order for me to gain their trust and confidence. I noted that among the Lithuanian émigrés numerous superstitions still survive; they are considered by scholars to be reminiscent of ancient paganism fused with Christian elements. Although I share their views, I argue that superstitions survived in most countries; however, Lithuanians' superstitions are particularly colourful. Typical examples were provided by Balys (an 88-year-old male participant in the study) translated from Lithuanian:

- Don't whistle inside the house, whistling will call the devil;
- Don't kill a spider it will bring bad luck;
- *Boba* (an annoying person) get out of the cart, for the horse it is a relief;
- Don't spit on fire or water it brings bad luck;
- You must not walk over a baby who is crawling or sitting or lying on the ground as the baby will stop growing;
- Don't put a loaf of bread upside down as it is a sign of lack of respect (Balys, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003),

Balys explained further one of the most powerful curses: “Let the neighbour’s cow die” (Balys, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003). In a rural society wishing the death of a farm animal which supported the family would have caused devastating consequences.

Leisure Time

The Lithuanians spent most of their days and seasons working in the fields or on the farm; time for leisure was limited. Whatever leisure time did exist was valued for its power to develop a strong sense of individual and community knowledge and respect for inherited national traditions and religious institutions and rituals.

Men would read newspapers or books, and would spend time playing cards with neighbours who lived in nearby farmsteads. Algirdas recounted during an interview that: “People would also gather family and friends to listen to the radio which, while a novelty initially, was slowly becoming more affordable for everyone during the period of independence”(Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2004). Given the significant national and international events and tensions which marked the decades of the 1930s and 1940s, the collective sharing of the radio was an important way of maintaining awareness of what was happening in the country, while consolidating community ties and allegiances. It was the first means of mass communication and it was appreciated by the rural population which lived far from the big cities. Hunting was the other major activity which would bring together two or three men to hunt hares in the forest.

Women would have fewer opportunities for leisure time as previously stated typically the Lithuanian rural families were large. However, they would spend time with their children and doing needle works. Aldona recalled also that:

> During winter my father invited friends and neighbours to sauna which was another social event. This would take place once or twice a month and after the sauna everyone would stop at our place to have a drink and spend some time together (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2004).

The cultural life of the pre-WWII rural Lithuanians evolved mainly around the family, primary schools and church. The district teacher would organise national commemorative days, mother’s day plays, folk dances and singing, and from time to time a dancing night with polka, waltzes and folk dances. The local *klebonas* (parish

priest), together with the organist of the church, would organise a children's church choir in which children aged from fifteen to seventeen years of age participated. They would practise two or three times a week and would then sing during Sunday Mass and special religious events. According to Alfonsas:

> For children it was a happy time as it would be spent with friends living perhaps on distant farms, but brought together by the socially endorsed role of the priest and rituals of religious worship (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

On Sundays and festive days the work was reduced to the bare essentials, as the whole family put on their best clothes to attend religious services. They would travel by cart for long journeys, but more often simply on foot when the distance was not more than seven or eight kilometres. After the service, especially when the weather allowed, the family would visit friends in the village or spend time outside the church, speaking with relatives or friends who lived on distant farms. For the Lithuanians, church attendance was an important means of maintaining contact and ties with the wider community and sharing in its happenings. As the rural population was necessarily engaged for most of the time in working on the farm, the best way of maintaining these contacts was through opportunities presented and legitimised by religious celebration or seasonal work, both of which brought people together.

Market days were another key occasion on which the community could come together. For the whole of the farmer's family these market days, usually each week on a Thursday, were a major event. The farmer and his wife, if the wife did not have small children at the time, would go together by cart to sell surplus farm products, such as eggs, cheese, butter and *grietinė* (sour cream), honey, fruit, berries, vegetables and bread. Alfa remembered her mother accompanied her husband to the market, sometimes in part:

> To avoid the possibility of his stopping with friends at the *smuklė* [inn], spending the money, from the selling of the farm products, and returning home with just a string of *barankos* [biscuits] for the children who generally remained at home (Alfa, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2004).

These *smuklė* were local inns often owned by Jewish Lithuanians, located along the main roads, where food and drink were served. Their location along the travel routes increased the chance of the farmer being swayed to stop off on his way home. Such measures make evident the difficult economic conditions under which most of these

families lived. This represents the ways in which one cultural group's naturalised problematic behaviour is conditioned by assigning the responsibility to another cultural group, the Jewish small business operators.

As noted in Chapter 3, Jews, according to the Czarist Regulations for Jews of 1804 and 1882, were forced to live in towns and cities and to work on mercantile activities to strengthen the economy of the urban centres. Consequently, they were banned from living in rural areas and from agricultural practice (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 228). Their mercantile activities were also on display at the markets, where Lithuanian Jewish artisans and small shopkeepers operated. Rutter describes a typical market day in the city of Kaunas in 1926 in these terms:

> Near the [Jewish] quarter is a large square where the main market is held twice a week. All around the square are the shops of the Jews, who sell chiefly hardware and cheap clothing; fronting the shops are the boots of the country people who bring in their fruit and eggs and vegetables, while the centre of the square forms a convenient park for the long Lithuanian carts. The Kaunas market is the meeting-place of Jews and Gentiles … trade brings them together (Rutter, 1926, p. 11).

Rutter's account foregrounds the ways in which the two communities lived and worked separately. The ethnic Lithuanians primarily engaged in agricultural activities in a rural farm setting, while the Jewish Lithuanian population was based more in artisan and mercantile work in villages and towns. This observation hints at the tensions which would increasingly erupt between ethnic and Jewish Lithuanians over the next two decades. The Government policy in the newly independent country sought to shift the balance between urban and rural, ethnic and Jewish work and professions in the new nation-state.

According to Algirdas the rural population also enjoyed dancing and during the summer time it was very popular to hold *Gegužinės* (open air dancing) for the young people.

> A suitable place would be chosen in an open field, which was surrounded by barbed wire decorated with coloured strings or ribbons bearing the red, green, and yellow colours of the Lithuanian flag while a pole with the national flag, would also be positioned so as to be clearly visible from a distance (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2004).

Algirdas continued by saying that often:

> In the evening, sporting competitions such as short distance running races or wrestling matches would take place and the winner would receive a prize … it was very popular event … many young people remained up until late (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2004).

During the Czarist period, *Gegužinės* had not been allowed as it was recognized by the authorities that nationalist activists could and doubtless would pass information and propagandistic materials against the Czarist authorities and their rule among the people during these supposedly non-political celebrations (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 176).

Conclusion

This chapter is a detailed description of a selected number of customs and traditions, values and beliefs which the researcher has identified through in-depth study of respected scholarly Lithuanian sources constituting the *essence* of pre-WWII rural Lithuanian culture. Such data have been used to lay the foundation for the multi column table, column 1. See in Appendix 3. A profile in summary form of the pre-war customs and traditions, values and beliefs is also presented in this table.

The next chapter presents a detailed descriptive account of the core features of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture of the present-day sample in Perth, Western Australia.

CHAPTER 7

LITHUANIANS IN PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA: THE DISSOLUTION OF A COMMUNITY

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> If the language, the customs and traditions disappear and religion is ignored completely … then you have no hope of continuing to be a Lithuanian (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

This chapter describes the significance of the cultural identity to the Lithuanians resettled in Western Australia at the end of WWII as part of the United Nations sponsored International Refugee Organization (IRO) programme started in 1947. It provides also a brief history of Lithuanian immigration to Australia, in the previous years. The Lithuanian presence in Australia, as well as that of other ethnic groups over the last half of the twentieth century, has contributed the changing the face of Australian society from being a predominantly Anglo-Saxon mono-cultural outpost of the British Empire to become a more complex multicultural society notably tolerant of cultural difference. Although limited in number, the Lithuanian community in Australia gave to the post-WWII Australian economy and culture a substantial and essential contribution in initiating the path for a prosperous economy and cultural development.

The focus of this chapter is on the post-WWII experience as it relates to those key pre-WWII rural traditions, values and beliefs which I have identified in Chapter 6 as the key characteristics of Lithuanian identity. My goal is to present only those traditions, customs, values and beliefs of which immigrant Lithuanians have spoken during the interviews. Interviews, recollections or comments relating to earlier periods are only included in the narratives when they clarify or extend the core material of this chapter. To this end, I have recorded the memories and views of four key periods: the years before they left Lithuania, the period of diaspora and dislocation, the early years after their re-settlement in Western Australia and, finally, the present situation.

In the first period I examined the lives of the Lithuanians before they fled their homeland. This narrative, however, is used only to support the already extant material mentioned above.

In the second period I explored the lives of the Lithuanians as a people of diaspora as manifest through their dislocating experiences in the foreign lands to which they moved in German and Austrian zones from as early as 1940, fleeing the first Soviet occupation, and then as forced labour or conscripts shifted by the Nazis to their cities, or as Lithuanians fleeing the second Soviet occupation.

In the third period I described the *émigrés* early years after their arrival in Western Australia as Displaced Persons (often referred to simply as 'DPs').

Finally, in the fourth period I considered the *émigrés* more recent experiences as an aging group, whose ties with an absent homeland have been affected by memory, time, distance, the need to adapt to a new environment.

Clearly, it would not have been possible for the émigrés in their new land to recreate the totality of their previous linguistic experience, or their formal Lithuanian village and rural life, or to persist unchanged with their farming, education and religious practices as some 'transplanted' form of pre-war Lithuania. However, many did find that they were able to reproduce elements of these in their new environment, particularly at a more local and personal level. Thus, whether in an attempt to preserve their language, family traditions, national and religious celebrations or to form community groups and activities that allowed traditional songs, dances and stories to survive, some continuity with appropriate modification occurred.

This chapter describes in what ways and to what extent this modification has and is still occurring in the lives of the Lithuanian immigrants, acknowledging that some traditions, values, beliefs and customs have been maintained, some are on the verge of being lost and some have inevitably been lost. Furthermore, I have also endeavoured to outline the Australian Migration Policy of 1947 as a response to the IRO programme. For an understanding of that policy, I have examined the work of the Australian analysts Egon Kunz (1988) and have obtained relevant statistical data from the Western Australian National Archives and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1946-1953). For the historical review of the pre-war Lithuanian migration I have examined the works of Birškys, Putninš and Salasoo (1986) and Linas Saldukas (2002). (

Earlier Lithuanian Migration to Australia.

From 1830 to1915, records about the Lithuanians who left their country in search of freedom and fortune outside the borders of the Lithuanian nation-state and to settle in Australia are scarce and mostly based on incidental sources, newspapers published in Lithuania and the United States, and data obtained by oral history. This data, although fragmented, reveals that a certain numbers of Lithuanians settled in Australia some time before the period of the mass-wave migration of the post-WWII period. None of those earlier émigrés, however, have been included in the interviewed sample of the present research.

Most of the Lithuanians who participated in the uprising of 1830-1831 against the Czarist regime were forced to flee the country. They were interned in East Prussia, and later exiled to America or deported to England and Scotland (Eidintas, 2003, p. 21). From there in 1832 they were shipped to New South Wales in Australia. Much later, in 1888, the American newspaper 'Lithuanian Voice', wrote that, of the Lithuanians who had fled to the United States in the 1830s, a few had later moved to Australia and to New Zealand. However, it is only in 1950 in the Melbourne archives, that evidence of the first Lithuanian immigrant was discovered. In 1836 Antanas Lagogenis had obtained the British citizenship and became the first Lithuanian to be naturalized in Australia. The Australian National Archive's records have shown that a group of Lithuanians was living in poor conditions in New South Wales. They became the object of a plea to the Australian Government by the Polish explorer Strzelecki (second cousin of the Lithuanian Duke Radziwill) in the hope of their repatriation. However, no records have been found which describes these early Lithuanians *arrivees*. It is known, however, that in 1841 the Lithuanian-born Varnas family, (father, mother, son and two daughters) came on the ship *Skjold* among a group of 275 settlers from Prussia and settled in Lobental in South Australia. Once again the records on this family ended here (Birškys, 1986, p. 9).

This pattern of scarce or incomplete records appears to be quite common through those years before the First World War (1914-1918). Lithuanians are mentioned for only a brief period of time, after which they virtually disappeared into the main stream population, often taking anglicized names. For most, encounters with other former

compatriots was often purely by accident. In 1914, Jonas Viedrinaitis, an Australian correspondent based in Sydney for the United States newspaper 'Lithuania', gave an account of one such encounter. He recalled that when visiting the Sydney markets to buy seeding potatoes, the stall-holder, hearing his accent, asked if he was Russian. When he discovered that Viedrinaitis was Lithuanian he said that his name was Jonas Mikevičius and that he was a Lithuanian as well. He had come from England in 1887 with his wife and sons and two other men. These two others soon returned to England, while he and his family decided to remain in Australia. Mikevičius added that Viedrinaitis was the first Lithuanian he had met in twenty-three years of living in Australia. At the time of their encounter, Mikevičius was the oldest known Lithuanian in Australia (Birškys, 1986, pp.10-11).

There are a few other accounts of Lithuanian presence in Australia: the brothers Petras and Vincas Karaitis who arrived in Australia in 1911 from Scotland and settled in Sydney; Daukantas, a man who settled in 1913 in Newcastle after acquiring some land; Paulis in Brisbane; and in Cairns where it was discovered the presence of an old Lithuanian men of 83 years of age who, after having sold his poultry farm, was making baskets for his living (Birškys, 1986, pp.10-11).

The very limited migration from Lithuania to Australia in those earlier years can be attributed to the circumstances of the time which have inhibited the settlement of Lithuanians in Australia. For example, Australia's early aversion to group settlement schemes was a significant factor which restricted Lithuanian immigrants settling in Australia before WWII. Colonial and post-federation state and federal governments of the day were reluctant to allow settlement of migrants of non Anglo-Saxon backgrounds. Australia retained aspirations of ethnic homogeneity, for fear of provoking social unrest and retarding immigrant assimilation.

The time and expense involved in travelling to Australia also made the country a less practical destination for Lithuanian migrants, particularly for sojourners. Sojourner migrants, or 'birds of passage' as they are sometimes called, were usually male migrants who engaged in temporary work campaigns abroad. Sojourners were driven to earn quick money then return 'home' with cash in hand to improve their living conditions and their families' livelihoods. Such seasonal migration allowed people not only to make

money, but also showed them how to migrate to foreign countries, should conditions in their homelands ever become untenable politically or economically. As Algirdas recounted:

> My parents migrated to America around 1905-1910, with other young men which were keen to leave the country to avoid the military service in the Russian Army which lasted 25 years. My father bribed some officials and he was declared unfitted for the military service. Reports were coming from America that life there was better and full of opportunities so the relatives encouraged my father to go there. It was rather simple, they sent a pre-paid passage by ship it was called ship card. Corruption was ripe everywhere at that time, so it was not difficult to bribe border guards and usually in a small group of four or seven people at night time cross the border and make the way to the port and to embark on the ship, while on the other side in America relatives were waiting (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2006).

However, the back and forth movement characteristic of sojourner migration would have been difficult for early Lithuanian migrants to Australia. The sea voyage to Australia was long, arduous and more expensive than a journey into neighbouring Europe, or across the Atlantic Ocean to North America. Economic considerations compounded the geographic and transport problems that limited early Lithuanian migration to Australia. Colonial and post-federation Australia did not offer migrant sojourners as wide a variety of employment as did the European or North American labour markets of the day. At the time of its federation in 1901, Australia was still a country very much dependent on primary resources for its wealth. While labour was required for agricultural production and mining, early Lithuanian migrants in Australia did not find the same range of work opportunities as were available in Europe and North America. A further factor impeding Lithuanian sojourner migration was the introduction of legislation which prohibited foreign contract labour. The federal Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, one of the most important pieces of legislation introduced in the newly federated Australia nation, not only hindered non Europeans from entering Australia, but prevented the landing in Australia of persons who had obtained a work contract from a labour agent... As a result the labour agent (who was often also the agents for the shipping lines), so influential figure in the early migration pattern to North America, was not as important in the early migration to Australia (Eidintas, 2003, p. 55).

Although the number of Lithuanians who migrated to Australia prior to WWII remained relatively small, their records are more easily traced than those of some other early

settlers, mainly because some of the Lithuanians were still alive at the time of the new post-war migration and could pass their stories on to the newly arrived. Moreover, Australia was now a nation that had begun some years earlier to collect census data. This helped in recovering information about Lithuanians then living in Australia. According to the 1933 Australian Census, which shows the birth place of Australian residents, 234 people gave their birthplace as Lithuania. Of these, approximately 70-75% had come to Australia during the Czarist period, while only 150 people had migrated from Lithuania after independence in search for a 'better life' and for a spirit of adventure.

In 1933 the gender composition of the 234 Lithuanians immigrants included 154 males and 80 females. This imbalance was even more extreme among the seventy Lithuanians still alive at the time and who had come to Australia before 1918, the ratio in that group being three males to one female (Birškys, Putnins, Salasoo, 1986, pp.13-14).

The 1933 census data also revealed a strong pattern of family life emerging, across the nation with a majority of the adult population being married people and with children, particularly in New South Wales where approximately 60% of the Lithuanians at the time were settled. Many Lithuanians living in Australia became naturalized even though this meant taking British nationality, not Australian. In 1933, of the 234 Lithuanian-born immigrants, 115 had been naturalized. The other 119 were not yet naturalized as they were among the more recent arrivals: sixty-four had arrived since 1928; and thirty-two from 1923 to 1928. Of those Lithuanians who had been living in Australia for more than ten years, only twenty-three had not been naturalized by 1933 (Birškys, Putnins, Salasoo, 1986, pp.13-14).

On October 27, 1929, Lithuanians Jasiumas and Dapkus established in Sydney the Australian Lithuanian Society '*Draugija*' which by 1933 was fully operational. All who considered themselves Lithuanians and who wanted to maintain closer relationships amongst each other and to continue to cultivate national spirit and Lithuanian culture joined this newly created society (Saldukas, 2000, p.138). Social activities were held regularly by the society. A choir was organized to perform regular concerts intended to keep alive the ancient *dainos* and Lithuanian folk songs, and a Lithuanian dancing group performed traditional folk dances. Later, a library was also established featuring books

and periodicals coming directly from Lithuania and the Lithuanian community in the United States.

The society was well organized and active, and brought together the Lithuanians who had migrated to Australia and settled in New South Wales. Lithuanians established themselves with their family in the new country, although the growing pressure of war time suspended the activity of the '*Draugija*', Lithuanians continued to maintain contact, supported each other, and strove to sustain a loyalty towards their homeland, its language and culture.

Voluntary Emigration and Refugee Status: Definitions

In contrast to the voluntary emigration which occurs when economic hardship induces immigrants to move in pursuit of the dream of a 'better life' for themselves and for their family, refugee emigration is created by political and war events. While the socio-economic composition of voluntary immigrants is relatively homogeneous, refugees often leave their homelands as members of diverse social strata, often very different in character, background, politics and religious faith. Moreover, the distinctive political character within each group frequently tends to unite people within sub-groups of similar educational, social or religious background. Few refugee populations thus, are fully homogeneous.

Initially, refugees flee to a country which they perceive to be the first and most-readily-available safe refuge, and not necessarily where they would most prefer to live on a continuing basis. After a relatively short period this country, according to Egon F. Kunz, often becomes for them only "a geographical, spiritual and temporal midway to nowhere" (Kunz, 1988, p. 23). From there for circumstances which affect the refugee's daily life, (as such restriction of personal freedom, on their employment and often by fear of political unrest and retaliation), forces them to move again and to accept offers of permanent settlement elsewhere. This characteristic pattern of refugee movement is in contrast with the pattern typical of voluntary migration which usually has its origins in a deliberate and planned search for a better economic outcome. Refugees, who move again, do so to find themselves a place away from their country of initial asylum in which they have become no longer wanted or are no longer able to live.

Thus, to understand the voluntary immigration pattern, it is necessary to recognise the economic circumstances of the immigrants of the country of origin and also the economic needs of the country of admission. To understand refugee immigrations, one needs to comprehend the political and military events of the period in question; to identify the relevant facts and creating forces, to assess the consequences of these, and then to examine the selective effects of the situation in the country of asylum and the admission criteria applied (Kunz, 1988, pp. 23-24).

In the case of the refugees or Displaced Person of WWII and for the Lithuanians in particular, re-settlements schemes, forced transfers, detention, expulsions and discriminatory policies affected the refugees already shaped by the application of Australia's selection criteria applied to groups admitted into the country.

The Australian IRO Mass Scheme (Displaced Person Scheme)

> We Australians are a young a virile people and our national heart beats strongly, but the body, of which that heart is a motivating force, is a huge land mass, an island continent of some three million square miles with 12,000 miles of coastline. Before a body of such vast dimensions can be operated at full efficiency, its heart must beat strongly and be fed by the extra life-blood which only new citizens can supply (National Archives of Australia (NAA), 1946).

The First Australian Minister for Immigration Arthur Calwell's dream of increasing the population of the nation, better able to defend its coastline and prosper economically, eventually came to fruition. In the five decades following WWII, Australia's population increased from 7.5 million in 1947 to 20,387,900 in 2004 (Commonwealth Bureau of Statistic Census of Australia, 2005). This increase was due in large part to immigration, with over four million immigrants settling in Australia since 1945.

There were three main reasons why Australian politicians and bureaucrats accepted large numbers of immigrants in the post-WWII period: to defend the country from any future foreign aggression or communist expansion; to provide labour to spur economic growth; and, finally, to uphold the new racial, social and political integrity of Australia. In addition, there was also the humanitarian element in the acceptance of thousands of war

refugees who could not or would not want to return to their homes in countries occupied by the Soviet Union.

Initially, defence matters outweighed all other considerations in the formulation of the immigration policy. Australia had been faced with the direct threat of a possible Japanese invasion during WWII while Australian soldiers were fighting in Europe. Throughout the course of war, Japanese planes and submarines made numerous reconnaissance trips to Australian cities and launched air raids on Darwin in February 1942. Japanese aggression subsided after the Battle of the Midway forced the tide of war in the Pacific to turn against the Japanese.

Arthur Calwell warned, in a landmark speech to the house of Representatives in August 1945 that Australia must either "populate or perish", he made it clear that defence was to be an important motivation in post-war immigration planning. In his second ministerial statement Calwell stated:

> The call to all Australians is to realize that without adequate numbers this wide brown land may not be held in another clash of arms, and to give their maximum assistance to every effort to expand its economy and assimilate more and more people who will come from overseas to link their fate with our destiny (Kunz, 1988, p. 13).

In order to achieve and maintain a larger population, better prepared to fend off any further aggressors, Calwell proposed a 2% per annum population growth rate. He suggested that half of the increase should come from births while the reminder of the quota was to be met by the immigration of 70,000 people each year. Calwell supported the Government's immigration policy based on the principle that migrants from the United Kingdom should be given every encouragement and assistance (Kunz, 1988, p. 7). Aside from questions of defence, economic factors also influenced the Australian Government to endorse large-scale immigration to Australia in the post-WWII period. A fall in the Australian birth rate during the years of the Great Depression translated into a labour shortage that plagued industry in the immediate years after the war.

When immigration planning began in 1945 no consideration was initially given to war refugees as potential immigrants. The lack of information about the situation in Europe misled the Australians into identifying European refugees with the extermination camp

survivors, who they believed to be unfit, mentally unstable and unsuitable for Australia's economic and social development. Consequently, Australia avoided Germany and its refugee camps as a possible source of immigrants. When Australia became a signatory to the constitution of the IRO on May 13, 1947, the Australian Prime Minister J.B. Chifley made clear that Australian involvement with the IRO in dealing with the thousands of refugees and displaced persons, "[would be] … primarily to return them to their homes" (Kunz, 1988, p. 18). By November 1945 there were strong doubts that there would be a sufficient number of British applicants (as England also needed to be re-built) or adequate transport to bring them to Australia.

On June 27, 1947, Arthur Calwell was informed by the British Government that Displaced Persons were available for re-settlement in Australia, and that their shipping would be provided by the IRO. It was agreed that Australia would take an initial quota of 4,000 Displaced Persons in the remaining months of 1947, which would be followed by 12,000 Displaced Persons per year in the following years. This programme, however, did not begin effectively until 1948. Due to the difficult shipping situation, priority was given to the repatriation of Australian servicemen. By that time Calwell, was convinced that a marked recruitment of British immigrants was impossible to achieve, therefore favoured an increase of the non-British element in the intake of immigrants brought to Australia. He believed in its beneficial effects for the country. Indeed, during 1948 the arrival of Displaced Persons fell under the desire target. In following years more than 70,000 Displaced Persons were recruited and transported to Australia (Kunz, 1988. pp. 17-19).

Lithuanians were part of that exodus of war-ravaged survivors. They were seen as necessary for the building of a successful post-war economy and a secure 'Europeanised' nation in a part of the world where Asian people and interests continued to be viewed with alarm and suspicion.

The first IRO vessel carrying Displaced Persons to Australia under the 'Mass Scheme' was the *General Heintzelman* which arrived in Fremantle, Western Australia on November 28, 1947 with 840 passengers, of which 440 were Lithuanians. Their destination was not Fremantle but the Commonwealth-operated Bonegilla Camp in Victoria (Kunz, 1988, pp. 39-42). The numbers which comprised the Lithuanian

diaspora in Australia from 1947 to 1953 were only 9,906 (Kunz, 1988, p. 43). Those registered in the 1953 Australian Census as having been born in Lithuania and then resident in Western Australia numbered only 583. Of these 360 were males and 223 females, including 130 children. Of these, sixty-three were boys and sixty-seven girls (Commonwealth Bureau of Statistic Census of Australia 1954). Among Lithuanian arrivals, 435 were Roman Catholics, seventy-nine Lutherans and the remaining belonged to minor religious denominations (Commonwealth Bureau of Statistic Census of Australia 1954).

In the first three intakes of Lithuanian arrivals from February 12 to March 19, 1949 priority was given to single men and women as per job requirements. It was only from May 21, 1949 to March 5, 1950 that families were admitted to Australia (Birškys, 1986, p. 19). The very smallness of this group presented its own challenge to the ability to find their place in a new environment, while at the same time preserving what they could of their traditions and the life values of their former homeland.

The Built Environment: Communities and Changes

The sense of cultural estrangement and alienation in a new country, (See maps in Appendix 11) of and for which the Lithuanians had had no real knowledge or preparation, is described in the words of Adolfas who remembered his transfer to the reception centre at the Perth suburb of Graylands after his arrival at Western Australia's port city of Fremantle in 1949: "When we arrived in Fremantle they put us on buses and we travelled through Fremantle. I was so surprised … very funny houses, the chimneys were very high and were like pots … so poor houses, so poor streets" (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

The Graylands centre was fitted out as a reception facility for Displaced Persons and designed as a temporary accommodation for both single people and married couples with children. Families were accommodated in individual barracks which had to be shared with other families, while single people lived in separate primitive quarters as Adolfas remembered:

> We were living in barracks, with no doors or windows … with flies, they were very dirty, smelling … we started to clean them immediately … I

> thought when I saw them … my God where I am … I wanted to return immediately back to Europe and I thought … if the sea could open I would walk back to Europe … I was really upset … I did not expect a place like this … in Germany the camp was very good and clean … We became all sick with skin and eyes infection … the place was terrible (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

These comments reflected the initial negative impact of Australia, a sentiment echoed by all the other participants to the study throughout the interviews.

As new arrivals in an English speaking nation, the Lithuanians had to negotiate the difficulty of operating on a daily basis in a foreign language, a situation which was eased by their prior experience of living in the refugees' camps where different languages were in use. According to Birutė the language barrier in Western Australia existed only among elderly members of the family, mainly the grandparents.

> I didn't find the knowledge of English a big problem as we studied it already in Germany when we were in the camp. People older than me studied English in the high school back home. My father and my mother spoke English, only my grandmother couldn't but we translated for her. We spoke with an accent, of course but we could understand everything quite well (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Despite this assurance, the reception camps in Western Australia used German as the language of major communication during orientation and re-settlement periods. Adolfas maintained that:

> The Australian administration of the camp had decided to adopt the German language which most of the Displaced Persons were familiar with after living for at least five years in Germany. During this period Lithuanians attended orientation lectures and survival level teaching in the English language. The camp instructions were given in German language through a Displaced Person selected among the arrivals (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Lithuanians who by and large had always placed importance on the maintenance of their cultural heritage through language, folklore and community recreational activities, once in Graylands started to form a community as most of them knew each other from their time in Germany, or they met on the voyage from Europe to Australia. For a short period in 1949 a dancing folk group was organised. Aldona remembered the first time that the Lithuanians danced in Western Australia soon after their arrival: "The dancing group was only formed by two couples and it was invited to perform Lithuanian folk dances to

St. Joachim School in Victoria Park … they wore the Lithuanian national costume" (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

When the number of Displaced Persons started to increase, other reception centres were organized at Dunreath Hostel (between Red Hill, a former air force camp not far from the Perth Domestic Airport and the nearby Perth suburb of Belmont), in rural Northam (some 60 miles from Perth), in Cunderdin (a further 30 miles beyond Northam), and at other minor centres. All the Lithuanian émigrés described these reception centres as being far from a suitable place to live in.

Once in Western Australia, most males were sent to work in saw-mills in the forests of the State's south west, in the cement factories in Rivervale (a suburb of Perth), in the asbestos mine in the remote Wittenoom Gorge, in the wheat-belt, and in other remote areas for the maintenance of railway lines and pipelines (Birškys, Putninš, and Salasoo, 1986, p. 21). Algirdas who arrived in Perth in 1948, during an interview recounted his arrival and allocation of a job:

> We arrived before midday in Fremantle, by busses they took us to Grayland we had lunch they show us the barracks. … During the next few days with other Lithuanians that I met on the ship we formed a group of ten and in a week they sent us to Merredin to work for the maintenance of the water pipeline to Kalgoorlie (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

Single and married women without young children were sent to work as domestics and laundry hands in hospitals, as cook or cleaners in hostels, private homes and most of them remained in the city area. Birutė, a high school student who was fifteen years old in 1948, with feelings of sadness recollected her first job in Perth. "I was a cook hand in a University Hostel kitchen, It was very hard and very hot … I was young working from 5.00 am. to 2.00 pm. every day of the week, I had to do a lot of washing and cleaning" (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Private accommodation in Perth at this time was scarce. There were no houses available to rent, mainly only rooms or garages. For married couples with children it was particularly difficult to find accommodation. Most landlords were disinclined to allow children. One respondent described the situation as 'terrible and hopeless' (Vygantas,

Interview Transcript 2, Perth, 2003). Adolfas had vivid memories of his desperate search for lodging.

> My wife and I we found a room in West Perth in a house of Macedonians … we had to put my wife's two children in St. Joseph's Convent … after that my daughter was born … they [the Macedonians] told me to go, they didn't want children. I had to look for a new accommodation and it was very hard … there were no houses, Perth was very small … people were making a lot of money. They charge you for the key, you get the house now, and if somebody gave more money, tomorrow you had to go out. It was what we call speculation and I was looking everywhere … I was working in the hills and I saw a little cottage it was rundown nobody lived there. … Someone told me that the owner was living not far from there in a little village. I went to see him and I asked if I could rent it, he gave it to me … I was so happy now I could have all the family together … I went there with my wife, my daughter, and I went to pick up the other two children … the cottage was dirty and need some work but for us at least was a proper house (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

In contrary Alfonsas remembered being surprised that after only few months he could find a room.

> My wife and I we could not find any accommodation, she had to sleep at the hospital were she was working and I slept at the Catholic School … I was a gardener there … finally after not even two months of searching we found a room at the back of an old house. … We were happy and we stayed there for a year … we had a child and they [landowners] allowed us to stay … they were very good … they were old and they did not have any children … but others were terrible … they did not want children (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

Due to the shortage of accommodation in Perth, the State Government sent most of the immigrant families to Northam, which soon became a family camp. Women with young children remained in the camp, while the men were sent to work at considerable distances for weeks at a time.

The difficulty of adapting to a completely new physical, economic and social environment, to the hard working conditions and to the shortage of accommodation undermined the stability of the immigrant families, leading to tension, depression, feelings of alienation and in some cases to divorce and separation. Eglė recalled those days with feelings of anxiety and sadness.

> When we came to Australia they sent us to Northam. My husband went to work far away in two years I did not see him very much, my little girl did not recognized him … he was a good man but we started to have a lot of problems

> … then he left me … I was left alone with my daughter … she was only four years old (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

Ona, one of her closest friends who at that time was 28-year-old, added:

> I came to Perth with my husband and two children … my husband left me, he went away to the Eastern States … he did not contact me … then I started to look for a good man … happy to look after my two children … I was lucky I found one (Ona, *Interview Transcript 1*, Perth, 2003).

Experiences such as these marked the first years in Western Australia for many of the Lithuanians as they struggled to adapt to their new homeland.

All the Displaced Persons within the work age limit had to remain in employment found for them by the Commonwealth for a period of two years from the date of their arrival. At the end of this period the Displaced Persons were granted indefinite residence in Australia. When their two-year work contracts expired and in some cases even before they expired, Lithuanian families started to move out of the camps and search for an affordable house or a block of land to purchase. It was not uncommon in that period for most of the émigrés to work two or more jobs in order to build sufficient savings for housing loan deposit. At first, the majority of the Lithuanians rented a room, lived for a time in a tent or in a garage, or else shared accommodation with relatives or friends, before being able to build a house. This was Aldona's case.

> My husband worked five days on the railway and another two days on a farm … to save the money to come here [to Perth] and buy a block and built a house ... I worked in a pub as well … a Lithuanian friend was looking after my two children. I was so happy when we bought the land … it doesn't matter how small … it wasn't like living in a tent. … We lived in a garage at the friend's house until we had the money to build our own house, I had two children they were happy to have their own bedroom (Aldona*, Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Similar accounts from other participants emphasized the hardship many Lithuanians faced, and the determination they required in re-establishing themselves and their families. This was, according to Audronė, reflected in all aspects of lifestyle, traditions and language and above all in the difficulties experienced in purchasing their first house.

> In 1950 we were able to buy a house in Victoria Park [a suburb of Perth], it was on stilts, it was built in 1914, it was a weather-board house … on top of the hill and we overlooked Perth, Kings Park, and South Perth. … We had a magnificent view. It was a medinukas (wooden house), my husband worked very hard to fix it up. It was small only two rooms, a kitchen and a big bathroom and a laundry, but

> that was just about the right size … we didn't have children. We lived there for 18 years, then we had to move because we became too old to look after the house, [and] my mother [who] was still living with us wanted to move close to my brother … to see the grandchildren more often … we sold the house and came to live in this one it was too big for three people, but [it had] a beautiful big garden … we spent lot of time in the garden (Audronė, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

The pre-war rural Lithuanian population lived largely in farmsteads built of timber or bricks, according to the different terrain of the Lithuanian regions and to the wealth of the farmers. Those Lithuanians who moved to the urban areas during the years of Independence lived in dwellings which varied in size and location and typically featured a balcony in lieu of a garden, as Audronė described.

> We lived in Kaunas in an apartment not far from the centre and we did not have a garden but we had balconies with lots of flowers, my mother loved her balconies, especially in summer there were a lot of flowers (Audronė, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

In Western Australia, the houses in which the émigrés lived were mainly of brick with a tiled roof in contrast to wooden structures in rural Lithuania and were designed in harmony with the Australian landscape and weather conditions. Built on single residential blocks, each house had sufficient space for a garden. In the early years the émigrés required accommodation that was easy to maintain. In most cases, both husband and wife were in the workforce; the time for maintaining the house, garden and looking after the family was limited; and duties were shared by all the members of the family. The contents of the houses were reduced to essentials, as the émigrés typically had in those days only limited money at their disposal, as Aldona confirmed.

> My husband and I we worked hard and we were saving a lot to pay off the mortgage of the house … we bought only the essential … and a sort of cooler … we bought it straight away … it was too hot you could not possibly keep anything … my husband built all the cupboards, the table for the garden and lots of other piece of furniture for the children … and also [a] few toys for the boys (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

In keeping with the rural Lithuanian traditions of wood carving and needle work, the household furniture was home-built, styled and constructed mostly by the Lithuanian men and decorated with needle work done by the women. Aldona went on to say:

> You see this tablecloth I made it I embroidered with my mother, she did a lot of cushions for the chairs and bed and also tea towels and we did a lot of needlework together. I always liked it … my mother she was very good … she

> taught it also to my daughter and she is also very good she did lots of embroideries when she was a young girl on her clothes … she loved it (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

The household garden in the early 1950s was considered an important addition to the house, as it has been in the pre-war Lithuanian culture. Despite having come originally from families with a rural background, most of the Lithuanian émigrés in Western Australia were educated. They had lived in large cities or country towns during the period of Lithuanian independence and before leaving the country. Typically they worked in academic and government jobs or were pursuing military careers at the time they fled Lithuania. It is possible therefore those farm-related activities were unfamiliar to them. However, these activities reminded them their rural background and their homeland. The garden predominantly served an aesthetic and social purpose rather than a productive one. However, most of the émigré families cultivated small patches of strawberries, maintaining the Lithuanian tradition of being great consumers of berries as noted in Chapter 6. Ona, who lived in a house with a large backyard claimed:

> I have always had strawberries in my garden, we used to eat them fresh, my mother used to preserve them, make jam and syrup … but we did not have enough and we used to go to the market gardeners and buy them … later we used to go and pick them directly from the market gardeners (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Even today, the aging female émigrés talk about their gardens, their home-made strawberry jam and syrup, their rose bushes and *rūta* (rue) shrubs - the national Lithuanian flower whose presence still symbolizes an unbroken bond with the former homeland. Birutė, describing her passion for gardening recounted:

> I always spent a lot of time in the garden, I like my rose bushes and all my pot plants … I used to do a lot of gardening back home when I was a girl. Then I went to study in Vilnius and I didn't do anymore … I was study nursing … I was at the hospital and I used to go home on the farm just for holidays. At the beginning when we came here we were always working … my husband is an engineer I was working in an hospital I was a nurse, but when we had time we liked to stay in the garden and look after our flowers … and play with our children (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Of significance are the *inkilai* (birds' nesting boxes) which are still found in most of the émigrés' gardens today. They are placed on trees mainly at the back of their gardens to encourage birds to nest in proximity of the house. As it had been the custom in the former homeland. This significant relationship with nature and its creatures maintained

for the most part by the aging émigrés, attests to the continuing strong influence of nature in their life. Indeed, one of my elderly male respondents asked to finish the interview quite early in the process so that he could go into the garden to feed the waiting crows and magpies. Asked why, Algirdas explained:

> I go and feed the birds … always at this time they are waiting for me …I always fed the birds back home and I do here. The crows come at five … for dinner. I go out with some pieces of meat and I feed them … It is good luck to have birds around your house (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

The structure and organization of the built environment of these first generation Lithuanian émigrés reveals how most families strived to maintain traditions, beliefs and values which for them were key characteristics of their rural original culture they hoped to preserve. In doing this they unconsciously believed to preserve their national identity in an alien country and culture. Nevertheless, it is evident that the influence of the dominant culture and the necessity for adaptation to the new environment and life-style created powerful forces for accommodation to the new, and thus retention of many of the preferred 'old ways' was possible only to a degree.

The New Australian-Lithuanian Family: The Role of the Grandparents

The immediate and extended families of most of the Lithuanian émigré community in Western Australia typically were small. Most were limited to an average of two or three children, as the lifestyle, work commitments and financial hardship in the first years of their re-settlement in Western Australia, according to Aldona, precluded the larger sized families that had been the familiar pattern during the pre-war period.

> We could not afford more than two children it was too expensive if you want them to go to a proper school and we did not have time. … My husband and I we were both working as we wanted to buy a roof over our heads … few of us also married late (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 5*, Perth, 2003).

The relatively small size of the extended family at the time of their arrival in Western Australia was the result of the difficulties faced by the Lithuanians when the time came to flee their homeland. Suitable means of transport for the elderly, the very young and the frail was not easily available. Moreover, most of the elderly members of the extended family at the time had not wanted to leave their country and home, their

relatives and friends, and their life's memories. Algirdas who had come originally from the Lithuanian city of Kaunas as a 30-year-old single man recorded:

> I left by boat with a friend, this was the only way. … The Russians had already surrounded part of the city. … The only escape route was the river … my family couldn't … they didn't have transport … some people were lucky they had horses and carts … others trucks. I was the only one in my family to escape, my two brothers and my sister they were too young … my mother wouldn't let them go. … She could have let my sister come with me she was ten, but she was a girl … and my mother did not want. She was very strong on this … I never returned to Lithuania and I have never seen them anymore … all of them is dead now (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Such breaking up of the family unit in this way depended on the circumstances and profile of the family at the time. Some clearly managed to keep the whole of their family and some of their friendship groups together. Ona, who fled Lithuania with her entire family, recounted during an interview how her father helped a friend's family to flee with them.

> We left by truck … my father had a business and he had a truck. We took another man and his family with us, he worked with my father, they didn't have transport … their truck was broken. … When we were leaving we saw this family in this truck that was broken … they could not live … my father felt pity for them and he took him and his family with us … we then became good friends for many years, we are still friends, we were in the camps together … all my family left, five of us my two brothers, my father, my mother and myself … we came all to Western Australia (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

For those émigrés who had also been able to bring their parents, the parents played an important role in the new homes, minding the next generation of grandchildren. Typically both the young parents were working and so were unable to look after their children during the day. Alfonsas recollected with a sense of gratitude the help that her mother in law gave to them for many years.

> When my wife went to work [my wife's mother] stayed at home with the children … she helped us [with] cooking, looking after our two children [and] minding the house. She was still young but not young enough to go out and work, she helped us a lot, she used to do everything … we were very lucky (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

In the new Australian Lithuanian family, working-age members of the family were in employment and their roles within the family were no longer as well defined as they had been in the traditional pre-war Lithuanian culture. Of necessity, their roles had adapted to the new circumstances and lifestyle. The man was still considered to be the head of

the family and the provider, but now the position of the women had changed. The woman was expected to work outside the family for financial reasons, while being expected also to fulfil her traditional role of wife and mother. However, most of the husbands evidently began to share part of the family duties when the wives were working, an arrangement more common in families without the presence of grandparents. The role of the grandparents in the maintenance of the Lithuanian language, traditions and customs within the family as well as in the community was vital. Although limited in number among those granted Displaced Persons status and hence passage to Western Australia in the early 1950s, all of the participants claimed that the grandparents could still conduct their traditional lives within a certain degree of adaptation. For the Lithuanians who had to enter directly into the mainstream of Australian community life the adaptation required was immediate. Aldona maintained:

> My husband and I we had to go to work …we spoke English every day, and we tried to become more familiar with the Australian's way of doing things … I didn't like but I didn't have any chance, at least when I was at work … at home was a different story (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

After their initial adaptation to the new climate and available foods, most of the émigré families were able to maintain their traditional eating habits. Grandparents, in particular, helped in the preservation of the rural cooking traditions, as the majority of the respondents reported. Aldona stated that:

> At the beginning was hard as we all lived in the bush where we were working … the food was terrible … we had a lot of meat and potatoes and carrots and peas, and pumpkin … but after when we returned to Perth we could have everything that we wanted … there was plenty food … and we did a lot of cooking. In my family we followed the old Lithuanian cooking traditions because my mother was alive and lived with us … she was preparing everything … my husband and me we were working. … My mother used to cook kugelis, cepelinas … when she died I tried to cook like her, but it was impossible (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Food was always abundant and affordable and all the émigrés maintained that they could prepare their traditional dishes, albeit with variation where some traditional ingredients were unavailable. Families could prepare the traditional soups of rye, barley, and beetroot, potato, cabbage salads, pancakes and their usual meat dishes, although now with beef more than pork. In the 1950s and 1960s the Australian diet was based mainly on beef and mutton rather than pork. Audronė recollects the parties that all the participants used to organise to keep in contact.

> We always had big parties with plenty food … I used to cook Lithuanian dishes with potatoes and sausages as my mother used to do back home … but sometime it was hard to find what you needed … in Australia you couldn't find a lot of pork meat, only beef … we were used to eat mainly pork back home … I cooked a lot of cabbage salads … everyone liked it … I still do it now, but I missed the mushroom … in Lithuania there are so many varieties of them, and I miss also the dark bread. Here in Australia they make the dark bread but it is different, [and they] do not have the same water that we have in Lithuania and the same rye (Audronė, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003).

The soils and weather conditions in and around Perth limited the growing of berries and mushrooms, two staples in the rural Lithuanian diet. The émigrés had to adjust to the local conditions and started to cultivate their own strawberries and purchase mushrooms when and where they were available. Ona remembered that:

> At the beginning there were not berries here but later you could buy them frozen … and for the mushroom you had to buy only one or two different kinds but you can still cooked them in the Lithuanian style, in the way that my mother did back home … I did and I still do for special occasion but now I have became lazy and also my husband cannot eat anymore fatty foods that we used to eat when we were younger … now I am old and I prefer to eat simple food (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Without exception all the participants in the study claimed that the old eating habits had been still maintained and is still followed among the original émigrés. However, they added that some émigrés have evidently changed their former eating habits for a variety of reasons, including their failing health, the fact that they now live alone or because preparing traditional rural Lithuanian food takes time and energy they no longer have or wish to devote.

Tea, coffee, and milk were on the table with meals daily. Most émigrés agreed that they were able to purchase beer and alcoholic spirits quite readily in Australia. Algirdas explained that the consumption of alcohol among the émigré Lithuanians had become too high and further explained.

> The Australians drink a lot and the Lithuanians drink too much and everything, but not so much wine … we drink a lot of beer and brandy, cognac and vodka … it is not good but it is a fact … especially during parties and for celebrate special occasions … I know some Lithuanians that drunk so much that [they] became alcoholics … in Lithuania we used to drink, but not much because it was expensive and the farmer had to work everyday also during the weekend he had to look after the animals (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

The traditional values attached to family and education that had helped nurture Lithuanian personal and social identity in the period before and during independence can be seen to have given way over time as the émigré Lithuanian families turned their attention, out of necessity, to the more pressing and immediately attainable goals of secure work, accommodation and transport. For many these goals included the best education they could provide for their children as a means of attaining for themselves and their children a secure place in the new society. Indeed, what the Lithuanian émigrés have been able to succeed in is evidenced by the high number of Lithuanians who have attained professional positions, considering the size of the Lithuanian community in Perth. Birutė recorded: "We worked hard … we wanted to give to our children a proper education and a better life …better than ours. … We saved money to send my son to the university … he is now a lecturer at Sydney University" (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 2,* Perth, 2003). While Alfonsas with pride added: "My son is a doctor and my daughter is a lawyer and most of my friends have children that are professionals all of them studied at university" (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Statements such as these were common in most of the interviews and are reflective of attitudes already well established by the time of the diaspora. In the years following independence, for instance, education had assumed special importance for rural Lithuanians. It was considered the only means available to their offspring to ensure a new social status in Independent Lithuania. In Australia the émigrés had to face a similar situation. Regardless of their original status prior to their experience of diaspora, a status which for most had been relatively high because of years of studying and working, the majority were again plunged into situations of deprivation and poverty. Most started their lives in Western Australia at the bottom of the economic and social ladders, renting the cheapest rooms and working long hours in difficult and heavy jobs. Such hardships that often go hand in hand with entrenched lower status were exactly what they most wished to avoid for their children. Thus, they inculcated in them a strong sense of value in education as a secure pathway to success in the professions.

Social Life and Hospitality

One of the most difficult experiences reported by the Lithuanian émigrés was the loss of friends and the close relationships they had enjoyed in their homeland. During their first years in Western Australia, many felt homesick, the intensity of which depended often on marital status, and whether they arrived alone or with their family. This loss gave rise to feelings of hostility towards the host country, and to feelings of marginalisation. The extent of such negative response differed according to age, gender, education, socio-economic and marital status, religion and the ability to speak English. This conforms to research carried out by scholars such as Portes and Rumbant on American immigration. In their work *Immigrant America: a Portrait,* they claim, for instance, that in the absence of the support of a family, single people suffer more stress and the new immigrants realised this (Portes and Rumbant, 1990, p. 154).

In their new unfamiliar environment and community, life was different from the one that they had experienced in Lithuania. They had inhabited a familiar and known community and environment with a common language, traditions and shared values, which sustained them throughout their lives. In the attempts to establish their old culture in the new environment and driven by feelings of comradeship which had been nurtured by shared adversity, the war time, the permanence in the Displaced Person camps, the journey to Australia and the time of the labour contract, Lithuanians émigrés who were able to purchase houses in the early 1950s opened them as a meeting place where the Lithuanian culture, language and values could be maintained. The home then came to represent a safe shelter, a place where the émigrés could, without fear or restraint, express their feelings of anxiety and doubt about their future in a country, that most of them considered at best indifferent and at worst hostile. Algirdas conveyed his feelings of despair in these words:

> I didn't like to live in Australia, I hate it, but I could not go back … I did not have the money and I had to work for two years … I could say this only to other Lithuanians … all of us were complained about the weather, the jobs … the Australians did not like us (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Such feelings shared by most of the original émigrés, suggested a widespread and prevalent pessimism about Australia and their likely place in it and an obvious frustration in the face of the difficulties they were experiencing as newly arrived

displaced persons. Their social life in Perth was built around the family and Lithuanian friends met during the permanence in the DPs' camps in Germany or in Western Australia, as it used to be in their homeland. During the early years after arrival, social gatherings were organized regularly, either formally to celebrate family and religious events, or simply spontaneously. Ona remembered one of these meetings at her father's house in North Perth.

> My father was the first person to pen his house to everyone … we had always someone at home … it was never too late or too early … there were meetings, dancing practices … all the time … and parties. He wanted to keep the Lithuanians together (Ona, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

In the recollection of Vygantas:

> We just got together and enjoyed ourselves … to maintain contact with relatives and Lithuanian friends who were living in the metropolitan or suburban's areas … it was difficult to see them, especially because we did not have a car at the beginning (Vygantas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

At that time after their arrival most Lithuanian émigrés had insufficient time to make friends outside their own ethnic group. The language for some and the different culture were an obstacle for most. Their social events were held indoors in winter and typically held in the garden in summer. Outdoor parties, however, were not common at first, as the early émigrés were not familiar with the Australian climate and took time to adapt to the new environmental conditions. Ona remembered: "In the beginning I did not like to spend time in the garden … it was hot, there were flies everywhere, we were not used to them … we could not even open our mouth … we had to cover the food" (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

During these early parties, hospitality traditions prevailed. Algirdas recalled that food and beverage was abundant and shared with the guests and friends.

> We had always great parties, with lots of food and drinks, we sang, I playing the accordion and we were dancing. … We were drinking a lot … spirits … there were some Lithuanians … who made their own beer and alcohol, we could not afford it at that time it was to expensive … we always had a great time … we also made a lot of jokes (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

He continues to explain the practice of home brewing of beer that was a common feature in the rural culture.

> We continued to make our beer until 2004 when the last émigrés who were able to produce it in the traditional way, were deceased, many families were able to make also degtinė [Lithuanian vodka] and brandy (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript*, *3,* Perth, 2005).

Home brewing had persisted all those years mainly because the cost of commercial beers and spirits was considered to be too high, much as it had been for them in the pre-war years. Eglė remembered that during these parties Lithuanian émigrés danced and sang old Lithuanian folk songs and partisans' songs, the latter a vivid reminder of their country and the fights for freedom: "We were singing always patriotic songs because we could not possibly forget our country … simply we could not … we always became sad … very sad … Lithuania was not a free country" (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Weekend and holiday picnics at King's Park, high above the Swan River in central Perth, were mentioned as popular outings by most of the émigrés. This was another attempt to reproduce the familiar culture in the new homeland. They were organized frequently and attendance was high. Most of the émigrés remembered these events fondly, showing photos of participating members of the family and deceased friends or friends who had left Perth for the Eastern States, or for the United States of America. Adolfas remembered one of his friends with feelings of regret: "I had a friend that after few years in Perth went to United States … his mother and sisters were both living there. They were lucky … but my friend and his family had to come to Australia at first" (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

For the infirm, elderly or those who did not have their own transport, a bus was often hired to make their participation possible and to encourage their attendance. Ona explained that the last Lithuanian priest had also been able to organize a number of extended excursions, all of which were well attended.

> When Father … took us [to the South of the State] it was a three days trip. We went to Pemberton. We were tired because we were old but I enjoyed it very much … my husband too … on the bus we sang, [and] Father … played the accordion … he [has] left now and nothing has been done anymore … nobody wants to organize anything … we are too old (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Dancing was another traditional entertainment and it was continued from the time Lithuanians first arrived in Perth. The venue was usually a hired hall in West Leederville. Ona maintained that attendance on those evenings was high, especially among the young single people, many of whom were evidently looking for a companion within their own ethnic group, with whom settle down and raise a family.

> There were a lot of single men, and couples … we were all happy … we danced, talked, met with other Lithuanians that came for the first time. …You didn't even have to pay much; just few "bobs" to pay the rent for the night … we had a good time … I went all the time … I was married. … My husband and I we liked to meet the other Lithuanians. We did not have many other occasions, we were just working all the time, and I had already had my first child (Ona, I*nterview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Such events were an important part of their social experience in the early years of their settlement in Perth. Audronė, who at the time was 21 years of age, recalled that during the weekends or evenings many of the adults enjoyed playing *sachmatas* (chess) and *proferansas*, *romi* and *vežimas* (card games), all of which were traditional Lithuanian table games. "All of us know how to play cards and chess … we used to play cards on Friday or Saturday night in turn at the house of different families … we always had a very good time" (Audrone, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Clubs and Organizations

One preoccupation for the gradually increasing number of Lithuanians settling in Perth was the felt need for the establishment of a formal community organization. As the composition of those gatherings at the meetings and in individual houses began to change over time, social divisions and a growing sense of unease based on social, educational and economic differences and backgrounds became apparent. The original composition of the group of Lithuanian émigrés had never been homogeneous from the time of their arrival. Most of them had come from urban centres and had professional, religious and military training. It was this group of people who were the main target of the Soviets, as they were seen as a political and social challenge to the New Order, and it was these who chose to flee the country.

During the interviews I increasingly heard remarks about the so-labelled 'snobbish' behaviour of some émigrés who had become very wealthy and about some of the better

educated Lithuanians who, it was claimed, had a tendency to socialize among themselves. Adolfas remembered: "They [the Lithuanians] started to split in groups, and they ignored you, they didn't want you … It was terrible" (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Most of these early privately organized functions were usually limited only to the immediate friends of the host family, a tendency towards increasing exclusivity and social stratification that many saw as an emerging threat to the survival of the community as an integrated and integrating entity. The concern was sufficiently widespread that a *Lietuvių Bendruomene* (Lithuanian Community) was established in 1952 with a president, a vice president, a treasurer and a co-ordinating committee that assisted in the organization of activities attended by virtually all of the Lithuanians who were living in the metropolitan area at the time. The Lithuanian Community in Western Australia was founded in accordance to the instructions of the *Pasauliu Lietuvių Bendruomene* (Lithuanian World Community) established in 1949 in Germany by the *Vyriausiasis Lietuvos išlaisvinimo komiteta* or VLIK (Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania). The Liberation Committee was based in Germany. It delivered the Lithuanian Charter in 1943 and the Constitution of the Lithuanian World Community. Both documents pledge to support and unite all Lithuanians outside Lithuania's border and to promote and maintain Lithuanian culture and language (Eidintas, 2003, pp.195-196). The establishment of a Lithuanian community in Perth was a successful event. The émigrés now felt bound to strongly each other. As Eglė claimed:

> At that time all of us were working from the heart. We did things to keep the community together, even if we had financially to pay personally or work hard after our working day … I cooked a lot and sew a lot, all this after that my children went to bed (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

This view was re-iterated frequently by other original émigrés as they recalled both the informal private gatherings and the organised programmes and events that had developed firstly in private homes and later in more public venues. In time, as the community became more settled, a sporting club, a folk dancing group, a choir, and boy-scout and girl-guide organizations were established, with the common purpose of bringing together the young and the elderly in an attempt to preserve their original Lithuanian traditions culture and values in an alien land.

In 1965 the first Lithuanian sport club *Neris* was organized in Perth, focusing on basketball, the Lithuanian national sport played by the younger male émigrés. A few years later, in 1980, the club was renamed *Tauras*, now also offering golf for the older émigré generation. Training sessions and competitions for both sports were held regularly. Alfonsas stated that: "The team competed in the State's public competition at the Perry Lakes' basketball stadium and golf at the Lake Course in Jandakot" (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003). These games were well supported by the Lithuanian community who used them to display their national emblems and express their identity. Birutė added that most of the women spectators wore the national costume and the men carried either the flag of Independent Lithuania or the individual banners of their favoured team.

> We were a lot … we had banners and the flag [Lithuanian] some women even wore the national costume and we really supported our players … the children also were the national costumes it was really good (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

By participating in these ways, the émigrés were seeking to convey to the wider audience their sense of national identity as a proud minority within, and as a participating group of, the dominant culture. Attendance at the public competition events was high, especially among the youngest, and lasted for many years. However, as the competitors started to have their own families, as work took on heavier commitments, and as they became more integrated into the wider community, many drifted away from *Tauras* and joined other local clubs or took up other sports not sponsored by *Tauras*. Birutė further explained: "Our boys started to do other sports … one of my younger sons preferred to do sailing because he loves the sea and he become a member of a sailing club" (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Similar comments from other interviewees suggest clearly the progressive shifting of the new Australian-born Lithuanian generation towards cultural integration. Although *Tauras* is still functioning, only golf continues as a sponsored sport. The older émigrés are encouraged to play in different golf clubs in the Perth area. Ona explained that on Anzac Day: "A golf tournament for the Lithuanian community is traditionally held, and a party at the Lithuanian Community House on the following Sunday after the church service or at the house of one of the players" (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

However, Ona concluded that numbers are decreasing because of death and old age and golf appears to be a fading involvement for most of these now aging original émigrés.

> At the beginning we were many. We had a male and a female group and we played separately. We used to play at the Golf Club in City Beach … we were about twenty women … but now we are sometimes four if we are lucky. They are all sick, old, some of them died or their husbands are sick and they cannot be left alone for half a day … everything is finishing (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

These early Lithuanian families had organised a folk dancing group in another attempt to preserve and continue among the younger members their rural folk dancing traditions. Support for folk dancing continued for many years as a core social and community activity for the émigrés. In 1961 a formal dancing group consisting of children aged between twelve and thirteen years was formed under the tutelage of an experienced community elder who was familiar with the folk dancing and singing traditions. Weekly meetings and rehearsals were held at private homes, in the gardens, where the group learnt their first steps of the traditional Lithuanian folk dances, accompanied most of the time by music of the accordion. Ona recounted that:

> Every Sunday the children were taken at some different [Lithuanian] houses to practice. At the beginning it was difficult as there was no music … but then we found Mr … who played for us the accordion … it was just perfect (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Formal performances which most of the émigrés attended in support of the group were held regularly in city or suburban halls hired for the occasions. The dancers wore the national costumes which varied in patterns and colours according to the regions of their ancestors' as did most of the Lithuanian spectators and supporters. The first national costumes outside Lithuania were initially made in the German camps and were kept by many of the original émigrés and taken with them when they moved later to Australia. Birutė explained that:

> In Germany the costumes were initially made with simple calico material on which were painted the characteristic patterns of the different Lithuanian regions. Later they were woven by Lithuanian women in different camps. I still have mine (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

However, in Western Australia from as early as 1950, most of the Lithuanians émigrés were able to purchase their national costumes from specialist suppliers in Canada.

Although expensive, many were bought, because there had never been any woven in Perth. Birutė continued to explain:

> In Perth nobody made the national costumes we could not find what we needed we were also young, some elderly member of the community started to embroidery … we all know how to make it but you need time and we had to go work (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2006).

Aldona maintained that availability of the national costume clearly helped to rekindle and nurture feelings of pride and national identity, and gave valuable continuity to the culture and consolidation of bonds with the lost homeland.

> In those days it was beautiful … we had a big dancing group and almost everyone was wearing the national costume also the children … I used to teach and dance a lot and my daughter as well … we had big performances in different clubs … folk dancing groups from Eastern States used to came here in Perth to perform … they were larger groups because they had more Lithuanians over there, but it was good … I have a lot of photos (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Most informers were noticeably proud of what they had been able to achieve through the consistent encouragement of folk dancing, noting that the younger dancers showed no concern at practising in public even though Lithuanian traditions were alien to most of the dominant culture. Nonetheless, when the children later started to merge into the mainstream of the dominant culture, they tended not to want any longer to participate in the group, presumably wishing not to draw attention to their differences. Ona, a mother of three observed:

> When the children started to have non Lithuanian friends, they forgot everything. They did not want to do anything that was Lithuanian anymore. … They felt ashamed to be different from their friends. … They wanted to be Australians … they started to speak like them, eat like them (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

The dancing group, which lasted until early 1980s, eventually disbanded and is no longer a feature of community life for any of the Western Australian Lithuanians, old or young.

During one interview, I became aware of the existence of a Lithuanian women's choir that had been organized in 1979 but which had lasted only few years. The choir members were Lithuanian female émigrés familiar with the Lithuanian *dainos* (songs). Ramunė explained that they used to sing in duets and in groups at the Lithuanian

Community House during the Sunday community gatherings. Although it was evidently very satisfying for its singers and popular for a time among the older members of the community, it evidently never became a vehicle for involvement of the younger generations. "We were only few women, but we enjoyed the singing. … Some could not sing but they tried. … The younger [ones] could not join in; they did not know enough the language" (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003). Again, the choir was an attempt by the émigrés to maintain, for the younger members, their old folk song tradition.

In 1983 a building was finally purchased in Mill Point Road (South Perth) by the Lithuanian community to establish a *Bendruomenes Namai* (Lithuanian Community House). See Appendix 13 Photographs. It soon became the centre for all community activities. Once a month, after Sunday Mass, the community would hold formal functions at the House to benefit the Lithuanians of Catholic and Lutheran religious backgrounds. Spouses who had different ethnic backgrounds could also join with the Lithuanian community in the House activities, for the commemoration and celebration of National days and important historical events, as well as traditional Lithuanian religious festivities and social events such as Names' days, birthdays, weddings and *šermenys* (funeral wake).

The Community House, until recently, was a place where people could eat traditional Lithuanian food, cooked and presented in the traditional Lithuanian ways by the older female émigrés. Ramunė remembered:

> We used to prepare traditional Lithuanian meals for more than one hundred people … I cooked potatoes and cabbage salads, all the time with meatloaf, and cakes … everyone was helping and cooking, cakes were always donated … they were good Lithuanian cakes (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript* 3, Perth, 2003).

The émigrés and their families on these occasions could sing and dance traditional Lithuanian folk songs and wear their national costumes. These songs and dances also served to nurture feelings of 'Lithuanian-ness' in both participants and spectators. Attendance at the functions was generally high, and typically included the Lithuanian Catholic priest who attended as an integral and vital member of the community.

Australian political and religious authorities were also invited to take part in celebrations of Lithuanian National days and their participation presumably reinforced, among the émigrés, the feeling of belonging to the Australian community. Alfonsas explained that: "During these functions, the émigrés took the opportunity to remind the audience through official speeches that Lithuania was then still an unwilling member of the Soviet Union" (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

In keeping with this belief, Lithuanian representatives have also performed at political events such as at the annual Captive Nations Week observances. The attendance at these events was constantly high with active participation by all members of the community at least until the middle to late 1990s, by which time the aging members of the community, already reduced in numbers, became increasingly unable to attend community gatherings, and it was evident that the Australian-born Lithuanian generation had started to grow distant from their original kinship. Balys concluded:

> If we are lucky now only thirty or forty people are coming regularly at the Lithuanian Community House … the others are dead or they don't come anymore … they are sick or they do not drive anymore. … The younger don't come, they are Australians they don't know the language and we are too old for them (Balys, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

The Lithuanian Language: the Fight for its Survival

> I am realistic about [the] Lithuanian language. My children are living in this country in which they are going to stay. They have their jobs here. Their children and they will be living here for the rest of their life … so there is no need for me to worry about the language of my ancestors (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Speaking of the desire among the Lithuanian community to keep alive their native tongue in the new land, Alfonsas observed that:

> Especially lucky were the children that lived with their grandparents … they had to speak [to them] only Lithuanian … most of the grandparents couldn't speak any other language than Lithuanian … my mother lived with us, she didn't know how to speak any other language but Lithuanian … so my two children had to speak only Lithuanian with her … she spent most of the time with them (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Although most of the Lithuanian children in the early years of settlement, and in the early stages of their lives, were exposed at home to the Lithuanian language on a daily basis,

once they began attending the local Australian schools they naturally started to speak English. For many of the adult immigrants, this marked the point at which they first perceived that the language of their country, one of the key markers of their national identity, was under threat. Ramunė recalled:

> My children spoke Lithuanian until they went to school, then they learnt English They had English friends and they didn't want to speak Lithuanian anymore with us, I was upset but I couldn't do anything … at the beginning I pretended that I did not understand English and I did not speak with them in English … but then I gave up otherwise they could not speak with me … neither in Lithuanian nor English. … It was hard and also for my husband, but he did not see the children as often as I did. … It was a struggle (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Comments such as this, echoed by the majority of the émigrés, expressed the common view that the language was fading away. Younger parents among the group eventually became objects of criticism from the older members of the community because of their inability or unwillingness to preserve the Lithuanian mother tongue as a valued priority in the family. Ona, an 82-year-old mother of two, in similar vein recalled:

> The old members of the Lithuanian community didn't have any clue of what was going on in my family … it was easier when the grandparents lived together. My children didn't want to speak with me anymore in Lithuanian. … They only wanted to speak English and they started to speak only between themselves. … If I didn't speak English I was left out. … One day I said to them that I could not speak English and I did not understand it … my daughter said "come on mum I heard you to speak English with the neighbours … you can speak and understand it do the same with us (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Alfonsas, father of two, remembered:

> Children that did not speak English at school … [They] were bullied by their school mates, and therefore they [the parents] allowed and encouraged the use of the English language all the time … the children also were expecting the parents to speak English as they did not want their family to be different from the others … I remember … when my boy went to school and there was a parents' night and we had to go to the school, my son asked us … please don't speak Lithuanian there, speak English, so that we can be like everybody else … so my wife and me we did, but we were very unhappy … we did just for the children. We did not have any choice. When a young child, your son, puts on you such demand, we had to do it … and also other Lithuanian that I know they did it as well (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Thus, when the parents started to speak English to their children at home, they did so for the most part out of the belief that their children would be disadvantaged in a monolingual society. However, most respondents were aware at the same time that this inevitably

contributed directly to the progressive undermining of the future of the Lithuanian language. Some respondents observed that the erosion of the Lithuanian language had started even earlier, when they were still in Germany during 1944, and indeed earlier still among those who had left Lithuania in 1941. For this latter group, who had settled in Germany for eight or nine years before being able to emigrate to Australia, both their own language and the language of their children had already been corrupted by the German language. Algirdas, who was nine years old when his family left Lithuania for Germany in 1941, admitted:

> I could [still] speak Lithuania but I [soon became] more fluent in German as I attended school there … and my youngest brothers, they didn't speak Lithuanian well at all. [For most of the young Lithuanians] the Lithuanian language was already mixed when we were in Germany. … It was half Lithuanian and half German (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

In 1969, almost twenty years after the arrival of the first Lithuanian Displaced Persons in Western Australia, a Sunday school in which the Lithuanian language was taught was organised in Perth by the émigrés. The school lasted until 1972, when it had to close because enrolments had fallen below the level required for the approval of government funding support. Parents who had supported the Sunday school clearly resented the Australian Government's decision to withdraw funding. Alfonsas recollected with bitterness:

> The group was too small, and too expensive … it wouldn't have been that expensive, because the government spent money in lot of unnecessary activities. The maintenance of the Lithuanian language was better when they were in the German DP camps, where the schools taught the subject in the Lithuanian language. … Here [in Western Australia] nothing has ever been done to preserve minority languages … to keep the Lithuanian language alive … in Perth, it is impossible … the Lithuanian community in Perth is very small … in the Eastern States where they have weekend schools … where they teach to the children … to write, read and speak … and the number of Lithuanian families is bigger … they can better foster the Lithuanian language among the children (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript* 3, Perth, 2003).

In all these ways and with the passage of time, all respondents have reported that the language slowly and inexorably started to disappear. Today the Lithuanian language is still spoken among the most senior citizens in the Lithuanian community, but for most of their children who can still speak and understand some words of this language; it remains essentially just a memory of their early childhood. Many of my respondents reported that their Australian-born grandchildren, although aware that their grandparents

sometimes spoke a language different from English, seldom showed any interest in the language of their ancestors or a desire to learn it. Ramunė reported:

> When my grandchildren came to visit me and my husband, they enjoy the food that I prepare and they like pancakes very much … but when they heard my husband and me speak Lithuanian they ask me to speak English … they know only one or two words, sudieu [goodbye] and ačiu [thank you] … that's all, but we are happy the same … at least we can hear some Lithuanian words (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

Although there are more grandparents in the Lithuanian community today than there were in the early 1950s, Alfonsas declared with some bitterness:

> The language cannot be maintained among the grandchildren as their parents' generation, some of whom were born in Australia, put aside the language of their ancestors to become part of the new Australian society. … Our children didn't want to speak Lithuanian because the Australians did not like it. … In this country you had to speak only English. … Now it is different; everybody can speak what they like. … But in the past it was different. … If you go to the shopping centres here, not far from us, they speak all languages – you can hear them: Italian, Chinese, and Greek all languages. … But for us now it is too late (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003).

It is evident that some of the first-generation offspring of the original Displaced Persons married members of other ethnic origins and that this contributed to a further break away from the language. Ona stated:

> My daughter married an English man, and my two boys married an Italian and an Australian girl. … They can speak only English with them and with the children. … When they came here for Kucios we all speak English. … We cannot possibly speak another language. … My five grandchildren they speak only English, the only Lithuanian word that they know is 'ačiu' [thank you] (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

In the attempt to maintain the Lithuanian language among the younger generation, in 1975 the first edition of the Lithuanian-language newsletter *Žinutė* (the news) was published in Perth (see Appendix 12 Newspaper and Newsletters) through the inspiration of the late Mr Victoras Skrolys (Interview, Perth, 2003). It was a monthly edition and soon became the voice of the Lithuanian Community, which believed that producing and showing the news in their own language and to do with matters of particular interest to the Lithuanian people, would provide an important extra focus for community life. *Žinutė* continued to be published and distributed until 1999, when the aging Lithuanian Community was unable to continue to support this evidently verysignificant initiative. Algirdas stated that the initiative had lasted for 23 years,

although its readership had declined as the group capable of reading in Lithuanian diminished.

> Our president, who was in charge of the newsletter for many years, he is too old now … he has no more energy … and also there are not many Lithuanians left in the community who can read it (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

For many years, this monthly publication, supported financially by members of the Lithuanian community, had clearly given to the original émigrés a sense of pride and national identity. It was distributed in the first week of each month and by 1982 had attained a distribution of 120 copies (Steckis, 1984, p. 352). It consisted of four pages and covered events of Lithuanian historical and political past. In addition, the publication provided information about social gatherings and religious celebrations of the Lithuanian community in Western Australia and articles about family and religious customs and traditions of Lithuanian culture. Although *Žinutė* was only a newsletter, Algirdas claimed that throughout its stories, photos, and advertisements, it did succeed for a significant time in maintaining an unbroken link between the past and the present for the émigrés in Western Australia.

> I always read *Žinutė*, since its start. It was good to know what was happening in the community and also to know something about your country. When I left Lithuanian I was too young I didn't know a lot about Lithuania … it is a pity that now we don't have it anymore (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

In 1976, one year after he had established the community newsletter, Victor Skrolys went on to establish a Lithuanian-language radio programme, with the help of a group of young Lithuanian students. Initially, the programme was broadcast for 30 minutes, once a week on Tuesday evenings. It was later moved to Sunday afternoons at 5.00 pm. As with the newsletter, this second initiative was aimed at maintaining the language, the culture and folk music, as an enduring bond with the homeland.

Originally developed for transmission in the Lithuanian language, the radio programme was broadcast from 1995 both in Lithuanian and in English, as increasing numbers of listeners among the children and grandchildren who wanted to listen to the programme were unable to understand the Lithuanian language sufficiently. As such, the programme was adapted to the changing needs of the community and was still in operation in 2007 and continued to be supported financially by its listeners. Unlike *Žinutė*, the now

discontinued community newsletter, the radio programme was not dependent on its audience having a working knowledge of the written Lithuanian language.

In 1985 to further promote the maintenance of the Lithuanian language and culture a circulation library was established at the Lithuanian Community House. The books, mainly in the Lithuanian language, were donated by émigrés who had brought them from Germany when they first migrated. This free service was aimed at maintaining knowledge of the Lithuanian culture, history, politics and language among those members of the community who had not had direct personal exposure to the traditional Lithuanian culture. The library was open to the public on Sundays during the regular monthly functions at the Community House. The service was still operating in 2007 although, according to the respondents, only few people were by then borrowing the books. Vygantas, the original organizer of the library, acknowledged:

> The younger do not have a sufficient knowledge of the language … they can only say few words, they cannot read … and they are not interested to learn about a country who does not appeal to them … we are old and we know about our country (Vygantas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Again, concern about the seemingly relentless erosion of the Lithuanian culture and language was expressed in this statement and echoed by those of others.

The Influence of the Catholic Church in the Life of the *Emigrés*

> It was the church that keep us together we were living everywhere but most of us found the way at least twice a month to go to the church on Sunday (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

The Catholic Church was traditionally a major unifying force in Catholic immigrant communities. It succeeded in the early 1950s in bringing and holding together the new Lithuanian community in Western Australia. It negotiated the psychological, social and economic difficulties which all new immigrant groups experienced. For isolated and minority immigrant groups, the Church was a unifying point of security and identity, a link between their past and their present. This was especially so for the intensely Catholic Lithuanians.

Although the seven Catholic Lithuanian priests who had arrived in Australia in the early 1950s had been posted to the Eastern States, where Lithuanian communities were larger than that in Western Australia, the Catholic practices and the community offered by the local Catholic Church in Western Australia were of major significance in maintaining the émigrés' sense of identity and helping them to negotiate a new and strange culture (Birškys, et al., 1986, p. 24).

The first Sunday Mass celebrated specifically for the Lithuanian émigrés was held in Perth on February 16, 1950, at St. Patrick's Church in West Perth (now demolished). It was celebrated in Latin by an Irish priest. Services led by Irish priests for the Lithuanians, although not held every Sunday because of the limited number of priests available, were attended by the great majority of émigrés and their offspring living in the central and outer suburban areas of Perth. For most of them, the Church was perceived as the traditional focus of cultural and social activity as well as the centre of their religious life and thus a valuable link to their pre-war rural Catholic upbringing and tradition. Attendance at the Sunday service was considered essential for the maintenance of their religious practices and beliefs. For most, their religious commitment was an integral part of their daily and community life, both for spiritual nourishment and as a key way to strengthen the feeling of national identity. Regular church attendance was almost the only available organised opportunity to socialize and to keep in contact with other members of the community. The number of people attending Church increased when the period of the initial work contract expired and increasing numbers of migrant families returned to Perth. Ramunė described Sunday Mass from her memories:

> It was a beautiful day, all of us were there … with our families, grandparents and children … it was just beautiful. … The church was full of people, the children, the grandparents, the parents, all well dress and happy to be there … we sang our religious songs and that lifted our hearts, everybody was there (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

This description is echoed in other interviews signifying again the evident desire among these uprooted immigrants to keep alive where possible their former ties between religious and family traditions. Over time, the English-speaking priests were progressively replaced by Lithuanian priests. Moreover, in 1959 the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth assigned St. Francis's Church in Windsor Street, East Perth, to the Lithuanian community. It remains to this day officially the current Lithuanian Church,

although the migrant chaplain priest is no longer a Lithuanian. See Appendix 13 Photographs. From 1962 and up to the time when the last Lithuanian priest left in 1999, regular services and important Church and family liturgical celebrations such as christenings, weddings and funerals were held in the Lithuanian language, a concession that had been approved officially by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) when the mother tongues in most countries replaced the traditional Latin of the Catholic Mass.

The majority of the respondents maintained that most Lithuanian children in the early days attended Church with their families and participated actively in the celebrations. Eglė described one Sunday mass at the Lithuanian church.

> The boys came regularly to the church, with their family … the parents were holding their little hands, … and some of them were altar boys, they helped with the Mass … it was just beautiful. They sang and recited the prayers in Lithuanian … they were very nice … we had a beautiful family … three boys, father, mother and grandmother. They all came every Sunday to the church. All well dressed, clean, very nice … they were Lithuanians, truly, truly Lithuanians. The boys were all altar boys. They pray, they sang (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Continuing the religious celebration of Lithuanian National holidays, according to their specific traditions, these Lithuanians émigrés underlined further their distinct national heritage, their sense of belonging to a particular community and the expression of patriotic sentiments. Vygantas recounted:

> We used to celebrate our national days, and the priest was with us, among us … he was like one of us … he was very good … during the Captive Nations' Week the priest during the sermon supported us. … and came with us at Kings' Park to march. We had flags … we were many, and the women were wearing the national costume (Vygantas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2004).

The clergy became an important reference point and locus of engagement for the Lithuanian community, providing spiritual leadership as well as participating in the social life of the community. From the interview accounts, it is clear that the majority of Lithuanian migrants in the first decades of their settlement in Perth preferred to turn to their Church and their priests for advice and advocacy rather than to unfamiliar Australian Government Departments. As Audronė recollected:

> When my brother died in Fremantle … he was crossing the road and a car run over him … all the family was very upset and my mother wanted me to go to the priest and ask him to help us with the papers for the police report and with the Department of Social Welfare … we didn't know what to do, he was the only

> man in the family, he had a young Latvian wife and two children … my father was dead and I wasn't married yet … he spoke English and for us it was more difficult ... we were all women … he helped us and it makes my mother happy because she did not speak English very well (Audronė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Indeed priests in the pre-WWII rural Lithuanian culture were accepted and looked up to as highly educated and especially knowledgeable members of the community and were the spiritual and social leaders of the congregation. Alfonsas explained the priest's position in the rural community in these words:

> I remember from my early days that the highest honour [for a family] was if a son was sent to a seminary and became a priest. The family was regarded as being high up. At that time the priest had a very high standing in the community … families that had a son that was a priest were honoured and received a lot of gifts from the village community. … Priests for us were like saints. Every body just respected them, nobody contradicted them [the priests] … what did they say was correct all the time … nobody dare to say something against them … they lived in the village and they helped the people … they were not perfect because they are human being, but they were all right for us they were for all the people not only for the rich like some of them do now (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The Catholic Church then was able to provide a point of unity and sense of continuing national identity for the émigrés while they sought to establish themselves during their early years in Western Australia. However, its influence in this regard lessened in later years after it had become apparent that the hoped-for possibility of a return to a free, Western-aligned Lithuania would not be achievable for most Lithuanians in Western Australia and many began to act instead in ways which would ensure a successful assimilation into the mainstream Australian culture. Such adjustment, however, was seldom without emotional pain. The feelings of anxiety and regret felt by many are expressed in the words of Eglė who declared: "For the next five years we all hoped that … we would go back to our country … we all hoped. Then five years passed and nothing happened. There was no hope then, no hope to go back" (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

At this point, it had become clear that out of necessity their long-term future would be in Australia. Most Lithuanians began the process consciously and deliberately of merging themselves and their families into the mainstream Australian life and started to attain achievements consistent with mainstream Australian values. As with all migrant

communities, so it was with the Lithuanians who came to Perth. Emotionally, socially and financially, some émigrés achieved more than others, the more successful and integrated families becoming gradually and progressively less emotionally dependent upon earlier deep and sustaining minority group involvement. As more and more families and their children found their way independently in the mainstream community, the initial strong homogeneity and intense interdependency of the group which had been determined by common social and political circumstances only lasted for the early period of re-settlement. Eglė, as did most of the other participants, discovered with sadness that:

> After five years everybody started to look [at] things in a different way … I am in a higher position, my husband earns more money than yours … I have a bigger wage, I have now a very good job, I have a bigger car … you have always the same dress … and you were excluded if you did not have money. … There was a nice lady that she was very religious and she used to come to the church with her daughter, but she was poor because the husband died in an accident. … She could not afford every Sunday a new dress as many women did … and one day Mrs … said to her to buy now a new dress, she did not say anything but the daughter say to the mother go to another church … and we never saw them anymore (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

All of the *émigrés* expressed the same view in various ways, illustrating the gradual and inevitable erosion of social cohesion among the émigrés' community as a whole. From 1950 to 1955 most of the families in the Lithuanian community in Perth had achieved the degree of financial security and economic well-being represented by the purchase of a house and car. It was common for most working Lithuanians to have more than one job, or to be working overtime, in order to meet their expanding financial commitments. Even in these still early stages of their settlement in Australia the necessity was to establish themselves and their families economically in a new country. Often this meant undertaking work shunned by other Australians, which in turn clearly inhibited their ability to continue attending mass on a regular basis and to maintain the same intensity of contact with other members of the Lithuanian community. For most Lithuanians, therefore, regular religious attendance gradually and inevitably became of secondary importance as their main efforts were directed towards establishing themselves in the new country. In the recollection of Aldona:

> My husband and I we were both working … we had to build a house. We had very little time to go to the church, we used to live far from the church … we still tried to go once a month and bring the children. … My husband had two jobs … on Sunday he used to work I couldn't go to the church with two small children

> by myself … sometimes I was working also on Sunday in a hotel and my husband had to look after our two children, we did not live close to the church we were in Midland (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

On the other hand, Alfonsas stated a somewhat contrary view, with some bitterness:

> It is not the time to think about culture and social, if your conditions force you to look after work, and money … to get money to feed the family and to send the children to school. … My wife and I we worked hard to buy the house but to give also a future to our two children … my daughter is a lawyer and my son is an engineer, they have a good position as well my grandchildren … we made sacrifices but they are all right and we now have what we need … but we always find the way to go to the church (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

The drift away from the church, and consequently from the community, was even more evident for those families and extended families in which the original émigrés had entered into mixed marriages. As Ona stated:

> Lithuanians are almost all Catholics … but when the men married a woman of different nationalities they went … where the wife was going … with the same friends and at the same church … the husband and wife are together … they [the men] worked hard … did not have a lot of time … [they] went home, had to do some work at home, in the garden, had to help the wife and also there were the children to help … to take them somewhere as well (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

However, in contrast, Ramunė claimed:

> We have Lithuanians that still now are attending the church every Sunday and their wives are not Lithuanians. … Occasionally also the wives are coming especially when we have the function after church at the Lithuanian Community House (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

From the interviews it is clear that continuing regular church attendance by parents and children was also highest when the children were young and that for most family's attendance has progressively declined.

Once children began school and especially during secondary schooling, they became involved in sport, started to socialize with other children outside their own community and gradually came to spend less time with their family at home. Alfonsas, father of two, reported:

> My children were encouraged from us to go to the church, but they became involved in sports. … On Sunday I became the taxi driver of my son and another twenty children. … In Lithuania all the extra activities for the children were on Saturday or Sunday after mass. Here, sport is mainly on Sunday. I remember to

> take my oldest son to play on Saturday, but later became also Sunday a sport day. My daughter, played the organ in the church for quite a few years, but then didn't anymore because she had to study during the period of the exams and she also wanted to do something with her Australian friends (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

This recount clearly conveys the emerging image of the traditional Lithuanian family, in which the roles of both the parents and their children had adapted progressively to the new circumstances and lifestyle.

According to most of the respondent, the new generations of Australian-born Lithuanian children drifted away from the church largely because the church was unable to maintain or develop among the younger members, any activities or initiatives that would encourage them to attend church and thereby reinforce their religious beliefs and Lithuanian identity. This perceived lack of commitment by the priests to engage and preserve traditional religious values among the younger generation remains a source of resentment among the most senior members of the Lithuanian community. As Alfonsas and his wife Milka in a joint interview explained, their feelings were typical of others of their generation:

> We didn't have Lithuanian priests who were caring for our children … they were not interested … we saw him [the priest] on Sunday only and then after the mass [he simply] went home … the priests that we had, they were useless … good only for themselves (Alfonsas and Milka, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

This new image of the priest is far from the status and respect obtained by the priests in pre-WWII rural Lithuania, the passing of which is remembered with regret by many of the original *émigrés*. Alfonsas reported:

> There was a klebonas (parish priest) who was attached to my school … he was all right. He organized excursions during summer holidays for us children and we travelled every day … from one parish to a big farm and then back to the presbytery … there we were fed properly. That was a memorable time for me. We used to do long walk and we had gatherings of boys and girls very big … we were over [one] hundred … we sang and played and we spent happy time (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

These views illustrate the high expectation and needs placed on their priests by the early Lithuanian émigrés. Expectations which the prevailing cultural circumstances in pre-war Lithuania enabled them to satisfy, but that could not be realised equivalently in the vastly different conditions of life in the predominantly protestant, secular and Anglo-

Celtic Australia. In the Australia of the late 1940s and 1950s the policy and assumption of assimilation and cultural forgetfulness had been accepted more or less uncritically by all in the political and wider community. While around 80% of Lithuanians traditionally had been Roman Catholic (Birškys, 1986, p. 23), the proportion of Roman Catholics was somewhat lower among the Lithuanian *émigrés* in Perth. This may be because those with a greater geographic attachment and religious closeness to Germany, and able to establish a German family member, were more inclined to see Germany as a place of refuge during the 1940s occupations of Lithuania. For those Lithuanians who came to Perth, the religious differences between Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic Lithuanians tended to weaken community togetherness as significant numbers of the group would not meet each other at church on Sundays and other opportunities did not arise in the absence of alternative established meeting facilities.

In the early years, the relatively small Lithuanian community in Western Australia was dispersed all over the State on work contracts. Economics, the tyranny of distance, and lack of time all made frequent contact extremely difficult. Adolfas who was living on the hills with his family, recounted during an interview:

> We lived too far from East Perth … we couldn't go to the church … the train was only once a day … we had five children. We also lived far from the railway station. We [could only] had to go down to Midland. We [therefore] didn't go to the church for long time. It was too much we had also work to do. We did not have time for socialize. We went back to the church when I bought the car (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Even though the Lithuanian community is today highly reduced in numbers and though most of its remaining aging population is unable to attend church for health and practical reasons, most of the surviving original émigrés still consider themselves and their children to be religious. Audronė illustrated this as follows:

> Religion is a personal choice … and they [the Lithuanians] can make it, regardless to the environment and the possibilities to attend the church, and have contacts with the priests. I don't go to the church anymore I am too old and I do not drive anymore … my daughter has her family I cannot impose on her to come with me at the church … I pray at home, I recite the rosary and I pray everyday (Audronė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Ramunė summed up the feelings of most of my participants.

> Everything is gone … [but] religion isn't. That is personal. People make decisions for themselves … I don't go anymore to the church, but I have a small

> cross, I have candles, I pray by myself. My friends … do the same … if you want to pray you can pray in your house, in your garden everywhere … you do not need to go to the church what you need is religion (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Thus, for the remaining group of the original *émigrés* who began their lives in pre-WWII Lithuania, religion clearly seems to have remained, some fifty years later, a strong element of identification with their national identity.

Survival of Family Customs and Traditions

> Customs, traditions and what people do is natural in their own country and nobody takes any particular notice about what you do. Here [in Australia] if you were to do what you were doing in Lithuania probably you would be laughed at (Algirdas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

For the rural Lithuanian population the most important avenue for preserving the material and spiritual values which form the key components of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture was through the family, as it was the family that had continued to create them and hand them down from generation to generation. When the Lithuanians arrived in Australia from 1948 to 1953 they brought their culture and values with them. However, for the participants in the study who had been living in Lithuanian urban areas during the pre-war period, the traditions and customs were mainly maintained on occasions of religious and family celebration, or through gatherings with elderly members of their family living in rural areas where they could preserve their traditions on a daily basis. Alfonsas recollected:

> We lived in Kaunas … only during summer or Christmas holidays I used to go to the farm where my grandparents and uncles lived … my grandmother used to make the bread … my mother never did … she used to buy it at the market … we lived in the city … the life was different (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Similar recollections, found in many of my other interview records, inferred that the ethnic Lithuanian population living in the cities had maintained their original rural culture only to a degree, as they had to accommodate the day-to-day demands of living in a new environment, in daily contact with a new reality. Ramunė remembered:

> My family lived in Vilnius, for *Kūčios* we had guests, friends of my father who were lawyers and mainly Jewish … my father and my mother they used to play

> the piano and sang Christmas carol and Lithuanian folk songs … we had a big Christmas tree (Ramunė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Moreover, those Lithuanian *émigrés* of German background who had been allowed to leave Lithuania for Germany as early as 1940, also brought with them to Western Australia their traditions, values and beliefs, albeit already diluted by the German culture of their daily life. Vygantas, who left Kaunas with his family in June 1940, described his life in Germany in these words:

> We went to Poznan in Poland, now occupied by the German Army … we changed our surname … [to] … my father started to work for a photo company … I went to the University in Berlin, in summer I worked in an ammunition factory … my brothers went to school and joined the Hitler Youth it was compulsory … later at the end of the war we went to a refugee camp … in this camps they accepted only Lithuanians … we were Lithuanians (Vygantas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Perth, 2003).

Another circumstance which diluted the maintenance of Lithuanian traditions in Perth was the presence among the arrivals of a high number of Lithuanian men who, rather than remain single, married out of their ethnic group. Ona claimed:

> With mixed marriages, most of the Lithuanians drifted away from the rest of the community and with them the traditions and the Lithuanian language, they had to speak only English all the time at home and with their children (Ona, *Interview Transcript 3,* Perth, 2003)

In Western Australia, childbirth occurred at the local hospital, usually with members of the close family and friends being able to visit the mother and the newborn baby. However, work commitments and distance, combined with lack of easy transport, often made it difficult for friends and relatives to visit the hospital to pay their respects to the mother and the baby. Aldona recalled the time of the birth of her first daughter:

> When my first child was born, only my mother my father and my husband came and visited me at the hospital. … My friends could not come they were all working and some of them lived far away and they did not have any transport (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

This suggests clearly how even the simplest of traditional practices often had to change because of the new circumstances or established local expectations.

Christenings usually occurred during the first five months after birth, in most cases in accordance with the Roman Catholic Rite. The Sacrament of Baptism was administered

by the Lithuanian priest in the local parish church of the child's parents in the presence of the godparents and a few guests. The godparents were in most cases the grandparents or, in their absence, relatives or close Lithuanian friends or, sometimes in later years, Australian friends. In Australia the choice of the godparents for the young émigré parents of the child differed from the Lithuanian tradition in which the godparents were typically younger relatives who would be expected to take over the responsibility for the child in case of the death of the parents. This was not possible in Western Australia as the extended family was limited in numbers and in some cases absent altogether and because other émigrés in the community were often not known sufficiently well for them to be entrusted with such an important life commitment. Aldona explained further:

> My father and my mother were the godparents of my first child … only later … but when I had my twins boys … the godparents were our Australian neighbours … they were very good friends, we became very close friends and still we are … I did not have Lithuanian godparents as I did not know anybody well enough…in the community (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

In the early years, the children continued to be baptized with both Christian and old pagan Lithuanian names, as had been the Lithuanian tradition. As Eglė stated: "All my children were baptized with Christian and Lithuanian old pagan names … and so [were] the children of the families that I know" (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

However, it is evident that adherence to the custom soon began to fade, as parents recognised the disadvantages that their children might face at school if they had to use the traditional Lithuanian names. As Alfonsas affirmed:

> Our children had only Christian names as it was easier for the Australians to pronounce them especially for the children at school … a Lithuanian family who gave to their boys as a first name a Lithuanian name, then they found out that it was never pronounced properly and they [children at school] started to call the boys with a different name (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Christenings were typically followed by a big party at the house of the child's parents. Members of the family and close Lithuanian friends were all invited, as traditions demanded. As Eglė, mother of three, remembered: "The guests were all expecting a big party, and you needed a lot of money and time for having some sort of savings" (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Although the Australian-born children were baptized with the names of Christian saints, most of the émigré families soon moved towards celebrating birthdays in place of the Names Day celebrations that had been the custom among the rural Lithuanian population. Adolfas recollected:

> We celebrated Name's Day back home … only for the first birthday we had a big celebration. The last Name Day celebration I had it was in Vilnius … the next day … we left for Germany … it was the first of July, 1944 we had a big party at the nursing school where I was studying … there were students, doctors and nurses…my mother had sent a turkey and a big cake … the following day with another girl will leave Vilnius we went home and my family was waiting … we all left … you could hear in distance the fighting of the Red Army that was trying to occupy Vilnius … I did not even to finish to eat the cake (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

According to most of the participants in the study, the Name Day's celebration ceased to be celebrated in Western Australia when the parents and grandparents died, as it was only that generation that had wanted to continue the celebrating of their Name's Day. Alfonsas as an 88-year-old recalled:

> For the celebrations of my Name's Day, we had always big parties at my house … we had a lunch and there were more than twelve people, all Lithuanian friends and the Lithuanian priest … he also was named after my saint. We had a very good time … I still celebrated it but now there are only with few friends left (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

His wife Milka went on to add:

> In the past I used to do a lot of cooking, for the parties … I cooked a cake and meat and soup … as my mother used to do back home. I also cooked *kugelis* (traditional Lithuanian dish) and I still do. … Everyone loved my cooking. Now, I only prepare a nice lunch, we are old and my husband does not want to eat too much (Alfonsas and Milka, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

However, it was not only after the *émigré* families moved to Australia that birthday celebrations had begun to replace the traditional Names Day celebrations. The tradition of birthday parties had already been taken up by many of the émigrés while they were in Germany. Nevertheless it is clear that adaptation to new circumstances was always the primary impetus for change. Vygantas claimed: "Name's Days celebration was not even maintained when the Lithuanians were in the camps in Germany … in Germany we started already to celebrate the birthday that was a German tradition" (Vygantas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003). Once in Western Australia it was presumably also fairly natural for most of the émigré families to continue celebrating birthdays, as this

was a common practice in their new homeland. However, Alfonsas, with some evident bitterness, concluded: "We became Australians … we make a birthday cake and put some candles and just sing happy birthday" (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

First Communions and Confirmations were organized through the Catholic Primary Schools attended by most of the Lithuanian children and took place at the time of the local Bishop's annually scheduled visit to the school and parish. However, Ona reported that her three children had the rare distinction of being the only ones in the entire Lithuanian community to have been confirmed by a visiting Lithuanian Bishop from the United States. As she recalled with evident pride:

> When the Lithuanian Bishop … arrived in Perth I was able to organize the Confirmation for my three children in the Lithuanian Church … I think my children were the only one … they were beautiful … I was very proud … The church was full(Ona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Given the deeply religious Catholic heritage of these early Lithuanian *émigrés*, it can be assumed that the continued popular celebration of these two sacraments would have helped to keep the émigrés together, reinforce their ties with the church and strengthen their sense of national identity.

Weddings were another significant cultural event that served to bring relatives and members of the Lithuanian community together. Celebrated on Saturdays and mostly in accordance with the Roman Catholic Rite, they were usually held in the local Parish church of the bride or groom. The celebrant was normally the Lithuanian priest who, for the occasion, was permitted to preside over the celebration in the chosen parish. Relatives and close Lithuanian friends were invited to participate in the celebration, which was then typically followed by a party at the house of the bride. In keeping with the tradition, the bride would wear a long white dress which in most cases would have been sewn by the bride. The groom would wear his best suit, usually grey in colour. Ona described her wedding dress in these words:

> I made my wedding dress … my mother helped me to sew it. It was too expensive to buy it. We could not afford it … but it was just beautiful. … All of my friends made their own wedding dress; it was too expensive nobody could afford it. … All Lithuanian women know to sew … in Lithuania girls were taught how to sew since they had to prepare they dowry (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

A small branch of rue, the national Lithuanian flower, was typically pinned onto the bride's veil or somewhere on the dress, symbolizing her virginal status. On occasions, the man would also pin a small branch of rue on his jacket, again in keeping with the old traditions. Ona, who married in Perth, recalled how other rituals had been observed as part of the home gathering, immediately after the Church celebration:

> After the religious ceremony everyone was invited to my parents' house. … At my wedding there were many people. … For the occasion we empted the biggest room of the house and we filled in with many people as possible … my mother presented to my husband and me the bread, salt and a glass of wine on the threshold of the house (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The presentation to the newlyweds of the glass of wine, bread and salt, which had been an essential element of the Lithuanian culture, was a tradition continued typically where both parents (or, at the very least, the mother) of the bride were Lithuanians, as it was the custom for the parents of the bride to present them. Aldona, recalling her daughter's wedding, claimed: "When my daughter … married, at the reception I waited [on]the couple with a tray with a glass of wine, bread and salt … I couldn't do it for my two boys … they married Australian and Italian girls" (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Funerals were mainly celebrated according to the Roman Catholic Rite at the Lithuanian church by a Lithuanian priest. However, funeral traditions were perhaps the ones that underwent the most adaptation to the new context. The Western Australian climate, and its attendant health regulations, clearly precluded the old Lithuanian custom of keeping the body of the deceased in the family at home for three days following the death. In the old country, this practice had allowed relatives and friends to pay their respects to the deceased and the deceased's family. Birutė remembered the funeral of her mother with these words:

> My real mother died very young … I suspected [that it was from a complication of] childbirth, but I was too young. … Nobody told me. … She was brought at home … where she lied on a wooden plank for tree days, to permit the relatives to come and see her. They were living in distant farms [and] needed time to arrive at the village where we lived (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The existence of funeral parlours in Australia was welcomed by the majority of the *émigrés*, all of whom readily agreed that keeping the body of the deceased at home would have been a terrible experience in the Australian climate, especially in summer.

Moreover the practice had already been abandoned in their homeland for the Lithuanian summer, particularly in the cities. Ona, recalling the death of her Lithuanian husband in Perth, stated:

> When my husband died, he was at home … he was taken away straight away, then … I went to the Funeral Parlour for the rosary with my children and other Lithuanians, and the funeral was at the Lithuanian church with the Lithuanian priests I had the šermenys at home … we did not have many people because my husband did not mixed with the Lithuanians in Perth (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The old tradition of taking photos of family members alongside the open coffin was also soon discarded in Australia, as it was no longer considered appropriate, especially by the new Australian-born generations. Adolfas claimed: "I didn't take any photos when my wife died … my children wouldn't allow me … they said to me that we were in Australia now" (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

However, the *šermenys*, the traditional reception following the burial, has been maintained as a gathering of all those who had attended the funeral. This reception was held either at Lithuanian Community House or at the house of the deceased, or more recently a restaurant. Audronė recalled: "When my husband died I organized a *šermenys* … there were a lot of people … it was [held] at the Lithuanian House" (Audronė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth 2003). *Šermenys* is another significant community event and gave further opportunity to the aging émigrés to socialize. Not every funeral, however, included this tradition: among the oldest émigrés were many who had no children to organize the event for them. It is noteworthy that the traditional Lithuanian *gedulas* period of mourning was mentioned only by one of my respondents, suggesting that it is one tradition that was not brought with the émigrés to Perth. Alfonsas explained:

> The gedulas was never observed here in Australia, I do not remember anyone doing anything like man wearing a black band around his arm in sign of grief and respect towards the deceased as my father did when my mother died back home (Alfonsas*, Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Religious Celebrations

While many of the Lithuanian family traditions had to be adjusted to the new lifestyle and environment, the religious calendar traditions have been extensively preserved.

During the interviews, almost all of them were mentioned by one or more of the participants to the study, the most commonly retained being the celebrations of *Kūčios* (Christmas Eve meal) and *Velikos* (Easter day). Importantly, even the Lithuanian children who married out of the community still enjoy them, presumably because they view them as a pleasant way to spend time with the extended family at times also celebrated by the wider Australian community and which were designated in Australia as national holidays.

A variety of reasons was provided by the participants in the study to the questions examining the failure to maintain the celebrations of *Kaledos* (Christmas Day), *Uzgavenes* (Shove Tuesday), *Didzioji Savaite* (Holy Week), *Sekmines* (Pentecost), *Zolines* (Feast of the Assumption), and *Jonines* (Feast of St John). Most of the émigrés ascribed the dilution of observance to apathy or lack of interest of other members of the community, or to the loss of religious values. This in part was due to a different lifestyle or environment, which did not encourage the maintenance of such traditions. Ona, who had lived and was raised on a farm, stated in sadness:

> In Australia we did not do anything right from the beginning … we could not … we only go to the church, listened to the mass and go home and that's it so they [the Lithuanians] have never organized anything (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth 2003).

Most participants acknowledged that *Kūčios*, had to be adapted somewhat to the new lifestyle out of necessity, but this had not prevented its retention. The old tradition of the *Kūčios* meal based on twelve dishes with no meat and fat and no consumption of alcohol has been maintained at large by the émigrés. Ona described the meal in these words:

> Every year we had *Kūčios* with my family at my place … I prepared only fish dishes to share with the family. I try to prepare the meal as my mother did back home … and when she was alive and living with us in Perth. She prepared it … I was working … before was always at my place but now in turn we do at the house of my children that are all married. I prepare part of the meal now (Ona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

In contrast Birutė recalled:

> I was working in a pub, I never had time to prepare a proper meal for my family and I did not think about the setting of the table … I used to have *Kūčios* dinner with my family, my husband and my two children, but I was very tired after having work all day and with a such hot weather … I used to prepare a quick meal with fish and salad and then we all went to bed (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

From the variety of responses given by male participants in the study, this tradition appears to have been lost only after a Lithuanian wife died. Adolfas remembered the meal in these words:

> We used to have a big meal when my wife was alive. She liked to cook and we had five children … now she is dead … my children married Australians, they do not celebrate it … the Australians they do not know our traditions. … They invited me only for *Kaledos* (Christmas Day) and we have just an ordinary meal … meat, fish … and salads (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

The *ploktelė* (a thin wafer), traditionally made by nuns in Lithuania and shared among members of the family during the *Kūčios* meal was not available when the *émigrés* first arrived in Perth. However, later it became easy to obtain them directly through the help of relatives still living in Lithuania, although that supply chain eventually dried up for many of the émigrés as their original contacts died. Alfonsas explained:

> When my mother was alive she always sent us *ploktelė* in a mail envelope … now, that she is dead my sister is not very religious I do not ask her … sometimes I have them from other Lithuanian families … they are lucky they still received Ploktele from their family back home. … When the last Lithuanian priest was here, somehow he was able to give us some *ploktekle* … I think he had [obtained] from the Polish nuns here in Perth, they made them. … It is also a Polish tradition. … But now we do not have them anymore (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The traditional placing of the hay under the tablecloth for the traditional meal was never maintained in Perth, either because it was difficult to find the hay easily or because it was no longer seen as being important. Aldona remembered:

> In this house I tried once. It was first of all for the glasses … the glasses wouldn't stand on the table straight they would fall all over because it was uneven … because we had also so much food and dishes and because it takes up to much room … it was very hard , very difficult (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Although *Kūčios* is still celebrated at the traditional time of Christmas Eve, some of the older *émigrés* do continue to celebrate it together on the Sunday before Christmas at the Lithuanian Community House. Aldona reported:

> On Sunday after Mass we go to the Lithuanian Community House and all of us we celebrate *Kūčios* … everybody bring their own food, and we share it with the other, last year we were about forty people and few children with the parents came later … we have our Christmas tree and we have also a lottery we really enjoyed this time. … It is sad that each year some of us is missing … but we still do it (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

The once popular community celebration of Midnight Mass, according to participants in the study, was soon discontinued in the early years after arrival in Perth, as most émigrés were living far from a church, often with young children to look after, and no transport. Adolfas, father of five recollected:

> We did not have a car and we were living far away close to Midland … we had five children and we could not possibly go to Midnight mass. Not even in Midland, we could not leave the children alone at night (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

However, a Christmas tree was always present in each Lithuanian family with children. Adolfas added: "I have always prepared a tree for my children, they were so happy I used to put the presents under it … the children liked" (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003). This tradition, which had started in Germany according to most of the émigrés, was easy to maintain in Perth as it was a tradition common also among the majority of the wider Australian population at the time.

The hot Perth summer climate and the easy all year round availability of foods of all kinds were the principal factors that inhibited maintenance of much of the Lithuanian Christmas day traditions. Eglė recalled:

> For the first, second and third Christmas that I spent in Western Australia I cried all the time … I missed the snow, the ice, I used to do ice-skating, … I miss my friend and family. … The Australians for Christmas go to the beach it is terribly hot … I did not like it and I still do not like the weather (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 3*, Perth, 2003).

Aldona remembered the old time back home with sadness:

> After the Mass, back at home [Lithuania] we used to have a nice lunch that my mother had prepared the week before it was special, there was a lot of unusual food … prepared just for Christmas … but here … it is too hot the children did not want to eat and stay at home … just go to the beach … here we can eat what we want all the time … we do not have to wait Christmas (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

All of the respondents confirmed during interviews that the festive celebration of *Užgavenės* (Shrove Tuesday) on the eve of Ash Wednesday was not continued once they arrived in Perth. The old tradition of making pancakes to be shared with friends, wearing costumes and masks, and making jokes was not longer practicable as the new circumstances and life style were not conducive. Aldona claimed:

> We were all working, we did not have the time to go and visit friends during the week … it was too difficult … we could not dress our children with costume and mask, people will laughed at them. … Here in Perth, nobody was interested in doing anything to maintain such traditions … we lived in a big city and we were working … how then you could go dress up with masks in the streets … they [the Australians] would think that you were mad … it was just not possible (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Didzioji Savaite (Holy Week) period, which was considered by the pre-WWII rural Lithuanian population the most important and significant of the year, was maintained according to all of the respondents, albeit more at the level of individual family practice than as a community-wide event. For the most part it was only on Palm Sunday and Easter Day and the end of the Holy Week that were celebrated formally in services at the Lithuanian church. During the week, most people were working and attending to the needs of their families. In a combined interview, Alfonsas and Milka reported:

> During the Holy week my wife was working and my children were very small, we did not have anybody to help us … I used to come home in the afternoon and my wife used to go to work as soon as I returned home. It was hard to do something apart from work and look after the family. We never went to church on Good Friday, because both of us were doing something at home … we take advantage of being at home with our children … [the wife continued] when I was in Lithuania I used to go all day on Friday to the church with my mother and other girls of my age and other women … we prayed, in front of the cross which was covered in purple … but here, no we only went to church for Palm Sunday and *Velykos* (Easter Day) … here it was all different we didn't feel it (Alfonsas and Milka, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Almost all *émigrés* and their families attended the *Verbo Sekmadieni* (Palm Sunday Mass) at the Lithuanian church and brought with them, to be blessed, a branch of a palm or of an olive tree. Adolfas remembered:

> When we first arrived for Palm Sunday, the church was full, we were all there, with some greenery, if you didn't have the palm or a branch of olive tree people brought a small branch of *rūta* [rue] our national flower (Adolfas, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Today this tradition, celebrated also by the wider Australian Catholic community in their parishes, is still maintained among the senior émigrés despite their decrease in numbers.

The *pasnikas* (fasting) is strictly observed by most of the Catholic Lithuanian population as the core of the *Dydysis Penktadienis* (Good Friday) preparation for Easter. Alfonsas

maintained that among the old Lithuanian *émigrés* in Perth, as a sign of devotion and respect, penance in the form of abstinence is still observed.

> I have never eaten or drink anything on Good Friday … in all my life. My parents did this back home … and my brothers and I we did the same. … Here in Perth, also my wife does not eat and drink anything for all day … I do not drink even a sip of water (Alfonsas, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The traditional *Didysis Seštadienis* (Holy Saturday) celebration from which people could take home blessed pieces of coal and water was never maintained in Perth, at least according to Birutė. The practice was not available in the early years because there was no Lithuanian church or Lithuanian priest and it was never re-activated even after the first Lithuanian priest arrival. "I supposed it could have been done, if somebody had had the bright idea … nobody thought about it. … The lifestyle here was and it is different … we cannot do what our parents did" (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Margučiu (decorated Easter eggs), a key features of the traditional *Velykos* (Easter Day) celebrations, are still a matter of interest among the young children whom, although they mostly ignore the religious significance, enjoy the ritual of the egg cracking. Aldona, grandmother of five, recalled:

> All my grandchildren have always enjoyed playing with margučiu. Obviously they did not know their religious meaning but they enjoyed to go around and tried to crack the eggs of the others … my grandson … he is always the first to enter in the house and ask for the eggs (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Margučiu are given to the guests at Easter lunch. They are decorated with different colours and patterns and as with the old tradition, are considered to bring good health, good luck and happiness. Today they are still prepared mostly by the grandparents. However, Birutė claimed that a competition for the children for the best decorated egg is held each year on the Sunday before Easter at the Lithuanian Community House in a continuing effort to keep alive the Lithuanian tradition.

> Every year many children are coming … they like to paint the eggs. … Last year there were not many children came but it was still nice. We are all old people and we like to see young people to continue to maintain somehow our traditions (Birutė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

The attendance at the Resurrection Mass, (Easter mass) remains high in Perth as most of the children and the grandchildren would typically attend the service and then join their

parents at home for Easter lunch. The meal is substantial as it is a festive meal. However, as most of the respondents indicated, the ready availability of a wide variety of foods throughout the year meant that no particular dishes are prepared for the occasion. Eglė declared:

> For Easter, I have prepared always a good meal, but nothing special, we have pork, salads and some Lithuanian cakes that my daughter in law that is Australian likes very much … I used to cook a lot before … when we first came to Australia … there was also my mother and my father with us … now, my husband is sick and he cannot eat fat … my children do not want to eat too much … things have being changed (Eglė, *Interview Transcript 4,* Perth, 2003).

Easter in Australia typically is a time of beautiful weather and offers one of the last opportunities before winter for the grandchildren to go on family holidays. Therefore, not all of the émigrés' children were able to spend Easter Day each year with their parents, as Aldona explained.

> Last year my daughter went on holiday with her family down south. I was not upset … She is a working mother and she needed an holidays with her family … she went to visit some friends … my husband and I we went to church and then we return home … we had a light lunch and later we went at my brother's house and we celebrate Easter with his family and one of my son who came over with his family (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Velines (All Soul's Day) in honour of deceased members of the family and community is still strictly observed by the old émigrés. After Sunday Mass they gather at Karrakatta Cemetery to visit the grave of the most recently deceased émigré. They recite the rosary and the litanies at the graveside of the émigré and then they disperse to visit the graves of their own deceased family members and other friends. Aldona recollected:

> Since we arrived in Perth we always went to Karakatta to pray … there were a lot of Lithuanian that died without anybody here in Perth … especially men … before we were younger and we used to go and visit each grave … but now we go only to visit the last one that died during the year … some of us cannot walk for long distance … at the beginning the graves of the émigrés were all together close to each other, so one could go and visit all of them … now they are scattered all over the cemetery (Aldona, *Interview Transcript 4*, Perth, 2003).

Aldona further added that the custom of decorating the graves of deceased family members with flowers is still widely practised, as is the decoration of graves of deceased community members who have no living relatives in Perth.

Concluding Summary

Lithuanian *émigrés* who came to Perth by virtue of the Australian Government's participation in the post-WWII International Refugee Organization (IRO) Programme of 1947, experienced particular culturally-based problems in settling in the new homeland. The usual difficulties of re-settling in an alien environment were compounded by the loss of their social networks and status, and the difficulties in maintaining their language and traditional customs, values and beliefs that were so much a part of the Lithuanian identity. Since the early days of their arrival in Perth, Lithuanian émigrés established social networks, which helped single people and the most vulnerable members of their community to adapt to their new life style and environment. In the process, they tried to preserve their Lithuanian family traditions, religious practices and language key core markers of their Lithuanian identity.

Inevitably, the new life-style, environment and time modified these traditions, values and beliefs to the extent that some of them have been lost, discarded or on the verge of being lost. Most of the participants in the study claimed that Lithuanian traditions associated with the forests and fields, husbandry and seasons of their native land, were the first to be lost, in the absence of close connection with a familiar or similar environment.

Family traditions survived better in the early days after arrival, as they were known and valued by most of the *émigrés*. The presence, although limited, of elderly members of the family, guaranteed their continuity within the family and community. In those first years, the senior émigrés could still conduct their traditional life, albeit with some adaptation. Young Lithuanians, forced to interact directly with mainstream Australian society through work and daily life needs, were obliged to adjust more quickly.

In this situation family traditions began to be modified or discarded according to the needs and lifestyle of the new Lithuanian-Australian family. Typically, the continuity of family traditions became difficult when Lithuanian male immigrants married out of their ethnic group. Customarily the traditions were handed down from generation to generation by the female members of the family. However, most of the *émigrés* who lived in urban areas during the pre-war period were already less inclined to retain some

of these traditions which could be only maintained in a rural environment. The cities and the new urban life-style prevented this. Furthermore, for *émigrés* who lived for a time in Germany or in the German camps before their re-settlement in Perth, some of these family traditions were either diluted or completely lost because they had adapted to the new German environment, culture and language.

One can conclude that most of the pre-WWII Lithuanian family traditions in Perth were maintained without modification by a limited number of émigrés' families while the senior members of the family were still alive. Most of the elderly members of the family were still living in rural area at the time they fled the country. Over time, the traditions were modified to adapt to the new environment and today few survive.

Similarly, one of the most powerful identity core markers of Lithuanian culture, the language, according to this research, is on the verge of being lost. Today the language is only spoken by the few remaining original *émigrés*. The interviewees all recognized the vital role of grandparents and their efforts to promote the Lithuanian language among the new Australian-Lithuanian generation. Nevertheless, the language remains threatened. Australian-Lithuanian children having attended school and merged into the mainstream culture, started to speak English, and refused to continue to speak Lithuanian within the family. Today, few can still speak and understand some words of their parents' language and for many it remains essentially just a memory of their childhood.

The Roman Catholic religion was an important factor in the émigrés' lives in the early years of their re-settlement. It was perceived by the Catholic Lithuanians as a link between their past and their present and provided a sense of identity and community. Its influence diminished as the émigrés families merged into mainstream Australian life. For most of the émigrés regular religious attendance became of secondary importance. This was even more so in extended families where children had intermarried. Today, the senior Catholic émigrés still attend church and those who are unable to take part in regular church practices, for health and practical reasons, still consider themselves to be religious. One can conclude that some fifty years later, religion seems to have remained a strong element of Lithuanian identification among the original émigrés whose life was shaped by the experiences of pre-WWII Lithuania. Although the original *émigrés* who

are still alive hold on to their religious values, most of their descendants attend church at Easter and Christmas time only. Like language and traditions, the religious connection may indeed die with the last of the original *émigrés*.

A column profiling in summary form the cultural characteristics of the group is presented in the multi column table, column 2. See in Appendix 3.

Four non-identifying but directly grounded composite narratives intended to convey a sense of people who made up the present-day Australian sample are contained in Appendix 10 – 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4.

The next chapter presents a detailed account of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture of the present day sample in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia.

CHAPTER 8

LITHUANIANS IN KRASNOYARSK, SIBERIA: THE SURVIVAL OF A COMMUNITY

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> We lost everything … our native language was about the only thing of value we were able to preserve (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 3*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

State-backed powers included the right to confiscate and re-allocate property (also a right under the auspices and authority of village elders), and to order deportation and forced labour. These have been mechanisms of social and political control and State economic management for over three and a half centuries. The Czarist laws of 1649-1736 first instituted and legitimized the forced removal and re-settlement of people in both the core Russian and colonized territories. Then after 1917, the Revolutionary Government and Soviet System controlled internal and external policy and political opposition and what was labelled 'criminality'. So over time this State-controlled system of mass arrest or exile settlements in remote areas directly affected and shaped the lives of millions of people. To attain a comprehensive and grounded understanding of the Gulag, its origin and organization I have analysed in depth the works of the historian Anne Applebaum(2003), the most Rev. Michael Bordeaux (1979) Roy A Medvedev,(1971, 2004), the most Rev. Jonas Savasis (1996) and the writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, (1973).

For the purpose of this thesis the focus is on the half century of forced removal and re-settlement of Lithuanian people which began with the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania in 1940; and on the ways in which this diaspora has affected the pre-WWII rural Lithuanian culture, its customs and traditions, values and beliefs. Under particular examination is the experience of Lithuanian *émigrés* in the former Soviet Siberian Region of Krasnoyarsk, collected through interviews; and I consider the extent to which these core markers of pre-war Lithuanian identity have been retained, modified or lost over the period of their diaspora. The period examined covers the fifty years of exile during which these original *émigrés*, all of whom chose to stay in Soviet or former Soviet regions to which they had been initially deported, have evolved over time into another condition: that of residents, tied to their adopted land by the intersecting claims of circumstances, history, economy and family.

The cornerstone of Soviet and State initiated and controlled deportation and re-settlement was the Gulag, the extensive system of labour camps and of the *specpolesenia* (special exile settlements). These were first established in Russia in 1919 as a direct result of the October 1917 Revolution and continued to expand over the following decades across the whole of the Soviet Union. The term Gulag, which was initially the Soviet acronym for *Glavnoe Upravlenie Lagerei* (Main Camp Administration), has come over the years to represent the entire Soviet prison and camp system in all its procedures and varieties. As such, the term now connotes for most people the form of arrest, the methods of interrogation, the transportation and the forced-labour. The Gulag involved as many as six million exiles in remote and scarcely populated areas of the Soviet Union, and the estimated death of approximately eighteen million people (Applebaum, 2003, p. 4).

The first camp of the Gulag was established by the Revolutionary Government in the Solovetsky Islands when prisoners, white guard officers, orthodox nuns and priests, and political dissidents started to arrive there in the summer of 1920. As early as May 1920, the government newspaper *Izvestija* had described the isolated islands of the Solovetsky as being the ideal work camps: "The harsh environment, the work regime, the fight against the force of the nature will be a good school for all criminal elements" (Applebaum, 2003, p. 42). Solovetsky may not have been the only prison in the Soviet Union, but it was a prison where slave-labour was used for the first time and where the camp system originated. According to Applebaum the entire Soviet system of forced labour as a method or re-education started in 1921. In this period eighty-four forced labour camps in forty-three provinces were established with the purpose to 'rehabilitate' the enemies of the people and continue to expand until 1953 (Applebaum, 2003, p. 4) In 1930 the Gulag was re-established as an administrative organisation. The administration of this system of re-education by forced labour, was under the direct responsibility of the *Chrezvychynaya Komissiya* or CHEKA (Extraordinary Commission), a secret police organization of the civil war period, whose power was absolute (Medvedev, 1971, p. 388). Years later Alexander Solzhenitsyn in his 1973 work *The Gulag Archipelago,* wrote that the CHEKA was "The only punitive organ in human history that combined in one set of hands investigation, arrest, interrogation, persecution, trial and execution of the verdict" (Solzhenitsyn, 1973, p. 28).

By 1934 the CHEKA, re-organized and re-named as the *Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikt* or NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs), was playing a key role in the implementation of Stalin's large-scale construction projects in the remote territories of former Siberia. This system was devised in order to accelerate the industrialisation of the Soviet Union and harvest the rich mineral resources of those underpopulated territories (Gregory and Lavarez, 2003, p. 213). Stalin's constant increasingly unreasonable demands for more and better output, together with the harsh environment and difficult living conditions in the camps, continually depleted the labour force and required an on-going supply of fresh manpower. The NKVD, by virtue of its unchallengeable right to imprison people and exile them with a mere administrative act and no juridical procedure (Medvedev, 1971, p. 391), was able to provide this essential labour supply for most of the first half of the twentieth century. The Gulag continued to expand throughout WWII. During the time from 1940 to 1953 it has been estimated that 279,313 Lithuanians were deported to the territories of the former Soviet Union. See Maps in Appendix 11 and Photographs in Appendix 13.

Of these, 152, 496 were sentenced to forced-labour and lived in imprisonment camps, and 126,817 were assigned to exile settlement villages (Racėnas, 2005, p. 11), among them about 30,700 children under the age of eighteen (Balkelis, 2005, p. 42). During the first Soviet mass deportation that took place from June 14 to 17 June, 1941 about 5,500 children were among the deportees, of whom 965 were younger than four years of age, 1,918 between the ages of five and ten years, and 2,276 between the ages of eleven and eighteen (Balkelis, 2005, p. 44). It was the contribution of some of these children to my interviews that allowed me to establish the patterns of maintenance, loss and adaptation of the pre-WWII rural Lithuanian traditions, religious practices and beliefs and language among the Lithuanian *émigrés* community still living in Siberia.

Among these Lithuanians deported, there were male and female prisoners of war, dissidents and partisans who were sentenced between fifteen and twenty-five years of imprisonment in forced-labour camps in the Norilsk, Vorkuta, Kolyma and Altaj Regions. Prisoners worked in almost every industry: logging, mining, construction, factory works and farming (Applebaum, 2003, p. 396). As part of the politics of concealment and control, the camps' identities were often disguised by names that reflected their topographic location and made difficult their identification and geographic

location. Jonas, who had been sentenced to fifteen years of forced-labour in one of those camps, described his experience with these words:

> I was deported on the 10th of August, 1946, at *Berlag* [shore camp] at Magadan because I did not want to serve in the Red Army … I worked in a mine … it was very cold, minus-50 degrees in winter. I was only twenty-six years old. My camp was 6000 km from Krasnoyarsk … there were also 800 women. … In my barrack there were thirty-three people from nineteen different countries Germans, Polish, Finnish (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Given the concealed nature of the system, it is impossible to determine accurately in exact figures the size and the numbers of camps and prisoners (United Nations, International Labour Office, 1953). Its effects and its survivors can be established and presented. The Russian historian Galina Ivanovna, in her work *Labour camp Socialism: the Gulag in the Totalitarian System* claims:

> To date, the Russian historians have discovered and described 476 camps that existed at different times on the territory of the USSR. It is well known that practically every one of them had several branches, many of which were quite large. In addition to the large numbers of camps, there were no less than 2000 colonies. It would be virtually impossible to reflect the entire mass of Gulag facilities on a map that would also account for the various times of their existence (Ivanovna, 2000, p. 188).

The Gulag endured in its core form until 1953, the year which marked the death of Stalin. By July of the following year the Soviet authorities, after having recognized the unproductive nature of the camps, the system was officially dissolved and the camps began to be dismantled and their prisoners released (Applebaum, 2002, p. 454).

Deportation Period (1940-1953): The Built Environment, Communities and Changes

Lithuanian deportees were mentally and physically unprepared for the environment that they had to confront when they reached their destination. The sense of alienation and despair is expressed in the words of Antanas who remembered what he saw from the small windows of the train on his journey to a remote settlements area in the *taiga* (Siberian forest) near Krasnoyarsk in the Altaj Region.

> I saw from the train … a large empty space with few houses here and there, very poor wooden houses, more like huts … with small windows … no trees … and no people (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

After their train journey, most of the deportees and their wagons were transferred onto large barges on the Yenisei River and transported to a virgin forest, to work in the logging camps. Janina remembered that on their arrival they were placed either in overcrowded wooden rectangular barracks (with thatched roofs, often with broken windows and doors, with a common kitchen, with scarce or no electricity, and with little heating) or in tents if they had been sent to build new camps, or in huts made from tree branches.

> With my daughter and my parents we were sent in a room shared with other two families. We were about twelve … it was all right other Lithuanians were twenty in a room and they had to sleep on the floor, it was so dirty and smelling (Janina, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Once in the exile settlement, the deportees were immediately organized in working teams without consideration of their age and gender. Men, boys, women and young girls alike were expected to fell trees and raft them down to the Yenisei River. Those of working age who were too ill to work were sent to the settlement infirmary or left home, mostly unattended. During the day, small children of working parents were either left in the care or other children or older siblings who had not reached the required working age, or were sent to a camp barrack that functioned as a nursery. Valerija, who lived for years in one of these exile settlements, gave a brief account of her experiences:

> When I arrived with my family it was very cold … they sent us in a barrack … the building was dirty, smelling, and the windows had broken glass … there were only a kerosene-lamp we did not have enough light the electricity was not working properly … some day it was all right and others it did not work, there was only a kerosene-fuelled lantern … I was with my mother and my two brothers and my younger sister … we had to share this place with another Lithuanian women and her three children … but it was all right … we had a common kitchen we were lucky … we soon learnt that some other people before being in this village were sent north and they had to stay in the Jurta a sort of round barracks, and they were a lot it was very cold. … I was twenty years old and I had to move the trees from the forest to the river, it was cold my hands were very cold, sometimes I had trouble to push the trunks … my skin was all swollen, the mosquitoes were everywhere, but we had to work men and women together with the same job, we were a mixed group there were also Ukrainians and Polish … everybody was working hard … but I met a lot of new people … my mother was often sick … I had to leave her at home by herself all of us had to go to work, my youngest sister was taken to the nursery she was only three years old (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 1,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In contrast Emilija recalled:

> In my village we were lucky there were new barracks that the people before us had already built. They were all right only the door did not close properly but

> there was the electricity, and we had enough heating, it was not hot but it was all right … we could read at night and do what ever we wanted, we shared it with another family mother, grandmother and a son … we were only three, my mother, my father and me … my brothers weren't at home when they came … they were in the fields and when they saw the trucks, they ran away … so they took only us … my mother was cleaning the school and in the infirmary (Emilija, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Life for the deportees was difficult but they generally supported and helped each other, essentially as one big family and with the strong sense of community that had been typical of their pre-war rural Lithuanian society and experience. Over time the exiles were able gradually to improve the standard of their accommodation, purchasing wood from the nearby forest and in the summer, adding a vegetable garden in a small piece of land given to them by the camp authorities. In most exile settlements, the Lithuanian deportees were able to mix relatively freely with the local population of fellow mixed-ethnic deportees and the Mongolian people native to the area. Janina, showing an old black and white photo, remembered the people depicted.

> Here we are in front of the tent where I was living and these was a family of local people … this was the mother and the father and they had also children … they used to drive a sledge pulled by the a reindeer. They were very nice and we become friends … they helped us they gave us some food (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

There was no possibility of escape from these exile settlements, as they were isolated and some of them could only be reached via river. The land around the exile settlements was typically flat, with a river or a small lake being the only source of fresh water and fish. A typical exile settlement, as described by Janina who lived near Krasnoyarsk, consisted of barracks for the deportees, a general store accessible to the local population, a post-office, a police station, a small hospital, a nursery, a pre-school and a primary school.

> We lived in a village not far from the river Yenisei … only six miles … close to the forest there were timber barracks … a shop, a school … and also better accommodation for the people in charge of the settlement … we were about fifty Lithuanians families (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Only a small number of the respondents who had spent time in the forced labour-camps were prepared or able to give any detailed description of the camp and their routines of daily life during their years there. During the interviews some clearly showed signs of evident distress and pain when I touched on their earliest days of deportation, and I decided (for them at least) not to exacerbate their discomfort by pursuing details of their

life in the camps. What I have recorded from them is therefore limited for the most part to the re-collections they have shared with me of their life after their release from the labour camps in Soviet Siberia.

According to those who did feel comfortable in relating their experiences, accommodation in the forced labour camps was typically in rectangular, overcrowded barracks made of wood, with the walls unplastered, with rows of bunk-beds and with a table and some benches placed in the centre of the room. Jonas remembered that heating and electricity was often, though not always, scarce.

> In my barrack we were a lot and of different nationality, the smell was terrible, but we had a good light and good heating, we could take home some coal from the mine (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The main compound of the typical forced labour camp was surrounded by a high wooden fence protected by a second wired fence and with a large open area inside and near to the entrance gate where the deportees were required to stand twice a day to be counted. Petras, who had lived for fifteen years in one of these camps, described his daily routine in these words:

> I lived in a barrack not far from the entrance gate … we were about thirty people of different nationalities … we worked in the near coal mine, the work was hard, they gave us food, but was never enough, we had bread and meat ration … we were not free to move out of the camp only we could go to work … they later allowed us to receive some parcel from home and that was good, because they did not take anything from us, so I received food and books from home … my barracks was warm as we could take some coal from the mine … they did not mind (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The experience and lifestyle of the deportees, both in the forced labour camps and in the exile settlements, varied according to their administration and the location. Agota recalled with sadness:

> I was deported with my two children … I was in the village alone for seven years, my husband was in a labour camp … my life was very hard, I was always worried for my children … but I kept going for them … I was so happy when he returned … we could be now a real family … all my relatives were back home we were the only one that were deported … my husband was a journalist and a partisan (Agota, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Petras further stated:

> We did not have any freedom, we were always checked … we still could contact each other as there were other Lithuanians in the camps and we formed our ethnic

> group, but we did not have much freedom … how can a person be happy if doesn't have any freedom … some of us learnt how to twist the rules but it was still dangerous (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The difficulty of adapting to a new physical environment, to the hard working conditions and to the separation from their family often resulted in tension, depression, and feelings of alienation which lasted for a long period. Petras described with feelings of sadness his life after he was married; he continued to live in fear for many years.

> Even when I was free for many years I lived in fear … that someone was coming to my door and pick me up in the middle of the night … I could not sleep and I felt very bad … I was always worried … my wife that is a Russian … she was very good and help me a lot (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Valerija stated that food shortages were ever present and food was a commodity always in demand in the first years of deportation. In the words of Valerija:
We were always starving … we were always looking for food … it was never enough people died for starvation … children, elderly people and women. We were lucky, my mother packed a lot of food, ham, potato, cabbage and bread … we even shared it with some people on the train … they did not have anything … we also had enough food for reaching our camp, but after it was a trouble … the weather was cold and we did have only the food rations, and sometimes we really starved … even if you had the money there was no food to buy in the village shop … some people could not buy anything because they did not have the money and anything else to barter … they were the one that died (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

For the deportees interned in the forced labour camps, a daily food ration was regularly provided according to their work load. However, the food was seldom enough for the deportees, most of whom were working long hours on heavy tasks. Jonas, who had worked in one of these camps, claimed:

> I worked thirteen hours a day in a mine, it was very hard work and cold and always the food was not enough … it was difficult to work in these conditions without enough food … people died from diseases and starvation (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

After a few months most of the deportees were allowed to write letters to relatives and friends back home. Although this was limited to once a year for those in the labour camps soon they began to receive monthly parcels of Lithuanian staple food, smoked ham and bacon, porridge mixture, dry beans, together with clothes and books for

children, and other amenities. They received vegetable seeds and started growing their own vegetables such as carrots, onions, cabbage and potatoes, preserving in this way some of the rural Lithuanian cooking traditions and eating habits. In the early 1950s, food started to become more available in the village stores, with the deportees typically being able to use their food ration cards to obtain their basic requirements. In the summer and autumn months, wild berries, edible mushrooms and nuts grew in the forest and could be collected by the children while their parents were working. Janina maintained that families were able for the most part to continue preparing traditional Lithuanian meals involving an abundance of rye, barley, beetroot, potatoes, cabbage, salads, pancakes and their usual meat dishes based on pork.

> After so many months of starvation, my mother was very happy, we had a vegetable garden with potatoes, cabbage, carrots and beetroots and onions … our relatives in Kaunas were sending us ham and bacon and we could it now with the bread that we could purchase from the local shop … with flowers and sugar my mother was always making biscuits (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Most of the respondents claimed that the traditional rural cooking and eating habits could be maintained largely because of the soil and the summer weather conditions of the area which were very similar to those in Lithuania. Leonas claimed that fish, easily caught in the local rivers and lakes, was an important and abundant addition to the basic diet for most families.

> Here in Siberia, there is the best fish that one can eat … I ate fish everyday for breakfast and it is enough for all day, it is very fresh, rich and tasty … after you do not need to eat anything else (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Tea was always a commodity of high consumption, due to the severe weather conditions of the Siberian winters. Herbal tea, if not purchased from the local village store, was prepared directly by the female deportees from herbs and flowers gathered in the neighbouring forest, as was traditionally done in Lithuania.

Lithuanian Language: An Identification of National Identity

The Lithuanian language continued to be maintained on a daily basis for private use both in the settlements and in the forced-labour camps. Juozas, who at the time of deportation was aged fifteen, remembered:

> We spoke and prayed in Lithuanian on the train … we spoke Lithuanian at home with our grandparents and parents, we had officially to speak Russian, but as soon as we were together we spoke Lithuanian … even at work, if the guard were not there (Juozas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Janina, who lived in a settlement village, explained that everyone was speaking Lithuanian, while Russian was only spoken at work.

> In the village we spoke only Lithuanian, as well at work if we could … the commandant of the camp did not want … I spoke all the time Lithuanian at home with my three girls, it was a form of protest … we could not speak Russian among us … at home we were Lithuanians (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2* , Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Petras in the same vein added that also in his labour camp everyone continued to speak their native language.

> We were only three Lithuanians in my barracks but we spoke Lithuanian all the time … it was a form of protest … we were Lithuanians … it was dangerous, the guards did not want us to speak a language that they could not understand but we did it just the same (Petras, *Interview Transcript 3*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Comments such as these, echoed by all the other respondents, expressed the common view that Lithuanians since their first days of deportation and during all their period of detention strove to maintain their language, a key marker of their national identity and a symbol of concealed rebellion against the new order.

Antanas claimed that most of the émigré Lithuanian children, being of school age at the time of deportation, were already familiar with both the Lithuanian and Russian languages.

> I was only fifteen … and my brother nine … but with my mother and grandmother until they died we spoke only Lithuanian, when my mother died … than I was twenty years old … all of us could speak and understand Russian, I learnt it at school, but we refused to speak it at home (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Valerija had memories of her mother speaking Lithuanian within the family and friends.

> My mother used to talk with me only in Lithuanian … I know that both of us could speak Russia, … but she used to tell me about her life when she was young in Kaunas, she was a dressmaker and she was telling me about the young girls who wanted a dress for their weddings … she always told me how the life was beautiful back home in springs with the gandras (stork) in the farm of my grandfather … and the day in which she was helping grandmother to bake some bread … she could not possibly tell me this in Russian … I remember also our

> Lithuanian friends all of us were peaking Lithuanian (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Those who had been below school-age when in Lithuania were exposed to Lithuanian language in the home after deportation, and learnt Russian once they began to attend the local village Russian school. So it was for Marija's son:

> My son was only three years old when we were deported, at home with us he spoke only Lithuanian and when he went to primary school, he never spoke a words of Russian with us we always wanted him to speak Lithuanian (Marija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

However, they all continued to use Lithuanian as the only language of communication with their family members, in this way strengthening their national ethnic identity and the sense of belonging to their homeland, which they associated with freedom and normal life through the continuous narrative of their parents and grandparents.

Lithuanian Families: The New Role of the Women and the Children

The size of the Lithuanian family at the time of their deportation varied according to the number of people deported and the people who survived the hardship of the journey to reach their destination. Most of the deportees' families, however, were typically large, particularly in the period from 1946 to 1950, when the *kulaks* were deported with their entire family as mentioned in Chapter 4. In the words of Agnes:

> All my family my father, my mother, two sisters and three brothers and me were deported also my grandfather and my grandmother … they were living with us at the farm … I was the oldest child, my little sister was only three years old … that night I remembered she was scared and she was crying … we were all taking something with us some food and clothes but she was sat on a chair and she was crying (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In contrast, Antanas claimed:

> I was deported in 1948 with my mother, my grandmother and my brother … my father was a partisan and he was not at home … he was hidden in the nearby forest, some neighbour later when I when to Lithuania told me that he knew what was happened immediately because he was in a forest next to our farm but he could not help … later my father was shot (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Dividing and separating the family unit was a deliberate strategy of the Soviet authorities. The men of most families were taken away from their wives and children and sent either

to prison or to forced-labour camps. Most of the women with young children were sent to the re-settlement villages.

Childbirths in the first years of deportation were not numerous. However, the traditional home childbirth event was maintained in the settlements for the female deportees who at the time of deportation were pregnant. Hospitalization and medical assistance were not always readily available in the infirmary of the settlement. Janina remembered the birth of her second baby girl.

> My first daughter was born in the village the first year when we arrived. I had her delivery in my barrack. My mother was there with another two Lithuanian female deportees. Everything was all right. I didn't need any other help (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Although most of the women managed to keep the family together, they had to endure further hardship, particularly if their children were very young and had elderly members of the family to look after as well. In the words of Janina who had been deported in 1948:

> In my village there were many Lithuanian women with young children and no husband some of them they had also some parents, which were elderly … they were the poorest in the village they never had enough money to buy food for the family and nothing that they could exchange for food … they lived out of one salary and from the help of the other Lithuanian families (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Antanas, who at that time was a young boy, recollected:

> In the village there were some women with their families that have been moved from one village to another without any reasons … one woman with four children told me that they were settled down in the village for about six months and then suddenly they had to change … they stay another two months in a small village north and then they reach this place were they settled down … but the grandmother died, almost immediately it was too difficult for her she was eighty-five years old (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The roles of the members of the typical pre-war rural Lithuanian family from the very early days of their deportation became progressively adapted to the new environment and life-style, reflecting their new realities more than the role relationships that had been the tradition in the homeland. In the re-settlement villages the head of the family was typically and necessarily the woman. Antanas pointed out that often the children took on the role of their father as principal guardians for the sole parent, grandparents and younger siblings. He has vivid sad memories of his family:

> My mother was paralysed after one year we arrived in the village, my grandmother was old, my brother and I we had to work to support them and to look after them, and my mother was always in bed (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

For the children, the deportation represented the end of their childhood. Their displacement marked a forced separation from the physical environment and social expectations they would have held in their homeland: a comfortable home and a native social and cultural environment. Agnes, who had been deported at the age of nine and spent her youth in one of the re-settlement villages, claimed:

> When I left my village [in Lithuania] I was so sorry … I had to leave behind my friends, my school … my dog and a tree not far from my farm on the road were I used to sit and recite little poems (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Children other than the very young were expected to work with the adult deportees and they received the same food ration as the adults, bread (the staple for all deportees in the first years of deportation), flour, tea, potato and salt. Agnes described her new life in Siberia as follows:

> I worked everyday in the forest with my mother, I had to help to put the trees that were cut together and then pushed them down in the water on a raft for being transported down to the river … it was hard work … in winter my hands were very cold, my mother was very tired and became sick, she wasn't used to this kind of work … I brought home some bread, potatoes some onions for all of us to eat … back home my mother was always happy she was cooking for us and she made my clothes with the sewing machine that my father bought for her … here as well she made my clothes but it was different (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

During their time of deportation, most of the participants in the study reported that they felt homesick, due to the loss of members of the family, relatives, friends and the close relationships which they had enjoyed back home. Valerija recalled this period with feelings of anxiety.

> With my mother, two brothers and my younger sister we were sent in a village near Irkutsk, after few weeks … they sent us here, … my husband was in a prison camp in the Pechora area, my father in another camp working on a farm … here there were many Lithuanian families … it was like a family we did things together … we supported each other … life was not very easy … I did not have my husband helping me, I missed him and I was very worried … but I made very good friends … there were also many Germans … they were good too … my best friend was a German lady, she is now dead … I miss her … my family went all back to Lithuania (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In order to survive physically, emotionally and spiritually in the new circumstances and environment of the exile settlements and labour camps, the deportees gathered together and formed their own Lithuanian sub-communities. This also was in order to offer some sort of protection to the weaker members' children and elderly or frail family members, and to secure jobs and food rations. The deportees were drawn to each other for their common cultural, social, religious and political values and beliefs and for their family links, since entire families were deported together; but it was also because of their shared feelings of resentment against and hostility towards the Soviet State that occupied their homeland.

These communities evidently helped to form and reinforce the children's identities as Lithuanians. The deportees' ethnicity functioned as a uniting force for the displaced and disrupted families, bringing the deportees together as they had to confront an alien environment and adjust to new life pressures. Their common culture, language and values clearly helped to strengthen their character and assist them to cope with the inevitable trauma of forced displacement. Most of the participants to the study made a distinction between their life before and after deportation. Leonas recalled his happy life in his village.

> I was ten years old and I remember my neighbour and my family everybody was happy with their life because they were content with what they did and had … they were able to built their own house their own garden and vegetable garden … With the Soviets even the nature had no life even the gandras (stork) were sick. I remember in those time in the evening you go to sleep and you do not know what was happening the following day … but now everything is good … they have nice trees and animals … with the Soviets everything disappeared (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

This recollection conveys the feelings of belonging, nostalgia and sorrow which are found also in most of the interviews. The homeland during the years of deportation and exile was and is still for the émigrés a powerful element in their continuing identity as exiles in a foreign land.

In most of the exile settlements, Lithuanian deportees managed to organize cultural and social activities and even religious festivals in secrecy. Agnes, an 84-year-old female respondent remembered preserving her Lithuanian identity in those early years by attending youth gatherings where she could recite Lithuanian poems.

> Back home at school I was always reciting poems, I was very good and I liked … my mother used to teach me them … even very old poem that her grandmother taught her when she was young … I used to learn them … and recite them at school it was the same here in this village were I was living before move to Krasnoyarsk … I always liked they were about nature and forest and animals of the forest, about the farms (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Leonas claimed that although he and his fellow deportees rarely had much to share, they nevertheless enjoyed meeting and giving away what they did have, in a continuing tradition of the hospitality that is a key defining trait of the Lithuanian culture.

> We had a club, where we met, we socialized and entertained each other by singing old Lithuanian songs and dancing … in this meeting we get to know each other and also some of us started a family … we were happy and she shared just our support and friendship because we had no food or drinks (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

However, the deportees were not always able to organize meeting places as permission had to be granted by the authorities in charge of the camps. Agnes, living now in the city of Krasnoyarsk, recalled that:

> As soon as we arrived in the village after few weeks we organized a sort of club, where we met and sang songs and dance, but when the commandant of the camp find out, he closed it down, we meet in secret in our houses … but it was different, not many people could be there all the time we did not have enough space (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

According to Antanas for many, the home was considered the only place where they could come together and express their feelings of fears and doubt about their future, speak their native language, pray and maintain their family and religious traditions and their national identity.

> I was young when I lived in the village, but I remember that after work, someone was always coming to visit my family … one women with two children and without husband … she had always problems of food and we often shared with her our meal that was very poor as well, but we all helped each others from the hearts, that was the only way to survive (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

They organized gatherings for religious and family occasions in secrecy, all prepared and enjoyed in keeping with the traditional Lithuanian sense of hospitality. However, Janina claimed that by the 1960s most of the Lithuanian families had returned to their homeland. Many of the single people, mostly men, who were not allowed to return to Lithuania for political reasons, had moved to the city of Krasnoyarsk.

> In my village everybody left … they all returned to Lithuania, only my family remained because my husband could not return to Lithuania … we became very good friends with a German family … we did a lot of things together … but we were only two families (Janina, *Interview Transcript* 2, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The Lithuanian émigrés in the villages strove to maintain the sense of community and shared hospitality among those left behind, who in some cases were émigrés from a different national background but with the same experiences.

The traditional values always attached to the family and education that helped nurture the Lithuanian personal and social identity in the period before and during independence, continued to be maintained during the first years of deportation in the new country. In the re-settlement villages, even though children were expected to works as adults, they were also able to benefit from the Soviet educational system. Children at the age of seven were expected and encouraged by their parents to attend the local schools although attendance was not compulsory. Most Lithuanian parents, however, sent their children and the time spent at school served to shorten their required working day by four hours. Agnes remembered about her schooling:

> I came here that I was ten years old, my mother sent me to school, and I liked, there I met other children of my age, we had a Russian teacher that was good … I remembered that when I was sick … than my mother though me at home … she wanted me to learn (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Statements such these were common in most of the interviews and are reflective of the parents' attitudes to encourage their children to obtain a better education.

The Role of Religion in the Life of the Deportees

For Lithuanian deportees and exiles, religious expression was a practice which became vital from the first days of their deportation as Antanas recollected:

> I was deported in 1948 with my family. … I remember everybody in my wagon were praying on their knees and singing a song to Our Lady … Marija, Marija, everyone was praying and crying (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Whilst the support of family members, friends and inmates was essential to endure the harsh living conditions and the unfamiliar environment, religion assisted the deportees' spiritual survival. However, in the Gulag the practice of any form of religion was

forbidden. It was not always possible for the deportees to maintain religious festivals and religious practices as a community, in the attempt to preserve their 'Lithuanian-ness' and their survival as an ethnic group in the forced labour camps and in the exile settlements. The harshness of the environment, climate conditions, the isolation of the exile settlements and the physically hard work, the Soviet rules and controls prevented it. Thus it was maintained secretly, at times with the tacit approval of sympathetic guards. Jonas, who was sentenced to forced labour in Magadan in the Kolyma Region, remembered: "When I wanted to pray I knelt facing the wall, I made the sign of the cross and I prayed for some minutes. … So did the others … some guards knew … but they never said anything" (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Lithuanian religious faith impressed many non-Catholics in the forced labour camps. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in his book *The Gulag Archipelago* claims that the Lithuanian Catholics were extremely religious and describes with these words how in prison they made their rosaries:

> In the Kuibyshev transit prison I saw Catholics [Lithuanians] busy making themselves rosaries for prison use. They made them by soaking bread kneading beads and stringing them while still moist on several strands (Solzhenitsyn, 1999, pp. 100-101).

Rev. Michael Bordeaux in his book *Lithuania the Land of Crosses* describes the Lithuanian as "… brave country-folk openly wore their baptismal crosses on their necks, thus making a silent testimony to their belonging to Jesus Christ …" (Bordeaux, 1979, p. 190).

In the labour camps religious practices survived only as individual practice as the Soviet controls prevented community events. Among the general prisoners in the camps, clergy and nuns from all over the Soviet Union and occupied countries were numerous and represented different faiths. Jonas claimed that Lithuanian Catholic priests would hold Sunday's service, Christmas and Easter celebrations in secrecy and would administer the Sacraments.

> I am a strong believer, and without my prayers, I think I could not survive, it was very hard to live there … there was a priest among us and in great secrecy helped us. … In the camp you could not show that you were praying, but in my barrack we always pray together, we recited the rosary … it was hard, you had to be very careful … I still pray everyday and recite my rosary (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In the exile settlements, religious practices and festivals were also celebrated in secrecy. Lithuanian female members of the family traditionally entrusted with the duty of safeguarding religious values, beliefs and traditions, had to strive throughout the entire period of the exile to meet their commitments. Valerija maintained that there were times when to mark a religious celebration was difficult because of work commitments, the absence of a priest, or the Soviet rules and controls imposed on the deportees.

> In the past if they discovered that you believed in God you were sent to prison, or punished … they changed your work or place of work with a more difficult one … we simply had no freedom … but we could still pray and gather together in secret. We used to meet at the house of different families in turns … we were about ten or twelve people and we prayed and sang together … we always did, we sang but not louder, because we were worried to be discovered (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

With no places of worship, Lithuanian deportees improvised a church in their own houses where they would meet and keep alive their religious faith, one of the most significant markers of the pre-war rural culture.

During the interviews almost all the Lithuanian religious calendar traditions were mentioned by one or more of the participants, the most commonly retained traditions being the celebration of *Gegužės Mėnesis* (Month of May), a month of prayer dedicated to the Virgin Mary; *Kūčios* (Christmas Eve meal), the customary Lithuanian Christmas Eve meal strictly shared only with the members of the family; *Kaledos* (Christmas Day); and *Velykos* (Easter Day) celebrations.

Gegužės Mėnesis (Month of May), is a month of prayer traditionally dedicated to the Virgin Mary in accordance to the Roman Catholic religious calendar. All the participants in the study confirmed that this observance was maintained in secret in the exile settlements as a community event. Agnes remembered one of these prayer meetings with the participation of six families.

> Every day during all month we met in turn in different houses and we recited the rosary and the Litanies and sang hymns together, we were a group of fourteen or twenty people … we all participated in it. Once they all gathered at my family's barrack we were about 23 people including the children I think about six families … we prayed and sang religious songs but not loudly … people could hear us and then the guards could cause troubles … but it was good everybody was happy and we support each others (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In the forced labour camp *Gegužės Mėnesis* was also maintained among the political prisoners on an individual and private basis. Petras described his observance of daily prayer in May in these words:

> In my barrack we prayed during *Gegužės Mėnesis* but not together ... I always found time to recite my rosary … I had to, I used to do it when I was in Lithuania with my family and friends … my mother was a very religious person and she taught us how to pray, since we were little children (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Kūčios (Christmas Eve meal), Emiljia explained that it had to be adapted to the new circumstances.

> At the beginning in the village nobody could prepare a *Kūčios* meal … there was not enough food … we only wish Merry Christmas and shake hands, sometime we exchange only some potatoes and an onion … we were always looking for food … but after when we started to received parcel from Lithuania, we had some food that we shared with the other that they did not have enough … and we started to prepare *Kūčios* (Emiljia, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In the first years of deportation the meal was prepared using herrings or other fish saved during the previous months, together with other available food such as bread, beetroot, beans, and potatoes. Valerija, mentioning the food parcels that her family received from relatives in Lithuania in the early 1950s, recollected:

> I was able to prepare Kūčios for my family … I cooked some beetroot soup, beans salad, some herrings that I saved the previous months … and I made even some kiselius (cranberry pudding) … and a fruit compote with apples and pears … I used to receive food from my sisters that returned to Lithuania (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Janina explained that *ploktelė*, traditionally shared among those who participate in the meal, were occasionally received by some of the deportees from their relatives in Lithuania and when available would typically be divided with other families in the village.

> After two years that we were in the village we had the permission to receive some parcel from Lithuania and my sister sent me also some books from my children and some cloths ... I used to receive ploktele inside some Lithuanian newspaper that my mother sent to me in the parcel with some food (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Petras reported that in the labour camps *Kūčios* meal was celebrated in secrecy and not as a regular community practice.

> In my barrack we were about ten Lithuanians and we saved some food during the previous months to be used for *Kūčios*, and then we celebrated in some corner of the camps that nobody knew (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Since the time of deportation *Kaledos* (Christmas Day) had become a normal working day. Both in the exile settlements and the forced labour camps, authorities would make sure of the presence of the exiles on the working sites by calling a daily roll, as Agota recalled.

> I was working in the forest to cut trees, most of us in my village worked in the forest. We had family and children, but on that day [Kaledos] we had to go to work. The people in charge of the camp used to came and check on us … it was too dangerous to remain at home (Agota, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In the same vein Marjia added:

> After work [on that day] people used to gather at the house of some families and sing traditional Lithuanian Christmas carols, but in low voices because gatherings of a large group of people were forbidden … and the guard could hear (Marjia, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Parents would decorate a Christmas tree for their children with cotton and paper decorations but would avoid speaking about the religious aspect of this day, especially with their children if they were attending school. At the time of Christmas, the young children of the émigrés were often queried by their teachers for information about their parents' social teaching and cultural practices in the home. Such indirect information gathering often was the source of serious consequences for the parents. Juozas, who at that time was fifteen years old, recollected:

> My parents didn't talk to my brother and me about God. We knew about it because we had been baptized in Lithuania, but they preferred not to say much … they always prepared the Christmas tree but they told us that was a winter celebration … they were too afraid to be discovered by the Soviet authorities in charge of the village and put in jail or be transferred to work in a different place (Juozas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Juozas continued by saying that parents with children born in the exile settlements would typically choose not to expose them directly to any sort of religious upbringing as the risks would have been seen as far too great.

> Parents would avoid showing pictures of Jesus and of the Virgin Mary to the children … it was too dangerous … the communists would arrive and you would

> have problems at least with your work … and others (Juozas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Agnes remembered her parents preparing a Christmas tree, but they never talked to the children about the religious meaning of Christmas. Clearly she knew it, being nine years old at the time of deportation, but the parents feared for her younger brother.

> I remember my mother and my father [helping us] to prepare the Christmas tree ... [but] they never told us about Infant Jesus, … only later they did … I was nine and I knew everything from home, when we were in Lithuanian, but my brother was too young he was only six years old he could talk at school … so they decided not to say anything (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Valerija, who was 26-year-old at the time of her family's deportation, reported:

> When we arrived here [the Krasnoyarsk area], in our village there were 100 Lithuanian families ... we didn't have the church or a priest … [the first arriving only after 1956, he was also a deportee] ... we met in different houses and prayed together … for Christmas and the Epiphany we gathered together and sang Christmas carols (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Jonas explained that in the labour camps *Kaledos* was celebrated as individual practice.

> For Christmas we went to work … but at night when we returned we prayed with some other inmates, Polish, and Germans that were also in my barrack (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

During the interview Marjia mentioned also that for the Epiphany some families used to go to the nearby forest to pray and sing: "It was cold but we wanted to be together to share that event … we went regularly for three years" (Marjia, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The religious celebration of *Didzioji Savaitė* (Holy Week), which started with *Verbo Sekmadieni* (Palm Sunday) considered by the Catholic Lithuanian population to be the most important and significant celebration of the year, could be preserved in the forced labour camps and in the exile settlements only as individual or within family practices. Large gatherings of people were allowed and there was neither a local church nor a resident priest. Janina remembered:

> We used to meet at the house of a family in turn but no more than ten or twelve people it was too dangerous, we prayed, we sang but not too loud (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In the same vein Petras reported:

> During the Holy week we prayed … in my barrack there were 28 people and eight of us were Lithuanians ... we recited the rosary (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The *pasnikas* (fasting) was strictly observed by most of the deportees both in the exile settlements and in the forced labour camps as the core of *Dydysis Penktadieni* (Good Friday) preparations for Easter, as a sign of devotion, respect and penance. Most of the participants in the study confirmed that they had always fasted on Good Friday and they met and prayed together. Janina remembered:

> I have always observed 'pasnikas' on Good Friday all my life as I did with my family back to Lithuania, I don't even drink water … my mother did the same (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Petras recounted during an interview:

> I have always been fasting for Good Friday, my mother did not allow us to eat and to drink when we were in Lithuania, now I continue to do so, I am been brought up in believe that is something that you have to do at least once a year … if you are a religious person … (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The traditional decoration of *margučiu* was maintained by the deportees, with the decorated eggs then being shared among their children and members of the family, as Agota remembered.

> I prepared *margučiu* [Easter decorated eggs] for my children when I could have some eggs … I boiled them with onions peels or green leaves that I had in the garden … I used to do it back home in the same way, they look very nice (Agota, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Vėlinės, (All Soul's Day) according to the participants it was observed as individual or family practice, as Janina with feelings of sadness explained.

> The first year was so sad because I went to the grave of my little daughter … so many children had died … it was so sad … all the families had at least a child that was dead … my little girl died after eight months from our arrival in the settlement and my husband did not see her anymore … I did not have any flowers but I prayed for her my two boys were with me and also they were very sad (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Petras maintained that:

> For *Velinė* I prayed for my father and my brother who had been shot by the Soviets … my brother was only twenty but he was with the partisan as my father

> was … I prayed also for my friends and my son that died not long ago … in an accident (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Although the environment and the circumstances were clearly not favourable to any open disclosure of religious practices, the vastness of the Lithuanian exile population in the exile settlements and in the forced labour camps made possible the maintenance of religious celebration and practices as a community event and as personal means of survival and preservation of national identity.

Senn suggested that religious faith held Lithuanians together, especially during 1948-1949 deportations.

> Religion strengthened the spiritual life of the Lithuanians in Siberia … [In that period] there were more of them, they could support and help each other in various ways (Senn, 1992, p. 12).

For the pre-war rural Lithuanian population, the family represented the most powerful organization able to maintain the material and spiritual values which were part of the core of the Lithuanian culture and national identity. It was within the family that customs and traditions were created and handed down from generation to generation. The Lithuanians who were deported to Soviet Siberia brought their culture and values with them, although it is clear that they had to strive to maintain them as they adjusted to a new life and environment which most found culturally and personally hostile. Janina, who had lived for fifty-four years in an exile settlement, recalled:

> When we arrived, in my village there were about one hundred Lithuanian families with children, but we did not know what to do ... everybody was afraid…at least until 1953 … everything was forbidden and they always controlled us (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Religious celebration of christenings, weddings and funerals were not allowed. In the first years of deportation the deportees experienced a high number of losses, typically among the elderly, young children and pregnant women. The harsh climate conditions and the hard work proved to be the main causes of death in addition to malnutrition and diseases. Antanas recollected the death of his grandmother just after their arrival with feelings of sadness and bitterness.

> My grandmother died one year after she was deported in 1948, at Iarzava settlement village. My brother that was sixteen and me, we dug a hole in the frozen ground … it was winter and it was difficult … with some piece of wood we made a sort of box and buried senelė [grandmother]. She was very religious,

> she wanted a priest but it was not possible … we could only pray for her (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Post Deportation Period (1953): The Exodus of the Former Deportees to their Homeland

From 1953, the year which marked Stalin's death, the controls in the exile settlements and forced labour camps relented and between February of the same year and September of 1955 amnesty was granted to all prisoners with sentences of five years or less, to all pregnant women, to all women with young children and to everyone less than eighteen years of age (Knight, 1993, p. 185). Most of the former Lithuanian *kulaks* (farmers) were rehabilitated and granted the permission to return to Lithuania with their families although some who applied to return were denied by the Lithuanian Soviet Authorities on the basis of their affiliation to former partisan organizations. Emilija, speaking about her father, reported:

> My father was a farmer … we had a farm not far from Kaunas, he was sent to Siberia because he used to help the partisans that they were living in the forest not far from our farm … I remembered they used to come to our place for food … when the Russian arrived they captured them in the forests and sent us to Siberia … I was only sixteen years old (Emilija*, Interview Transcript 1,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The force labour camps began progressively to be dismantled and the political prisoners released. However, political prisoners in the camps who had committed crimes or who had taken part in revolts in the camps during their years of detention were not rehabilitated and were not free to leave the former Soviet Union. There is little doubt that the Soviets feared the influence that this group of dissidents and former political prisoners would have on the Lithuanian population in Lithuania.. Clearly Lithuanians wanted to continue as an independent nation, people and culture with their own definitive traditions, values and language, and thus were inclined to go on resisting the Soviets. Some deportees, for reasons of their political past, or economic and personal circumstances, had no choice but to remain in their original place of exile.

Among the released prisoners, 130 Lithuanian priests were also able to return to Lithuania. However, a few remained voluntarily with the exiles to minister to their spiritual needs (Savasis, 1966, p. 31). Priests who returned to Lithuania were never fully

rehabilitated by the local Lithuanian Communist Authorities and were sent to isolated parishes. Subsequently, some of them chose to return to the former Soviet Union to work for the exiles. In 1955 Lithuanian children for the first time could be baptized and receive their First Communion. Janina, mother of three girls, claimed during the interview:

> My three daughters were all baptized in 1955, with Christian names … they were baptized in secret … I was happy that they were healthy … some children died after few weeks from their birth without being baptized by the priest … I remember that the parents were very upset … a little boy died only after three weeks (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Emilija explained that typically the godparents were chosen among the grandparents if still alive, relatives or close friends.

> The god parents of my first child were my father and my mother … but then they returned to Lithuania … for my second child I had German friends … they were living just the house next door and we were very good friends for all these years (Emilija, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Priests were still reaching the villages in secrecy. If discovered they would be arrested, given another sentence, or would be expelled from their place of residence. Catholic nuns who were also among the exiles would teach catechism and would prepare people to receive the Sacraments. When a group was ready a priest known to the nuns would be invited to the village to visit and minister the Sacraments. Leonas recalled:

> We all knew when a priest was coming … in our village, we were all happy we could receive the Sacraments, and have a Mass, all in secret at the house of some of us, we had our children baptized, confirmed, and some of us married (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Although most of the Russian-Lithuanian born children were baptized with names of Christian Saints, most of the émigrés families started to celebrate birthdays in place of the Name's Day, leaving Name's Day celebration for elderly members of the family, grandparents and parents. Marija remembered the celebration of her Name's Day.

> At the beginning for Name's Day we just congratulated to each other and shook the hands or gave hugs … we did not have anything to give as a present … Once I remembered some came with an onion and hugged me (Marija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

According to the participants in the study Name's Day celebration ceased to be celebrated when grandparents died or returned to Lithuania.

The first weddings according to the Roman Catholic rites were also celebrated after 1955 in secrecy, by a visiting priest. Valerija explained that the celebration would take place in a deportee's house in the exile settlement that would be improvised as a church in the presence of friends and relatives. The family of the bride for the occasion would organise a party for relatives and friends.

> I was invited to a wedding … a young girl, the daughter of a friend married a Lithuanian young man … It was celebrated at the house of my friends, it was beautiful finally we had a religious wedding … we had also a party it was just as it was to be at home (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Although the official celebration of funerals was not permitted, depending on the settlement authorities, after 1954 the deportees were allowed to accompany the deceased to the burial place, generally an area outside the settlement. A procession was often organized with the participation of most of the Lithuanians living in the exile settlement. Daiva described the funeral of her sister who was only six years old.

> My sister died in 1954, she was ill, and at that time there were not a lot of medicines … my mother and grandmother tried to heal her with some herbs, but she was too sick, she went to the infirmary and then after few days she died. We made a small coffin and we brought them to the cemetery it was a very sad day … it was winter and there was a lot of snow … but lots of friends of my family came with us to the cemetery (Daiva, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

By the early 1960s, most of the deportees had returned to Lithuania, leaving behind only a few families (and in some cases, members of their own families) who had not been granted permission to return to their homeland. The Lithuanians who had remained in Krasnoyarsk and were available to participate in the present study were those who had been denied permission to return to their original country after the dissolution of the camps; or were the deportees who chose to return to Krasnoyarsk as their original place of exile. At times when the male member of family was precluded from returning home, others who may themselves have been free to return opted instead to remain in order to keep the family unit intact. The following extract from an interview with Petras describes his experience of the time and his feelings of anxiety.

> At the railway station of Krasnoyarsk, … the central Siberian railway station … there was such a crowd that to leave was almost impossible … deportees were there from all over Siberia … I met my mother and my sister for the first time after ten years, both released from a re-settlement village and on the way to Lithuania … I couldn't go with them. I was not allowed [the respondent was a former partisan], and also other Lithuanians couldn't go … I was very sick … and for two years I couldn't write to my mother and sister or receive their letters …

> and other Lithuanians could not leave because they were former partisans … as other Lithuanians that now lived here in the city (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Petras summed up the feelings of most of the participants in the study who had the same experience of being left behind, separated from the rest of the family and friends.

The memories of Daiva, create a stark and painful reminder of the ways in which personal and political concerns worked to limit the choices available for exiled Lithuanians who may have wanted to return to the country of their birth but who felt or were unable to do so.

> My sisters, my mother and I we had the permission to return to Lithuania but not my father, we all remained here; we didn't want to leave my father. … Still today I do not know why my father was not allowed to return to Lithuania (Daiva, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

For those deportees who did return to Lithuania, the situation for some was complicated by a number of factors, including the reactions they received from those who had remained in Lithuania during the years of Soviet occupation. Many of their former countrymen, marked by their history of war, foreign occupation and cultural upheaval, had been effectively educated and trained by the institutions of their occupiers to regard former deportees as criminals and enemies of the state to be treated with suspicion, hostility and active avoidance. This evidently made it difficult or impossible for some former deportees to resettle in their homeland and some of them made the decision to return to the area of their initial exile and attempt to start a new life where they would at least not find the same rejection. As Leonas maintained:

> I went back to Lithuania twice and they [the Lithuanian authorities] did not register me … I couldn't work and I didn't have any place to stay … .I returned to Krasnoyarsk. … Here it was easy for me … people were more friendly … the Russian families helped me (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Juozas in the same vein stated:

> I didn't want to remain in Lithuania, they did not help me … here I have a good life. I studied at the University … I married a Russian girl … I have two daughters and two grandchildren … and I have three shops in the villages around Krasnoyarsk (Juozas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The Lithuanian historian Saldukas claimed that approximately 40,000 Lithuanian-born were in 1989 still living in different regions of Siberia (Saldukas, 2002, p. 193).

The Effects of *Glasnost* (Openness) and *Perestroika* (Restructuring)

In 1997 approximately 8000 Lithuanian-born lived in the city of Krasnoyarsk and in the surrounding villages (Saldukas, 2002, p. 194). Lithuanian analyst and journalist Birutė Vyšniauskaitė, in her article *Krasnojarsko lietuviai tikisi paramos* (*Sostinė*, December 23, 1997 see Appendix 12 Newspapers and Newsletters), maintained that among the Lithuanian *émigrés* there were still 248 original Lithuanian deportees who had settled in the region in the late 1940s. It is against this background that in this chapter I examine and interpret the extent to which the key pre-war rural Lithuanian traditions, values and beliefs survived in a foreign land which had become the new home and in which their lives had to be adapted; and the effect of *Glasnost* (openness) and *Perestroika* (restructuring) that started in 1987 and marked a new era of reforms in the former Soviet Union (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 424). *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* were new programmes of reform promoted by Gorbacev in the Soviet Union, which advocated reforms in all spheres of the lives of the Soviet citizens and encouraged a new rapport based on openness between the state and its citizens.

These *émigrés* established themselves in the rural villages that for most of them were their former exile settlement camps. Most built their own houses, raised families and continued to live, with some degree of adaptation, according to their original culture, maintaining as far as was possible and practicable, their pre-war rural Lithuanian family and community traditions, religious practices and beliefs and language. Valerija, still living in a village approximately 100 kilometres from Krasnoyarsk, remembered:

> When we arrived in this village there were about fifty Lithuanians families, we knew each other … we did a lot of things together … we pray, we speak Lithuanian with our children and we sang Lithuanian songs … when they started to return to Lithuanian only few of us was left behind, but we continued to maintain our traditions and to do things together (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Leonas, who lives in Krasnoyarsk, recollected:

> In the villages live the Lithuanians who worked in the kolkhozes or were cutting the trees in the taiga (Russian forest) these people if they are still here, found difficult to live in the city. … Krasnoyarsk is surrounded by hills and by the big rock cliffs of the Stolby Nature Reserve … in this area many Lithuanian deportees built villages and made the roads. Before here there were only forests … some of Lithuanians they still live where they first settled (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Most of the former political prisoners who were deported without family or were single people at the time of their deportation moved to the city of Krasnoyarsk in search of job opportunities, to further their education and participate in a wider social life. They found jobs in factories or government organizations; they married mostly with members of the mainstream population or other ethnic groups and had a family. Jonas explained that the weddings were celebrated in the Town Hall with a civil rite according to Soviet rules. The traditional Lithuanian weddings gave way at this time to civil ceremonies.

> I married after that I realized that I could not returned to Lithuania … all my family went back … I was alone … I could not find a Lithuanian girls because most of them returned home with their family … it was very difficult … I married my wife that was the daughter of a Russian family that helped me a lot … they were very nice people (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

According to most of the responses given by the male participants in the study the *Kūčios* tradition appears having been lost when they entered into mixed marriages. Jonas, with a Russian wife, claimed: "I am married with a Russian … she is not Catholic … for Christmas Eve I ask her not to cook meat, but we do not do anything special" (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004). Thus, this celebration is maintained according to Janina only by the aging female Lithuanian *émigrés*, most of them helped by their daughters and granddaughters. "In my family we prepare always *Kucios* … meal my two granddaughters like it very much as well as their father that is Russian … my daughter helps me and she likes to cook Lithuanian dishes" (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Being in a large and densely populated city, Lithuanian *émigrés* tended to be somewhat isolated. Juozas who worked in an aluminium factory described his life in the city of Krasnoyarsk in these words:

> Krasnoyarsk is an industrial and military centre, many Lithuanians that could not return home settle down here because they had a job … people worked in an aluminium plant, in the hydroelectric power station, in the railway station that is very big and is an important station for the Tran-Siberian railway line … only who worked in factories and in the railway line live in the city … many of us are here, but we do not know where … the place is too big and everybody speak Russian … but from time to time I had the opportunity to meet some Lithuanian through my Russian friends … I met a family the wife was Lithuanian he was Russian … they had four children. … He is dead now but I am still in contact with his wife and the family (Juozas*, Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Leonas, with a Russian espouse, maintained that in mixed marriages and with the lack of or only limited contacts between themselves, it was clearly problematic for the *émigrés* to preserve their traditional culture. Family traditions and language had to be negotiated and religious practices could only be maintained as individual practice.

> The Lithuanians who lived in the villages had an easier life as they knew each others they were like a community … if some of them are still here … they found difficult to live in the city. Some of Lithuanians they still live where they first settled … for them it was easier to contact each other … they were together but in the city it was very difficult and now is even more difficult because we are old and sick, we not drive and we do not have a car … it is difficult … there are buses … but it takes all day to go and visit people … it takes two hours from where I live to go to the church on Sunday (Leonas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

It is important to recognise the differences between these two groups of Lithuanian émigrés living in former Soviet Siberia, in villages and in cities. Each has been influenced by different experiences, faced different challenges and adapted to different circumstances as its members sought to survive and prosper in their new environment. As will be shown there is no single description or common characterisation that can represent adequately the ways in which the Lithuanian *émigrés* living in Siberia today have retained, adapted or surrendered their former Lithuanian character.

The Built Environment: Freedom in the Former Exile Settlement

Most of the former deportees, who with their families opted to continue living in or near their original exile settlements, pursued a life on the land as farmers. For those who stayed on the land, the houses they built for themselves were typically constructed in local timber, usually with tiled roofs according to the pre-war rural features, but designed in harmony with the Siberian landscape and according to the prevailing weather conditions. Most were built on single residential blocks, at the footstep of the *taiga* (Siberian forest) or along the Yenisei River. Each of them had sufficient space at the front for a garden with pine trees and bushes of rue and with the traditional flowers, marigolds, pansies and native *taiga* flowers.

Most also had a large vegetable garden in the back of the house with rows of berry bushes, strawberry patches and plantings of peas, potatoes, carrots, cucumbers and cabbages. An external summer kitchen, a shed for farming utensils and food storage, a

pirties (rural Lithuanian traditional bath house) and a large log pile were common in addition to the main building. Small farms' animals typically were chickens, roosters, goose and ducks; and were kept for meat and eggs. The house and the other buildings were guarded by a dog chained to a pole aside the main entrance of the house. Agota, speaking about her house, explained that the contents of the houses were reduced to the essentials.

> My husband and I we both worked hard, it was difficult to save, but we had to because we wanted our daughters to go to the high school, we did not have to pay fees, but we had to buy food for them and clothes … my husband was working in the local forest and I worked for many years in the local shop, at home we had only the essential, I used to make our clothes, and try to save as much possible because our salaries were very low and if you did not work they did not pay you (Agota, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Inside the typical *émigré* house there were two bedrooms which opened one to each side of a large clay stove that was built in the corner of the living room, where the family used to stay during the day. The rooms had small windows and doors that were always closed to retain warmth during the long and severe Siberian winter. Colourful and heavy rugs were typically also hung on the walls and covered the floors to help keep the rooms warm and to add colour to what would otherwise have been a somewhat drab and uninviting environment. Most houses were externally painted in blue and white, the typical colours of the rural Russian landscape. Marija recounted the building of her house with these words:

> When first I came here I was by myself with my children, then my husband joined us and he started to work on this house … before was really small and not so nice … my husband painted the all house in blue and white because they were the only colour that were around here … then he made some furniture and all the sheds outside … I helped him but he worked hard … our life as never be easy … we had two girls … I had to work as well (Marija, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In keeping with the rural traditions of wood-carving and needle work, the household furniture typically was home-built, styled and constructed mostly by the Lithuanian men and decorated with needle work done by the women of the family. As Emilija claimed:

> The furniture of this room, except for the fridge … was made by my husband … he made this table and these chairs and for the children their beds … he was very good he used to do also a lot of work in the garden … he built an outside table, and all the fence around the house … the inkilai (birds' nesting boxes) he also painted the house and made the sheds (Emilija, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Small *inkilai* (birds' nesting boxes) are still found in all my respondents' gardens, placed on trees in front of the house and at the back in their gardens, as had been the custom in their homeland. Indeed, one of my elderly female respondents wanted to show me the *inkilai,* and interrupted the interview so that we could to go into the garden to see the small nesting boxes built by her late husband. Janina made this comment:

> In winter is very cold and we do not have many birds but I like to see them around my house in spring and in summer … in Lithuania I remembered to wait for the birds because the good weather was closer … in spring I like my garden and in summer it is not too hot, but I like to sit outside as I used to do when my husband was alive and with my children, … now I am on my own, I have a daughter that lives with me but she came only during at the end of the week, she is not married but she lives in the city, she asked me to go and live with her but I like here it is like to be back home … I can do what I like, it is not like to live in the flat in the city you cannot move … I have never been in a flat in all my life (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The Lithuanian *émigrés* who went to live in the city typically found accommodation in multistorey apartment buildings in the suburban areas of Krasnoyarsk. These multistorey apartment buildings were clustered in groups of approximately four or five to form a residential complex with a common children's playground and courtyard with wooden tables and benches. A market with food and general stalls, a post-office, a medical centre and a kindergarten and primary schools were all located within walking distance.

The apartment typically consisted of two or three bedrooms according to the number of people in the family; a small kitchen; and a small sanitary room separated from the washing room; a medium size balcony that most of the *émigrés* used as a store room and on which they cultivated flowers and herbs; and, typically, double entrance doors which helped to protect the dwelling from the cold Siberian winter weather. Petras, who at the time of the interview was living on the fourth floor in one of these apartment buildings, explained:

> I have been living in this apartment with my wife and my two children for the last forty years. It is comfortable, I have my bedroom, my son with his wife have their bedroom as well my two single sons … Now that all of them work and they have a good salaries we have changed all the kitchen and the bathroom everything is modern and clean. We still had to paint one room the dining room but that's all … When my wife was alive she was very proud of this apartment she used to work hard, when she came back from work, but we all helped her … everyone had a duty, my oldest son had to clean the floors, and the youngest one had to do the washing and ironing and I helped my wife with the shopping and cooking … we were always working. … We had a house in the country for the summer and

> during the weekend we used to go there and work (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Juozas, who for the last forty years has being living in an apartment building in the outskirts of Krasnoyarsk, recounted:

> I live here since 1965, with my wife, she is Russian we do not have any children … this flat is enough for us … from the window we can see the forest and it is beautiful especially in winter because you can see some squirrels … in spring if full of birds … and flowers, we like here … it is far from the city but I can catch the bus … I need two catch two of them … but we do not need to go to the city very often, and I was working not far from here I used to walk at the factory and my wife she is a teacher she had a school not far from here she was teaching in the local school. … The only things that we would like to have a new sewerage system and a new kitchen … they are very old … but it costs a lot of money and we are pensioners … we also went few times to Lithuania on holidays … at Siauliai where my sister lives. In winter is very cold here, but we do not have to go to work anymore so we can stay at home … I like to read … but only in Lithuanian. I don't read Russian. I never liked (Juozas, *Interview transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Jonas, who at the time of the interview lived with his wife in a wooden cottage that he built more than forty years ago in a Krasnoyarsk suburb, claimed:

> I lived in this house with my Russian wife and with my two children … since I married. We started to build this house slowly because we both were working and we had also two children and not much time. It is like the one in which I used to live back home. My wife liked the garden with flowers and vegetable as my mother used to have. I always liked to live here. It is very close to the city, just few bus stops or by car ten minutes. I have everything that I want here, just as it was back home (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Most of these apartments and cottages which were occupied during the Soviet period are still owned or rented by the original recipients or by their offspring. The structure and organization of the built environment of these first generation Lithuanian *émigrés* reveals clearly that most of them had continued to live according to the old familiar ways in which they have been brought up, and they have maintained to some extent the associated traditions, beliefs and values brought with them at the time of deportation.

The New Lithuanian Family in Siberia

For most of the *émigrés* in Krasnoyarsk, their immediate and extended families were typically small. Most were limited to two or three children. The lifestyle and financial

hardship in the first years of their resettlement denied the larger families typical of rural Lithuania. As Antanas recalled:

> We had only two children … we could not afford more … I was working all day, my husband was working … we did not have money … I wanted to give them also a bit more that what I had … it was hard (Daiva, *Interview Transcript 1,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004)

Janina maintained:

> My husband was for many years in prison, than when he came home we had three daughters, I was already old … one of them died … it was hard to raise children here, not enough food, cold weather and my husband and I we were always working … I wanted also send my daughters to the university and it cost a lot of money as we had to provide food and clothes (Janina, *Interview Transcript 1,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Both adults of working age were typically in employment. Their roles within the family were no longer defined as they had been for their counterparts in the pre-war rural Lithuania. Out of necessity, their roles had adapted to the new life. The man was still considered the head of the family and the provider, but the position of the woman had changed, often very significantly. The woman was also working outside the family, partly in compliance with the Soviet expectation that required all Soviet citizens to contribute to the prosperity and development of the country, and partly because it was difficult for any family in the former Soviet Union at the time to survive on just one income.

At home the woman was still expected to fulfil her traditional role of wife and mother, although all members of the family evidently began to share part of the home duties in view of the fact that the woman was also employed outside the home. Daiva, a mother of two children, living in the city described her life in these words:

> My father could not return home … we all remain in Krasnoyarsk … I married and I am now seventy eight … all my family has been always working hard because we had only enough money for the basic needs … when I married I continued to work in the same factory and I was an employee as I had the opportunity to study … my husband died and I was left with my children (Daiva, *Interview Transcript 1*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Similar comments shared by all respondents confirm the continuing adjustment and re-shaping of roles that took place within the new Lithuanian family as its members adapted to the new realities. Once again they underline the difficulties and countervailing forces

faced by the *émigrés* as they sought to hold onto their original culture during and after their times in the forced labour camps and exile settlements.

Most of the traditional foods and eating habits had been maintained and were still followed by the old *émigrés*, although some aspects of doing so naturally had to be negotiated with their partners in mixed marriages. The respondents claimed that the Russian cooking traditions are in fact very similar to those of Lithuania, largely because the soil and the weather conditions in both countries are favourable to the same crops. Janina claimed:

> I cook only Lithuanian dishes that I learnt from my mother at home, in Lithuania … here as in Lithuania to fight the cold winter you have to have fat that protect you, I also eat meat that give me more energy and drink a lot of milk. … In Autumn as I used to do back home I still make my jam out of berries, that I pick up wild just on the back of my house near to forest and my strawberry' jam and I preserve a lot of mushroom. I do here at home in my kitchen outside in the garden my children came and help me in summer on Saturday and on Sunday. They spent some holidays here to prepare with me some food for the winter they live in the city (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The use of fat in many of the staple dishes is evidently very high, due mainly to the severe weather conditions in the East European and Siberian winters. Petras explained:

> In this country, as in Lithuania, in winter you don't have much because it is too cold therefore you have to prepare everything in summer so you can eat in winter. Now you can find everything in the shops but in winter it is very expensive and if you are a pensioner you don't have enough money to spend only on food. Lithuanians like to eat well and a lot, but you can see us we are not fat as the cold it helps to burnt your fat … I preserve a lot of mushroom that I dried or I put in jars … my children like them very much … I live with my children and I cook for them as they are all working and I cook only what I remember my mother used to cook and my wife that is dead. She was Lithuanian (Petras, *Interview, Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Typically all the respondents who live in the city have a *dacha* (summer cottage) in the country, which is a source of an additional income to their pension and also to their children's family. In fact, during the good season the *émigrés* would grow enough vegetables and fruit to be preserved and consumed during the cold season with wild berries and mushrooms gathered from the near-by forest. Antanas, living in Krasnoyarsk all year, described how he spent his summer with his family.

> Most of us are still working hard in Summer … I go with my wife to my dacha and we stay there all summer … Saturday and Sunday often my children with their families join us and together we work in the vegetable garden and in the

> orchard … the dacha is forty-two kilometres from the city and I returned to the flat only once every two weeks to pick up what I need … with my vegetable garden we are all self sufficient as well as my sons with their families we need only to buy salt and meat … we don't spend any money on food and we all eat well, I made also my own dektinė [vodka], bottle of two litres each … I have also a small smoked house and there I can smoked fish and meat and sausage … near the house there is a river and I go there fishing … my wife she is Russian but she can prepare everything … Russian and Lithuanian dishes … It is just as it was back home, on my father farm … we used to have a very large farms, with lots of animals and people helping us in the orchards … we had hundreds apple threes … I can make also my cheese and my wife she knows how to bake the bread … I buy honey from people that has bees had we eat it with cheese … just as it was at home (Antanas, *Interview transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

With the exception of those in poor health, most of the respondents maintained that even though they are now elderly and some are alone, they still enjoy cooking and eating much as they did in the 'old time'.

Herbal tea and instant coffee are routinely on the *émigrés'* dinner tables with their daily meals. Antanas claimed that herbal tea is prepared by the old *émigrés* directly from herbs and flowers gathered in the neighbouring forest during summer, or bought at the local market, essentially as it was done in Lithuania before the war.

> In our *dacia* we grew all sort of vegetable and we have also a forest closely where we can go and pick up mushrooms, herbs, berries all sort of things as we did back home and we made our own tea … the Lithuanian that don't have a *dacha* they go and pick up the herbs in the forest or they buy them at the market (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Fresh coffee beans and instant coffee are expensive items and therefore not always affordable. Most of the participants in the study agreed that they could purchase spirits quite cheaply and that they were also able to make their own bottle of *dektinė* (vodka). Juozas asserted that the consumption of alcohol among the émigrés has never been high.

> The Russian people young and old they drink too much … all the time … and they have always done it. In Lithuania, I remember my father would drink only for parties or when the friends came to see him … we had to work, and we children were not allowed to drink, here to buy alcohol is very cheap and in Krasnoyarsk once a year there is the festival of the beer, you can drink free as much as you want … the Russian they all get drunk but not the Lithuanians I never did … when I was young I had a family and a work to look after … I did not have time to get drunk people here drink because they do not have anything spiritual in which to believe … they do not believe in anything … I am a strong Catholic and believe I know that drinking is wrong (Juozas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Similar feelings are echoed in the comments of all the respondents, suggesting that many of the pre-WWII rural Lithuanian beliefs and traditions are still being preserved and supported by the aging *émigrés*, despite the fact that they have been living for more than fifty years outside the homeland and in a community where, according to them, religious and family values are diluted.

The Struggle to Maintain the Lithuanian Language

For the Lithuanians left behind after most of the former deportees returned to Lithuania, the possibility of speaking their native language daily in the villages and in Krasnoyarsk became increasingly difficult. Jouzas claimed that most of them had already entered into mixed marriages with the language of communication –spoken at home – now being Russian.

> I worked with some Lithuanians at the railway line here in Krasnoyarsk, but then my friends left, they wanted to returned to Lithuania, I could not do it … I was married, my wife is Russian, I had built the house I had already a boy and a girl who were going to school, my wife had a job, … I did not like to stay here … but my life was here (Juozas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Moreover, their children had grown up, and most of them left home to attend high school or university or found jobs. They started to socialise with friends from different ethnic groups and began to merge into the mainstream population. Russian became their daily language, with Lithuanian being used only at home with their parents. They married members of different ethnic groups, started families of their own, and Russian naturally became the language in which they raised their children. Janina made clear how she still continues to speak Lithuanian with her adult children, even though they themselves have adopted Russian as the language in their own homes.

> When my children were small and until they lived at home with us … and my husband was still alive we spoke only Lithuanian … but then my daughters all married with Russians, … in the villages there were no Lithuanian men left … all of them returned to Lithuanian with their parents … my daughters married boys that they met at the University or at work. … One of my daughter is a doctor and she met her husband when she was in the first year of the medical school … I wanted for her a Lithuanian man … but it was impossible. … My daughters they speak Lithuanian only with me … I don't speak Russian with them … I did not learn to read or to write Russian … it was a form of protest … I still refused now (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Although the new life for most of the old *émigrés* prevented daily use of the Lithuanian language, the respondents agreed that maintenance of their language was high among the generation of offspring who were born in Lithuania and had been attending primary school before deportation. Agnes, who had arrived in Siberia as a school-aged child, confirmed:

> Here all the people of about my age speak Lithuania, and also younger … we all speak Lithuanian, I spoke with my parents and friends, my wife is Russian and she started to learn Lithuanian, we go almost every year to Lithuania on holidays, I cannot write very well in Lithuanian but I can speak and read (Agnes, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Among most of the Siberian-Lithuanian generation born into mixed marriages, the knowledge of the Lithuanian language is either limited or completely absent. They were exposed primarily to the Russian language during their childhood. Juozas, who had a German wife, stated:

> My children cannot speak Lithuanian, just few words that they have learn when they were travelling there few years ago … they would like to go and work to Lithuania, but they cannot speak the Language it is impossible now, may be my youngest would be able, he wants to go there and study the language but he need a lot of money. … My wife was German … between us we always spoke German but with the children Russian … I was here by myself the children they did not have any opportunity to speak with grandparents (Juozas, *Interview, Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Some of the grandchildren can speak Lithuanian. Some are studying or have studied at Lithuanian universities in Vilnius or Kaunas; others have decided to live in Lithuania and are married to Lithuanians they met there. Others who settled in Siberia spend part of their holidays in most years visiting the country of their ancestors. As Antanas, evidently proud of the achievements of his two sons and pleased with their interest in the Lithuanian culture and language, declared:

> My second son went to study at the university of Vilnius and now he has married to a Lithuanian girl and they live in Lithuania … my first son is married with a Russian girl and they have a son, they want to go to live in Lithuania and work there … he is now studying Lithuanian (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In contrast, Petras admitted with evident feelings of despair and sadness:

> My two boys they would like to go to live in Lithuania and to work there but they do not know the language and they cannot do anything. … My wife was German, we spoke Russian at home with our children … my children did not have any relatives from Lithuania here … I was deported with my mother, my brother and

> my sister but they all returned to Lithuania … I was not allowed (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In 1997, in the attempt to maintain their language, a Sunday school was organised for the first time in Krasnoyarsk. Antanas explained that:

> A Lithuanian teacher was appointed from Lithuania … the school was attended successfully for few years, there were about twenty-five students … then the teacher returned to Lithuania and the school was closed (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

According to some of the *émigrés* interviewed in the study, the Lithuanian language has survived and continues to survive among their Russian-born children and grandchildren, many of whom have a strong interest in the country and culture of their ancestors, and a sense of continuing national identity that was and is still actively nurtured by their grandparents and parents. These children and grandchildren of the original *émigrés*, although born and raised in Soviet Siberia or Russian Siberia, perceive Lithuania as a free country offering a better lifestyle and environment and providing a more open window to Western countries. Janina described with these words the interest in Lithuanian culture shown by her daughter and granddaughters:

> My daughter and my two granddaughters and me … we go every year to Lithuania to visit my sister in Kaunas, they like the country, the culture, the food, the songs … the girls are considering to go and live there … my eldest granddaughter has studied already for few months Lithuanian at the University of Kaunas … my eldest granddaughter she speak Lithuanian and she is only twenty two … she wants to speak with me in Lithuanian … my daughter is married with a doctor he is Russian, but he likes Lithuania and our culture, … he speaks [only] a bit of Lithuanian but he understand it (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The Role of Education

The traditional pre-war values attached to education continued to be maintained among the Lithuanian *émigrés*. Most of the grandparents and parents encouraged their children to achieve a good education and a better status. Agnes remembered how her parents helped and encouraged her to pursue her study.

> I was allowed to attend the high school, but my parents had to provide food and clothing for me … I was away from home … I went also to a Technical College in Krasnoyarsk. I studied business … than I worked in a Government office and I was able to have a good position … I was the person in charge of my office … I never married I became a career woman … now I am retired and I help my niece

> to go to the University in Moscow … it is very expensive so I help her (Agnes, *Interview transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Statements such these were common in most of the interviews and are reflective of attitudes that were already well established by the time of deportation. Back home, for the rural population, education represented the only means available to most of their children to assure them of a better social and economic status in the new Independent Lithuania. This was especially true for the usually large size of the typical rural family of the day, given the likelihood that only some of the children could reasonably look to a continuing life on the land in their adulthood.

In Siberia, most of the *émigré* families had to confront a similar reality. Regardless of their status prior to deportation, all were again forced into a situation of deprivation and poverty. Janina described her former life in Kaunas with a mixture of sadness and nostalgia, explaining how she and her husband had encouraged their Russian Lithuanian-born daughters to look to education as the basis of their way forward in their new society.

> My parents had a big farm in a village near Kaunas … I was sent to study in the city, with my two brothers. I became a secretary … I met my husband, he was a journalist. We married and we lived in the city. But during summer everybody was working on the farm of my father. I remembered during my holidays since I was a student I used to go home with my two brothers and help my parents on the farm … we had people coming to help us, but the farm was very big … there was a lot to do … we had a very big orchard … we were deported just because according to the Soviets my father was a bourgeois. … My husband and I we worked hard in this village and f we were able to give to my daughters a good education … one is a teacher in Moscow and the other is a doctor … not far from here (Janina, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Without exception, all the participants in the study stressed that most of their children and grandchildren had been able to achieve good professional positions in Russian Siberia and in Lithuania. Even the oldest of the original *émigrés'* children had already completed some years of high school, and some even college or university, before being deported. However, they were not allowed to continue their study in the first years of deportation. They were eventually able to finish their courses at a technical institute or university with support from their families. As Antanas declared:

> I am geologist and my wife is a paediatrician … when I came here I was only twelve. I was not allowed to study, I had to go to work … then later I could, I studied and now I am still working two days a week … (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The Soviet Control of Religious Practices

In 1992 the Catholic Church in Krasnoyarsk, originally built by Polish and Lithuanian exiles during the Czarist period, and used as a theatre during the Soviet period, was re-opened for Christian worship once a week on Sundays and for Christmas and Easter celebrations. See photographs in Appendix 13. So after years of undisclosed religious practices, Lithuanian émigrés were at last able openly to attend the Sunday service. By that time the number of the Lithuanian *émigrés* in the region of Krasnoyarsk had became smaller, as most of them had returned to Lithuania, died, or were married to partners from the mainstream population and had started their lives separately from the rest of the remaining *émigrés*. However, Petras remembered that attendance at the church was high.

> Many Lithuanians used to come to the church at the beginning … we even asked to the Catholic Church in Lithuania, to send us a priest to work for the community here and to help to maintain our religious traditions and to minister the Sacraments and celebrate the Sunday mass in Lithuanian, to visit us at home, we were many … especially old people … they couldn't come to the church for health reasons … they lived in villages far away or simply they did not have the money to travel to the city (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

At that time the Parish priest was (and is still at the time of the interviews) Polish. Today he celebrates three services in Russian each Sunday. All are well attended by a mixed congregation of Catholic *émigrés* and converted Russians. Marija, who regularly attended the Sunday masses, stated:

> Our church is open only on Sunday for three hours … during the week and at night it is still used as a theatre, but we are more than hundred people who attend regularly the service … Polish, German and Lithuanians, and some converted Russians ... we have had also christenings and marriages (Marija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Most of the original *émigrés* with some of their children and grandchildren also attend the Christmas and Easter Day services that are held every year. Those living in the surrounding villages would often be brought to the church by city-based friends or relatives. After the service, all would gather at a suitably large meeting place, usually the Polish school. The Lithuanian *émigrés* in Krasnoyarsk did not have a school or community house of their own. The *émigrés*, with their families, would share lunch together, although it would not be a typical traditional Lithuanian festive meal; but they would still share the traditional *margucios*. They would sing old Lithuanian songs and speak in the Lithuanian language, as Petras explained:

> After [the Christmas and Easter] Mass we all go to the Polish School ... there are also some Lithuanian that they are not religious but they want to came and share some time together with our wives ... although they are Russians and do not speak Lithuanian, they understand the language and are happy to share [the celebration] as a community event. We all know each other, our wives are Polish, Russian, German and two of us have married two Lithuanian girls… but every time there is some new people join us. At the beginning we were only ten people, now we are more than fifty … we gathered regularly twice a year (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Verbo Sekmadieni (Palm Sunday), this important and popular pre-war religious tradition that was immediately abandoned once the Lithuanians had been deported, has re-appeared also since 1992 as an important liturgical celebration for the senior *émigrés*. During the now-revived Palm Sunday service, the parish priest blesses the greenery that the *émigrés* bring to the church. Petras recorded:

> On Palm Sunday, I go to the church with some *rūta* [rue] the national Lithuanian flower that grow very well here in Siberia … and the priest blessed it … then I will take it home and I keep it until next year … my mother in Lithuanian she used to bring small juniper branches to be blessed (Petras, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Some traditional services in accordance to the Roman Catholic religious calendar could not be maintained (at the time of these interviews) as the church was opened to worship only on Sundays: the traditional Friday afternoon service to remember and commemorate the death of Jesus Christ; the *Gegužė Menesi* (Month of May); the traditional month of prayer dedicated to the Virgin Mary; and *Vėlinė* (All Soul's Day), the day of remembrance for departed family members and friends. However, according to Agota these practices are still maintained, albeit mostly as individual or family practices.

> For *Gegužė Menesi*, we always prayed together … [in the early days] we were many … in my village there were about fifty families … but then [most of them]returned to Lithuania … not many of us were left behind in the village, but we still met and prayed [for a time] … but now, nobody is left. I am the only one … I pray … I still recite my rosary by myself (Agota, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Emilija further explained:

> For *Velinė* I go to the cemetery of the village to visit the grave of my husband and of one of my daughter. I take flowers and candles and I pray for them … then I go and visit the graves of those Lithuanian that died and don't have anybody who look after their graves. I also go to visit a German grave of some friends of mine … they both died here … they did not have any children (Emilija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

After 1992 most of deceased members of the family were brought back to Lithuania by their children or relatives. However, a large number of Lithuanians are still buried in former Soviet Siberia, but their graves have not been found, as Jonas recounted during an interview:

> Especially at the beginning people that died in the labour camps, they were buried in some place outside the camps … but with the time the Russians have built or used the area for agricultural purposed and it was not easy to find the original graves … I don't have any relatives here, they are all buried in Lithuania, they could go back … I have only my son who died four years ago in an accident (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

While attendance at the church had been high in the few years from 1992 to 1996 and most traditional Catholic religious celebrations and practices had been re-established, this soon diminished to the point that today, only the old original *émigrés* (now just ten to fifteen in number) regularly attend the Sunday Mass. Many of these now-ageing *émigrés* are experiencing health problems or becoming increasingly frail and confined to their homes, and again others with their families returned to Lithuania. Valerija stated:

> I live far from the city, I cannot go to the church and we do not have any Lithuanian priests here … I pray at home, I recite my rosary … my daughter take me to the church in Krasnoyarsk for Christmas and Easter (Valerija, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Although the original *émigrés* have been living for more than fifty years in an atheistic society, most of them seem to have maintained their religious values and beliefs in which they have been brought up. Marija maintained that although most of the Siberian-Lithuanian generation do not regularly attend religious services, it seems to have retained part of the religious traditions of their ancestors.

> The young generation doesn't come to the church very often, however, when the grandparents or parents died they come to the church and asked for a priest and a funeral … [and with pride added further] … In Irtkuz, there is a young Lithuanian girl, that is very active in the church and wants to became a Carmelite nun (Marija, *Interview, Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

The Beginning of a New Community

From 1992 the *émigrés* in Krasnoyarsk established the *Lituanica*, a cultural organization as an attempt to maintain their national identity and promote their culture among the new Siberian-Lithuanian generation. See Newspapers and Newsletters in Appendix 12. It was a slow process at the beginning. The *émigrés* had to overcome bureaucratic hindrance in

a system where the establishment of non-state organizations was still perceived as a threat. According to the president Antanas (at the time of the interview), the organization was formed easily, since it needed only to be recognized by the Russian authority.

> When they gave us the permission to openly gather and they recognised the society, I could not believe it. I was scared, for nights I remembered I could not sleep and I was always ready to be summoned by the police … but it did not happen … after so many years, finally we could declare openly to be Lithuanians. Most of us has never said it … we have many members in this society and we continue to grow (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

Obviously it is difficult to contact all *émigrés* in the vast Krasnoyarsk region, but the organisation has established a network of communication that reached the remote areas. Antanas maintained that after so many years of living in the former Soviet Siberia, some émigrés had chosen not to disclose their original ethnic origin and they continue in this choice.

> There are many Lithuanians also in the remote villages, but we don't know where … they don't contact us … Siberia is a big country. … At the beginning and until few years ago, we were scared to say that we were Lithuanians … but now we have our organisation, we have our choir, we have back our national identity (Antanas, *Interview Transcript 2,* Krasnoyarsk, 2004).

In 1989 the choir *Rūta* (Rue), was established to promote Lithuanian folk songs. The choir, dressed in Lithuanian national costume, has performed on several occasions in Krasnoyarsk and in 1998 at the Song Festival in Lithuania. See Photographs in Appendix 13. Interestingly, the members of the choir are mostly young Russian Lithuanian-born children and grandchildren.

Concluding Summary

The Lithuanian *émigrés* living in the former Soviet Siberia were part of an ethnic group deported as a consequence of forty-six years of Soviet occupation of their homeland. They constituted two distinctive groups, which included political prisoners (mainly partisans and dissidents) and *kulaks* (farmers). They were sentenced for different lengths of time and sent to re-settlement villages and prison camps. These two groups have been influenced by different experiences, challenges and circumstances which have affected the retention, adaptation and in some case the loss of their pre-WWII Lithuanian culture.

In the first years of deportation, Catholic religious traditions and practices played an important role in the life of the deportees. Living in an atheistic society, faith and religious practices were the only instruments at the deportees' disposal, to assist them in their physical and spiritual survival in an environment where they endured constant psychological and physical hardship. Particularly for the large numbers of deportees in the prison camps, the retention of religious practices and traditions signified their individual survival.

In the exile settlement villages the deportees, mainly *kulaks* were able to re-create at least to some extent a spiritual life similar to that of their villages in their homeland, through religious practices and traditions shared with other members of the community in secrecy. Most of the Catholic Lithuanians perceived this as a link between their past and present life and it gave them a sense of national identity and belonging. By 1960 most of the former *kulaks* returned to Lithuania with their families and only a few family units were left behind in remote settlements. These Lithuanians continued to maintain their religious practices and traditions at an individual family level, in the absence of a larger community. Clearly, the *émigrés* in the villages missed the sense of the formal, open, religious community, the sharing of religious celebration and practices which had been so typical of their pre-war rural experience and upbringing. Indeed, the religious life of rural Lithuanians gravitated mostly around their Catholic parishes.

In 1992, the Catholic Church in Krasnoyarsk was re-opened for worship. At that time the vast majority of the *émigrés* living in the city with some of their children would regularly attend the only Sunday service. As for the *émigrés* living in the villages, their attendance was not always possible due to distance and lack of transportation. The aging *émigrés* had to depend on children and grandchildren for transport. However, most of them participated in the services of Christmas and Easter celebrations.

Today, the numbers of original *émigrés* attending church has further decreased for health and practical reasons and also due to the loss of the few other families who returned to Lithuania. However, they still maintained their religion as individual practice. One can conclude therefore that although the Lithuanian *émigrés* had been living for more than fifty years in an atheistic society, religion seems to have remained a strong element of

Lithuanian identification; and similarly to some extent in most of their children, who have still maintained Roman Catholic traditions.

The Lithuanian language, one of the key features of Lithuanian identity, according to this research has been maintained among the original émigrés and their children, since the first days of their deportation, both in the exile settlements and in forced-labour camps. The Siberian-Lithuanian born children, although exposed to the Russian language in their daily life, continued to maintain the use of the language of their parents within the context of the family and rest of the Lithuanian community in the village. After 1960, when most of the former deportees returned to Lithuania, the use of the language in the exile settlements became a challenge. The younger generation started to merge into the mainstream population and most of the single men released from the camps settled in the city and entered into marriages with non Lithuanians. The language was still maintained as the way of communication between the old *émigrés* and their children. Today, although the *émigrés* must speak Russian as a national language in their gatherings and contacts within the community, they continue the use of their native language. Furthermore, most of them declared that they know only how to speak Russian; and indeed they have refused to learn how to read and write it.

It appears that since 1992 the new Siberian-Lithuanian generation has established close ties with the land of their ancestors through studying and holidays; and therefore in 1997 the Lithuanian community, in an attempt to maintain a live Lithuanian language, organized a Sunday school which was well attended. This allowed the younger generation to further develop and maintain a basic knowledge of the language of their ancestors.

The pre-WWII rural Lithuanian family traditions have always survived in the exile settlements, with a certain degree of adaptation. This especially has been the case where both parents were Lithuanians and there was also the presence of elderly members of the family, at least until 1960. Their presence guaranteed the continuation of family traditions. In the city with mixed marriages, the pre-war family traditions struggled to survive even if the environment and lifestyle were very similar to those in Lithuania. Traditions had to be compromised due to the different ethnic background of the spouse.

In conclusion, the Lithuanian *émigrés* in Siberia, although limited in numbers, coming from different social backgrounds, and living in an alien environment and difficult circumstances, succeeded after fifty years in retaining part of those elements that I have identified as the key characteristics of Lithuanian culture. The language, the Roman Catholic religion and family traditions and have been handed down successfully to some extent to the new Siberian-Lithuanian generation.

Two separate columns, profiling in summary form the cultural characteristics of the rural and urban subgroup sample, are presented in columns 3 and 4 of the multi-column table in Appendix 3.

Three non-identifying but directly grounded composite narratives to convey the sense of people who constitute the present-day Siberian sample are in Appendix 10: 10.6, 10.7 and 10.8.

The next chapter provides a detailed account of the retention, loss or adaptation of the key characteristic of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture in the present-day sample in Lithuania.

CHAPTER 9

PRE-WWII LITHUANIANS IN LITHUANIA: THE PRESERVATION OF THEIR IDENTITY

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> We could not fight the Russians … they had the tanks, but we had our language, our religion, our traditions … we maintained our national identity (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

By the end of WWII Lithuanians were enduring a Soviet occupation for the second time. By occupying Lithuania through military force, the Soviet Union ignored the Ribbentrop- Molotov Pact and the Atlantic Charter once again violated the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of 1939 and the Atlantic Charter, to which all the Allies were to refrain from territorial occupation (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 297). Once more the people of Lithuania had to negotiate the issues of cultural identity and continuity in a shifting political context.

The influence of this occupation in the rural and urban areas with regards to the continuance or otherwise of the traditions, values and beliefs that I have identified to be the key features of the pre-war Lithuanian culture, will be the focus of the rest of this chapter. I will consider this particularly in the light of interviews conducted with Lithuanians who have lived under Soviet occupation for more than four decades.

To survive the New Order imposed upon the country, most of the Lithuanians had to conform to a regime which contradicted their traditional values and beliefs and go into 'internal exile'. According to the English historian Alexandra Ashbourne, in her article *Homo Sovieticus and post Soviet Lithuania*, internal exile means "paying lip-service to the regime in power, while sharing one's real thoughts only with those who are entirely trustworthy – a natural reaction to living in a society riddled with informers" (Ashborne, 2000, p. 53). Asbourne claimed that conformity is a natural human instinct for preservation and often dominates during occupation; and maintained that although there are individuals ready to fight to defend their beliefs and values, the majority traditionally fosters conformity for self-preservation, albeit for the most part only on the surface. In Lithuania internal exile was a stance or demeanour adopted by most of the population, who were living in a society not immune from informers. In this occupied society, every

aspect of daily life was difficult, as the Soviet ruling authorities believed that individuals could be manipulated if kept occupied, struggling to fulfil the most basic chores. Jadviga, who was living in Vilnius at the time of the Soviet occupation, remembered the hardship of all those years.

> It was very hard with the Soviets, everything was difficult and we did not have any freedom … I used to go to work everyday with my husband we both worked hard but we could buy only what we needed … we could not save anything … and at work we could not say anything because there were always someone that could reported you and then they [the Soviets] punished you … only at home with my parents and my husband we could express ourselves freely I couldn't trust not even my sister and her husband (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

Internal exile sustained most of the Lithuanian population and conformity was the easiest way of surviving during these years. Only Lithuanians who were out of the public spotlight maintained their loyalty to the country. Internal exile had a strong impact in the workplace, resulting in the stagnation of the economy and decline of technological progress. However, for the population who went into internal exile, art, music and literature (which mostly eluded the Soviet control) supported and helped them to preserve their national identity.

At the time of the second Soviet occupation (1944), Lithuania was predominantly an agricultural country. Most of the ethnic Lithuanians were engaged in farming and lived in villages and small country towns. The rural areas became the stronghold of Lithuanian national identity and provided both fighters and tactical support to the partisan movement which opposed the collectivisation of the country's agriculture and aimed for the restoration of an independent Lithuania. Thus, it was not uncommon for entire rural families to join the partisans and for some members of the clergy to serve in the movement as chaplains. While most of the active fighting partisans were young workers or farmers, the commanding positions were generally entrusted to former Lithuanian army officers. It was in the village, therefore, where the most significant post-war political, cultural and economic changes took place.

For a long time the Soviets merely controlled the cities and towns, while the resistance in effect controlled the villages and the whole rural area. As a form of retaliation, mass reprisals were launched by the Soviets against entire villages whose inhabitants were

suspected to have given help and shelter to members of the underground resistance. Partisans' families were often deported. In her narrative Regina, an 85-year-old respondent, who lived in a village near Kaunas, recollected with feelings of bitterness:

> When I was sixteen my father was a partisan and he was hiding in the forest. For two years every night at midnight the Soviets came to my father's farm, and took me to the forest and questioned me for one or two hours … always the same questions … it was terrible … I didn't know where my father was … later I found out that they had shot him (Regina, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

Arvydas, who was an 18-year-old young man, remembered what happened in his village not far from Kaunas on a summer day.

> They [The Red Army soldiers] came with a truck, I saw them from the window of the kitchen and they went to a house … they took the whole family in the small square of the village and shoot the head of the family … left him there … nobody could go near … not even his family because it was taken away and deported to Siberia … this family was helping the partisans (Arvydas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

The land nationalised in 1940 of approximately 690,000 hectares, in 1944 was re-allocated to 96,000 landless peasants and small holders (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 405). A class of new farmers was established who were encouraged to join the new system of agriculture co-operative. The geographical setting of the Lithuanian villages would facilitate the establishment of these group settlements, the first step towards the *kolkhozes*. At the same time the *kulaks* (small landowners) were burdened with a system of progressive taxes based on the size of their farms. They were also forced to make large requisition payments.

Finally in 1947 the system of the *kolkhozes* was established throughout the country. The *kolkhozes*, an abbreviation of the Russian words *kollektivnoïé khoziaïstvo* (agriculture cooperative) had been established by Stalin in 1928 in Soviet Russia, in an attempt to eliminate private farming. The kolkhozes' property such as land and farm animals remained under their original owners, but the administration and organization were controlled directly from Moscow. The *kulaks*' salary was paid in part with agricultural products and in part according to the number of working hours, at a low hourly rate. The landowners who refused to join the *kolkhozes* 'voluntarily' had their taxes and requisition payments further increased. This made their ability to farm as independent farmers increasingly untenable. Arvydas recorded:

> We were all working on my father farm … it was not big it was just enough for my family … but we had always to give pigs and other food to the Soviets … it was impossible … they always wanted the best cut of meat, the best crops (Arvydas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

Genovaitė explained that the kulaks unable to pay their taxes or meet the requisition demands were imprisoned, their land confiscated and they were deported to Siberia with their families. She further maintained that some kulaks who did not want to enter into the kolkhozes even sold their farm animals. This happened to her uncle and his family.

> My uncle sold all his animals except a couple of cows … he and his family were deported to Siberia, his farm was taken away … when he returned in 1961, he did not have any place to go … a Russian family was living on his property, the all farmstead was ruined … the stables and the fields the crops, the Russian did not know how to farm (Genovaitė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Between 1948 and 1951, approximately 94% of the rural population 'voluntarily' joined the new agriculture cooperatives system (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 406).

The Built Environment in the Soviet Era

The period of the Soviet occupation imposed considerable changes on the Lithuanian population, still living outside the major cities and towns and dependent on farming. These changes were most evident in the landscape, farm structures and life style. Across the countryside, dilapidated farmhouses and vast empty spaces were all that remained of most of the pre-war farmsteads, the owners having been exiled, fled the country or moved to collective farms settlements. As Veronika explained:

> The isolated *ažuolas* [oak tree] in the middle of the fields … often marked the locations of a *ūkis* [farm] … and most of these *ūkininkai* [farmers] and his family were deported or fled the country … before the Russians arrived. … Some beautiful farms were completely destroyed by the Russian families that took them over … they did not know anything about farming … they lived like beggars … you could see these farms with the fences damaged, glass windows broken … and the clothes that looked like rugs spread on the fence to dry … it was really terrible (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In contrast, the large square grey brick buildings of the collective farms lacked the character of old traditional villages. They were often built alongside the wooden houses with sloping thatched roofs. Pranas remembered a collective farm not far from his father's property.

> They [the Soviets] built one of these collective farms not far from where my parents lived … it was terrible, large rectangular building … just a block of cement … now they are empty and nobody wants them and even the government does not know what to do with them (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

Gediminas maintained that most of the villages became sparsely inhabited. Much of the population moved to urban areas as his brother and he did, leaving their elderly parents in the village.

> My father and my mother remained in the village they did not want to move but my brother and I went to the city to work in a factory. The life was easier … we were always working hard but we had a bit more money (Gediminas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Despite the introduction of mechanization, the rural population continued with the traditional methods of farming on the approximately 0.6 hectares of land that was left to them for their private use (Gerutis, et al., 1969, p. 300). This land supported the entire family and provided an additional form of income, since surplus products (if any) were sold to the local market. Pranas stated:

> This piece of land was not very big, but I used to cultivate potatoes, cabbage, carrots and all vegetable that I could sell to the market … and also apples and plums … and we had also chickens that we sell to the market with eggs … it was not bad but the life was expensive and everything was just enough to keep us going I had three children, my wife and my mother and father to look after … a big family … my wife was working, but my parents were too old (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The agricultural production of these private hectares of land was higher than the much bigger *kolkhozes*. Mechanization could not compensate for good management, according to Gediminas who worked in a collective farm for a brief period of time.

> The Lithuanians worked on their private piece of land and were proud of what they could produce … we had also few animals left … but in the *kolkhozes* we worked in a system that we did not like and was not well organized … I remembered the person in charge he could not even communicate with us he was Russian he did not speak Lithuanian … he was not a bad persons but he did not know anything … we did not work properly there (Gediminas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The rural areas appeared neglected and uninhabited. Agricultural production declined and so did the standard of living of the rural population. Gediminas, with feelings of sadness, went on to describe the rural landscape.

> Everything was so grey … the sky, the houses the faces of the people, even the *gandrai* [the storks] were so sad. They stood in the middle of the fields, they were thin, and sad, they looked different … I remember when I was a child they were nesting on top of the roof of my father farmhouse, they were just beautiful fat and happy (Gediminas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

The Soviets introduced a wholesale programme of urbanisation and industrialisation which mostly affected the urban areas. When they began to industrialize the country, they obtained direct control of the material resources, setting high prices on consumer goods to guarantee high profit for the State. This profit was then re-invested to develop a network of industries throughout the country and to re-build towns and cities destroyed by the war. In a combined interview, Gediminas and Kestutys explained:

> During the Soviet period … there were two different type of shops one for the normal Lithuanians and one for the Russians and for the Lithuanians with money … if you had money you could buy even bananas that were very expensive and most of us did not even know that were available … we could not afford anything, just food and the basics to survive … a normal Lithuanian could not afford anything, our wages were not just enough (Gediminas and Kestutys, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

The economy of the country after few years shifted from a traditional agricultural economy to an industrial economy. Gediminas, who was working in a beer factory, recollected:

> They built a factory not far from the centre, I used to go there by bus, none of us had a car, we were about five hundred people working there … It was a grey building and nobody was happy, we just worked. I worked there until I retired. We were not free to do anything, we were always worried that someone could report you, and then there were troubles … that's wasn't life … but to work in a factory was better than work in the kolkhose … (Gediminas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

In 1959 approximately 2.71 million people were living in Lithuania, only 38.6% were city dwellers (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 416). The new industrial development gave rise to the need to import labourers. Most of them came from Soviet Russia or from other occupied Republics. In the rural areas remained mostly ethnic Lithuanians with a few Russian families who established themselves on the farms of exiled *kulaks*. Rural Lithuanians who had been driven off the land and who had been unable to find well paid jobs in the rural areas moved to towns and cities, attracted by better working conditions and lifestyle. As this happened, their children began increasingly to attend higher education colleges. Genovaitė, who lived in a village near Kaunas, claimed:

> My father and my mother moved to the city. I went to the technical college … my sister instead married and went to work in an office … the life for us was better … we did not have much but it was good … I could study (Genovaitė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

The rural Lithuanians became progressively more urbanized. The cities became more cosmopolitan and Vilnius becoming the headquarters of the Soviet occupying forces with their families. In her narrative Regina, who has lived in Vilnius for more than thirty years claimed:

> In Vilnius there were more Russians than Lithuanians and lots of Poles … even today if you ask for a taxi … all the taxi drivers are Russians. They do not speak Lithuanian …where I lived, on my floor out of four families my family was the only one Lithuanian, the others were Russians … I have never been friendly with them for 30 years … I never spoke with them (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

However, the generation of new urban dwellers were still closely related to their former villages, rural traditions and customs. This connection was very important for the preservation of the Lithuanian national consciousness during the years of Soviet occupation.

The Lithuanians in urban areas lived in apartment blocks built in the immediate suburban areas of the city and according to a common design throughout the country. These grey multi-storey apartment buildings were clustered in groups of approximately four or five to form a residential complex with a common courtyard and a children's playground. Typically, in one of these buildings there was a general state store, open all days of the week, and a medical clinic. Within walking distance there was a kindergarden, a primary school and a local market. A bus network transported residents to and from their residential areas. Each family lived in a two or three-roomed apartment with a sitting room that doubled a bedroom, a small kitchen and a sanitary room separate from washrooms, with all rooms having built-in cupboards and wardrobes. Regina gave a description of her apartment in Vilnius.

> I lived in this apartment with my parents and my sister all my life, I bought this apartment now. It was small … but this was because we were four people, but we were lucky … some Lithuanians had smaller apartments. Now I am on my own with my cat … my father was a very good carpenter and he built other cupboards that are in the kitchen and in the corridor. My mother was a very clean woman and she kept the house in very good condition … everything was just spotless (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Typically each apartment had a balcony that was used as a storeroom; a glasshouse to maintain the traditional Lithuanian close association with nature; and a double timber front door built for a practical purpose as Regina described in her narrative.

> Most of the houses and apartments in Lithuania have double doors to keep the cold winter weather out … with the Soviets it was very good to have the double doors avoiding people stopping in front of your flat and listening to what you were saying and then reporting you to the authorities. It was very dangerous in the past, every building had a sort of spy but it was difficult to discover the person … even the walls had ears. … Now we do not have the informers any more but we have the thieves … it is a better security system (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

On a similar vein Dana remembered her life in one of these residential complexes, also in the city of Vilnius.

> I lived in this apartment for fifty years … this is a big apartment … three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom … we lived here in six … my husband, my mother, my father and my two children … and me … we were very lucky … my sister lived in a smaller apartment and they were six with a baby (Dana, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In contrast, Irena who lived in Klaipeda claimed:

> As soon as we married my husband and I we lived for few years with my parents and then we went to live in a small apartment not far from the school were I was teaching … the rent was cheap … during the Soviet period the rent was not high as it is now … we had two children and my children that were already married and living in their own house, bought us this apartment in the centre of the city for an investment … this building … before the Soviet occupation was one of the best hotels in Klaipeda … then the Russian authorities with their families and army officers came to live here (Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

Most of these apartments which were occupied during the Soviet period are still owned or rented by the original recipients.

Typically the Lithuanians living in urban areas just beyond the city limits had a *soda* (garden) with a summer cottage to spend the weekend with their family. Most of them maintained the old tradition of growing their own vegetables, berries and fruits that would be preserved and consumed during the winter period. They would continue to preserve mushrooms and made wild berry jam from the nearby forest. Children and grandchildren would help also to prepare traditional winter conserves and pickles during the summer period. In a joint interview Irena and her husband Jonas, with feelings of pride, described a summer Sunday at their country cottage:

> My daughter and her family they all come on Sunday morning … and sometimes on Saturday night. After having worked all week … my granddaughter that studied law at the University at that time sometimes comes with her friends … my son-in-law likes to work in the garden digging potatoes or planting new seeds or to mow the lawn … my daughter and my granddaughter come to gather berries … we have a lot of them and different types … and we make jam … my daughter loves flowers and we have always beautiful flowers during the summer and we take them home or to the cemetery to my parents' graves … now we have finished building the house and my daughter thinks to come and live here when she retires. My son-in-law likes to live in the country and he likes to buy fresh milk, cheese and butter and bread from the farms around here … at the end of the road there is a lake where he can swim and go fishing … we have everything here … but we worked hard to built this house and we had to came here every weekend [especially in summer] to look after the vegetable garden and fruit trees. Now we have running water … before he had to walk 3 kms to take the water home … it was very tiring (Irena and Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

Traditional herbs would be gathered from the forest or from the fields and used to prepare herbal teas, medication and ointments, more cheaply than buying them at the pharmacy. As Irena maintained:

> I never buy teas, I always make my own with the herbs of my garden or from the fields there are plenty of them but you have to know which one is the right one … I know how to mixed different types of herbs, I saw my mother and my grandmother doing this and I do it too, my granddaughters, they are young but they asked me to make for them my tea … I also prepared some tea to help digestion and other stomach problems … I have been brought-up to use them … I lived on a farm we did not have a lot of money and the medicines were expensive and now that I am a pensioner they are still expensive. … I always kept under my bed chestnut and oak leaves, my mother used to do it. They give strength and good health (Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

The Lithuanian Family: During Occupation

By comparison with pre-war Lithuania, the size of the immediate family both in the rural and urban areas was generally small, with an average of one or two children. The lifestyle, work commitments and new roles of family members (in particular the woman) prevented the growth of larger families. Typically the position of the woman as mother and wife was considered unproductive by the Soviets. It was regarded as reminiscent of a traditional agricultural society that was to be replaced by a modern industrial society. Women were in employment and were expected to contribute to the wealth and development of the country in the same ways as men. Both husband and wife worked in

the collective farms, in urban factories, or as public servants. Regina who worked in an office in Vilnius affirmed:

> I was working in an office in the opposite side of the city near the airport … I used to get up very early at five o'clock every day of the week except on Sunday, I had to take two busses and in winter it was terrible they used to go very slowly … I was in this work for all my life it was hard … my husband was lucky because he used to work in an office in the city … he used to arrive home earlier and he could spend more time with the children than me … but we had my father and my mother living with us and they looked after the children, they helped us a lot … they did everything for us and for the grandchildren … my sister had her mother-in-law and father-in-law to living with her … they helped her as well life was difficult you had the time only for work … when you arrived at home you were too tired for doing something different then go to bed (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The size of the extended family at the time of the Soviet occupation was also smaller than in previous times. Most Lithuanian families had relatives who had fled the country before the occupation, or were killed during or after the war, or had been deported to Siberia. Most of the immediate and extended family members were the elderly and the youngest, who at the time of occupation were not allowed to or could not leave the country. Pranas in his interview gave reasons why he could not flee his home village.

> My mother did not want us to go … my sister and I we were too young … during the war we lived on a farm not too far from the border with Germany when the Soviets arrived my mother was pregnant, she could not travel we did not have a cart, she could not walk … I was only twelve years old and my sister eight. My mother gave the permission to leave only to my eldest brother he was eighteen, he could not make it with us … my brother was lucky he escaped through the forest with another friends and went to Germany … now he lives in United States with his family (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Kaunas, 2004).

In the same vein Jonas, with evident feelings of anxiety, explained in his narrative:

> In my family we were only two children, my sister and I and we were both married. All my family has been deported including my grandparents I was the lucky one because with my wife we were not at home that day … from Siberia my mother, my sister and one of her daughter returned all the others died there. My uncle and his wife were deported ... he was an officer in the Lithuanian army they were my godparents … they never returned … I was able with the help of other relatives to bring all of them back and to bury them in the cemetery of the village where they were born (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

By contrast Vytas, an 88-year-old respondent, claimed:

> We were a big family, we were not a rich or educated family … we were just simple workers … nobody in my family was deported we did not have big farm … we did not employ other people to work for us … we had to go to work for

> other wealthy farmers … the ones that had been deported (Vytas, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

Breaking up the family unit in this way was an option and much depended on the circumstances and profile of the family at the time of occupation.

Childrearing was traditionally the responsibility of the mother. However, retired grandparents if living with the young family often had the chore of tending the grandchildren when both parents were working. Traditionally the family home has always been the place of informal learning during times of cultural oppression. Regina maintained that grandparents were considered an important source of knowledge, as they were responsible for teaching their grandchildren aspects of the Lithuanian culture, folklore and traditions.

> My mother lived with us all the time until she died and she taught to my daughter to cook typical Lithuanian dishes as *cepelinai* and *šaltibarščiai* … and while she was teaching how to make them, she was also telling her when Lithuanian used to cook them and why … so my daughter learnt the cooking, the language and our traditions (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

After completing their school commitments most of the children were often asked to observe and help the elderly to complete and learn various tasks, in order to maintain the traditional culture. Young girls would imitate the elderly and under their instructions would learn to prepare old Lithuanian dishes and look after the house. In a mostly rural society, the tradition of cooking was an important component in the upbringing of a girl, who one day would be married and would be the mistress of her house. All the participants in the study confirmed that the pre-war rural style of cooking and eating habits have been maintained and handed down to the current young generation. Although Lithuanians, since independence in 1991, have been introduced to western cuisine and styles of cooking, most of the young generation still maintain their preference for the traditional diet, based on a large consumption of grains, dairy products and meat with mushroom and berries. Irena, a respondent living in Klaipeda, claimed:

> Once a week my children and grandchildren come to my place for dinner. They like to eat the old Lithuanian dishes that I prepared and they always want me to preserve for them pickles cucumbers and make berries jam. My daughter in law is working and she does not have time but I am retired … I have time and I like to cook for them (Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

Most of the farming population still today is self-supporting. Rural Lithuanians produce most of the food of their former diet, using pre-war methods of preparation. They smoke their own meat, make their own cheese, butter and *grietinė* (sour cream) and bake their own bread. Typically, these traditions survived in the villages in their original environment. In the cities, even though the life style changed, Lithuanians continued to maintain traditional cooking and eating habits, purchasing most of the products from the local markets. Regina remembered her husband's eating habits with these words:

> My husband died two years ago, but he always wanted to eat real Lithuanian food … we tried sometimes when our grandchildren came to visit us something different … but he didn't like … he wanted always Lithuanian food (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Local food markets have retrained the old features. The farmers display their products in stalls or in the back of their car or mini-van that today has replaced the former cart and horse. Irena described the market in Klaipeda where she continued to go regularly at the time of the interview.

> Almost everyday I go to the local market on foot it is not far from where I live … I don't like to go to the supermarket … I am looking for Lithuanian food not for all the new food that I don't even know what it is and is expensive. … In Klaipeda we have a very nice market, just as it was in the past … I always buy daily baked bread, cheese, butter and the cream, fruit and vegetable only sometimes because I have my soda in the country and I grew them …just as I used to do when I was working and when I had my children … nothing is changed, now I have more time … and I am happy, I can do what I like (Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

While all my participants claimed that they have preserved the old eating and drinking habits, they agreed that alcohol consumption has increased noticeably, mainly among the generation born after the 1950s. Veronika reported with feelings of bitterness:

> We like to drink for all sorts of reasons …Lithuanians like to drink … but before the Soviet occupation especially in the rural area the farmer did not drink too much only for special occasions … because they had to work hard and on the farm they had animals and crops to look after and alcohol was expensive particularly during the Independence. Farmers needed tools for the farm and food for the animals. … There were farmers that used to drink a lot … you could see this from their farm, that was dirty with rugs at the windows and broken fences and not many animals … they were usually heavy drinkers … but not as much as now…since the occupation *dektinė* (Lithuanian vodka) has become very cheap and is still cheap and everyone can afford it, before it was very expensive and people with a family could not afford to spend their money in drinks. The Soviet wanted us drunk so they could control us as they did in their country, since the time of the Czar (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In the memories of a people who had lived under Soviet rule for more than four decades, the pre-war rural Lithuanian society was a community with a warm sense of hospitality and charity. Most of the participants in the study drew attention to the differences between pre- and post-Soviet occupation society. Jadviga reported in her narrative, with feelings of sadness:

> Before the war people was more friendly … we used to help each other, and enjoyed parties and celebrations together … in the villages people was friendly we all knew each other … now in the cities and in the villages everything is changed, too many years of Soviet occupation have changed the mentality of some Lithuanians especially of our children … we have lost the trust in people and we became very suspicious … we only trust ourselves (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The population in the villages traditionally was part of an extended family. Members of the community helped each other and shared their material goods with those in need. Food played an important role in the family and in religious celebrations. A table with an abundance of food and drink was considered a sign of hospitality and affluence. It was customary for all guests to sit at a common table that filled most of the best room of the house. The hosts would ensure that no guests would leave the table hungry or thirsty. Typically, these meals started with salads, cold meat and bread accompanied by *kompotas* (cold fruit tea) and small glasses of vodka, wine or *gira* (a carbonated soft drink made from grain), followed by a hot course, dessert and tea or coffee. Conversation and singing were shared among the guests in happiness. Arvydas described a party at his father's farm before the Soviet occupation.

> At the end of the harvest in my father farm there was always a big celebration … a big party that lasted all night with a lot of people, food and drinks, we used to dance, joke and we really enjoyed that time we were always looking forward for that day, I was young and with other young boys we were looking for girls … I remembered my parents inviting our neighbours and lots of friends … I was enjoying this time of the year (Arvydas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

These comments were shared by all the respondents, who declared with feeling of sadness that during the period of occupation, such traditions were difficult to maintain to the same extent. The new Lithuanian Soviet society was built on a system of informers, and most of the people were concerned about gatherings on occasions, even within their own extended family members. The house and the family, traditionally the focus of the pre-war community life, started to lose its original value. According to Jadviga, people

were intimidated and afraid, especially in the cities where the ethnic Lithuanians lived closely with Russians and other minority groups.

> My husband and I we were worried about our neighbours … they were Russians … they still live next door … we were careful when we spoke with them even at home between us … because also the walls could have ears … it was really dangerous, we had party for birthdays mainly … we invited relatives and friends but not many and we used to talk about nothing important … we just were scared … then how could you have friends if you are scare also of your own family … therefore you became isolated (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

Dana, with feelings of sorrow, recorded:

> We were always very superficial … very silly during the parties, but we were scared … for our family, friends and yourself … I was alone with my children my husband died in 1956, I used to go to work but I did not mix with people there … and my neighbours they were Russians … in this building there are still now more Russians than Lithuanians (Dana, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

When former deportees started to return from Siberia in the early 1960s, the situation worsened. Veronika with sadness recollected the return home of her father from Siberia:

> My father was a musician he played the violin in an orchestra he was deported in 1941 and he came back in 1960. He was an old and sick man, and my brother and I we could not have him at home in Vilnius … they [the Soviets authorities] did not give him the permission to stay with us, he did not know where to go, then he went to live a small village, nobody wanted to help him they were all scared ... all his friends were dead or deported and my brother and I we used to go and visit him but with difficulties we were both working … some neighbours help him but the Soviet propaganda had ruined everything … some people were thinking that my father was a criminal (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 1*, Vilnius, 2004).

These mixed feelings towards the former deportees were of partial acceptance, rejoicing, diffidence and fear. Some Lithuanians had to meet face-to-face the persons whom they had denounced and condemned, often without formal accusation or trial.

Discussions with members of the family and friends about their life in the camps or in the settlements were an additional problem that the former deportees had to confront, once back in Lithuania. Former prisoners were asked, upon leaving their camps, to sign a document in which they agreed to remain silent about their experience. Being required to sign such a statement frightened the deportees, most of who accordingly refrained later from talking about their ordeal and communicating their experience with people.

When I met one of them and I asked questions about his life in the camp, he merely answered … "I went to Siberia and I came back". After this statement I was not able to engage him in any further conversation; the man simply turned his back and left. This behaviour signals how some deportees, even after more than forty years from their release, were still reluctant to talk with people about their past and their experiences. Indeed, memories of the past are difficult to surface or to be talked about.

Other former deportees found that their immediate family and friends, if not uninterested, did not want to know in any detail where they had been and what happened to them. People were too afraid, not just of the disguised presence of the secret informers, but of what they might learn about their friends and relatives. The sense of community and hospitality so typical of the Lithuanian culture was diluted if not lost in most cases, as the result of a campaign organised by the local Communist Lithuanian authorities who feared the effect that former deportees might have on that part of the local population who displayed anti-Soviet feelings.

In contrast, feelings of trust and a sense of community could be maintained to a certain extent in rural areas where most of the ethnic Lithuanians lived. Arvydas, who had lived most of his life in a village near Kaunas and at the time of the interview moved to Vilnius in a retirement village, nostalgically remembered his life in his native village.

> I liked to live in my village, I knew everybody … we had parties … we invited friends and relatives … we were real Lithuanians patriots … in my village there were only two Russian families … they lived on a farm that belonged to some people that was deported … we never talk with them … we fear more the *stribai*, they weren't Lithuanians patriots they were spies … but we knew them … in a small village with twenty families or so we all knew each other … they were different they acted in a different way … we had to be careful … I never invited them at my place (Arvydas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Religious Practices and Traditions under Soviet Rule

> It is impossible to have the people religious as they were before the war … my generation is still very religious … most of our children are not … our grandchildren they can make their own choice … they are free now (Pranas, *Interview transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

Occupation and deportation also impacted on the Lithuanian Catholic Church. During the years of Soviet occupation, the policy and measures adopted by the Soviet authorities

towards religion were aimed to isolate the church and the clergy from public life. Churches became state property and most of the clergy lost their source of income and accommodation. Arvydas sadly remembered the parish priest of his village.

> Our parish priest was a nice man. He was an old man and he had a small piece of land with a cow … he liked farming because his father was a farmer and he spent all his life on a farm … but they [the Soviets] took everything away from him … on his small piece of land he grew vegetables and from the cow he had the milk … he did not have much … afterwards the people in the village had to look after him (Arvydas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Pranas claimed that the survival of the clergy left in the country depended increasingly on contributions by the parishioners. He remembered the time when the parish priest of his village was invited to his parents' house for a meal:

> My mother was a very religious woman and we lived walking distance from the church. We always invited our parish priest in secret at our place for dinner or lunch. He was an old man and by himself, he did not have any relatives (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

Typically, this practice was possible in villages where Soviet control was not as constant as in the cities and towns and where the rural population had more food commodities at their disposal. The Soviets controlled mainly the cities where the educated Lithuanians were living and working for the New Order. In the villages the rural population represented less of a threat.

The recollections of Genovaitė, who lived in Vilnius, gave away also how the Soviets dealt with the churches in urban areas.

> In Vilnius, a church in the city was used as a theatre, it was a nice small chapel near the university and even now is still used as a theatre … there were churches that have been used for storing food or spare parts for the machines or tanks … it was terrible, they really destroyed all our churches … the oldest church of Vilnius was used as an archive separated on two floors (Genovaitė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The following recount during an interview describes the feelings of Pranas about the deconsecrated Catholic church of his village.

> In my village there was a big old church, it was just beautiful … it was first damaged when the German retreats because the Russian arrived and they fight it was in part burnt down … after this it was then converted in a potato deposit … it was such a pity, we all felt bad but we could not do anything…in my village there was no priest, no church … but now after so many years the church has been repaired and it is now beautiful as it was ... in my village my generation

> they go all to church. ... On Sunday it is full and we have more than a priest (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

Another measure of repression adopted by the Soviets was the ban on the teaching of religion in public schools, along with the elimination of the crucifix and religious crafts. Gediminas, who at that time was attending the gymnasium (high school) in a town not far from his father's farm, had vivid memories of what happened in his classroom.

> I was going to school, but we could not have anymore the parish priest coming and teach us religion … one day I remember it was Monday … I went to school and the crucifix was gone it was above the teacher desk and it was not there anymore … the teacher did not say anything … also a picture of the Virgin Mary was gone … it was very unusual but nobody said anything. … We could not ask … we were scared … but we knew that something bad was happening (Gediminas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Jadviga maintained that as a result of such measures the Church went underground and the religious Lithuanian population, both in the villages and cities, continued religious practices in secrecy.

> We used to go to the forest and the priest celebrated the Mass, we prayed together and we spent some time with the priest. It was dangerous but it was not so bad in the villages, we were true Lithuanians … people from the cities used to come and joint us … we continued to do everything but in secrecy (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In the cities a program of intensive surveillance was introduced to prevent public servants, teachers and people working for the Soviet administration, from attending religious services or associating with the clergy as mentioned previously in Chapter 4. Veronika, an 85-year-old female, who was a high school teacher in Vilnius, remembered:

> I was a high school teacher … I was teaching home-economics, I could not attend any religious service or go to my local parish, I was worried that I would lose my job … because they [the Soviets authorities] checked on all of us … if I was a simple worker was not problem or if I was an old retired woman … but because I was a teacher … It was a good job … I could travel everywhere in Lithuania and in the Soviet Union … when I could I used to go to the church in some villages but I still was scared to be discovered … then I decided to avoid to go…but I was still praying at home … I believe in God (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In a joint interview Jonas and his wife Irena, who both worked as public servants, stated:

> My wife and I … we both had a very good job … I was working for the Department of Construction and my wife for the Department of Transport … we

> did not wanted to loose our jobs…we had two children and we wanted them to study … for me it was not a problem to avoid to go to church but for my wife that she was religious she was not happy … she always prayed at home and she used to recite the rosary all the time with her mother … she was living with us (Jonas and Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

The abolition and re-naming of religious feast days, explained previously explained in Chapter 4 became part of the strategy adopted in the battle against traditional religious practices. Genovaitė explained:

> For Christmas you had to go to work otherwise you could lose your job or be sent somewhere else … some people refused to go to work on Christmas Day … but it was too dangerous. I had two children and my husband had a good job … we used to prepare the Christmas tree for the children and then go to work (Genovaitė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Notwistanding such measures of repression, the threat posed by the clergy's position and influence over the Lithuanian religious population and its strong identification with the Nationalist Movement induced the Soviet authorities sometimes to remove them from their parishes, to imprison and send them to Siberia. Irena remembered her parish priest with feelings of sadness:

> He was a very good man, he worked hard and we all liked him … he used to do a lot for the children and going to visit sick people and elderly … he used to come to our place often he was a good man … and he was sent away (Irena, Klaipeda, *Interview Transcript 2*, 2004).

During the deportation of 1941, a total of forty-three priests were imprisoned. Only nine of these reached Siberia; fifteen had been killed and eighteen had been able to escape (Savasis, 1966, p. 22-24). In the autumn 1945 when the Soviet Army returned more clergy, were deported accused of helping or hiding the partisans. In Lithuania in the period between the two twentieth century world wars, all the religious denominations had a constitutionally guaranteed monopoly over registration of marriages, births and deaths. The Soviets systematically removed the clergy from performing such religious events, placing them instead under the direct control of the State (Savasis, 1966, pp. 76-81). The Soviet authorities claimed that their goal was to:

> Put into practice the real freedom of conscience … let the believers believe, but the non-believers should not forced be forced to study religion, marry in church, be baptized and pay for the support of the church (Vardys, 1978, p. 46).

The introduction of secular ceremonies was aimed to eliminate the role of the church and the authority of both religion and traditional family structures. Sanctions were also introduced against those who ignored the State's injunctions.

For instance, christening the newborn according to the Roman Catholic rite was difficult as the official celebration of religious practices was banned. A system of clinics with free medical assistance was available to all Soviet citizens living in the occupied country and to the local population. However, in the villages typically the delivery of babies was at home and christening was possible in secrecy. In the city where the presence of the priest was banned from the hospital, a Christening became difficult when the newborn was in danger of dying. Jadviga made a comparison between the Christening of her two children during the period of the German and Soviet occupations and maintained that the priests were always administering the sacrament where and when it was possible.

> My two children were both baptized … one was born in 1942 and there was the German occupation and it was not a problem, the second one was born three years later when the Soviets occupied Lithuania, my mother that was not working and was looking after the children … she took him to a village where my aunt was living and there he was baptized … it was dangerous but my mother was able to do it she was the godmother and my uncle the godfather it was just a normal day, nobody knew it … she organized everything (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*,Vilnius, 2004).

On the same vein Veronika recalled:

> In the cities there were not many churches left open for worship, so the Soviets could easily monitored people who was going and what they were doing or what it was happening … you could not just go to the church and ask for your baby to be baptized … the priests would be punish as well … in the village was easier … the Soviets were not there all the time, but you had to be careful for the spies … I was a teacher I could not possibly have my children baptized where we were living … so we went in a village not too far from here but nobody knew that I was a teacher … they did not know us (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In spite of the adverse circumstances, all the participants in the study maintained that their children had been baptized according to the Roman Catholic rite. Typically the ceremony took place within two weeks of birth; however, for some this length of period could not be maintained as circumstances and events prevented it. The godparents were traditionally the grandparents or in their absence close members of the family who could be trusted to maintain the necessary secrecy.

During the period of Soviet occupation, although most of children continued to be baptized with names of Christian Saints, together with old Lithuanian pagan names, most of the families started to celebrate birthdays in place of Names' Day as had been customary in the old time. Jadviga claimed:

> Names' Day was celebrated before the war … after the war it was only for people who was baptized with important names as Jonas (John), Ona (Ann), and for the elderly … some young people although they have these names they prefer to celebrate their birthday … as my children and grandchildren (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The participants also maintained that often grandchildren who bear the same names as their grandparents join in the celebration. This is what Jonas reported about one of his grandsons:

> My grandson is twelve years old. His name is Jonas [John] … the same as mine. He likes to have Name's day celebration with me…so we can have together a party with family and friends … we put around our head a wreath made with leaves of oak as it was done in the old time … I believe it is good for the young generation to know our old traditions (Jonas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

First Communion and Confirmation were not always easy to organize, given the repressive measures adopted by the Soviet authorities and continuing controls, especially in the cities. However, Veronika affirmed the most of the children at some stage of their life were confirmed and received their First Communion.

> My younger daughter had her first communion and confirmation when she was eighteen…we went to a church in Žemaitjia … my son that was older instead had his first communion and confirmation when he was twelve … at that time it was easier ... we just went in a village were we knew the parish priest (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Genovaitė added:

> All my children had their Holy Communion and Confirmation with other children in a village … in the city where we were living was not possible … but I was able to have them confirmed (Genovaitė, *Interview Transcript* 2, Vilnius, 2004).

Although the celebration of weddings was forbidden, and even to be merely present at a celebration as a guest could invite serious consequences, most urban Lithuanians who chose to be married with a religious rite went to a village. Jadviga described the wedding of her sister with the following words:

> My sister she was twenty two years old and she wanted to be married in a church she arranged everything with my mother who she knew the priest in a village far from Vilnius and they went there it was a normal Sunday … nobody knew anything … it was too dangerous (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

This did not affect the participants in the study. They all but one claimed that they married in a Catholic Church according to the Roman Catholic rite. They married during the period of Lithuanian Independence or during the German occupation and they celebrated their wedding according to the pre-war rural Lithuanian traditions. Dana, an 89-year-old female, showing the photos of her wedding during the Lithuanian Independence, explained:

> My father had a very big farm … we were very wealthy … I had three brothers and two sisters … I married an army officer … we had a very beautiful weddings with many people … I was a student at the University of Kaunas at that time … I had a white wedding dress and my mother pinned on my dress some *rūta* (rue) my parents waited for us with the traditional glass of wine and bread and salt and wish us good luck and prosperity … we danced and sang and really I had a very good time there were also officers friends of my husband (Dana, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

Veronika, who married during the German occupation, when she was only twenty year old, claimed:

> My father had a big farm but too many children and so he sold the farm and we went to Vilnius to live … he sent all of us at school and my brothers attended the university … I became a midwife and I married during the German occupation. I had a marriage in the church with my family and friends and then the reception at our place … I was dress with the traditional white wedding dress and everything was done as it was for my mother wedding (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In contrast, Kestutys although having been baptized stated:

> I never believed in God, since I was a young man … I never went to church and pray … I had a civil marriage according to the Soviet rules … it was not a problem because both my wife and me we were not believers … we had a party with few friends and that was all (*Kestutys, Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Family members, relatives and all the community, particularly in rural areas, participated in the celebration of funerals as a sign of respect for the deceased and their family. During the Soviet occupation, priests defended their traditional religious rights and in secrecy continued their ministry. Gediminas recollected the funeral of his father in his village.

> Before my father died a priest gave him confession and administered his last sacrament … my mother wanted for him a proper funeral … we were living in a village … he stayed at home from three days … he had a crucifix in his hand and we light up candles around him … and people came and paid their respects … in the village nobody said or did anything … I don't know if they [local Soviet authorities] knew … but nothing happened (Gediminas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In contrast Dana, who was living in the city, sadly remembered the two different occasions of the death of her parents.

> Both my parents died during the Soviet occupation, we lived in Vilnius they both died in hospital. They were just buried in the cemetery not far from where we lived … It was sad because my mother was a very religious woman and she wanted to have a priest … but it was just not possible … but I prayed for them at home … it was terrible … now it is different people has the traditional funerals with the priests and friends … but not at that time (Dana, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Arvydas concluded that although life in the villages was not easy, religious practices and traditions could be better maintained because of the ethnic Lithuanian population, the presence of the partisans and the lack of interest from the Soviets in controlling rural people and labourers.

> Until 1953 the Soviets were scared to come to the village, because they knew that the partisans were there, hidden in the forests, and they knew that the farmers were helping them … so they did not came very often … but it was also difficult for us living in the villages because if you gave food or help to the Russian soldiers, the partisans retaliated against you and your family … if you helped the partisans you were sent to Siberia or shot … it was a difficult situation because the Russians, from the farms they took everything, especially food but at least we were relatively free to go to the church, when Stalin died it was better but it was still not easy to be free to practice religion (Arvydas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In 1953, with Stalin's death a new strategy in the war against religion began as the Soviets realised that the ban on religion and religious practices would only be beneficial for the church. Thus a new strategy was adopted by the Soviets, who focused on the young Lithuanian generation, as detailed in Chapter 3.

Kūčios (Christmas Eve meal), was maintained during the period of occupation. It was strictly a family-only celebration and circumstances prevented parents from discussing the religious meaning of the ritual with the youngest members of the family. Regina stated:

> I was lucky I did not have any children and for few years I could still celebrate Kūčios at home with my family and my husband … but then after I had children and they started to go to school, we choose not to talk about religious meaning of the Kūčios … it was to dangerous … the children could speak to the teacher and say what we were doing … the Soviets would retaliate and they could also take away from you your children (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Genovaitė described one of these dinners with her family:

> For *Kūči*os, we always prepared the traditional Lithuanian meal. I was working but living with my parents and my mother took care of it. … My mother used to cook the all meal…we were six in my family we had *kučiukai* [small biscuits] with poppy seeds milk … and she prepared the fish the herrings with mushroom, potatoes, vegetable … we have always celebrated *Kūčios* (Genovaitė, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Kaledos (Christmas Day), as previously explained at the beginning of this chapter, was declared a working day. Parents prepared the Christmas tree for their children and a good meal was usually prepared by the grandmother and shared at the end of the day. Veronika, mother of two, remembered:

> My husband and I we used to prepare the Christmas Three for our children but that was all after we had to go to work only at night when we came back from work we could have a meal together my parents that were living with us prepared everything … but we could not go to the church (Veronika, Interview Transcript 2, Vilnius, 2004).

The *Užgavenės* (Shrove Tuesday) festival, celebrated on the eve of Ash Wednesday to mark the period of Lent, was maintained during the Soviet occupation. However, it soon largely lost its religious meaning. Pranas explained with bitterness that the festival became a party instrument to make a mockery of Independent Lithuanian institutions and people.

> They [the Soviets] made fun of our past, our history our rules. It was not anymore an enjoyable carnival, it was vulgar … we still made the traditional pancakes at home, but it was more a family celebration. None of us wanted to participate in a community festival (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Kaunas, 2004).

The traditional celebrations of the Holy Week, *Verbo Sekmadieni* (Palm Sunday), *Svarioju Ketvirtadieni* (Holy Thursday), *Dydysis Penktadieni* (Good Friday) and *Didysis Seštadieni* (Holy Saturday) could not be maintained as religious community events, but were as an individual commitment or at the level of individual families. As Jadviga explained:

> I lived in Vilnius I never went to church during this week and for Easter … it was just a normal working week…but with my mother I used to recite the rosary and fast on Good Friday … it was easier to pray at home nobody could control you (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Jadviga further added that *Velykos* (Easter Sunday) was a working day and one's presence at work was carefully monitored by the officials.

> Even if I wanted to go to church somewhere else there was not the opportunity if you were working all day … for the elderly people it was easier they did not have to go to work and they had more time. My mother used to go at the house of some friends and pray … but it was dangerous because they could be heard from next door (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

The traditional festivals of *Sekminės* (Pentecost), *Joninės* (Feast of Saint John of Baptist), *Zolinė* (Feast of Assumption), all relating to farming and husbandry, were not celebrated during the period of the Soviet occupation. Since 1991, the year which marked the withdrawn of the Soviets from Lithuania, these religious festivals have been resumed in most urban and rural areas. Irena, living in Klaipeda, confirmed:

> Since 1992 every year on the night before June 24, here in Klaipeda, we had a big celebration on a hill not far from my house … there are people in national costumes that dance around the bonfire light up for Jonine … I go every year and it is beautiful…it reminds me of when I was young, when we used to celebrate this day in the village not far from the farm of my father … we used to dance and meet young men … we really enjoyed that time. … For many years [during the occupation] we were not allowed to do anything, … all our traditions were suppressed … but now we do it again … and many young people want to know their traditions (Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

Veronika in her narrative recalled:

> Last year, my daughter drove me to the Cathedral in Vilnius for the celebration of *Sekminės*. The Church was full. There were many priests and the service was beautiful, everybody was singing as it was in the past. Then there was a long procession from the Cathedral through the main street of Vilnius that takes you to the gate of the Virgin Mary … and afterwards the priests blessed all of us….It was raining but there were a lot of people, young, old and children. … For many years we could not do it, as we did not have the permission. Now the church has started again to work as it was before the war and people like it … also young people start to go back to church and religion (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Typically, on the eve of *Vėlinės* (All Souls' Day) Lithuanians would visit the graves of the deceased members of their family and relatives and would decorate them with flowers and candles as a sign of respect and an occasion to reinforce the existing bond

between the living members of the family and the community and the deceased. Religious services were held in the church during the whole of the day, culminating in a night procession lead by a priest to the cemetery and the graves of national heroes who were also honoured; although many cemeteries and graves had been destroyed or damaged during the Soviet occupation in the attempt to eliminate the influence of religion on the Lithuanian ethnic population. Jonas and Irena maintained that Lithuanians continued to pay their respects to their deceased.

> In Klaipeda the Soviets demolished the oldest cemetery in the centre of the city with bulldozers to create a park. They did this because the cemetery was in the centre and they did not want people going there and worshipping. … They [the Soviets] built a new cemetery outside the city. It is now a big one … I go there once a week to visit my parents and few friends … I just take a bus … it is about an hour distant from the city (Jonas and Irena, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

The above extracts in this section, taken from interviews in 2004, convey the hardship of the Lithuanians in maintaining their religious beliefs and pre-war traditions in a period in which secularization and elimination of the national identity was the goal of the New Order.

A Controlled System of Education

> Most of our children have a good education … but most of them have lost religious values (Jadviga, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the re-organization of the education system completed the Sovietisation of Lithuania. As part of their education, children had to spend some time working on a farm and on a factory during the week, and to attend an extensive program of lectures, youth groups and camps activities, organised to eliminate parental and religious influence on the children. Although this Soviet educational system gave most of the children the opportunity to achieve a good education, it eliminated their parents' control over the content of the programmes and the methods of instruction. Pranas, whose daughter obtained a degree in English literature at the University of Vilnius, described her daughter's education with feelings of sadness:

> My daughter was a very clever student and she had the opportunity to go to Vilnius to study at the university … she became an English teacher … but she lost completely her faith … when she was at home and she was a child we taught her some religion in secrecy because it was very dangerous but then we became

> scare to talk with her … she was heavily involved with the youth camps and all the activities organized by the communists and she became an atheist … and my son as well … he is like her … my wife and me we are very religious, we are believers … we don't go every Sunday to the church but we believe in God as my mother and all my family did … but my children are different, they do not want to know about religion (Pranas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Veronika in the same vein added with feelings of bitterness:

> My daughter is married with five children, she had a very good job … she had an education … but she is atheist … she married a Russian man; she did not married in the church as I did and all my family did as well. … She was baptized because I arranged it … she is my only daughter and I am very sorry for her … but I cannot change her. … Most of our children had a good education but most of them have lost religious values (Veronika, *Interview Transcript 2*, Klaipeda, 2004).

Lithuanian Language: Its Re-emergence

> We are Lithuanians, we have our language, culture and traditions … we continued to speak our language as it was the only way to resist the sovietisation of Lithuania, and to show them that we were not Russians … nothing could stop us (Regina, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

During the years of occupation the Lithuanian language lacked official status. It was formally regained in 1988, when it was declared the official language of Lithuania, as it had been during the period of Independence (1918-1940). However, both in urban and rural areas Lithuanians had maintained the use of their language on a daily base. It is a common claim among the participants that the Lithuanian language was better preserved in the villages among the ethnic Lithuanian population. People were not exposed daily to the use of the Russian language as were the Lithuanians living in the cities where there was a high concentration of Russian population. In the cities the pressure to speak Russian as the daily language of communication was high. Regina, who had been living and working in Vilnius, claimed:

> In the village it was easier to speak Lithuanian language because there were mainly farmers and labourers … but in the city the situation was different, people had to go to work in the offices and in place where the people in charge were Russian … then you had to speak the Russian language … especially in government jobs … you could not speak Lithuanian. I continued to speak Lithuanian only at home with my children and my relatives. … In Vilnius in the building where I was living there were mainly Russian families … after fifty years they could not even say good morning in Lithuanian (Regina, *Interview transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Veronika described her life at work with words of resentment:

> I was working in a factories and I was in an office … I remember one day came a man to talk with us about the production … we were about five hundred Lithuanians, he was one … but he spoke only Russian … and we had to listen … and some of us did not even understand what he was saying … everything was in Russian (Veronika, *Interview transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

In schools and at all levels of education, text books, language classes and course content focused on Soviet Russian culture and values, taught in the Russian language by Russian teachers who had been brought into the Lithuanian education system to fill the places of those who had been deported or removed. Indeed, from the start of schooling the Russian language and literature studies occupied larger periods of the school week, diminishing the time available to Lithuanian language classes. At school it was forbidden to speak Lithuanian, even during recess time. As the emphasis in the schools was heavily on Soviet Russian culture, Lithuanian children had to learn their own language and culture through other sources.

During the Czarist period of occupation in the nineteenth century, as stated in Chapter 3 Lithuanian school teachers and ethnic Lithuanians in the village had organised an underground educational program for children of all ages (Kiaupa, 2002, p. 263). During the years of Soviet occupation, it was again the responsibility of the Lithuanian people, informally, to maintain their language and to teach Lithuanian culture to the young generation. This objective was achieved through the family. Lithuanian families taught folk poems, songs and stories in the attempt to maintain their culture among the younger generation. Folk songs and poems from before the period of occupation were used to reclaim the national spirit and to provide a foundation upon which to develop and maintain national identity.

Most of the Lithuanian-born teachers, however, did continue unofficially to promote and reinforce aspects of the Lithuanian culture at school whenever the opportunity allowed. As Vytas, who had been educated during the period of Soviet occupation recalled:

> I remember my teacher who managed to give us some knowledge of our culture, alongside all the Soviet propaganda. We were even taught poems and songs which were not supposed to be sung in public … it was dangerous but somehow she did it (Vytas, *Interview Transcript 2*, Vilnius, 2004).

Dana with proud feelings reported:

> We were able to maintain our old traditions, language and religion more in the villages because there were the real Lithuanians … in the city we were more mixed …we had more Russians but all the Lithuanian families wanted to fight for the national identity and preservation of their culture (Dana, *Interview Transcript 2,* Vilnius, 2004).

For the ethnic Lithuanian population, the family has been always the most important vehicle or instrument for preserving the material and spiritual values that are part of the core of the pre-war rural Lithuanian culture; and once again, according to Dana, the Lithuanian family was able to fulfil its role.

Concluding Summary

Notwithstanding the political, cultural and economic changes which took place in Lithuania over the forty-six years of Soviet occupation and subsequent Sovietisation of the country, the Lithuanian population was able to challenge the imposed Soviet system in an attempt to preserve the key core markers of their pre-WWII Lithuanian culture.

Although during the years of occupation the Lithuanian language officially lost its status to the Russian language, it was still maintained on an individual and family level, surviving the pressure of the New Order. Particularly in rural areas it was preserved unbroken and used daily as the population was distinctively of ethnic Lithuanian origin. In urban areas and towns it was retained, albeit only at an individual and family level as the pressure of the work place and the high presence of different ethnic groups resulted in the daily forced adoption of the Russian language.

Religious beliefs and practices as a form of protest against the atheistic doctrine survived among the present-day Lithuanians who participated in the study, whose values and beliefs were shaped by pre-war Roman Catholic traditions. However, their religious practices were more on an individual level, than as a community as it was before the occupation.

Family traditions continued to be maintained in rural areas - the natural environment for these ethnic Lithuanians. In urban areas, traditions were also maintained, albeit in

diluted forms due to the presence of different ethnic groups and the influence of the industrialization which did not affect directly the rural areas.

The Sovietisation of education did not influence the generation of participants as they have been brought up in the pre-war education system. However, it shaped the up-bringing of their children who, although in some cases were able to obtain a better education than their parents; it seems had been detached from religious values.

From the analysis of the data of my interviews the traditional pre-WWII Lithuanian sense of hospitality and community seem clearly to have been affected by the Soviet occupation. The society was built on a system of informers who intimidated and created feelings of fears among the ethnic Lithuanians, who in turn withdrew into themselves and did not interact with each other, to such an extent that it created isolation even from their immediate families.

Two separate columns profiling in summary form the cultural characteristics of the rural and urban subgroups of the present-day Lithuanian sample are in columns 5 and 6 of the multi-column table in Appendix 3.

Three non-identifying but directly grounded composite narratives with the purpose of conveying a sense of the people who made up the Lithuanian sample are in Appendix 10: 10.8, 10.9 and 10.10.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

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> Culture is not like rock, which ostensibly can pass through many hands and remains unchanged, but it is rather like a story that is tailored and embellished in the process of transmission … false cultures – static and passively transmitted – are produced by tourist industries and by scholars … the [true] process of cultural transmission … is dynamic, creative and real (Linnekin, 1990, p.161).

This study has discovered, described, explored, compared and analysed the cultural changes which have taken place within three distinct present-day Lithuanian communities in Western Australia, Siberia and Lithuania.

Using empirical data collected from people still living in the present-day Lithuanian, Siberian and Australian population sample groups, I was able to identify within their subjective experiences the differences and the similarities in the preservation and loss of the key markers of pre-WWII Lithuanian culture among these three distinctive groups as well as the degree to which they have distanced themselves from their original culture.

Analysis of the data has established clearly that the reality for the two distinctive groups in Western Australia and Siberia is that a degree of adaptation has occurred to a new culture which has been dominant for the last fifty years. This is not revealed by the analysis of the data of the Lithuanian group in Lithuania. Furthermore, it was found that the ways in which individuals moved through this process of preservation and loss were governed by intervening conditions specific to individuals and their particular circumstances. These conditions shaped and influenced what the individual or the community was able to retain from the original pre-war Lithuanian culture.

It was clear from the stories relayed by the group in Western Australia that the participants in the study viewed the adaptation to the dominant culture as a natural occurrence. The process of adaptation was dynamic and extended to all aspects of life.

Lithuanian Emigrés in Perth, Western Australia

The Lithuanians in Western Australia were a small group and their composition was not socially homogeneous. They differed in their original social status, education, professions, military training and region of origin. They shared only a common political view. These differences, over time, contributed to the extent of the maintenance and/or loss of the core markers of the pre-WWII Lithuanian culture. The usual difficulties in the sharing of Lithuanian ethnicity occurred on personal, psychological and social levels and nurtured the *émigrés* need for social and emotional support but only in the first years of their re-settlement. The small size of the Lithuanian group limited their ability to maintain cultural institutions and, therefore, the group on their arrival, became dependent on the Catholic Church. However, when the Lithuanians started to merge into the Australian society their dependence on the Church diminished as they became more influenced by the values of the Australian society where the Roman Catholic religion did not play a prominent role.

Perhaps because of this drift, decreased participation in community gatherings occurred. Activities which largely related to traditions became diluted and are at risk of being lost. Although the Lithuanian language is still maintained among the old émigrés on an individual basis, the use of the English language is dominant. Most of them failed to pass on their language to the next generation. After fifty years, Lithuanian religious and linguistic ethos and family traditions, continued to be preserved among most of the original *émigrés*, on an individual basis.

Lithuanian Emigrés in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia

The Lithuanians settled in the region of Krasnoyarsk formed a small community. Although living in an atheistic society, where any form of religious practice was forbidden (until 1992), the Lithuanian *émigrés* continued to maintain their faith on an individual level. Lithuanian family traditions could be maintained with a certain degree of adaptation in the family where the female participant was of Lithuanian origin. In the families where the male participants in the study entered into mixed marriages, traditions had to be negotiated. Lithuanian émigrés in Krasnoyarsk, although they speak Russian as a national language, maintain the use of their native language with contacts in their

community, as a sign of rebellion against their forced displacement and as a symbol of ethnicity and identity. The use of the Russian language threatened their national ethnic identity and the sense of belonging to their homeland which the group associated with freedom and a normal life. After fifty years, Lithuanian religion and the language, more than family traditions, continued to be maintained by the group.

Pre-War Lithuanian Generation in Lithuania

After the period of Soviet occupation the characteristics of pre-war culture were retained in spite of the Sovietisation of the country. As a form of resistance and protest against atheistic doctrines, religious values and beliefs were celebrated. Pre-war traditions and customs were maintained by the participants in the study because they were in their original environment. The older generation was also proud to continue the tradition passed down to them in the family and currently have no reason or desire to change. The language, the most important key marker of the Lithuanian identity, has been preserved as a national language although it was under threat from the occupying force. In particular, the language has survived intact in rural areas where the population was distinctively ethnic Lithuanian. According to my findings, forty-six years of Soviet occupation failed to re-mould the values, beliefs and traditions of the pre-war generation who were participants to the study.

I believe that this comparative study is unique because of the three sample groups. Information is accordingly gained from a larger and more varied total sample and hence enables a deeper understanding of how time and circumstances have affected the 'original' culture. Results obtained may be significant in assisting other scholars to explore the same phenomena in other communities that have experienced foreign oppression in their own country, deportation, or emigration as refugees from their home country to escape oppression. The findings of the present work may offer researchers an opportunity to investigate and compare three streams of other present-day populations which have not yet been surveyed.

Comparisons and Contrasts across the Three Lithuanian Groups Investigated

The value of the comparative tables set out in the appendices is that they enable an objective return to the four hypotheses with which this thesis began. The four hypotheses were designed to ascertain to what extent each of the three distinct communities investigated might have distanced itself from its original heritage and to what degree the chief features of that culture have been maintained or lost over a period of fifty years of living in Western Australia, in Siberia or in Lithuania.

The tables make it possible to draw an immediate comparison of the differences and/or similarities in the retention or loss of the key markers of the pre-war Lithuanian culture, between the three distinctive groups. The tables also allow one to validate or to offer different possibilities since the initial four hypotheses were not exhaustive. The findings show that the retention of cultural identity is far more complex than can be demonstrated with absolute specificity to these four hypotheses alone

Hypothesis 1

This hypothesis suggested that each of the three population groups' samples could have retained a substantial common core of pre-war Lithuanian traditions values and beliefs.

It is not verified. According to the findings two of these three groups (Australian and Siberian) have slowly adapted to their new environment; even if each still holds on to certain core aspects of their original culture. However the data show that adaptation has occurred more rapidly in Australia in relation to the use of the Lithuanian language and family and religious traditions.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis posited that each of the present-day communities could have drifted substantially away from its original pre-war Lithuanian culture. In this hypothesised outcome the groups have changed to such an extent that they no longer share their pre-war Lithuanian culture; and have completely distanced themselves from their original identity.

The findings indicate this is not the case for all three population groups. It is true only for the diaspora groups. Lithuania is a predominantly agricultural country and its rural

population is firmly attached to its traditions and strongly conservative and resistant to change, especially sudden change. Therefore, the three groups have adopted different strategies to assist in the preservation of its customs, traditions, values and beliefs.

Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis suggested that two population groups both part of the post-war Lithuanian diaspora, share some common cultural aspects while the Lithuanian group in Lithuania no longer shares those aspects, even though it still retains some (other) traditional Lithuanian characteristics.

The findings, however, indicate that the two groups of the Lithuanian diaspora, in Western Australia and Siberia, although sharing some common cultural aspects, differ in the extent and intensity of that sharing. This is due to the level of integration into the mainstream population, which was more pronounced in Western Australia than in Siberia, due to the latter's political circumstances. The Lithuanian group in Lithuania did not drift. It has retained intact the characteristics of the pre-war culture, largely due to the obvious fact that it continued to live in the original environment.

Hypothesis 4

This hypotheses put forward that the two groups of the Lithuanian diaspora have drifted away completely from their original culture, while the group in Lithuania still retains its pre-war culture.

Findings show that the Lithuanian group in Lithuania has maintained its culture intact and that the two diaspora groups have not abandoned their original culture outright but still retain some core of its key markers.

In conclusion, none of the four hypotheses has been entirely verified. However, findings show that the group which retains most strongly the core markers and therefore a strong sense of 'Lithuanian-ness' is the Lithuanian group still living in their homeland. In this group age played a decisive role. Due to their age and upbringing, and to the environment in which they have been living for the last fifty years, they may have adapted to the system imposed upon them, but they preserved their language, traditions and faith. All the participants in the study acknowledge their strong religious faith and

the maintenance of religious practices and traditions, even though during the period of occupation this was possible only on a personal basis.

The two groups of the Lithuanian diaspora in Western Australia and Siberia, although retaining some common core of the original culture, are very distinctive.

The Siberian group has retained a strong sense of national identity, which could only be disclosed after 1992. The old émigrés preserved religious beliefs and values, the use of the Lithuanian language, and to some extent Lithuanian family traditions –considering that the majority of the members of the Lithuanian diaspora in Siberia are married to members of other ethnic groups. The strong ties maintained with their homeland keep alive their children's and grand-children's interest and thereby preserve certain continuity with the Lithuanian culture.

The study showed that the Lithuanian group in Western Australia, although was able to retain a sense of 'Lithuanian-ness', integrated rapidly into the mainstream population. The old émigrés have adapted to such an extent to the dominant culture that their traditions, values and beliefs now reflect their new environment. They were not able to preserve their culture in such a way that it could be handed down on their children and grand-children. They failed also to maintain continued ties with their homeland. As a consequence the future Lithuanian way of life in Australia is close to extinction.

This research has demonstrated that while none of the four original hypotheses could be completely validated, each of the groups investigated has retained at least some (and, in the case of the Lithuanians in their homeland, almost all) of their pre-war heritage. Importantly, the study has revealed that the complexities of, and marked differences between, the situations faced by the three groups have been such that the broad and somewhat sweeping comparisons implied by the original hypotheses represent a gross oversimplification of what is actually a highly variable and nuanced reality. Indeed, the only comparisons one can meaningfully make on the basis of the data obtained in the study are comparisons that reveal and delineate the different degrees and patterns of cultural movement or retention as they have been experienced by the three groups examined.

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APPENDIX 1

DEPORTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Appendix 1

DEPORTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Regarding the Procedure for carrying out the Deportation of Anti-Soviet Elements from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia

Strictly Secret

(Translated in London from the original Russian Text)

1. General Situation

The deportation of anti-Soviet elements from the Baltic Republics is a task of great political importance. Its successful execution depends upon the extent to which the district operative "troikas"* and operative headquarters are capable of carefully working out a plan for implementing the operations and for anticipating everything indispensable. Moreover, care must be taken that the operations are carried out without disturbance and panic, so as not to permit any demonstrations and other troubles not only on the part of those to be deported, but also on the part of a certain section of the surrounding population hostile to the Soviet administration.

Instructions as to the procedure for conducting the operations are given below. They should be adhered to, but in individual cases the collaborators engaged in carrying out the operations shall take into account the special character of the concrete conditions of such operations and, in order to correctly appraise the situation, may and must adopt other decisions directed to the same end, viz.,to fulfil the task entrusted to them without noise and panic.

2. Procedure of Instructing

The instructing of operative groups by the district *troika** shall be done as speedily as possible on the day before the beginning of the operations, taking into consideration the time necessary for travelling to the scene of operations.

The district *troika* shall previously prepare the necessary transport for conveyance of the operative groups in the village to the scene of operations.

On the question of allocating the necessary number of motor-cars and wagons for transport, the district "troikas" shall consult the leaders of the Soviet party organized on the spot.

Premises for the issue of instructions must be carefully prepared in advance, and their capacity, exits and entrances and the possibility of intrusion by strangers must be considered.

Whilst instructions are being issued the building must be securely guarded by operative workers.

* "Troika" – a body consisting of three members

Should anybody from among those participating in the operations fail to appear for instructions the district "troika" shall at once take steps to replace the absentee from a reserve which shall be provided in advance.

Through police officers the *troika* shall notify those assembled of the Government's decision to deport a prescribed contingent of anti-Soviet elements from the territory of the said republic or region. Moreover, they shall briefly explain what the deportees represent.

The special attention of the (local) Soviet party workers gathered for instructions shall be drawn to the fact that the deportees are enemies of the Soviet people and that, therefore, the possibility of an armed attack on the part of the deportees cannot be excluded.

3. Procedure for Acquisition of Documents

After the general instruction of the operative groups, documents regarding the deportees should be issued to such groups. The deportees' personal files must be previously collected and distributed among the operative groups, by communes and villages so that when they are being given out there shall be no delays.

After receipt of the personal files, the senior member of the operative group shall acquaint himself with the personal affairs of the families which he will have to deport. He shall, moreover, ascertain the composition of the family, the supply of essential forms for completion regarding the deportee, the supply of transport for conveyance of the deportee, and he shall receive exhaustive answers to questions not clear to him.

Simultaneously with the issuing of documents, the district *troika* shall explain to each senior member of the operative group where the families to be deported are situated and shall describe the route to be followed to place of deportation. The roads to be taken by the operative personnel with the deported families to the railway station for entrainment must also be indicated. It is also essential to indicate where reserve military groups are stationed, should it become necessary to call them out during trouble of any kind.

The possession and state of arms and ammunition of the entire operative personnel shall be checked. Weapons must be in complete battle readiness and magazine loaded, but the cartridge shall not be slipped into the rifle breach. Weapons shall be used only in the last resort, when the operative group is attacked or threatened with attack or when resistance is offered.

4. Procedure for Carrying out Deportations

If the deportation of several families is being carried out in a settled locality, one of the operative workers shall be appointed senior as regards deportation in that village, and under his direction the operative personnel shall proceed to the villages in question.

On arrival in the villages, the operative groups shall get in touch (observing the necessary secrecy) with the local authorities: the chairman, secretary or members of the village soviets, and shall ascertain from them the exact dwelling-place of the families to be deported. After this the operative groups, together with representatives of the local

authorities, who shall be appointed to make an inventory of property, shall proceed to the dwellings of the families to be deported.

Operations shall be begun at daybreak. Upon entering the home of the person to be deported, the senior member of the operative group shall assemble the entire family of the deportee into one room, taking all necessary precautionary measures against any possible trouble.

After the members of the family have been checked in conformity with the list, the location of those absent and the number of sick persons shall be ascertained, after which they shall be called upon to give up their weapons. Irrespective of whether or not any weapons are delivered, the deportee shall be personally searched and then the entire premises shall be searched in order to discover hidden weapons.

During the search of the premises one of the members of the operative group shall be appointed to keep watch over the deportees.

Should the search disclose hidden weapons in small quantities, these shall be collected by the operative groups and distributed among them. If many weapons are discovered, they shall be piled into the wagon or motorcar which has brought the operative group, after any ammunition in them has been removed. Ammunition shall be packed and loaded together with rifles.

If necessary, a convoy for transporting the weapons shall be mobilized with an adequate guard.

In the event of the discovery of weapons, counter-revolutionary pamphlets, literature, foreign currency, large quantities of valuables, etc., a brief report of search shall be drawn up on the spot, wherein the hidden weapons or counter-revolutionary literature shall be indicated. If there is any armed resistance, the question of the necessity of arresting the parties showing such armed resistance and of sending them to the district branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security shall be decided by the district "troikas".

A report shall be drawn up regarding those deportees in hiding or sick ones, and this report shall be signed by the representative of the Soviet party organization.

After completion of the search the deportees shall be notified that by a Government decision they will be deported to other regions of the Union.

The deportees shall be permitted to take with them household necessities not exceeding 100 kilograms in weight.

1. Suit
2. Shoes.
3. Underwear
4. Bedding
5. Dishes
6. Glassware
7. Kitchen utensils

8. Food – an estimated month's supply for a family
9. Money in their possession
10. Trunk or box in which to pack articles.

It is not recommended that large articles be taken.

If the contingent is deported from rural districts, they shall be allowed to take with them small agricultural stocks – axes, saws and other articles, which shall be tied together and packed separately from the other articles, so that when boarding the deportation train they may be loaded into special goods wagons.

In order not to mix them with articles belonging to others, the Christian name, patronymic and surname of the deportee and name of the village shall be written on the packaged property.

When loading these articles into the carts, measures shall be taken so that the deportee cannot make use of them for purposes of resistance while the column is moving along the highway.

Simultaneously with the task of loading by the operative groups, the representatives of the Soviet party organizations present at the time shall prepare an inventory of the property and of the manner of its protection in conformity with the instructions received by them.

If the deportees are without any means of transport, carts shall be mobilized in the village by the local authorities, as instructed by the senior member of the operative group.

All persons entering the home of the deportee during the execution of the operations or found there at the moment of these operations must be detained until the conclusion of the operations, and their relationship to the deportee shall be ascertained. This is done in order to disclose persons hiding from the police, gendarmes and other persons.

After verification of the identity of the detained persons and establishment of the fact that they are persons in whom the contingent is not interested, they shall be liberated.

If the inhabitants of the village begin to gather around the deportee's home while operations are in progress, they shall be called upon to disperse to their own homes, and crowds shall not be permitted to form.

If the deportee refuses to open the door of his home, notwithstanding that he is aware that the members of the People's Commissariat of Public Security have arrived, the door must be broken down. In individual cases neighbouring operative groups carrying out operations in that locality shall be called upon to help.

The delivery of the deportees from the village to the meeting place at the railway station must be effected during the daylight; care, moreover, should be taken that the assembling of every family shall not last more than two hours.

In all cases throughout the operations firm and decisive action shall be taken, without the slightest excitement, noise and panic.

It is categorically forbidden to take any articles away from the deportees except weapons, counter-revolutionary literature and foreign currency, as also to make use of the food of the deportees.

All participants in the operations must be warned that they will be held legally accountable for attempts to appropriate individual articles belonging to the deportees.

5. Procedure for Separation of Deportee's Family from Head of the Family

In view of the fact that a large number of deportees must be arrested and distributed in special camps and that their families must proceed to special settlements in distant regions, it is essential that the operation of removal of both the members of the deportee's family and its head should be carried out simultaneously, without notifying them of the separation confronting them. After the domiciliary search has been carried out and the appropriate identification documents have been drawn up in the deportee's home, the operative worker shall complete the documents for the head of the family and deposit them in the latter's personal file, but the documents drawn up for members of his family shall be deposited in the personal file of the deportee's family.

The convoy of the entire family to the station shall, however, be effected in one vehicle and only at the station of departure shall the head of the family be placed separately from his family in a car specially intended for heads of families.

During the assembling (of the family) in the home of the deportee the head of the family shall be warned that personal male effects must be packed in a separate suitcase, as a sanitary inspection of the deported men will be made separately from the women and children.

At the stations of entrainment heads of families subject to arrest shall be loaded into cars specially allotted for them, which shall be indicated by operative workers appointed for that purpose.

6. Procedure for convoying the Deportees

The assistants convoying the column of deportees in horse-carts are strictly forbidden to sit it the said carts. The assistants must follow alongside and behind the column of deportees. The senior assistant of the convoy shall from time to time go the rounds of the entire column to check the correctness of movement.

When the column of deportees is passing through inhabited places or when encountering passers-by, the convoy must be controlled with particular care; those in charge must see that no attempts are made to escape, and no conversation of any kind shall be permitted between the deportees and passers-by.

7. Procedure for Entrainment

At each point of entertainment a member of the operative *troika* and a person specially appointed for that purpose shall be responsible for entrainment.

On the day of entrainment the chief of the entrainment point, together with the chief of the deportation train and of the convoying military forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, shall examine the railway cars provided in order to see that they are supplied with everything necessary, and the chief of the entrainment point shall agree with the chief of the deportation train on the procedure to be observed by the latter in accepting delivery of the deportees.

Red Army men of the convoying forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs shall surround the entrainment station.

The senior member of the operative group shall deliver to the chief of deportation train one copy of the nominal roll of the deportees in each railway car. The chief of the deportation train shall, in conformity with this list, call out the name of each deportee, shall carefully check every name and assign the deportee's place in the railway-car.

The deportees' effects shall be loaded into the car, together with the deportees, with the exception of the small agricultural inventory, which shall be loaded in a separate car.

The deportees shall be loaded into railway-cars by families; it is not permitted to break up a family (with the exception of heads of families subject to arrest). An estimate of twenty-five persons to a car should be observed.

After the railway-car has been filled with the necessary number of families, it shall be locked.

After the people have been taken over and placed in the deportation train, the chief of the train shall bear responsibility for all persons handed over to him and for their delivery to their destination.

After handing over the deportees the senior member of the operative group shall draw up a report on the operation carried out by him and shall address it to the chief of the district operative *troika*. The report shall briefly indicate the name of the deportee, whether any weapons and counter-revolutionary literature have been discovered, and also how the operation was carried out.

After having placed the deportees on the deportation train and having submitted reports of the results of the operations thus discharged, the members of the operative group shall be considered free and shall act in accordance with the instructions of the chief of the district branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security.

Deputy People's Commissar of Public Security
of the U.S.S.R

Commissar of Public Security of the Third Rank
(Signed) Serov

APPENDIX 2

DECLARATION OF THE SUPREME COMMITTEE OF LIBERATION

Appendix 2

DECLARATION OF THE SUPREME COMMITTEE OF LIBERATION

To the Lithuanian People!

The Lithuanian nation endeavouring to liberate Lithuania from the occupation and to restore the functioning of Lithuania's sovereign organs, temporarily impeded by foreign forces, stands in need of united political leadership. With this aim in view, the Lithuanian political groups, as the exponents of the nation's political thought and instruments of its application, have agreed to unite all forces for common action and have created the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania.

The Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, entering upon their duties, declare that:

1. The freedom of Lithuanian nation and the independence of the Lithuanian State are indispensable conditions for the nation's existence and well-being.
2. The sovereign State of Lithuania has not disappeared by reason of its occupation by the Soviet Union or because of the present occupation by the German Reich; only the functioning of the sovereign State organs has been temporarily suspended. The occupation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union on 15th June, 1940, and the divers other acts perpetrated by force and fraud under cover of that occupation resulting in disruption of the functions of the sovereign organs of the State, were brought to an end by the popular revolt of the Nation on June 23rd, 1941, and the functions of the sovereign organs of the State were temporarily resumed by the Provisional Government.
3. After the liberation of Lithuania from the occupation, the Constitution of 1938 will remain in force until it is appropriately amended in a legal manner.
4. A Provisional Government of the Republic will be organized, when the proper time comes, within the Supreme Committee of Liberation of Lithuania on a coalition basis and by agreement of the political groups.
5. The democratic organization of the State of Lithuania will be effected in conformity with the interests of the people as a whole and under general post-war conditions.
6. The laws governing the election of the President of the Republic and of Members of Parliament will be modified in accordance with the principles of democratic elections.
7. The Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, having undertaken leadership in the struggle and labour for the liberation of the country, for the resuscitation of the functions of the sovereign organs of the State, for the restoration of the democratic order, and for the defence of the country against Communism and other life-disrupting factors, will endeavour to bring about the broadest possible consolidation of the community, at the same time eliminating misunderstandings among the political groups.
8. Recognizing the great importance of the national armed forces in the struggle for the liberation of Lithuania, the Committee will by all available means support the restoration of the Lithuania army.
9. The Committee will maintain close contact with the Lithuanian Legations and Consulates and will collaborate with Lithuanians abroad, especially with American-

Lithuanians, as well as with all nations that recognize the principle of self-determination of nations and the right of Lithuania to independence.

10. In order to facilitate the cultural and economic progress of the nation and to accelerate the country's return to normal life, the Committee will collect and arrange the appropriate material for the use of liberated Lithuania's administration, as well as for the regulation of the national economy, social life, justice and education.

The Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, in making this declaration to the Lithuanian people, invites all Lithuanians of goodwill of all political parties to imbue themselves with the spirit of unity and collaboration in this unequal struggle for the liberation of Lithuania.

"For the sake of this Lithuania
Let the unity of her people blossom!"
(From the Lithuanian National Anthem)

The Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania

Vilnius. *February* 16th, 1944.

APPENDIX 3

PRE-WAR LITHUANIAN TRADITIONS, VALUES AND BELIEFS

LITHUANIAN CULTURAL CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

LITHUANIAN CULTURAL VALUES

LITHUANIAN CULTURAL BELIEFS

Lithuanian Cultural Customs and Practices

Appendix 3

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post–WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post–WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post–WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post–WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post–WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Housing					
Farmsteads had a uniformity of design. • A square, non-fenced compound with one single-storey farmhouse, built of logs and with a roof of thatch or wooden shingles, facing the main road with double front doors and a porch with gables. • A more modern red brick building generally with a tiled or tin roof. • A well to supply fresh water not far from the front of the house. • The farming buildings included the stables for the horses and cows, the barn, the granary, the hen-house, a pig-sty, a beehive, a smoke-house, a potato bunker and a *pirtis* (bath house). *(Continued Over)*	Houses are built featuring Australian architecture. • Each house is a single storey, built of bricks with generally a garage attached. • A decorative garden is at the front, mostly with lawn, native trees, and multicoloured flowers and rose bushes. • A decorative garden is also in the back of the house with assorted pot plants, and small patches of *ruta* (rue), dill and strawberries. • *Inkilai* (nesting bird-boxes) are also visible on the trees in the back garden.	Houses are built featuring pre-war rural Lithuanian design. • Generally the house is built of logs or in bricks with doors and windows painted in white and blue. • Each house has a double timber front door and a porch with gables. • A decorative garden is at the front of the house with flowers and pine and birch trees. • A vegetable garden is in the back of the house with dill and *rūta* (rue) bushes, berries and strawberries patches. • A summer kitchen and a *pirtis* (sauna) are built also at the back of the house. *Inkilai* (nesting bird-boxes) are located on the trees. • A dog guards the house.	Apartments are multi-storey large buildings blocks featuring post-war Soviet period. • The apartment buildings are clustered in groups of approximately four or five to form a residential complex with a common courtyard and a children's playground. • Apartments generally have two or three rooms with sitting rooms that doubled as bedrooms with built in wardrobes; a small kitchen with built in cupboards, and a sanitary room separated from the washroom; a balcony and a double timber and iron front door. • Typically, in one of these buildings there is a general store, and a medical clinic. *(Continued Over)*	Farmsteads are built featuring pre-WW II rural Lithuanian design. • A dog guarded the farmstead.	Apartments are built featuring the post- war Soviet period. • Typically Lithuanians living in the urban areas have a *soda* (a summer cottage with a vegetable and decorative garden) featuring pre-war rural Lithuanian design.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
• Family sanitary and bathing needs were outside not far from the farm house. • The farmstead property was marked by oak, maple, and birch trees and was not far from a pine or fir forest. • Crosses and *koplytelė* (small religious shrines) were built on the property, *inkilai* (nesting-bird boxes) were built and placed on trees. • A decorative garden was at the front of the farmhouse with multicoloured flowers, roses and *rūta* (rue) bushes. • A vegetable garden was on the side or on the back of the farmhouse with berries bushes and strawberries patches and an orchard. • A dog guarded the farmstead.			• Within walking distance there is a kindergarten, a primary school, and a local market. • A bus network transports residents to and from the residential areas. • Typically Lithuanians living in the urban areas have a *dacha* (a summer cottage with a decorative and a vegetable garden) featuring pre-war rural Lithuanian design.		

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Family					
Families were generally large on average of five children. Elderly members of the family generally lived independently on their farm. All members of the family including children worked on the farm and spent considerable time together.	Families were generally small on average of two or three children. Elderly members, if any lived together with their children. All members of the family were in employment. Only mothers with young children and elderly members of the family stayed at home.	Families were generally small on average of two or three children. Elderly members of the family lived together with their children. All members of the family were in employment. Only elderly members of the family stayed at home.	Families were generally small on average of two or three children. Elderly members, if any lived together with their children. All members of the family were in employment. Only elderly members, if any, stayed at home.	Families were generally small on average of two or three children. Elderly members of the family lived together with their children. All members of the family were in employment. Only elderly members of the family stayed at home.	Families were generally small on average of two children. Elderly members of the family lived together with their children. All members of the family were in the employment. Only elderly members of the family stayed at home.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Food and Drink					
Traditional staple dishes and diet were based on: ***cereals:*** (rye, barley, buckwheat, oats soups and porridges) ***bread:*** (dark rye bread and white bread) ***pork meat:*** preserved in brine or smoked, *skilandys* (smoked pork sausages) *lašynis* (bacon) ***milk and dairy products****:* butter, cheese and *grietinė* (sour cream). fresh water fish, eels, *silke* (herrings). ***Vegetable and fruit:*** beetroots, cabbages, potatoes, turnips, dill, mushrooms, cucumbers, strawberries and berries ***Preserves:*** honey, strawberry jam, pickled beetroots and sauerkraut *(Continued Over)*	Traditional staple diet has been maintained with some variation according to the climate (unsuitable conditions for mushrooms and berries), the environment and health conditions. Traditional dishes are prepared only on special occasions Standard beverages have been maintained; beer, wine and *dektinė* (vodka), milk, herbal tea and coffee. Some old émigrés are still producing their own home-brewing of beer.	Traditional staple dishes and diet have been easily maintained due to the climate. Standard beverages are vodka, brandy and beer milk and herbal tea. Coffee is consumed on special occasions. No data for home-brewing.	Traditional staple dishes and diet, with some degree of adaptation due to mixed marriages, have been maintained Standard beverages are vodka, brandy and beer, with old émigrés still making home-brewing vodka. Milk and herbal tea are consumed regularly. Coffee on special occasions. Generally the old émigrés produce their own home-brewing of vodka.	Traditional staple dishes and diet have been maintained. Standard beverages have been maintained according to the pre-WWII traditions.	Traditional staple dishes and diet have been maintained. Standard beverages have been maintained according to the pre-WWII traditions.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Traditional dishes: Lithuanian *borsch* (beetroot soup), *blynai* (flour or potato pancakes), č*epelinas* (meat and potatoes dumpling), *kugėlis* (grated potatoes baked with bacon). **Standard beverages:** home-made apple cider, beer, *krupnikas, saldė* and dektinė (vodka), milk, herbal tea and coffee.					
National Costume Men's costumes were soberly coloured: thick linen white shirt, long trousers, with a waistband, vest, lightweight coat, greatcoat, short jacket, sheepskin coat, bright *(Continued Over)*	Soon after their arrival, national costumes were worn only on particular social, political and religious events as a sign of strong national identification.	(No data available)	The use of national costumes, with some variation, has been re-assumed in 1991 the year that marked the end of the Soviet era.	(No data available)	(No data available)

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
woven sash, felt and straw hat decorated with feathers and flowers, leather boots and *klumpes* (wooden clogs). Women's costumes were more colourful and with embroidery: white linen shirt, loose skirt, bodice, apron, sash and shawl, head covering, leather shoes, *klumpės* (wooden clogs) and amber jewellery Children costumes were similar to adults. Boys' costumes were without jacket and vest. Young girls' costumes were short checked or patterned skirts with aprons. Adolescent girls wore calf-length skirts and a small crown made of ribbon loose on their shoulder.					

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Entertainment On Sundays and for other religious celebrations the family would attend church and after the service would socialize with friends. On market days farmers and their wives would go to the market and on the way back home they would stop at the *smuklė* (inn) for a meal and a drink. The family would enjoy parties, with neighbours and friends and would sing and dance to folk songs. In winter the family would invite neighbours and friends to sauna. In summer young people would go *Geguzinė* (outdoor dancing). In the evenings, typically the men would read *(Continued Over)*	***On their arrival to Western Australia*** On Sunday and for other religious celebrations the family would attend church and would socialize with friends. The family would enjoy parties with Lithuanians friends at home, at the Lithuanians House or at different venues. They would share a traditional Lithuanian meal sing folk songs and dance. During the good seasons they would organize picnics, excursions and gatherings in their gardens. They would play traditional Lithuanians cards games and chess. They would play basketball and golf. ***Currently*** On Sundays and for other religious celebrations the original émigrés would attend church. After the *(Continued Over)*	***At the time of deportation*** Families would gather together in different households to pray in secrecy and spend time together ***Currently*** The family would spend time together. Generally for Christmas and Easter the old émigrés would go to the city to attend church and then celebrate Christmas and Easter with other émigrés. The original émigrés would travel to Lithuania on holidays with children or grandchildren.	***At the time of deportation*** In mixed marriages Lithuanians would socialize with Russian relatives and friends. ***Currently*** Generally for Christmas and Easter the old émigrés would attend church and would have lunch and spend time with Russian and Lithuanian friends. During Summer they would spend time at the *dacha* (summer cottage).	***At the time of occupation*** Families would gather together and socialize as in the pre-WWII period. ***Currently*** The old émigrés would attend church and spend time together with the family and friends.	***At the time of occupation*** Families would gather together and socialize with close relatives and friends with a sense of fear. ***Currently*** The old émigrés would attend church and spend time together with the family and friends. During Summer they would spend time at the *soda* (summer cottage).

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
books and newspapers and listen to the radio, play cards with the neighbours Men would go hare hunting in the forest with friends. Women would spend time with the children, would knit or sew, do needle works and sing old traditional songs.	service would socialize with friends at the *Lithuanian House*. The old émigrés would enjoy parties with Lithuanians friends at home, at the *Lithuanians House.* They would play golf. They would listen to the Lithuanian radio program. They would travel to Lithuania and around the world if in good health.				

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Specific male role *(during working life)* The men were considered the breadwinners. They tended mainly large farm animals (cattle and horses), performed the heavy duties on the farm, shovelling snow, cutting firewood, repairing farm tools, making kitchen utensils and clogs for the family, working in the fields and treating ill animals. They would lead the family in prayer and slice the bread during meals. They would initiate the young boys to farming.	*(during working life)* The men were the breadwinners. They were working in urban factories, in the maintenance of pipeline and railway line saw mills, cement factories, asbestos mines and the wheat belt. They shared part of the family's duty, tended the garden, built furniture, drove the car and looked after the children.	*(during working life)* Men were the breadwinners. They were working in the kolkhozes and in logging. They shared part of the family's duty, tended the garden, built furniture and looked after the children.	*(during working life)* Men were the breadwinners. They were working in urban factories and in the maintenance of the railway line. They were expected to share part of the housework, built furniture and look after the children.	*(during working life)* Men were the breadwinners. They were working in the kolkhozes.	*(during working life)* Men were the breadwinners. They were expected to work in urban factories, and government jobs. They would share part of the housework, and look after the children.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Specific female role *(during working life)* Women attended the house duties, spun and wove, cooked, made and mended clothing, made napery, preserved vegetables and fruits, made bread, tended poultry, sheep and pigs and helped the males in the fields during the period of the harvesting. Women would tend the decorative and the vegetable gardens and the orchard. It was the responsibility of the mother to look after the wellbeing of the new born and their upbringing. The mother breastfed her babies, introduced the young offspring to the value and practices of the Catholic Church and taught the young female offspring to learn how to raise a family and run the household. They would look after the elderly members of the family.	*(during working life)* Women were in employment. They were working as domestics, laundry hands in hospitals, as cooks and cleaners in hostels, private homes and factories. Most of them remained in the city area. They were expected to fulfil the traditional role of wife and mother. They would attend housework make and mend clothing, do needlework for the entire family, cook, preserve fruit and vegetable, tend the garden and drive a car. She would look after the children, the elderly members of the family and the sick and would teach children religious values and practices.	*(during working life)* Women were in employment and were expected to fulfill the traditional role of wife and mother. They would attend housework make and mend clothing, do needlework for the entire family, cook, preserve fruit and vegetable, tend the vegetable and flowers garden and small farm animals. They would look after the children, and the elderly and sick members of the family.	*(during working life)* Women were in employment working in factories and government jobs and were expected to fulfil the traditional role of mother and wife. No further data available in the case when the spouse was Russian.	*(during working life)* Women were in employment and were expected to fulfil the traditional role of wife and mother. They would attend housework make and mend clothing, do needlework for the entire family, cook, preserve fruit and vegetable. They would look after the children, the elderly and sick members of the family.	(*during working life)* Women were in employment and were expected to fulfill the traditional role of wife and mother. They would attend housework make and mend clothing, do needlework for the entire family, cook, preserve fruit and vegetable, tend the garden and tend the *soda* (summer cottage), working in factories and government jobs. They would look after the children, the elderly and sick members of the family.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Specific elderly role Grandparents if living in the same household or other elderly members of the family would help to look after the grandchildren, to organize family celebrations, to treat the sick and to maintain family and religious traditions. Folk tradition was handed down through *pasakos* (stories) and *misles* (riddles) and folk songs.	Grandparents would help to look after the grandchildren and the household if living together with their children. They would teach to the grandchildren aspects of the Lithuanian culture and folklore. They would organize family celebrations, maintain family and religious traditions and Lithuanian language.	Grandparents if any would live together with their children and would look after the grandchildren, help in the household and maintain family traditions and Lithuanian language.	No data available due to the absence of grandparents as they were deceased or returned to Lithuania in the early 1960s.	Grandparents would help to look after the grandchildren and help in the household if living together with their children. They would organize family celebrations and maintain family traditions. .	Grandparents would help to look after the grandchildren and help in the household if living together with their children. They would organize family celebrations and maintain family traditions.
Specific children's role Children would be expected to obey and respect their parents and elderly, help with farm and house works, tend small farm animals, attend school and look after younger siblings. Children take part in religious practices. *(Continued Over)*	Children would generally attend Catholic schools and were expected to follow the religious instructions and practices. Children were expected to maintain the Lithuanian language and elements of the Lithuanian culture.	Children were expected to work, attend school and complete higher education to maintain Lithuanian language and culture.	Children were expected to attend school and complete higher education.	Children were expected to attend school, maintain Lithuanian culture and help with various tasks on the farm.	Children were expected to attend school and complete higher education and learn various tasks to maintain Lithuanian culture.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Girls would be expected to learn household duties from an early age, to spin and weave, to prepare their dowry, and to help the mother in the making of the bread. Boys were introduced to men's work gradually, tending cattle, manuring, mowing, threshing and sowing.					
Childbirth Families were quite large. The baby's delivery was at home. Only married women were allowed to visit the mother and newborn after childbirth and they would take a present. Typically parents would erect a cross or plant a tree on the property to celebrate the event.	The baby's delivery was at the hospital. The mother and newborn baby were visited by family members and friends. Typically they would receive gifts.	The baby's delivery was at home. The mother and newborn baby were visited by friends and a gift was taken.	(no available data)	The baby's delivery was at the hospital or at home. The mother and newborn baby were visited by family members and friends and a gift was taken.	The baby's delivery was generally at the hospital. The mother and newborn baby were visited by family members and friends and a gift was always taken.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Christening Christening would take place within one to two weeks after the birth. It was celebrated in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. A Saint's name was given to the child, with an old pagan or historical Lithuanian name. Godparents were close members of the family or friends and would undertake the full parental role in case of death of one of the parents or of both of them.	Christening took place four or five weeks after the birth to allow the family to financially organize a party. It was celebrated in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. A Saint's name was given to the child. Godparents generally were the grandparents or close family friends.	Christening took place whenever and where it could be arranged, in secrecy in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. A Saint's name was given to the child. Godparents generally were the grandparents or close family friends.	Christening took place whenever and where it could be arranged, in secrecy in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite even when the wife was Russian and of the Orthodox faith. A Saint's name was given to the child.	Christening took place in secrecy, in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. A Saint's name was given to the child, as well as an old pagan or historical Lithuanian name. Godparents were typically the grandparents who could be trusted.	Christening took place mainly in the villages or country towns in secrecy in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. A Saint's name was given to the child as well as an old pagan or historical Lithuanian name. Godparents were typically the grandparents who could be trusted.
Name's Days and Birthdays Name's Day was celebrated every year on the day of the Saint after whom a person was named. Generally birthdays were celebrated only when one turned 21 years of age.	Name's Day was celebrated only for the elderly members of the family. Birthdays were celebrated for all the members of the family.	Name's Day was celebrated only for the elderly members of the family. Birthdays were celebrated for all members of the family.	(No data available) Birthdays were celebrated for all members of the family.	Name's Day was celebrated only for the elderly members of the family. Birthdays were celebrated for all members of the family.	Name's Day was celebrated only for the elderly members of the family. Birthdays were celebrated for all members of the family.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Weddings The wedding was celebrated on Sunday in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. The groom would wear his best suit. The bride would wear a long white dress with a small wreath of rue pinned on the veil. The parents would greet the newly weds offering bread salt and a glass of wine; festivities lasted from three to six days. *Raguolis* the traditional wedding cake was shared among the guests.	The wedding was celebrated in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite. Lithuanian wedding traditions have been maintained to a certain extent due to the foreign terrain. The wedding celebration would last only one day.	The wedding was celebrated in Lithuania before deportation in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite with the Lithuanian traditions.	In the city lived mainly the young Lithuanian males who married with Russian or German women. Therefore the marriage was celebrated according to the Soviet civil rites.	The wedding was celebrated in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite in the pre-WWII period or during German occupation. The Lithuanian wedding customs and traditions have been maintained.	The wedding was celebrated in accordance to the Roman Catholic rite in the pre-WWII period or during German occupation. The Lithuanian wedding traditions remained unchanged.
Death and Funeral The deceased was kept at home for three days in the best room of the house; family members and neighbours would recite the rosary together; lamentation mourners were hired from the village. *(Continued Over)*	The deceased would be kept in a funeral parlor. Family members, relatives and friends assembled there or at the Lithuanian church the evening before the funeral to recite the rosary, with the participation of a priest. *(Continued Over)*	Religious funeral celebrations were forbidden. People would kiss the deceased and family photographs were taken around the coffin.	No data available as the elderly members of the family were already deceased whilst in the settlement villages or had returned to Lithuania in the 1960s.	Prior to 1991, religious funeral celebrations were forbidden.	Prior to 1991, religious funeral celebrations were forbidden.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
The women would wash and dress the deceased in their best clothes, adult women in dark clothes, with a white or black head-covering; unmarried young women in white clothes with a white head-covering with a small wreath of rue or myrtle pinned in. Adult females and males would be without shoes. Relatives and friends would kiss the deceased and would take family photographs around the coffin. A *šermenys* (wake) was prepared for the participants after the funeral. The *gedulas* (period of mourning) was observed according to the status and position of the person in the family. Women would wear a dark dress with a black or white scarf; men and children would wear a black band around one arm.	The funeral was celebrated according to the Roman Catholic rite. *Šermenys* (funeral wake) after the burial for relatives and close friends was maintained. Relatives and close friends continued the tradition of kissing the deceased whilst the taking of photographs, around the coffin was discarded on advice of young Australian Lithuanians.				

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
***Kūčios* (Christmas Eve Meal)** After cleaning the buildings of the farmstead, the family would change into their best clothes. In the evening they would celebrate *Kūčios* with the participation of family members only. Hay would be put under the tablecloths. A place would be set for the absent members of the family marked with a fir twig or sprig of myrtle and a candle of the deceased. The meal would consist of 12 dishes each representing a month of the year, with no meat, fat and dairy products. *Kišelius* (cranberry pudding) with poppy seeds milk was generally served. Consumption of alcohol was not allowed. The family would share a *ploktelė* (a thin blessed wafer) at the beginning of the meal. *(Continued Over)*	*Kūčios* tradition has been maintained with some degree of adaptation to the new environment and climate. A Christmas tree was decorated with modern ornaments. *Ploktelė* would be shared when available.	*Kūčios* tradition has been maintained only at the level of individual family with *Ploktelė* shared when sent from relatives in Lithuania.	*Kūčios* tradition has been lost in the case of mixed marriages.	*Kūčios* tradition has been maintained. .	*Kūčios* tradition has been maintained.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Christmas tree, if any was decorated out of straw and paper cuttings. After the meal, the young members of the family would enjoy making predictions for the coming year and generally would attend Midnight Mass.					
Kaledos **(Christmas Day)** The family would go to church early in the morning. It was a family day. Visiting friends was reserved for St. Stephen's Day (Boxing Day).	Tradition has been maintained to a certain extent by the old émigrés, children and grandchildren attended Church occasionally.	Church attendance was re-assumed from 1991. The old émigrés would go to the city of Krasnoyarsk to attend the religious service and after would gather for a Christmas meal together.	Church attendance was re-assumed from 1991. The old émigrés would attend the religious service at church and after would gather for a Christmas meal.	Religious traditions re-assumed since 1991. Christmas Day was considered a working day by the Soviets.	Religious traditions re-assumed since 1991. Christmas Day was considered a working day by the Soviets.
Užgavenes **(Shrove Tuesday)** A festival celebrated on the eve of Ash Wednesday to mark the period of Lent. People wore masks and costumes and go around the village to visit friends. *(Continued Over)*	Tradition has not been maintained since the arrival of the old émigrés due to the different cultures.	(no data available)	(no data available)	Tradition was not maintained during the Soviet occupation with a religious meaning but as political devices to mock the independent Lithuanian institutions and people.	Tradition was maintained during the Soviet occupation to mock the independent Lithuanian institutions and people.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
They would eat pancakes and rich food. All festivities concluded at midnight.					
Verbo Sekmadieni **(Palm Sunday)** The family would attend church with a bunch of greenery to be blessed. At the end of the service, they would brush each other with the greenery and give wishes of good health and good luck. The greenery would be kept dry at home all year round.	Tradition has been maintained. The original emigrés would bring olive and palm branches to the church to be blessed.	Tradition was not mentioned during the interviews.	Since 1991 the tradition has been resumed with the re-opening of the Catholic Church.	Tradition was not maintained until 1991.	Tradition was not maintained until 1991.
Svariuoju Ketvirtadieniu **(Holy Thursday)** The family could work together for a day of spring-cleaning in the home and the farmstead. Waters in the lakes and *(Continued Over)*	Tradition not maintained due to foreign terrain.	(No available data)	(No available data)	(No available data)	(No available data)

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
rivers were believed to have healing powers on this day; therefore people would bathe in these 'magic' water to restore their health and sprinkle the animals and crops.					
Didysis Penktadieni **(Good Friday)** In the churches, statues of Saints and of Jesus Christ were covered with a dark cloth. Christ's sepulchre was re-created and a cross was laid on the floor to be kissed by the faithful. The church was opened all night and in turn, groups of women would pray throughout the night. Most of the family would observe pasnikas (fasting) all day.	Religious practices and *Pasnikas* (fasting) has been maintained only at individual level.	Religious practices and *Pasnikas* (fasting) has been maintained only at individual level as there was no Church.	*Pasnikas* (fasting) has been maintained on an individual level. Religious practices not maintained as the Church was closed.	Religious practices and *Pasnikas* have been maintained only at an individual level.	Religious practices and *Pasnikas* have been maintained only at an individual level.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
Didysis Sestadieni **(Holy Saturday)** The family would go to church to attend the service and take home the blessed fire (coal) and water. Children and parents would decorate *Margučiu* (Easter eggs). The coal was added to the fire to burn and the water was sprinkled in the house and stable to send away evil spirits.	The grandparents would decorate *Margučiu* (Easter eggs) for the grandchildren.	Grandparents would decorate *Margučiu* (Easter eggs) for the grandchildren.	Tradition lost as a consequence of mixed marriages.	Grandparents would decorate *Margučiu* (Easter eggs) for the grandchildren.	Grandparents would help the grandchildren to decorate *Margučiu* (Easter eggs).
Velykos **(Easter Sunday)** The family would attend the Resurrection Mass early in the morning. The church would be circled three times in procession. It is a family celebration. Children would play with eggs. Young unmarried men would play music and recite poems through the village.	Tradition have been maintained but not all the émigré children would spend Easter day with their parents and attend church.				

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
***Sekmines* (Pentecost)** Young girls would go to the fields and forests to gather flowers and greenery from which they would make garlands. The farmstead would be decorated with birch branches and the cows with a wreath of wildflowers. Greenery would be taken to the church to be blessed.	Tradition has been lost due to different environment and lifestyle.	(No data available)	(No data available)	(No data available)	(No data available)
***Jonines* (Feast of St. John the Baptist)** Bonfires were lit on high ground; young girls and women would gather herbs and flowers to make garlands with birch leaves; the name day of St. John was celebrated; girls hoping to marry floated wreaths on river; and there was fortune telling.	Tradition has been lost due to different environment and lifestyle.	(No data available)	(No data available)	Traditions have been re-assumed after 1991.	Traditions have been re-assumed after 1991.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Australia	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the country)	Post –WWII Lithuanian Diaspora in Siberia (in the city)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the country)	Post WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania (in the city)
***Žoline* (Feast of Assumption)** Family would attend the church. Greenery and flowers would be blessed in the church; flowers would be dried and kept around the house; the day was spent mostly with family members.	Attendance to Sunday Mass.	Traditions have been lost.	Traditions have been re-assumed after 1991.	Traditions have been re-assumed after 1991.	Traditions have been re-assumed after 1991.
***Velinė* (All Soul's Day)** Family would attend the church service and would go to the cemetery to visit and decorate with candles and flowers the graves of the deceased members of the family, and friends. A procession lead by a priest would be held in the late afternoon. A rosary would be recited during the procession.	Traditions have been maintained however the procession and rosary would be held in the afternoon.	Traditions have been maintained on an individual level.	(No data available)	Traditions have been strongly maintained.	Traditions have been strongly maintained.

Lithuanian Cultural Values

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Australia	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Siberia	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania
Veneration for nature Birds, flowers, trees, water, fire, sun and animals had to be respected.	Nature and its creatures have to be respected as part of the environment in which people live.	Nature and people cannot live separately; survival of people depends in most cases on nature.	Nature is stronger than people; if not respected it would take revenge.
Religious teaching and moral code of the Catholic Church Girls were expected to remain chaste; religious practices (prayers, attendance at church, confession, communion, fasting) had to be strictly observed. Sacraments (christening, confirmation, marriage, and funeral) had to be celebrated in accordance with the Roman Catholic tradition.	Without religious and moral direction, people cannot conduct a good life. The presence of God in people's lives is fundamental to overcoming problems.	The presence of God in an individual life and the religious teaching of the parents are essential to allow one to grow, and to help to forget and forgive the hardships of the past.	The presence of God and the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church sustain individual hardships.
Respect for family members Immediate and extended family members would take part in decision-making and in the daily family routine.	Family members are respected, but each nuclear family makes decisions separately, according to its needs.	Decision-making is taken by individual nuclear families, with strong support from the extended family.	Immediate and extended family members would take part in decision-making of the family.
Self-respect and self-esteem Pride in work and personal achievements and hospitable and charitable attitudes would help individual growth.	Hard work and sacrifice make a strong individual, able to face the hard circumstances of life. Charitable and hospitable attitudes are part of the teaching of God, and foster personal and spiritual growth.	Life can be hard, but with a strong will and pride one can achieve goals and satisfaction.	Only hard work and pride in achievements makes one strong and respected.
Community spirit The entire community would strive to live in peace and would share significant happy and sad life events.	Relationships and mutual respect within the local Lithuanian community play an important role in the life of each family.	Each family is well adapted to the diverse community in which it lives and shares mutual friendships.	People help and respect each other, without invading the privacy of other families.

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Australia	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Siberia	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania
Hospitality and generosity towards guests Families would warmly welcome guests at all times.	Families would warmly welcome guests at all times.	Families would warmly welcome guests at all times.	Families would warmly welcome guests at all times.
Assistance to those in need Neighbours: manual labour was given during harvest time. Travellers: shelter and food was given. Beggars: food was always offered.	Assistance is given to members of the old local Lithuanian community, and to some charitable organizations.	Assistance is given to people in need, in the spirit of repaying the help given to them in the past.	Assistance is given to people in need, according to means.
Shared responsibility in the upbringing of children Both parents provided for physical and emotional needs.The mother introduced the children to their duties as members of the family and educated them in the code of conduct of the Catholic Church. Grandparents handed down traditions to the next generation. Godparents maintained a close relationship with the children.	Both parents provide moral and emotional support for their children. Godparents and grandparents still take part in the upbringing and education of children.	Both parents provide moral and emotional support, and help with everyday tasks. Godparents and grandparents still play a relevant role in the upbringing of a child.	Both parents provide moral and emotional support, and help with everyday tasks. Godparents and grandparents play an important role in the upbringing of the child.
Centrality of the Language Lithuanian identification and self-identity is strongly based on the language.	Although Lithuanian language is considered a strong identification of self-identity it is not maintained in the succeeding generation.	Lithuanian language is still a strong identification of self-identity and generally maintained in the succeeding generation	Lithuanian language strong identification of self-identity
Education Passion for education developed due to the history of oppression and long term denial of access to educational opportunity.	Education is strongly supported.	Education is strongly supported.	Education is strongly supported.
Love for their country Strong patriotism regenerates the population.	Patriotism exists however the old émigrés now identify themselves with Australia.	Strong patriotism regenerates the population but identification continues to be with Lithuania.	Strong patriotism regenerates the population and preserves national identification.

Lithuanian Cultural Beliefs

Pre-WWII Lithuania	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Australia	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Siberia	Post-WWII Lithuanians in Lithuania
Lithuanians believed that:	**Today Lithuanians in Australia believe that:**	**Today Lithuanians in Siberia believe that:**	**Today Lithuanians in Lithuania believe that:**
• helping each other would allow one to grow personally.	• by helping members of their own small original community, they will stay in touch with their roots and past experiences.	• helping each other is essential and natural in order to survive the adversities of life.	• helping each other is a way to survive the adversities of life and to overcome fear of being left alone.
• by respecting Mother Nature, her elements and creatures, prosperity, health and good luck would be granted to the individual and the family.	• by respecting Mother Nature, her elements and creatures, they can preserve the environment and enjoy the gifts of Mother Nature.	• respecting Mother Nature, her elements and creatures, is a way to thank her for her gifts that have allowed them to survive.	• by respecting Mother Nature, her elements and creatures, prosperity and health is given in return.
• praying for and venerating the deceased would ensure their presence within the family.	• praying for the deceased members of the family is a form of respect and religious duty.	• praying for deceased people is a sign of respect and a way to continue to keep alive their presence among the family.	• praying for the deceased is a religious tradition and a way to remember them and to keep their presence alive within the family.
• living in peace within the community required a moral upbringing and faith together with religious practice.	• the community of original émigrés being small, living in peace within this community is seen as the only way of keeping in contact with their own past.	• living in peace with neighbours is a way to thank them for the help, often given at their own risk, which enabled the Lithuanians to survive.	• living in peace with neighbors reflects understanding of human nature and demonstrates forgiveness for past experiences.
• by using natural remedies, health and wellbeing would improve.	• using natural remedies is less dangerous for the health than using pharmaceutical drugs.	• using natural remedies is more economical and less dangerous for the health than pharmaceuticals drugs.	• using natural medicine when it is possible is less expensive and healthier than pharmaceuticals drugs.
• attending school, at least to the end of primary level or having a higher education was essential for children.	• education is a pre-requisite for achieving your goals in life, and obtaining a prestigious position within the community.	• education enriches your life, but it doesn't give you any status or financial privilege.	• education is important for trying to achieve a better social status.
• being self sufficient and independent would build inner strength.	• being self sufficient and independent would build inner strength.	• being self sufficient and independent would build inner strength.	• being self sufficient and independent would build inner strength.

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW DESIGN LOGIC

Interview Design Logic **Appendix 4**

Focus	Definition	Language/discourse which will reveal focus	Questions which will prompt the language/discourse	Examples
Customs and Traditions	Traditions are the statements, beliefs, rules or customs of a cultural group handed down from one generation to another. Customs are practices shared by the members of a particular culture in order to be considered a part of that group.	*Descriptive* language of what, how, when, where, how often, etc. a certain event takes place or is carried out. The respondent will reveal the practices of the culture, which permit its members to be and feel united in a single social entity.	Questions will focus on the "what", "when" and "how" of cultural customs (a) still practiced, and (b) no longer practiced by the respondent.	A1. What did you (your family, church, friends, etc.) do this year for Easter? A2. What about the Lithuanian language in your family? A3. How important do you consider grandparents? A4. Have your relatives in Lithuania changed?
Beliefs	A belief is a proposition about the world, which an individual holds to be the truth. These permit them to understand themselves, the social and physical world in which they live, and their relationships with other human beings. Such ideas or opinions are taken into account when an individual chooses a line of action.	*Explanatory* language able to give reasons for the cultural practices described. Statements may highlight the respondent's opinions on other individuals and their beliefs and values.	Questions will invite the respondent to offer reasons as to "why" particular practices have either continued or ceased.	B1. Why did you change/cease/continue these practices? B2. Why do your children speak/not speak Lithuanian? B3. Why did your children have/not have contact with their grandparents? B4. Why and how are these relatives different?
Values	Values are underpinned by the individual's beliefs and may have been internalised though a processes of aculturisation. These assist in the selection of goals, courses of action and judgements on both themselves and others. Values rely on feelings and emotions. These are essential factors in determining choice and attitude.	*Emotive* language able to express deeply held feelings and values, therefore be able to give an insight into the individual. Statements are borne out of feelings of anger, frustration, fear, joy, sadness, delight, etc.	Questions focussing on "why" and "how" the respondent may *feel* about a certain event or aspect of their culture will stimulate him/her to reveal underlying value positions.	C1. How do you feel about losing or altering certain typical Lithuanian traditions? How important do you think it is to preserve/let go? C2. How do you feel about your children being able/unable to speak Lithuanian? C3. How do you feel about the grandparents' influence/lack of influence on your children? C4. How do you feel about growing apart/not growing apart from your Lithuanian relatives? Why have you grown/not grown apart?

APPENDIX 5

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PROJECT PARTICIPATION

Appendix 5

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Research Project Participation

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research project into the cultural changes, if any, that have taken place within specific Lithuanian communities since the start of Soviet occupation in 1940 in Lithuania. The communities included in the study are: Lithuanians who remained in their country of birth during the period of Soviet occupation (1940-1990), those who have been forcibly removed from Lithuania and sent to Siberia as a result of Soviet occupation and those who fled their country during this period and migrated to Western Australia.

I believe that you will find the results of my study interesting, as they will show whether the foreign cultures to which your community have been exposed over time, have had any influence on the traditional Lithuanian culture.

Your participation will include being interviewed twice for one hour to one-and-a-half hours each time. If necessary a third interview may be added after the first two interviews.

You can be assured a complete anonymity, as no names will be mentioned in any of the interview transcripts or any subsequent research documentation. Each participant in the study will be identified only by a pre-assigned code. Therefore you can have complete confidence that your identity will not be disclosed.

In addition, the giving of the consent does not imply that you are free to discontinue your participation in the study at any time. In that case the material collected from you up to the point will be destroyed and not included in the study.

A copy of the transcript of each of your interviews can be provided to you upon request.

The findings of this research project will be written up in a doctoral thesis.

Should you wish to contact my supervisor, his contact details are as follows:
Prof. Tony Ryan
Notre Dame University, Perth, Western Australia
Tel. +61-8-9433-0868
E-mail tryan@nd.edu.au

I appreciate your time in assisting me with this study.

Thank you,

……

Please sign below if you are willing to participate in the research project outlined above.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 6

PHASES OF MEMORY RECOLLECTIONS

Appendix 6

FOCUS 1 – CHILDHOOD RECOLLECTIONS

Rationale: This phase is relevant to the study as it will show the influence of the family in shaping the child's attitude towards absorbing and retaining the beliefs, values and traditions of Lithuanian culture. This, in turn, will give an insight into which values might have been most deeply embedded and hence retained.

Assumptions:

(1) As Lithuania is predominantly an agricultural country, one would expect that the society is strongly attached to its traditions, strongly conservative and, therefore, resistant to change, especially sudden change.

(2) The possibility of falsified or suppressed memories is unlikely as the respondents are recalling past events that should not represent any threat. Such events concern their own childhood before World War II when life in Lithuania was secure, happy and comfortable. The respondents should not have experienced any traumatic events they would prefer not to disclose.

(3) The memories of the respondents should have a high degree of accuracy as long-term memory in the elderly is generally reliable. The possibility exists of minimisation or exaggeration of events seen through the eyes of a child. However, this would not be an undermining factor in the validity of the evidence, since I am searching only for the existence of an impact of a certain event on the child's mind and the degree to which that affects subsequent behaviour.

Issues: In order to transport the respondents back in time so that they will be able to recall events with the mind of a child, it is intended to use Cognitive Interview techniques, such as beginning with a question that asks the respondent to recall the very first memory as a child (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992).

Regarding the possibility of the creation of false memories, research suggests that this is not a widespread phenomenon, except in situations where the person has had an especially traumatic experience or acute embarrassment about particular events. There is evidence for incorrect memories, but less evidence for the creation of false memories.

Appendix 6.1

FOCUS 2 – TRANSITION STAGE

Rationale: This phase is relevant to the study as it will show the degree of adaptation to a new or temporary environment by the respondents. This will show the predisposition of the respondents to resist or accept a new culture or to try to achieve an amalgam of the old culture with the new one.

Assumptions:

(1) Some of the respondents initially hoped to go back to a free Lithuania within a short time of leaving; therefore, there would probably have been no attempt to change and adapt to the new situation.

(2) Some respondents – more fatalistic – would possibly have immediately started a process of voluntary adaptation to the new circumstances in view of the perceived likelihood of having to start a radically new life elsewhere.

(3) Some respondents would have been immediately forced to adapt to the new environment and circumstances, knowing that there would be no other alternative in the near future.

(4) Some respondents will have been aware of the likelihood of losing their traditions and for this reason may have made deliberate efforts to hold on to, or preserve, their core Lithuanian beliefs and values.

(5) Most respondents may be quite unaware of a process of gradual erosion or, eventually, complete loss of some values and traditions.

(6) Some respondents in Siberia and Lithuania may be expected to express a certain degree of resentment of the fact that they did not have any choice in determining their future.

(7) The degree of adaptation to new circumstances will be influenced by the age of the person at the time of dislocation, with willingness to change being greatest among the youngest.

(8) The most vivid memories will coincide with those times of most dramatically felt change, ie, for the Lithuanians in Siberia and Germany, on first arrival in the camps or at the time when the next movement was announced; or for the those in Lithuania, when the Russians occupied the country.

(9) In order to discern whether there are, or are likely to be repressed or suppressed memories, it is intended to use memory recall techniques, such as beginning with a question that asks the respondent to recall the very first memory of the time when they were displaced.

Appendix 6.2

FOCUS 3 – PRESENT DAY PERCEPTIONS

Rationale: This phase is relevant to the study for comparing what the Lithuanian culture was with what it is now, as demonstrated in the primary data because this comparison will reveal for each of the groups how much they believe they have kept, and how much they can recognise they have lost.

Assumptions:

(1) Retention of culture appears to be stronger when it is under threat therefore, each group in different circumstances has adopted various ways to preserve customs and traditions.

(2) It is the Lithuanian people's perception that religion and language are the core of the Lithuanian culture. Therefore, according to circumstances, more or less favourable, each group has tried to preserve these as much as possible.

(3) Each group will view themselves as different from other Lithuanian groups. This perception will be supported by individual experiences (media, correspondence, travel, relatives).

(4) There will be high motivation to try to pass on to the new generation as much of the religious beliefs and language as possible in order to attempt to maintain a certain degree of "Lithuanian-ness".

(5) Ability to preserve the core of the Lithuanian culture. Some respondents (those who were very young when they left Lithuania) will have found this task difficult as they were not fully aware of the elements in the core of Lithuanian culture because they did not have the opportunity to fully absorb them. Therefore, the degree of such ability will be limited by circumstances or lack of knowledge.

(6) Receptivity to attempts to pass on traditions and customs to new generations differed. Some respondents may have found a certain degree of difficulty as subsequent generations were not fully receptive to their efforts. This may have happened to those who found themselves between two cultures and chose to suppress part of their family background in order to better integrate into the dominant culture. Those in Lithuania or Siberia, may have been compelled to suppress their heritage to survive the imposed order instead. This resulted in underground activities that reinforced their beliefs and traditions. Therefore, the degree of success or lack of success of any attempt depended upon the individual and the circumstances.

APPENDIX 7

QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Appendix 7

Questioning Sequence

Stage 1:

The "What", "When" and "How" question.

→ Customs and Traditions

Stage 2:

The "Why" question.

→ Beliefs

Stage 3:

The "How and Why do you feel" question.

→ Values

APPENDIX 8

PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Appendix 8

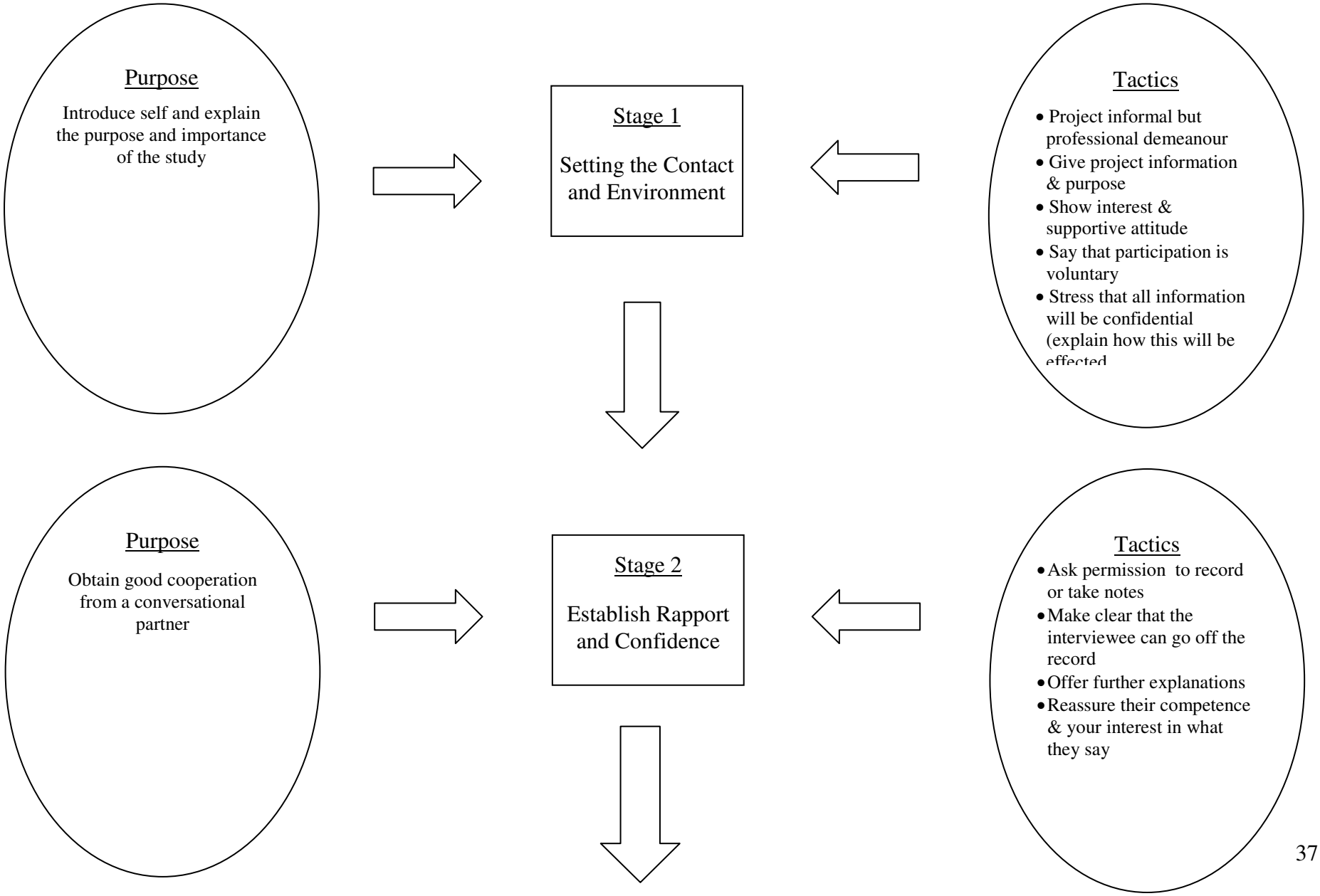
People Interviewed

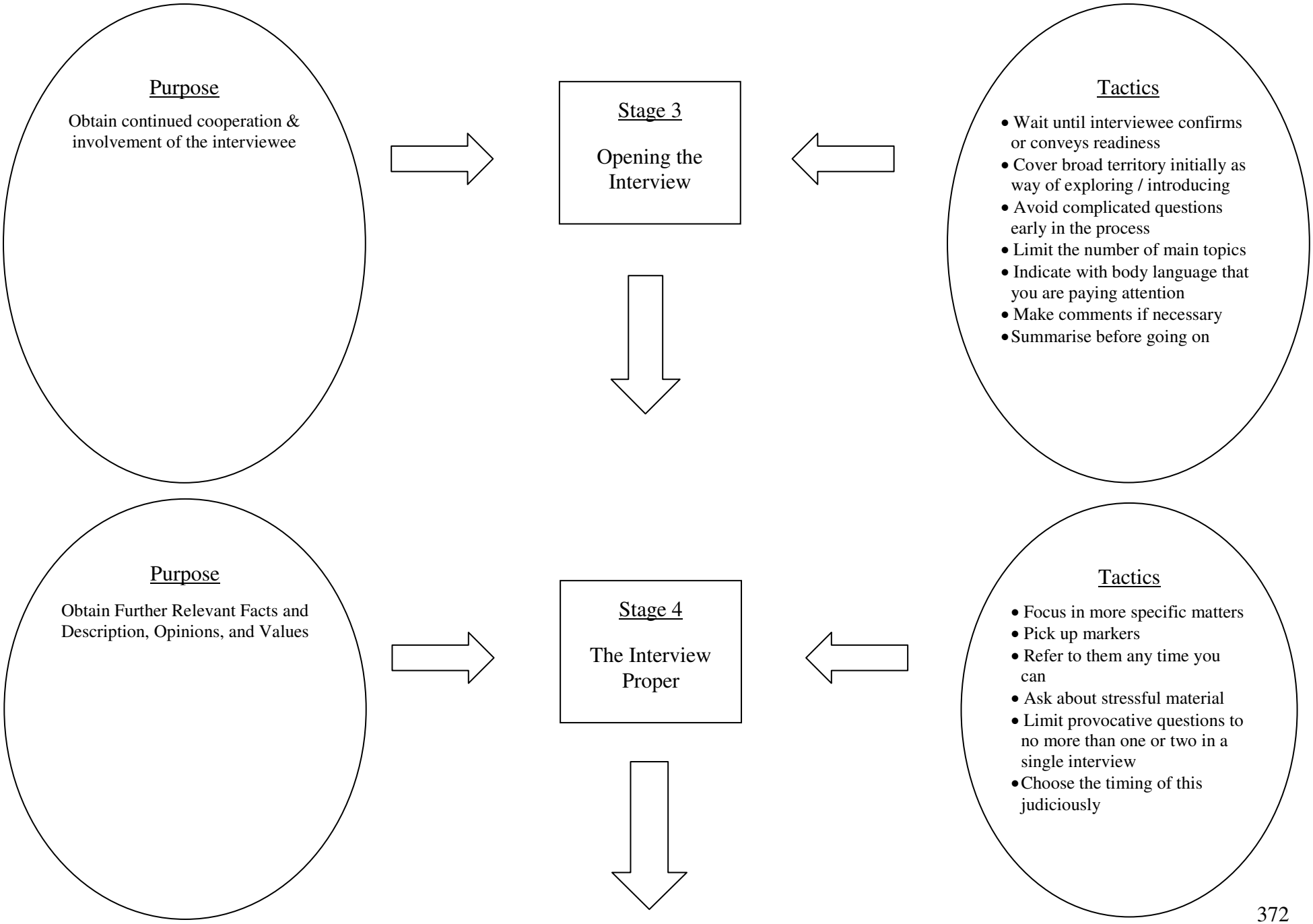
Places of interviews		Approached		Declined		Agreed to interview			
						Kept		Discarded	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Lithuania	Klaipeda, Kaunas Vilnius	8	10	1	1	6	6	1	3
Siberia	Krasnojarsk	8	10	2	1	5	7	1	2
Australia	Perth	7	11	2	2	4	8	1	1
	Total	**23**	**31**	**5**	**4**	**15**	**21**	**3**	**6**

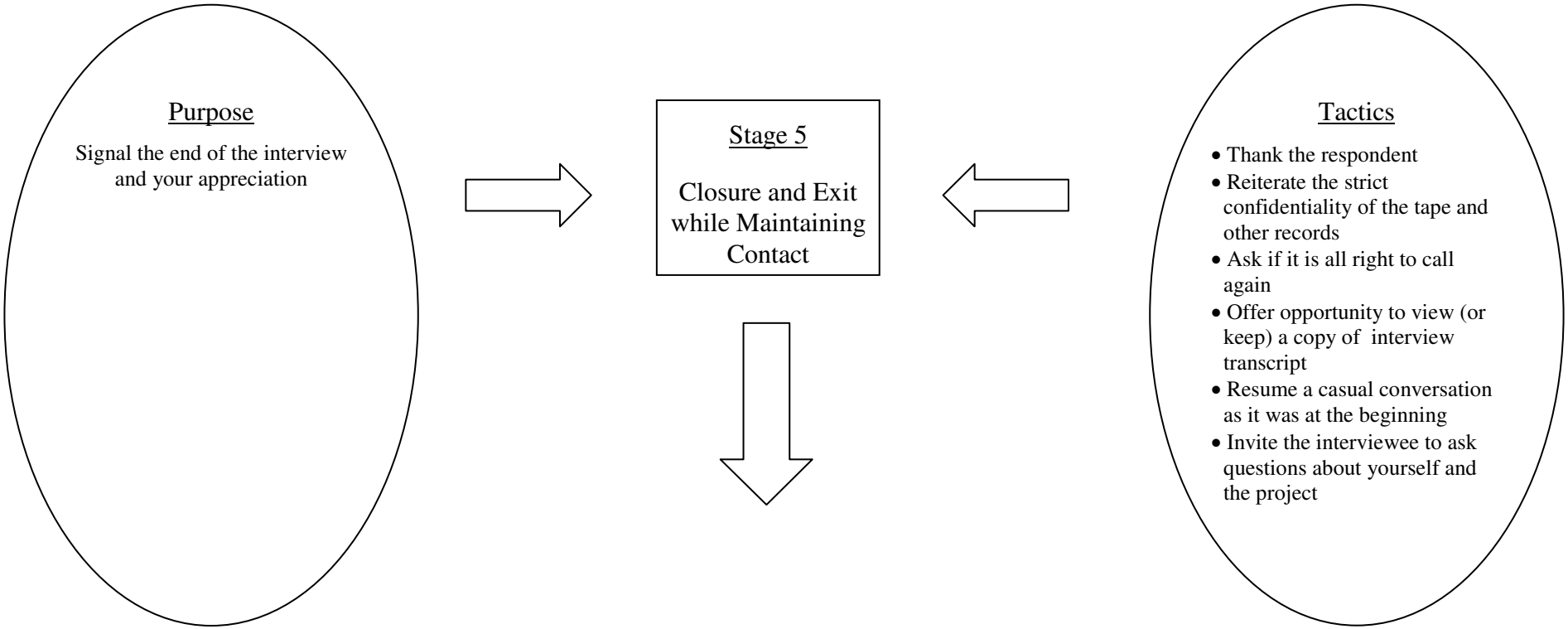
APPENDIX 9

STAGES OF AN INTERVIEW

STAGES OF AN INTERVIEW




Purpose
Obtain continued cooperation & involvement of the interviewee
Stage 3
Opening the Interview
Tactics
• Wait until interviewee confirms or conveys readiness
• Cover broad territory initially as way of exploring / introducing
• Avoid complicated questions early in the process
• Limit the number of main topics
• Indicate with body language that you are paying attention
• Make comments if necessary
• Summarise before going on
Purpose
Obtain Further Relevant Facts and Description, Opinions, and Values
Stage 4
The Interview Proper
Tactics
• Focus in more specific matters
• Pick up markers
• Refer to them any time you can
• Ask about stressful material
• Limit provocative questions to no more than one or two in a single interview
• Choose the timing of this judiciously


Purpose
Signal the end of the interview and your appreciation
Stage 5
Closure and Exit while Maintaining Contact
Tactics
• Thank the respondent
• Reiterate the strict confidentiality of the tape and other records
• Ask if it is all right to call again
• Offer opportunity to view (or keep) a copy of interview transcript
• Resume a casual conversation as it was at the beginning
• Invite the interviewee to ask questions about yourself and the project

APPENDIX 10

COMPOSITE NARRATIVES

Lidia's Story

Elena's Story

Pranas's Story

Marija's Story

Stasy's Story

Janina's Story

Rimas's Story

Erika's Story

Bianka's Story

Rūta's Story

Note**:** These are composite stories based on interview material but do not describe any individual person interviewed. The names given to the composite characters are fictitious.

Lidia's Story

Lidia is a female participant in the study. She is 83-years-old; and is a member of the Lithuanian diaspora of Western Australia, migrating in 1949. She was interviewed in Perth in 2003.
Born in Kaunas, Lidia spent most of her life in Vilnius. She left Lithuania in 1943, leaving behind all her family. She lived for few years in a refugee camp in Germany where she married and had two children. She returned to Lithuania in 1997 for the first time.

I was born in Kaunas, a big city in the centre of Lithuania surrounded by beautiful parks and a river where I used to go walking with my family.

My father was a judge and was also in charge of the Passport Office. My mother was a very gentle and caring person who looked after the family and I had a young brother who loved Napoleon.

One Christmas I remember my younger brother riding a big wooden rocking horse with real hair, wearing a Napoleon hat and a sword that my father brought home for him. He was so happy and excited. He used to have an entire collection of miniature model Austrian and German soldiers and he would spend hours playing with them on the big table of our children's playroom. He also had a few Napoleon figurines, which he used to keep in a big album.

For as long as I live I will always remember the happy Christmas days that I used to spend back home with my family. We had a really big tall Christmas tree that reached the ceiling. My mother would decorate it on Christmas Eve. I still have photos of my brother and me beside this beautiful tree. After decorating the tree, my mother made sure that there were presents under it for everyone, and then would start to set the table. Firstly she would put a handful of dried hay on the table, then a beautiful white tablecloth and in the centre of the table a small infant Jesus, Mary, Joseph and a few other small statuettes.

During the week before Christmas my mother, with the help of our maid, would prepare all sorts of food for *Kūčios* (Christmas Eve meal) and Christmas Day and would store it in a spare room which was very cold as there were no fridges at that time. Then guests would begin to arrive and my father's mother used to come and also my parents' friends, who were mostly Russian teachers working in the Russian school in Kaunas. We would start the dinner by sharing the traditional *ploktelė*, a wafer that was given to my mother by the nuns of the nearby convent. They used to make *ploktelė* only for Christmas. After dinner my father would play the guitar and my mother the piano and everybody would sing. We also had a gramophone and a few records that my parents used to play when they wanted to dance.

My brother and I went to the primary school that was at the corner near the biggest church in the centre of Kaunas. My parents were very strict on matters concerning schooling. At that time, children used to go to school from 8.00 in the morning until 3.00 in the afternoon, six days a week. My brother and I would come home, have dinner and later do our homework. My father always helped me with maths and

whatever I needed. He used to buy books for us and he or my mother would read them to us from time to time. I remember my father had a small book of Russian fairytales and one day while my mother was sewing a little dress for me, I was sitting next to her and with this little book in my hands, I asked my mother to teach me the Russian alphabet. She did and slowly I put the letters together and started to read the story, which was about two friends walking through the woods when they met a bear. Mum was so surprised and so happy that she got up and went to my father who was in his study and said –"Josas … Lidia knows how to read Russian". That's the reason why my father sent all the Russian books that are on my bookshelf here in Australia from Lithuania. My mother also taught German to my brother, but he was so lazy he never learnt the language.

My brother and I didn't have much time to play, we had to study and we would go out only with our parents.

I remember on Fridays my mother would take me to the market. For a child growing up in the city it was exciting. The market square, which was not far from where we lived, was full of people and very noisy. All the farmers sat on their carts with their fresh products displayed on the hay, such as butter, cheese, sour-cream, eggs, and loaves of newly baked rye bread, different sorts of mushrooms and berries from the forest and fresh fruit from their orchards. Most of the time farmers' wives helped their husbands together with some of their children. My mother would go from one cart to another examining the products before buying what she needed and I used to follow her and fill up my basket. All around people were talking and laughing and it was a sort of social event, as there was the opportunity to meet neighbours and friends.

I didn't know much of Kaunas, only my way to the school and back home. I lived in my own world, sheltered by my caring and loving parents. I wasn't aware of what was happening in my country or how people lived. Like most teenagers nowadays, I didn't read the newspapers and I didn't listen to the news on the radio, as I wasn't allowed to.

The gymnasium (high-school) that I attended faced the residence of the Lithuanian President. I was always curious to see where our President lived. When I went back to Lithuania for the first time, I went there with my sister. What I could see of this residence was only the foyer with big potted palm trees. The other rooms were all locked. Everything was so neglected and filthy that I thought, "My God, the President would not live here" and then I went to my gymnasium. It was in July and it was closed. I put my nose right into the keyhole, to breathe in the smell of the oil, which was used to polish the beautiful wooden floors. They were always clean and glossy. But I was disappointed as I could no longer smell the freshness. It was just the smell of an old closed building.

My mother was a very religious woman. Her grandparents were Polish and French and her Polish grandfather used to be the organist at a church in the centre of Kaunas. Like the majority of Lithuanians, we were Catholics and we would attend church on Sundays and for religious festivals. In those days children would go to church with their parents without questioning it or making fun of it, as they do now. We used to always obey our parents. We would also say a prayer before each meal and before going to bed.

Priests were considered like saints; we respected them and followed their preaching. They would go to visit the sick and help the poor. In Kaunas, there were many churches and people used to go to the nearby church on foot.

When I arrived in Australia, things changed. Lithuanians didn't go to church very often. Some of us lived far away from the churches, we didn't have a car, some people had to work night shift and some people were sick. We preferred to spend the weekend at home, resting, or helping and going out with their children. Some of us lost interest in going to church because we didn't like some of the people and others had passed away.

When I was a child there was a big difference between life in the city and life in the country. Life in the city was easier and people had higher wages, were more highly educated and also spoke Polish and Russian. Life in the country was more difficult; people had a lower level of education and mainly spoke Lithuanian.

However, in the rural areas there were differences amongst the farmers. In the country one could see farms that were perfect. They would have lovely fences, a good roof and glass on the windows, healthy animals and well maintained crops. Other farms were neglected. They had broken fences, windows with broken glass, rags mixed together with the washing hanging from the fences. These were farms, I believed, of farmers who were lazy and used to drink a lot. On market days, the farmers' wives would accompany their husbands, unless they had to look after a baby, to make sure they would return home with the money. After the markets, otherwise, the farmer would often stop at the *smuklė*, a country pub usually owned by Jewish people, and he would spend all his money on eating and drinking and he would return home late, usually guided home by his horse. The farmer would usually be deeply asleep on the cart. All the money would be spent and he would only have a string of bagels around his neck for his children.

Then the war started. My mother died in 1939, one year after my brother died and my father was transferred to Vilnius to work and remarried.

I was seventeen at the time and working in an office, which issued transit permits. It was the time when the Germans were occupying Lithuania and everyone who wanted to travel by train needed to have a permit. Life was still easy but we were no longer happy as we were before the war. We never knew what would happen the following day; we lived in fear and with uncertainty. Then, when the Germans retreated, Lithuania was in complete chaos and I finally decided to leave the country. I organized a transit permit for my family and myself but my stepmother was pregnant and couldn't leave, so my father remained behind with her.

I spent a few years in a German camp for Displaced Persons, where I married and had two children. Later we migrated to Australia.and I was sent to Northam with my two children, as by that time my husband had deserted me and went to Adelaide. I remarried and my second husband and I managed to buy a house by working hard and saving almost all the money we had earned. We were happy, as we could start a new life. Here in Perth there were about 400 of us. We managed to have a club, which was always full. For a while, I was the secretary of the club. At that time we had the church in East Perth and our own newspaper. The Lithuanian community was very

friendly, we worked together and we organized a choir and a dancing group. There was a good community life, we were all always together. For the children, there were also Lithuanian language classes. Until they started school, all children spoke Lithuanian at home with their parents and grandparents. I know that this was the case in almost all Lithuanian families. My son and my daughter could also speak German as they had learnt it in the camp. Then when the parents both started to go to work and came home tired, the children, after having spent all day at school speaking English, started to speak English with the parents and slowly they forgot Lithuanian.

The Lithuanian traditions like the language started to fade away with mixed marriages especially if the wife wasn't Lithuanian. She couldn't possibly know our traditions. I think everything just faded away, except for religion because that is something personal. People could make these decisions for themselves. I have taught my children what I could about Lithuania, as most of my friends here in Perth have done.

Although I have lived for more than fifty-four years in Australia I still consider myself Lithuanian, I have my values and beliefs. I have kept my parents' pictures, I have my God and this is all I need. Even if my children don't carry on Lithuanian traditions, I know and I remember them. I have a little cross and I pray. I don't have many Lithuanian friends anymore, there is only one that I can trust and talk to freely about my troubles. My friend respects me and I respect her and this is why we still have a strong friendship.

Elena's Story

Elena is a female participant in the study. She is 82-years-old; and is a member of the Lithuanian diaspora of Western Australia, migrating in 1949. She was interviewed in Perth in 2003.
Born in Gringiškis, a small village near Kaunas, Elena was the eldest child in the family. At the age of four her mother died and her father remarried, to a German-Lithuanian. Elena spent nine years in Germany, in a village at first and then in a refugee camp at the end of WWII. In Australia she married and had three children. Elena has made several trips to her homeland since 1991.

I was born in a small, country town in the centre of Lithuania. My mother died when she was 32-years-old. I was barely six years old and my brother three years old. I do not have many memories of my mother but I remember once, she took me to the dentist and when we returned home I had to eat cold porridge, which I liked very much. One day, when I was about five years old, she took my brother and me to the Nevezis River and she taught me how to swim. I really enjoyed that day although I was afraid of being in the water. Then my mother died and this is the last thing I remember of her, even though I don't want to remember, I can't forget when she was brought home in a coffin, which was placed in the best room of our house. My brother, who was only three years old at the time, began to scream … "My mother is dead!" He didn't want to accept it. I was only six years old at the time and when the coffin was opened, the women present made me kiss my mother's feet. It was terrible. I can still remember the cold feeling of the feet on my mouth. I would never do this to any child. It was just terrible.

She was buried in the same village where I was born, where we had a farm and where I spent part of my childhood. My brother was born in a Lithuanian summer resort on the Baltic Sea. My father was working there as a policeman. He used to work in different towns and we continued to move from one place to another. After my mother died my father was posted to a small place, about 20 km from Kaunas.

My father then remarried. His second wife was a local girl, quite well educated for those times and she was young, she had just finished high school. It took a while for me to accept my stepmother, as I was jealous of this young attractive girl whom I felt had taken my father away from me. But she liked us children very much and slowly I started to accept her and she became more of a mother to me than my real mother, as I had grown to know her better.

When the Soviets came to Lithuania in 1940, my father lost his job and we all went to live on our farm. The farm had been given to my father as a reward by the Lithuanian government for his participation as a "freedom fighter" during the struggle for the liberation of the country in 1918-1919 against the Russians. At first, he put tenant farmers on the farm and they also took care of my grandparents who also lived there. This I believe, was an agreement that my father had made has he had taken on the responsibility of looking after his parents.

Being a policeman he was not allowed to live on the farm so we used to go there only on holidays. Later we went to live with my grandparents in the same farmhouse, that

my father had started to build but was only half finished. It was a typical Lithuanian farmhouse with a shingled roof. Outside there was a well, which the whole family was very proud of as the water had a very good taste and my grandfather had dug it for us. Inside the house, there was a kitchen with a big stove in which my grandmother used to bake bread and behind the stove, there was a little place where my grandfather had his bed. That place behind the stove was nice and warm for him especially in winter. My grandmother's bedroom was on the other side of the stove. It was a little room, but she put wallpaper on the walls, which to me looked very strange. Even today, I do not like wallpaper.

The house was always well looked after by my grandparents. There were always fresh flowers around the house and there was a nice vegetable garden. There was an orchard with apple trees, a few cherry trees and a couple of pear trees. My grandparents also had a pig and a cow. Later, my father decided with my stepmother, to build a new stable. They built a very strong building for those days. We now had a house, a stable and a barn as well as a small house which was built before the proper farmhouse and where the farmworkers used to live. It was small but very nice.

Our farm was very close to the town and it was not far from a small river. The farmhouse was built on a hill and if we wanted to go down to the river we used to run down the hill through a meadow and then reached the river.

Every year during summer my brother and I used to go to my grandparents' farmhouse. We would spend a few weeks there. One lovely memory I have, was running down that hill, rolling through the grass in the meadow and going to the river with the excuse of going for a swim. … "Running down the hill, rolling through the meadow". I still would like to do this sometimes and this is what I miss here in Australia. The Australian fields are so harsh. They don't have any softness. When my brother and I went back to Lithuania for the first time, nine years ago …"My biggest disappointment, my really great disappointment was that the Soviets had decided to flood our meadow". They wanted to build a dam. The first thing that I did was try to run down that hill to the meadow and I couldn't because the meadow wasn't there anymore. There was just a swamp. I was very disappointed and the house wasn't there anymore, as it was burnt down during the war.

We children were happy to go to visit our grandparents. My grandmother used to cook some very nice pancakes, their taste was very good. My grandparents were very happy to see us and they used to take us to the town that was just about two kilometres away.

A Jewish family used to live next to our farm with three girls, of more or less my age and I used to see them every time we went to the farm. Those girls used to help their parents on the farm and they taught me how to milk a cow, pick up the wheat when it was cut and tie it in small bundles. We children used to carry these bundles and put them into a heap. Everything was so wonderful. At night, we used to sleep on the hay in the barn, those three girls, my brother and me, and sometimes my stepmother's brother. The smell was wonderful.

During the year, we used to go and visit my grandparents on Sunday after church. We would bring a small present for them that we used to buy on Tuesdays at the market.

My grandfather used to wear a particular hat, actually it was not a hat it was a cap. Nearly every year my parents used to buy him a new cap and he was very happy to wear it.

We used to go to church every Sunday, although my stepmother wasn't Catholic, she was Lutheran. However, she made sure that we attended church and she was very strict in that regard because I think she knew she had married into a Catholic family and she had a duty to fulfil. We lived in a Catholic country and all the children had to attend church on Sunday because on Monday, when we had religion lessons, most of the time the priest would ask …"Did you go to church yesterday?" … So you couldn't say "No". It was expected, you had to go. For a few months, after my mother died we lived with an old lady and we used to attend church regularly even before I started to go to school. This lady was very religious but we were happy and we used to run to the church. My younger brother used to say that he wanted to become a priest when he grew up.

Pranas's Story

Pranas is a male participant in the study. He is 86-years-old; and he is a member of the Lithuanian diaspora of Western Australia, migrating in 1949. He was interviewed in Perth in 2003.
He was born in Kaunas, the second largest city of Lithuania, where he spent his childhood and attended the University. As a young boy he spent time on his grandparents'farm. He came from a large family; and in 1944 the whole family left Lithuanian for Germany. He spent a few years in a German refugee camp where he married, before migrating to Australia. In Perth he completed his qualifications and today is still working. He is a father of three children. He has never returned to Lithuania.

"At last school was finished!" … I was very happy as I could now go to spend my summer holidays at my grandparents' farm.

During the year, I used to live in Kaunas, a big city in the centre of Lithuania, with my family, my father, my mother, two younger brothers and a younger sister. Until I left for Germany in 1944, when I was 20, I spent most of my life in Kaunas, where I attended primary and secondary school and the first year of university. I played sport and I had lot of friends. At this time I was a teenager, then a young man, interested in enjoying my life and new experiences and not paying much attention to political events that were storming my country.

My parents were from the country and all my grandparents had farms. The farm where I used to go more frequently was only 20 hectares however the soil was of a good quality. Then, I was a young boy and I used to enjoy helping with small jobs. I remember my grandfather had several beehives and at a certain time of the day the bees used to become agitated. They would fly out of the hives. My job was to take a bucket of water and a broom and sprinkle water on them to calm them down so that they would settle and not fly away. I remember taking this task very seriously and being very proud of it. I used to like my grandfather's honey very much and sometimes I would go with him on a cart to the market in the nearby village to sell it.

After the hay was cut and dried, we children used to rake it up in small heaps and load it into a cart. The same was done with the wheat and rye after harvest time. I used to help with raking, tidying up the straw left behind in the fields and looking after the cows and sheep and making sure they stayed together.

I also remember returning home and eating the pancakes with strawberry jam that my grandmother used to prepare. For some inexplicable reason they tasted better than the ones that my mother used to make back home. Still today I don't know why.

I was happy to share part of my life with the adults on the farm, at the beginning only at my grandparents' then later with my uncles, as after they married they also had farms. Often at night, I used to sleep in the barn on the hay and hear the noise of the wind through the trees, the crickets singing and the dogs barking.

On the farm there were a lot of berry bushes. We boys used to help the girls pick them in August when they were big and ripe. Some of the berries were sold at the market and the rest were used by my grandmother to make jam.

My wife also makes strawberry jam, as I believe all the Lithuanian ladies do here in Perth. When we go to church on Sundays, I notice they often exchange small jars of jam that they have homemade during the week. Occasionally, I have also seen small pot plants of rue, our national flower, to pass from one person to another.

We children were not allowed to drink the homebrewed brandy and beer that the adults would drink during the celebration at the end of harvest time. On the farm my grandparents used to organise a big party, which lasted until morning. Neighbours were invited and food and drinks were shared in abundance. Later at night, after exhaustive dancing, people began to sing beautiful Lithuanian folk songs and the words are vivid in my memory.

Lithuanians used to drink mainly on special occasions and thus drinking was never a problem as it seems to be today in Lithuania. My two daughters went there a few years ago and they were surprised to see how much people drink. I was sad to hear about it. It seemed to me so untypical of Lithuanian behaviour. I remember people before the war worked very hard, especially on the farm. They used to go out into the fields very early in the morning and there was no time for drinking except during the festivities. In addition, beer and brandy were very expensive and in most cases, especially on the farm, were it was homebrewed. However, when the Soviets occupied Lithuania alcohol was much more affordable and people began to buy it in large quantities. The Government policy was to make alcoholic drinks (vodka in particular) very cheap and easily available so that the people could drink more.

In Perth Lithuanians also drink but not as much as the Australians do. We never go to the pub after work. Maybe single men used to go but married men would go home to their families and drink at home, at parties but not in large quantities as the people do here or in Lithuania.

In Kaunas, my father owned a correspondence school, which at that time was the only one in Lithuania. It was a high school that offered specialised subjects such as psychology, mechanics and creative writing, that were not usually taught at high school level and other specialised subjects (which I do not clearly remember) but which were part of the high school programme. These courses were designed mainly for the farmers' children who were looking for a better education but could not afford to go to high school as they were only in larger country towns. They were further away and more expensive. The courses offered lasted eight years and were to the equivalent of year twelve. The correspondence school system was very popular all over Lithuania before the war and supported by the Government.

I believe that more boys than girls were enrolled in these courses. After finishing primary school, the girls were not keen to continue with their studies and only a few of them continued. It was tradition for them to help their parents on the farm and the boys to be sent to school. If the parents were wealthy, they used to send them as boarders. They became doctors, engineers, university professors, teachers and priests.

It was from this kind of family that the Lithuanian intelligentia originated from before the WWII.

In my early days, I remember it was a great honour for a farmer to have a son studying at the Seminary. In the village, the family was treated with great respect and consideration. Priests were held in high esteem, especially in country areas. They taught religion at school and we children used to accept what they said without questioning it. In the city, perhaps, they were challenged by a few intellectuals but not from the population in general. We were very religious in my time and very respectful.

Here in Perth, I believe that people of my generation are still quite religious, with a few exceptions of course. A few years after we first came to Australia, the Catholic bishop of Perth gave us a church. On Sundays, entire families used to go to church, grandparents, parents and children. It was a big occasion and everybody looked forward to the next Sunday, to come together once again. We also had a Lithuanian priest, who kept our religious traditions alive. After a few years people started to marry with different nationalities and started to drift away from the church and from the community as well. People attended our church only on special occasions such as weddings, funerals or christenings.

Now we don't even have a Lithuanian priest anymore. The number of people in our community is slowly declining and it is difficult to have a Lithuanian priest for such a small community. We still attend mass every Sunday, but there are no more than 20 to 25 people who attend church regularly. Obviously some of us are now old, our health is not very good and transport is not available all the time. Some of us have already passed away and the young generation seem not to be keen to go to church anymore. Our children are all married and most of them have other commitments with their own children and maybe they work on Sunday or they simply want to have a rest.

This dwindling attendance at church is not only happening in the Lithuanian community in Perth, but in all Lithuanian communities in Australia and even in the United States, where the number of Lithuanians is larger. It seems to me that the religious values and beliefs are no longer present and people have become more materialistic rather than spiritual. Also the young generation, in particular, is no longer prepared to conform to the strict rules that religion imposes on them. Therefore, in some cases the young seek new alternatives to the practices and beliefs of the Catholic Church.

Back to school holidays … I remember that for the Christmas holiday I used to go ice-skating with my friends. In Lithuania, in this period of the year everything is covered in snow, it is very cold but the atmosphere is very happy because it is the period approaching Christmas. My mother would prepare a particular meal with lots of unusual dishes for *Kūčios* [Christmas Eve meal] a very important family celebration in Lithuania. I can still see the table in front of me, set with a nice white tablecloth and plates, and a particular milky type of soup, which is served cold. In the country, I know the setting of the table was different, as the farmer used to put same hay under the table cloth. I remember this very clearly, as one year we went to spend Christmas at my grandparents' farm.

My wife and I still celebrate *Kūčios* as all the other Lithuanians do. While my mother was alive (she died 10 years ago) she used to send us the *ploktelė*, [a small thin wafer] that was blesses in the church, and shared among the members all the members of the family. Now it is more difficult for us to have them, though last year someone gave us some of them. My mother was very religious and she was very attentive in keeping old religious traditions alive. But my sister, who still lives in Lithuania, is not, and so is not of any help.

After I left Lithuania in 1944, I have never been back and I do not have any intention to do so. I still have relatives there but I don't feel comfortable about going there anymore. More than fifty years have passed, my parents are both dead and the people seem different from the ones that I left behind. Although Lithuania is a free country, people still have communist ideas. They don't say so but one can notice when they speak.

I spoke with some Lithuanians who have migrated to Australia in the last ten years. Some of them were young and some not so young anymore, but they were all born during the period of the Soviet occupation. These people seem not to have anything in common with us. They come to the church and the club once and then disappeared. They speak in a derogative way about our past, our history, our kings and dukes of which we are very fond. Their interpretation of our history is unclear and full of doubts. They cannot deny our past but they cannot accept it.

They laugh about religion and they say that religion is only for the peasants and accuse us of being a group of peasants with no education, as we did not have schooling in the pre-WWII period. It seems to me that it is not only the age gap which provokes such an unpleasant situation but the mentality and the accusations that they are always ready to launch about the pre-WWII time that I think keeps us apart. They are very materialistic and they expect us to help them. We do, but we can offer only moral and social support, and it seems to me that this is not what they are looking for. Lithuanian communities in Sydney and Melbourne seem to experience the same problem and so do those in the United States, especially in Chicago where there are more Lithuanians now than in pre-WWII time.

They tend to talk about good things that happened during the occupation regarding education, the job situation, and the health system. They don't seem to talk much about deportation to Siberia. We had a very strong underground military resistance. They don't speak highly about it. They consider the partisans terrorists, who were killing people. In my view, these are probably the issues that keep us apart and the difference between us.

Marjia's Story

Marjia is a female participant in the study. She is 83-years-old; and she is a member of the Lithuanian diaspora in Western Australia, migrating in 1949. She was interviewed in Perth in 2003.
Marjia was born in a small village in the centre of Lithuania where her father had a farm where she lived until marrying at the age of eighteen. Although she went to live in a nearby country town with her husband, Marjia in her heart remained close to the country life-style and traditions. She left Lithuania in 1944 and with her family spent a few years in a German refugee camp, before migrating to Australia in 1949. Since 1991 Marjia has twice returned to Lithuania to visit relatives.

I still remember the beautiful forest not far from the small country town where I was born. In summer time, we children would go there to pick blueberries. In autumn, although days were short and dark, we would go to pick mushrooms. After a few rainy days, mushrooms covered the forest like a white carpet, and in a short time I was always able to fill up a bucket that I'd proudly present to my parents. My mother never wasted time and, like all Lithuanian farmers' wives, she would preserve some of the mushrooms for winter and the rest of them she would cook. She did the same with the strawberries and all the vegetables that grew in our vegetable garden behind the house. The strawberries were preserved in syrup or made into jam, sealed in big jars, and ready to be used. They were all canned and stacked neatly on the shelves of my mother's pantry along with plum jam and pickled cucumbers.

In winter, the ranger who looked after the forest would sell a few pine trees to the local farmers for firewood or for building materials. In this period of the year, when the land was covered in snow for many months, farmers would spend their time repairing the farm buildings, making tools (which would be used in spring) and laying wooden planks on the snow to allow people and horses to reach the main road as the snow was at times about one metre high. My father, like all the other farmers in the area, used to take firewood to the local school to keep the classroom warm and cosy for us children. To make the forest more beautiful, poor people would regularly rake it for some small amount of money and would help to replace the trees, which had been cut down.

I remember seeing my father early in the morning shovelling the snow from the front door and the entrance to the stable. The stable was always a very warm place during the winter months and often we children would go there with father and help mind the cows and pigs. My parents used to have a few pigs, which they slaughtered just before Christmas. They would make all sorts of sausages and a very good *lašynys* and š*kilandys*, a kind of bacon that Lithuanians eat on a slice of dark bread. My mother would give a thick slice of bread and *lašynys* to poor people who would knock at our door because they were hungry. She was a very religious woman and was always ready to help people in need.

In Australia, my husband and I we have always supported the St. Vincent de Paul and Silver Chain with donations as I believed Australians also do. To give part of what we have to others less fortunate is our way to thank God for what he has given to us. In Lithuania back at home, we weren't rich but we weren't poor either; we had clothes

and food and we could afford from time to time also to buy biscuits, which in my time were usually the privilege of a few wealthy people.

When I returned to my village for the first time, a few years ago, after Lithuania had become independent, I went to my brother's house, which had been my parents' house, and I immediately wanted to go to my forest, as I used to do when I was a child. To my great surprise and disappointment, I couldn't even walk through this beautiful forest that was part of my childhood. There was rubbish everywhere and it was absolutely filthy. Nothing of what I remembered resembled the beauty past in that place, only the big blueberry bushes were still there covered in small ripe berries.

In my time, quite a few people from my village could just make ends meet; they had a very simple and modest life, but it was a good life and spirits were always high. People lived happily and in harmony and they used to sing and dance a lot. We all knew each other and we all shared the happy and sad moments of life together. We used to live like a big family, a lot different from life in Australia.

For Shrove Tuesday, which is one of the merriest days of our calendar, before Lent, we children would put on a costume and a mask and go in a group, through the village knocking at every door. People would give us pancakes that we ate immediately, as they were warm and tasty and at that time of the year, in March or April, the weather is still cold in Lithuania and the village was usually still covered with snow. The place was full of laugher, full of life. Our neighbours' little daughter used to come to visit us early in the morning dressed in a very nice costume. She was very pretty with her long plaited blond hair and we were very fond of her. Adults would enjoy themselves later in the day, after work. They would go to parties which would last until late at night.

I arrived in Australia 53 years ago, and since then I have never dressed my children in a costume or sent them to visit friends and make pancakes for Shrove Tuesday. We never carried on this tradition in my family and I know that other Lithuanian children didn't do it either. Back at home, I know that they still celebrate it. Here it is lost, it has gone. In Perth, when we first arrived we were scattered everywhere, some of us lived in the city and others in the country. We were busy beginning a new life and all our energy and thoughts were directed towards our work and to have the money to buy a house. Only later, after approximately two years, we began to meet at church and it was only then that we realized that there were quite a few Lithuanian families in Perth. Perhaps the Shrove Tuesday tradition could have still been kept for a while but I believe it was too late by then.

When the church bells in my village rang, we children got excited and ran to the church immediately. We knew someone was dead or dying and we were curious to find out who it was. In Lithuania in the past, it was a tradition that the ringing of the bells brought sad news to the people. Everyone had to take part in this sad event.

I remember when one of my relatives died on a farm; the bells of the nearby village were playing very slowly and with a very profound sound. The day was very sad. It was winter and so by four o'clock it was already dark. The coffin was in the main room of the house surrounded by candles (four of them) and only with a few flowers as it was winter. The walls were covered with beautiful handmade embroideries, sort

of cloths, and a cross and some pictures of saints were hung on the wall. The coffin remained at home for three days to allow relatives who lived in other villages to arrive in time for the funeral. People came to pray and recite the rosary. Women and young people came during the day, men in the evening after work. Meals were provided for all these visitors, who used to stay for a few hours. The whole small community shared the sadness of the moment.

Then on the morning of the third day, a cart with horses arrived with a wooden plank, which was later used to carry the coffin. A sort of black flag with white cross in the middle was draped across the coffin and we all walked towards the church. The priest was waiting at the church with two altar boys. He would open and blessed the coffin, and then we would all go to the cemetery, which was ten minutes' walking distance. The cart with horses was used, as my relative didn't live in the village, otherwise four men would carry the coffin, on their shoulder on the flat board to the church and then to the cemetery. When my little daughter died, four young girls carried the white coffin and we took a picture of it that I still have. In Lithuania even now in small villages they still carry the coffin. This happened when my brother's wife died and I was there. It was the second time I went back, not long ago.

Here in Australia, I had to change this tradition and adopt a new one. When my husband died I immediately rang the Silver Chain and a lady came and organized everything. My husband was in a funeral parlour overnight and we recited the rosary with a few Lithuanian friends. The following day we went to the Lithuanian Church in East Perth where almost all the Lithuanian community was waiting, and from there to Karrakatta. I didn't organize the wake at the Lithuanian Club as most Lithuanians do, as I was by myself and I didn't think about it.

Some traditions have also changed in Lithuania and what I noticed, when I was there was that people at my sister-in-law's funeral came with beautiful bunches of flowers, as they do here. In the past, people didn't have flowers; they used to come with small branches of holly. Perhaps now they have flowers all year round as they grow them in glasshouses which I never saw when I was a child.

The village where I grew up, before my father decided to move to a nearby farm, to my child's eyes was beautiful. There was a church whose bell tower I could see from my bedroom window, my school, a few Jewish shops, a chemist's and a doctor's surgery. The streets were clean and on both sides there were trees. Each house had a front garden with plenty of flowers in spring and summer, and lace curtains at the windows. The forest, the small river, and a few *koplitelė* scattered in the fields or at the corners of roads made the place beautiful and peaceful.

We never locked the front door and we would leave the stable and animals unguarded throughout the day when we went to visit relatives. It was unthinkable to have a theft or burglary. Children used to play outside until late, especially during the long northern summer white nights, as there was no danger. Sometimes dogs would join the children's games, barking and jumping all around. I remember going for a walk after dinner, and picking flowers from the edges of the road for my mother. She was always pleased to receive them. Everything was so calm and simple and we children were happy.

But then the Russians came. At the beginning I didn't notice much difference only that a few people were shot and others sent to Siberia. I remember about 3 km from our farm there was a brickyard and the whole family (with two daughters of my age) were taken away and their property was given to the people who were working for them. My whole happy world was starting to crumble and in time the situation became worse. It's likely my family was not deported because my father was not a rich farmer and didn't employ farm workers. We didn't need to go to work for other people but no one worked for us, we worked on our farm. Then both my sister and I married. I married a young handsome policeman and I was really happy. But when the Russians returned to Lithuania for the second time we had to escape, as people who were in the policeforce during the German occupation were considered enemies of the state and shot on sight. That was a very hard period for the police.

After being in a camp in Germany for a few years, we were accepted to come to Australia and sent to work in the bush for two years, living in a tent. We worked very hard. My husband worked five days a week on the railway and another two days on farms (Saturday and Sunday). We worked to save the money to come to Perth and buy a block of land, which we did. My children both attended good private schools, they graduated, they married and now I am a grandmother of four beautiful grandchildren that love my Lithuanian pancakes and sauerkraut, and they say *ačiu senelė* to me [thank you grandmother] whenever I cook for them.

I have been living in Australia for 53 years, and I have spent only the first twenty years of my life in Lithuania. I have been back to my village twice, and I found that everything has changed, everything was strange. I could still recognize my church but that was about all. The chemist shop wasn't there anymore. Only a few Jewish shops were left but were closed, and I recognized only a few old houses. My school was still there but I thought it was in need of urgent repair. My father's farm where my two brothers with their families live is still there, but nothing was nice anymore.

I also feel that my relations are not my relations any longer as we don't have much in common. They lived for more than fifty years under the Communist system while I was living in a free country. They were suspicious of speaking with me and I thought they didn't trust me. This is what I believe can be expected from people living, for many years under a system of terror. For years they have learnt to be silent. However, now I find that some people say just as as my brother-in-law said, before he passed away, that Lithuania needs someone like Stalin to put everything in place. I couldn't possibly go back there to live. My family is here. My children, my grandchildren and my husband's grave is in Karakatta, where I would like to go at the end of my journey.

My Lithuanian friends are the ones left are here. We share the same experiences and we have shared all our sad and happy stories. Lithuanians here have changed as I have. We became more like Australians, although I still feel more Lithuanian than Australian. I still have relations in Lithuania, my parents and grandparents were Lithuanians, I was born in Lithuania, I married a Lithuanian, I speak the language although sometimes I find it difficult to remember some words, and I am Catholic. I don't go to church all the time but I pray at home, that is the place where I like to be most of the time with my memories and my husband's pictures in my living room. I don't have Australian friends as I choose not to have any. I don't feel that I have

anything in common with them. They cannot understand being forced to leave your country and your entire family behind and not being allowed to contact them for years. I prefer to speak with new Australians as I believe they understand me better.

I go to the Lithuanian Church in East Perth almost every Sunday. Once a month, I try to go to the Lithuanian Club in South Perth and there we celebrate together important events of our past history, and birthday and name days and this is enough for me. I would like to return to my country one more time, as I would like once more to see my younger sister, who reminds me of the mother that I left behind.

Stasys's Story

Stasys is a male participant in the study. He is 82-years-old; and a member of the Lithuanian diaspora of Siberia. He was interviewed in Krasnoyarsk in 2004. Stasys was born in a village not far from Kaunas. He spent his childhood on his father's farm. In 1948 he was deported to Siberia with his father and two brothers. In 1960 they were allowed to return to Lithuania, but Stasys remained in Siberia. He married a German former deportee and they had two boys. One of Stasys'sons went to live to Lithuania.

I remember attending the Berneliu Mišos (midnight Christmas mass) with my family when I was a child in the beautiful big church, only one kilometre from my parents' farm. We used to go on foot or in the cart and on the way we used to meet smiling, happy people going in the same direction. The church was always full. There were children. Women had their heads covered with a scarf and men could not wear hats. My father, who had a beautiful voice, used to sing in the church choir, and everything seemed to be so solemn.

Six weeks after Easter is *Žolinė* [Pentecost] in Lithuania it is spring. Girls used to make garlands with flowers and greenery and take them to the church to be blessed. In my family we used to take branches of trees to the church and then kept them around the house. We did not dispose them until the following year. I remember my mother keeping some branches, when dried, in her bedroom.

I used to work on my father's farm with my brothers. It was 32 hectares, and we did not need any other people to work for us, except at the the rye harvest time. My mother used to make very good dark bread. My mother would bake about fifty kilos of rye bread twice a month as the family was quite large, eight people. She used to work for two days, on the first day she would prepare the bread mixture and on the second day she would bake. The smell of freshly baked bread was throughout the farm. Lithuanians make very good bread. Once when I went to Kaunas I brought back three big loaves of rye bread to Krasnoyarsk. In Siberia I do not know why but bread is not so good, I don't like it. Instead fish is very good. I have caught some fish here that never tasted so good anywhere. Here herrings are not very big but so good that when you have them once a day you don't need to eat anymore for the rest of the day.

Our meals back on the farm as in the villages were very simple. Especially in summer, when people work long hours, we always ate meat five days per week, but not on Fridays. On Good Friday, my mother was very strict and we had to fast, but when she wasn't in sight, we children used to eat a little bit.

I was only a boy of ten, but I remember my neighbours and my family were happy with their life and they were satisfied with what they did and what they had. They were able to build their own house, have a garden, and a vegetable garden, look after the animals and at the same time to bring up a family, go to church and enjoy life.

In 1940, when the Soviets arrived, everything became sad. I think that even nature was sad. We had good horses, cows, pigs, very nice water, beautiful trees, and nice

neighbours, but with the Soviets everything disappeared. Nothing was good anymore. You would go to bed at night and you were not sure of what was going to happen when you woke up. In those days living in the villages was very difficult and not very safe. The *Žalukai Miškos Brolis* [the partisans] were all hiding in the surrounding forests and they could come to the village for food and shelter at any time. If a farmer helped the partisans, he had to expect retaliation by the Russian. If he helped the Russians, he was eventually shot by the partisans. However, Russian troops wouldn't come very often into the villages, as they knew that the partisans were nearby.

I was only 21 when I was deported to Siberia with my father and two of my brothers. My mother wasn't at home. She was in Poland with my other two brothers, visiting my sister who at the time, was living there with her Polish husband. We were deported because my father did not want to join the *kolkhoze* [collective farms].

All of us were sent to work in a *kolkhoz*. In the village where we lived there were other Lithuanians and together we continued to speak Lithuanian and to share memories of our life back home. The children would speak Lithuanian at home, but when they started to go to school they began to learn and speak Russian and Lithuanian was only spoken at home with the parents and grandparents. We could not organize any Lithuanian classes and at school everything was in Russian.

Children knew about Lithuanian traditions, and religion, which was taught to them by their parents and grandparents, in secret. In the villages there wasn't a church or a priest. The priest who started to visit us was a deportee as well. We knew when he was arriving and we would meet in secret, in turn in each house. He used to baptise our children, marry couples, and give first communion and confirmation, but funerals were not allowed.

We weren't permitted to leave our village, and anyhow, we simply couldn't. Firstly because the place was isolated and surrounded by snow in winter, secondly twice a month, the person in charge of the whole village would come and check who was there and who wasn't. At the beginning many were not present because they had died of disease, cold and starvation.

After Stalin died, life became easier. After 1960, we were all allowed to return home. Permission was granted to everyone except political prisoners, who could resettle only in Russia or in Latvia or Kaliningrad. Almost all my friends returned home, only a few remained behind, the ones married to Russians or others who weren't Lithuanians.

My father and my brothers went back. My two brothers started a new life and I must say, they started to live as they used to live before the war. Both of them built their own house and organized their own life again. It was very difficult but they succeeded.

I remain in Siberia and at that time life was easier. I left the village and I went to live in the city of Krasnoyarsk. I married a German former deportee and we had two children. My son remained in Siberia and my daughter went to live in Lithuania.

Now in Krasnoyarsk there are not many Lithuanians of my generation left. Most of them returned home, some died and many others prefer to continue to live in the villages, not in the big city. For them it is difficult to come to church or to our meetings, as they live far away and do not have transport. We don't have a club, but we meet three or four time a year in a Polish high school. We have a meal, we sing, we dance and we spend some time together speaking Lithuanian.

I go often to Lithuania on holidays, visiting my daughter and my two brothers and their families. I have my flat in Kaunas that unfortunately, has been given to me thirty years too late. Now I am retired, my wife is dead and in Lithuania I would be by myself. Here, I live with my son and two grandchildren. I still live in my Lithuanian way. I read the newspaper, I listen to the Lithuanian news, I cook Lithuanian food and I go to Lithuania as often as I can afford to. I love my country; my parents were Lithuanians, and I was born there and brought up according to the Lithuanian traditions. My children and grandchildren are all baptised. My son says that I am a Lithuanian, and that it doesn't seem that I have being living for so many years in Siberia. My son made an attempt to go to live in Lithuania, but he couldn't find a job and returned. My grandchildren love Lithuania and I hope that perhaps one day they will be able to go and live there.

Janina's Story

Janina is a female participant in the study. She is 88-years-old; and a member of the Lithuanian diaspora of Siberia. She was interviewed in Krasnoyarsk in 2004.
She was born in a small village near the Latvian border. She married and had a daughter. During the first Soviet occupation the all family was deported to Siberia. After 1960 they settled in the region of Krasnoyarsk where they had a second child. Since 1992 Janina with her daughters and grandddauthers has regularly visited the relatives in Lithuania.

Janina I didn't realize how hard life could be until I was deported to Siberia. I was 26 years old when I was deported with my father and my two sisters and my brother. My mother was lucky; she wasn't at home when the Russians came, at 2.00 in the morning.

I was born in a village not far from the Latvian border. Both my parents were farmers. When I was a child I didn't have many friends to play with, as our farm was far from the rest of the village. I used to play with my sisters and brother and we had a wonderful time together, even if from time to time we had small fights as all children do.

My family was Catholic, but we did not go to church every day, only on Sundays because we had the animals to tend, and work to do on the farm. The church was only two kilometres away. We used to go there on foot during the good season and by cart in winter.

I went to primary school in the village like my sisters and brother and later to the technical school in the nearby country town. During the German occupation I was working in an office, later I married and had my first daughter. I was happy with my wife and my new family. We lived in the city and I often used to go to visit my parents with my baby.

Then the Russian arrived, my husband was arrested because he was a partisan. I lost my job and I went to live with my parents on the farm. My brother was only 13 years old when he died. My husband then was sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment in labour camps and sent to the Peciora area, a place close to the Arctic. My father refused to join the kolkhozes (collective farms) and was deported. We were sent to the Krasnojarsk territory, where most of the Lithuanians were, we used to work in the kolkhozes and in the forests and we lived in villages nearby.

Life was hard. Winter is very cold in Siberia, and for months the temperature is very low. We used to wear a lot of clothes but it seemed that they were never enough. Snow and ice were everywhere. Lots of people died from the cold. In the village the live wasn't bad but I didn't like being so isolated. We used to go to work in the forest to cut trees all day and by the time we returned home we were tired and we didn't have much to do or anywhere to go. Back home the life in the village was different, after work people could go to visit friends on foot and you could walk to school and to church.

When Stalin died, my father and my sisters returned to Lithuania and started a new life. I couldn't go back because my husband wasn't allowed. He left the labour camp, and joined me in this village where I still live in the same house I have lived in for the last 50 years. My husband went to work in the forest, and then in the corner shop for 24 years. We had two more daughters, one of them died, one lives in Moscow and the last one married a young Russian man and lives only 8km. away from this house. In summer we all live together here. My daughter speaks Lithuanian; as do my granddaughters and we all go to Lithuania on holidays every year to visit our relatives.

One of my granddaughters studies at Vilnius University and she loves Lithuania. She is thinking of remaining there after she finishes her studies. At home, although my son-in-law is Russian, we eat and speak Lithuanian. He likes Lithuanian food, especially *zepelinas* and he has learnt to say a few words in Lithuanian. At Christmas and Easter we go to church and we keep Lithuanian traditions in the home. My children and grandchildren were all baptized and have Lithuanian names. I spent 26 years in Lithuania and I've been 56 years in Siberia. My life is here, but my heart is in Lithuania. Every time that I go back to my country, I find that it is better and better. Of course there are some problems, but there are problems everywhere. People like to drink there, people like to drink here, but I must say here in Siberia, people drink more than in Lithuania. There are rich people there and rich people here, lazy people there and lazy people here.

I couldn't return to Lithuania at that time, when the rest of my family did, and now it is too late because I am by myself but I am happy that I can go there each year and that my children like their grandparents' country, its language and its traditions.

Years ago, a few Lithuanian families lived in the Krasnoyarsk area, but now most of them have returned and a lot of people of my age have died. My husband died a few years ago and he is buried in the small cemetery outside his village with a few other Lithuanians. I don't have many friends left, especially ones that lived in this village, but from time to time my daughter takes me to visit them and we speak, not about the past, but about the Lithuania of today, and its future.

Rimas's Story

Rimas is a male participant in the study. He is 84-years-old; and a member of the Lithuanian diaspora of Siberia. He was interviewed in Krasnoyarsk in 2004. Rimas lived on a big farm and came from a large family. He was deported to Siberia with part of his family in 1948. They were placed in the region of Krasnoyarsk and were loggers. All his family returned to Lithuania in 1960. At that time he was married to a local girl and had a son. Rimas decided to remain in Krasnoyarsk.

My father's farm was 160 hectares and part of the land was an orchard, the rest was rye and hay fields. We had a few cows, horses, pigs and also poultry. Everybody worked on the farm except for one of my brothers, who was studying at the university and myself who was attending a technical institute at the time. However, in summer during the school holidays we all had to help. Summer in Lithuania is a very busy period of the year for farmers. There was also a young family living on the farm that helped with the work all year until 1940, before the first Russian occupation. Then my father let them go. At fruit picking time, neighbours would come to help as well. There were a number of apple and plum trees also strawberries and other varieties of berries.

It was the best time of the year. During the day we would work very hard, but in the evening we used to party until late. We ate, drank, danced and sang until late in the evening and then the boys would go to sleep in the barn. The young people gathered on Saturday and Sunday night as well, but we never used to drink a lot, otherwise the girls wouldn't dance with us and that was not what we wanted.

My parents' house was very big and we lived in only half of it. There was a large room that my parents would use for entertaining during the festivities and for other special occasions. Our house was always open to everyone and at mealtime there always some unexpected visitors, who my parents welcomed warmly. My mother would quickly prepare something special and we would all join in. People from the village used to come at Christmas to see our Christmas tree, which would be standing beautiful and tall in this big room. The table was always set, with food ready to be eaten by visitors.

Life was peaceful and we were all happy; we had to work long hours, but we also had time to enjoy each other's company and our neighbours' company as well. Not far from us there was a Russian farmer and he used to come with his family to visit us and enjoy themselves by joining in our dancing and singing. This family only spoke a few words of Lithuanian, but it was enough to understand us. We did not have any problems with them, we were all the same, we were all farmers working hard and proud of what we did and had achieved.

When the Russians came in 1941, they started to deport people but not many farmers. Mainly families whose relatives were partisans and educated people were deported. Later, in 1948 they arrested and deported the bourgeois and the farmers who refused to join the kolkhozes. That was the time when my family was deported.

We were deported to Krasnoyarsk region, to cut trees in the forest. We didn't have an easy life until Stalin died. We had to work hard and we suffered a lot during the cold Siberian winter. Now, after so many years of living in Siberia I am used to it, but I always think that the wintertime is too long and I always wait for the good season that never seems to arrive.

When we arrived, we lived in settlement with other Lithuanians and people coming from other countries. We continued to speak our language, tried to keep our traditions and especially our religion alive but it was in secret. I remember going in turn to different houses to say the rosary and sing religious hymns for *Geguzė* [month of May]. For Christmas we made a small *eglutė* [Christmas tree] and the children were very happy.

Parents would only speak Lithuanian to their children and today Lithuanians of my generation and younger all speak Lithuanian. We didn't forget our parents' language and most of us could read and write it as well. Perhaps as we do not use the language everyday, we have forgotten a few words, but this I would say is very common when people live in a different country with a different language.

In 1960, all my family returned to Lithuania. At that time I was the only one married to a Russian girl and had a child. I tried to go back, but I couldn't find a job to support my family and I decided to return to Krasnoyarsk. With a mixed marriage it is impossible to preserve your traditions and language in the family, especially the language, because the children speak mainly the language of their mother. Then they go to school and speak Russian. This is happening in all the families of the Lithuanians that are now here.

After 55 years of living here, I only speak Russian but I don't write or read it. I used to read Lithuanian newspapers, but now I don't anymore. I can watch the news on television. My wife learnt a bit of Lithuanian as every year we go on holiday to Lithuania for one month to visit two of my brothers and a sister who live there. My son went to Lithuania as well with his family. He liked it there and started to learn the language. A few years ago there was a Lithuanian teacher who was here and she started Lithuanian classes. There were about twenty people including my son who attended these classes.

Now, we have also a church in the city. It is an old church built during the Czarist period, and was then closed and used as a theatre. It is still used nowadays as a theatre but it is also used once a week as a church. We have two Catholic priests, and about a hundred people attend the church regularly, they are mainly Polish and German. Their communities are much larger than the Lithuanian community. There are not many of us and we are old and most of us have preferred to live in the villages, not in the city. The villages are far so those people can not possibly come to church often, but they come for Easter and Christmas.

In summer, I don't go to church because I go to my *dacha* [summer cottage], which is 42 km. away, close to the forest. It is beautiful. I stay there during the week with my wife and on Saturday and Sunday my son and his family come as well. Together we work and prepare the food for the winter. I have everything that I need from my garden and during winter I only buy meat and salt.

In winter, I stay in the city and although we don't have a club we meet in a Polish high school. We are all Lithuanians and we know each other and we speak about our life past and present. Our wives are Russian and they do understand Lithuanian, although they cannot speak it, but they enjoy being together. They cook a good meal and they sing and dance. For Christmas usually we have a big party and our children and grandchildren join in as well.

After 56 years of living in Siberia, Lithuania reminds me of my childhood, my family and friends. My wife and I are both retired, we live comfortably, we have a flat in the city, and a car, we can go on holidays, we have what we need, and we have time to do what we want. But my heart and mind is still in Lithuania. My wife would be happy to go to live there, but our pensions are not enough because life in Lithuania is more expensive than in Siberia. We don't have a place to live there, although one of my brothers is a builder in Vilnius and could easily find us a flat. We are old now and to start all over again is difficult and scary. I am happy to go to Lithuania as often as I can, and to keep in touch with my family and relatives, they come to see us even from United States and I have grandchildren who are considering going there to live and this is enough for me.

Erika's Story

Erika is a female participant in the study. She is 82-years-old; and still lives in Lithuania. She was interviewed in Klaipeda in 2004.
She was born on a farm in a village near Klaipeda. She studied in Klaipeda, became a teacher, and married at the age of twenty. She has two sons. Now she is retired but she is still very active; she is a member of a choir and she spends most of her time with her sons'families.

I am a retired teacher and I still have a very busy life. I have two sons and five beautiful grandchildren and all of them look after me. We spend Christmas and Easter together and I cook the same Lithuanian dishes for them that my mother used to prepare when I was a child on my father's farm. My two daughters-in-law both work and they don't have much time to spend in the kitchen as I did when I was married.

My father was a farmer. He didn't have a big farm and never had enough money, but what the farm produced was enough to support our small family. There were only three children and my parents. We children didn't have much time to play. We had to go to school and also help on the farm and we would obey our parents and do what they wanted us to do.

In summer, my mother would spend entire days preserving cabbage, cucumbers and all sorts of vegetables and would spend time picking and drying different herbs then put them in jars so that they would be ready for winter in case someone in the family was sick. In our village there wasn't a doctor and in cases of necessity, we had to go to the nearest country town. Doctors were fairly expensive, and people first tried homemade remedies and the advice from a *bobutė*, one of the oldest and most knowledgeable women in the village. Still today, after so many years, I keep some chestnuts and acorns, under my bed as my mother used to tell me that they give energy and I use herbal teas for remedies, especially for a cold or sore throat.

We also had a small patch where my father used to plant potatoes and when the time came to pick them, we all helped. This I thought was the most tiring work as everyone was there for at least two or three days digging potatoes, putting them on a basket and then on the cart. Potatoes were heavy, and we children worked in pairs to bring the baskets to the cart. My mother used to make very good potato pancakes, and even now I make them regularly for breakfast.

Breakfast is very important for people who work on a farm, to give them enough energy for the rest of the morning. Even now my breakfast is quite substantial. I usually eat pancakes, cheese and smoked herrings and I drink a nice cup of tea. My children and especially my grandchildren eat much less as they don't want to put on weight, but they still eat pancakes with jam.

I have a *soda* [country cottage with vegetable garden], and I go there regularly usually once or twice a week, except in winter as it is very cold and nothing grows. From my *soda* I gather fruits and vegetables for the whole year. I preserve most of them and I make big jars of strawberry jam and pickled cucumbers that all my family love. It is hard work, especially now that I am not young anymore, and I am by myself, but I

like to do it. I usually catch a bus and in about an hour and a half I am there. I work in my vegetable garden all day and I am very happy and satisfied. Sometimes one of my sons comes after work and picks me up, otherwise I come back by myself with all my fresh fruit and vegetable for the rest of the week.

Once a week I go to the cemetery to visit my husband and my friends' graves. I go there by bus as well and it takes less than twenty minutes. Our city has a big cemetery and it is very well kept. Lithuanians are very fond of their cemeteries, especially in the county. In November, it's beautiful to go to there. There are candles everywhere and lots of people too and everything is clean and neat. Sometimes there is snow, but lately we have been lucky that there hasn't been any. Now we have flowers also in winter as there are glasshouses. Flowers are expensive but people don't mind buying them for their loved ones.

I am a member of a folk choir. We meet once a week and we sing mainly traditional songs and in the group there are also people who dance old folk dances. There are about thirty of us and we sing in country festivals and also on other different occasions in hospitals and schools. Our group is very well known in the city and last year they asked us to sing for the Feast of the Sea, which is a big festival that lasts a week and is held in honour of the sea. My city is Lithuania's only port. We wear Lithuanian costumes from all different districts and lots of people come and listen to us, especially young people who are now trying to rediscover their past and the traditions and history of their country.

Although farmers had a hard life before the war, as there was not any machinery to help with the work in the fields, life was peaceful and enjoyable, everybody was friendly helped each other and had a good time together. I remember my father having parties for his *Vardo Diena* [Name's Day]. Mother would cook a special meal and invite our neighbours, and we would dance and sing all night. My father was so happy. In those days it was more common to celebrate Name's Days, than birthdays, especially if you had religious names such as Ona, Jonas, Petras, or Marija. Nowadays only elderly people still celebrate Name Days. In Lithuania young people are starting to be named once again with old saints' names but they prefer to celebrate birthdays. We had some birthday celebrations in the past but later, after the war, the birthday became the most common one.

A big traditional festival, all over Lithuania is the celebration of *Joninė* [Saint John]. That wasn't allowed during the period of the Soviet occupation, but now it has started again. It is a beautiful festival with bonfires. People dress in traditional costume and sing and dance to old Lithuanian folk music. Those named after the saint, both male and female wear garlands of birch leaves with flowers.

In Lithuania, traditions are stronger and kept mainly in the villages, as people there are older and less influenced by foreigners. In the city, there are more people but they're younger and not all Lithuanians, so language and tradition are mixed, as I believe happens everywhere.

In my busy life I always find the time to go to church and there's one not far from where I live. I don't go everyday but on Sundays and on special occasions as my family used to do when I was a child. I am happy to be able to go where I want to

now, as there was a period when, for teachers in particular, it was impossible to go to the church in the place where you lived and where people knew you. If you did, you were punished. I remember that I used to go in villages where nobody knew that I was a teacher. I did this also to have my two children baptised. But now that is all in the past and I go where it is more convenient. Every Sunday the church is always full and it is surprising how many young people attend the services. Sometimes the service is longer than usual, but nobody seems to be in a hurry to leave. I meet my friends there, and after the service we have a cup of coffee there, or they come to my place or I go to their place, and we talk about the latest news, such as this year's elections.

I am content with my life and I have what I need and I have a nice family. I live in the centre of the city and everything is easy for me. I think that I am very lucky. Something I miss my husband but I can not do anything about that. Life does not last forever and we spent many years together.

Bianka's Story

Bianka is a female participant in the study. She is 88-years-old; and still lives in Lithuania. She was interviewed in Vilnius in 2004.
She was born in Kaunas. She had three younger sisters. Bianka has spent all her life in the city of Kaunas, where she studied, married and worked in a medical laboratory. She did not have children. Bianka is very nostalgic about the Lithuanian past and her family.She thinks that the Soviets have changed the Lithuanian life-style. Although now living in a retirement village in Vilnius she receives many visitors.

I spent my childhood in Kaunas with my family, my father who was a journalist, my mother and my three sisters. All of us girls studied at the university and we all graduated. I was the youngest and I finished my studies just before the Soviet occupation. My father was already dead. He died during one of his working trips far away from Lithuania. My father travelled everywhere in the world for his work and sometimes he would take me with him. I remember going to Klaipeda, and at the end of the day an English journalist gave me an unexpected gift, a big box of chocolates. That made me very happy. My family wasn't very wealthy, but not poor either and we girls had everything we needed, including beautiful toys, and sweets that my father used to bring home from his trip As for the sweets, my mother would take them and would give us a treat from time to time. My father was a gentleman, highly educated and generous. We loved him. My mother dedicated all her time to the family but she was stricter than my father.

In Kaunas, we lived in a nice apartment that my mother looked after with the help of a maid. We used to have guests all the time and food and drinks were always ready for them. I remember our dining room always set up for some guest that my father would bring home, at the last minute. I never heard my mother complain as she enjoyed the presence of guests. It gave her the opportunity to prepare something different for our meals. Lithuanians are very hospitable people and we treat guests with respect and share what we have with them.

My father's parents used to live on a farm not far from Kaunas. They were very wealthy, and had a big house that was always open to relatives and neighbours. My grandparents had seven children, who used to go to visit their parents on the farm with their families on Sunday after mass. It was fantastic for me as a child. Lots of people were there, all my cousins and we played together for all entire afternoon. The dining room table was literally covered in food, smoked fish, smoked meat, poultry, roasted piglets, ham, cheese, sweets and cakes.

After lunch, my grandfather used to talk about Lithuanian politics with my father and my uncles. My grandmother, my aunts and my mother used to talk about children, food, and other women's topics. I heard this as sometimes I used to enter the room to take some food and drinks. We children would play outside in the garden without disturbing the adults. We would run and play hide and seek and other games that my elder sisters or cousins suggested. The farm was very big, so it was easy to hide and not be found for a while. But we were not allowed in some parts of the farms were there were animals or machinery. I used to like Sunday and I wait eagerly for this day, when I could meet my cousins and play.

During the week, back home, I didn't have much time to play because I had to go to school, and then do my homework. My parents sent me to bed early as they were very strict with their rules, especially when I was going to school. I had friends who came to visit me, but not very often as all of us had to study.

My childhood was a very happy one. The summer holidays spent at my grandparent's farm were one of the best times that I remember. My parents weren't there and my grandmother allowed me to do whatever I wanted, and she would cook me all sorts of cakes. There was always something new to discover or to do on the farm. There was a stable and other buildings but the one that I remember the most was the small cottage built for the *kampininkai* [boarders] who helped with the work on the farm.

In Lithuania before the war, people who had small farms with not enough good land to support their families had to work for other farmers, regularly or seasonally. My grandparents were in need of people all year round to look after their animals and crops. These people used to work hard all week, but they had their free time on Sundays. They could go to the village to dance and sing with other young people, and during the months of May they would go for a *geguzinė* [picnic outing] on their bicycles. I didn't know all these young men, but it was interesting for me to see this house, built not far from the stable, and all these workers going about the farm during the day, then at night after having taken a bath in the nearby river, wearing a clean pair of trousers and shirt they would disappear.

My mother was a religious woman, who used to go to Kalvarija, a town in the district of Žemaitija, known in Lithuania for its "Stations of the Cross" in pilgrimage. When we arrived we used to join the people and the priest outside the church and then go all together in procession to the hill where different chapels were built, one for each station. People used to come from all over Lithuania, Poland and Germany. Everybody would pray and sing, and you felt that you believed in something that everyone believed in and that we were all the same. I was only fifteen, but I remember this feeling, especially during the singing. Lithuanian people like to sing, and in the church even now we have big choirs.

During the Soviet occupation we weren't allowed to practice our religion openly, everything was done in secret, but now people have gone back to all the Catholic traditions, and once again to to pilgrimages to Kalvarija. In Lithuania there are two different towns called Kalvarija. One is close to the Polish border and the other one is in Žemaitija. Both places have now become very popular again, especially during Lent, when people go there and pray.

I lived most of my life in Kaunas, where I married and worked. I didn't have any children, and when my husband died I continued to live in our flat for a few years. Inside my house I kept the Lithuanian traditions that both my parents and grandparents taught me. I continued to pray, to have Christmas and Easter celebrations, cook in the country style that I like very much as I don't like the food that I don't know.

Two years ago, I had to come and live in this retirement village, as I started to have difficulties in walking. Previously I lived for a year with some relatives in Kaunas, but they were young and both working. I also wanted my privacy and independence.

I am happy here, relatives still come almost every day to visit me and take me out, wherever I want to go. I spend my time studying French, which was one of the languages that my father liked the most and reading his travel books and articles. I sometimes look at my photo albums, and I remember my past. One photo in particular is very dear to me, it is one where all my family and relatives are standing in front of my grandparent's house on the farm. They are all gone now. I am the last one left of the old generation. My family was splendid as it was the real Lithuania. We loved God, our country and our family.

My only sadness in life is that I would like to live in Kaunas, where my roots are, not in Vilnius, but this is life, *nieko nepadarisiu* [there is nothing that I can do about it].

Rūta's Story

Rūta is a female participant in the study. She is 84-years-old; and still lives in Lithuania. She was interviewed in Vilnius in 2004.
She was born near a small town in the centre of Lithuania. Her father had a farm and Rūta was happy to live in contact with nature. She had two sisters. At the age of 21 she married a young man from Vilnius where they lived and had two children. She was happy in Vilnius but missed country life.

Easter was the happiest holiday of the year and the beginning of spring. After a long cold winter, finally flowers and greenery appeared in the fields, trees were covered with leaves and blossoms, and both nature and animals looked happy. People dressed in lighter clothes, and children were allowed to play outside. The days started to be longer, and one could smell the perfume of the flowers and the grass in the air.

At this time of year my mother was busy cleaning the whole house for the entire Holy Week. She wanted everything to look shining and fresh and we children used to help her. My father would clean and tidy up every corner of the stable, the big shed with the farming tools, and the cart that he used for going to the market once a week and to church on Sundays. He wasn't very religious, but he didn't mind going to church with his family.

We used to go to Easter Celebration early in the morning, all of us dressed in our best clothes. After the long celebration we stopped in front of the church for a few minutes to catch up with some neighbours and friends, and then we returned home to have our meal. Usually we didn't have any guests, they would arrive in the afternoon or the following day, but the table was always set. My mother used to prepare an abundant, rich meal that was welcomed by all of us after having had simple meals during Lent and fasted on Good Friday.

My sisters and I were all excited about our *marguciu* [Easter eggs]. After the meal we used to play a game of strength with the eggs. We used to hit them one against the other and you could win the other egg, if you broke it. I wasn't lucky at all, but I always came away with more eggs than when I started to play. In those days, we didn't have chocolate eggs, only hens' eggs that we used to dye in different colours on Saturday before Easter. We didn't have a lot of sweets or toys, either. We used to play with anything that our parents made for us or we made ourselves, but we had a lot of other children to play with, especially in summer.

We lived on a farm not far from the country town of Kedanei, in the centre of Lithuania. It was only a twelve hectare farm and we had two cows, two horses, three pigs, some sheep and a few chickens. We had fields of rye and potatoes, and a big vegetable garden that my mother used to look after, as well as with few fruits plants and strawberry patches. Everything from the farm was enough for us, and my parents used to sell the surplus products at the market.

In winter, life was boring, especially for us children. The days were shorter and we had to go to school at the nearby village, and by the time we returned home it was dark. We had a meal, we did our homework and we were sent to bed. In the evenings

my parents listened to the radio, my mother wove and my father made wooden spoons and forks and tools needed for his work.

My father was a very good woodcarver, and he used to make figurines that my mother displayed. He didn't drink or smoke. I remember him buying a small bottle of *dektinė* [Lithuanian vodka], but only at Christmas and Easter, and he would drink it in a *bonkutė* [small glass for liquor]. He spent all his life working hard and providing for his family. He was a free thinker and friends often came to our place to talk with him about politics. He loved his country and he was a real patriot.

My mother was very fond of her garden, as most Lithuanian women were. In spring she would work long hours planting seedlings, and by summer our front garden was full of colourful flowers. We used to have flowers everywhere at home, and they looked beautiful. In her garden she had bushes of rue, like all the other gardens of the village rue was considered a sort of national flower. My parents didn't have a high education, they attended only few classes of primary school, but they made sure that their children went to school. I was sent to study in the city, and there I met my husband, who was working as a sub-editor on a newspaper.

I was 21 and he was 28 when we married. We had two children, and now I am a grandmother of five. My husband was from Vilnius and after our marriage we went to live there. I liked living in a big city, but I also missed the village life, where we all knew each other and used to do a lot of things together. Life was more difficult in the village than in the city, but it was more interesting and people were friendly. In the village we were all Lithuanians, we spoke Lithuanian and we had our traditions. In Vilnius, people spoke other languages, because they were from different countries. I didn't have many friends and at the beginning I wasn't happy, even though I was with my husband.

I believe that farmers worked hard everywhere, as they do today, but not as hard as they did before the war, and they did during the periods of Soviet occupation. After Soviet occupation people had machinery, and more modern systems of farming, but almost everything they produced was collected in the kolkhoz [collective farm]. Today in Lithuania, young people don't want to become farmers anymore. The young generation prefers to sell their grandparents' or parents' farms and go to work in the city or aboard. Many farms are kept but aren't looked after, and it is difficult to find people to work on them. Before, we didn't have any choice; we had to work on our parents' land because there were so few other opportunities. I am not very happy about the situation now. In the villages the population is decreasing and it's mainly the elderly people who are left and gradually the old farmers are dying out.

Lithuania is an agricultural country and for generations people have been working in the fields and have been self-supporting. Even now, living in a village costs less than in the city. Here in Vilnius it is very expensive, especially for retired people. I believe that the past was better, I don't see any advantages of living in the city now and perhaps it is because I am becoming older and I prefer the peaceful life of the country, the sound of the animals, and the tasty food that they still make on farms today.

APPENDIX 11

MAPS

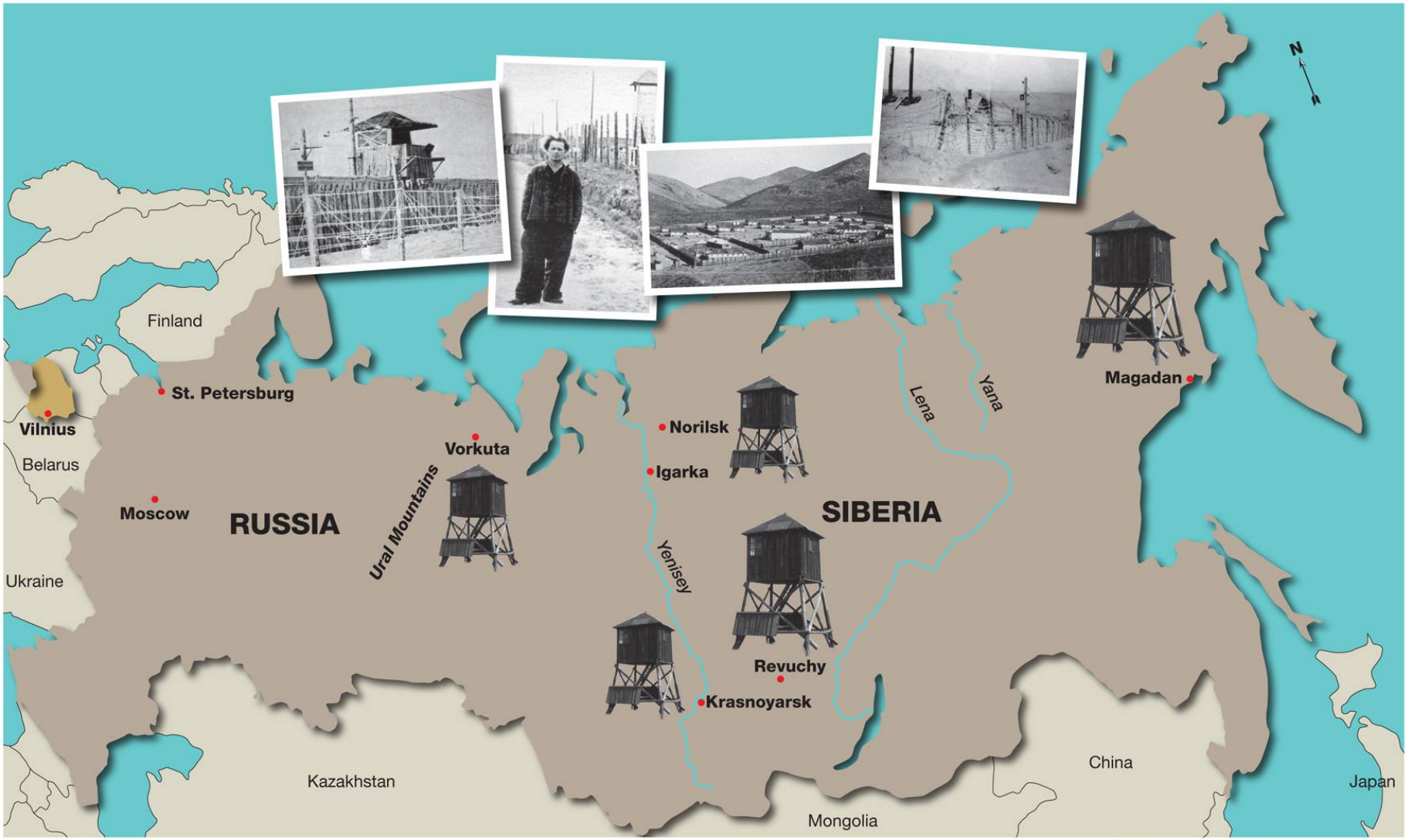
Ethnic Lithuanian Costumes

Lithuania

Area:
65,200km²

Population:
3,600,000

Siberia 1940-1953



Photographs used by kind permission of the Museum of Genocide Victims www.genocid.lt

Australia

Area:
7,741,220km²

Population:
19,860,000

APPENDIX 12

NEWSPAPERS AND NEWSLETTERS

VAKARINĖS AUSTRALIJOS LIETUVIŲ
ŽINUTĖS
Leidžia Perth'o Lietuvių Bendruomenė
(The Newsletter of Western Australian Lithuanians)
Published by the Australian Lithuanian Community of Perth
2001 m. balandžio 7 d. ***Eina nuo 1975 metų*** Nr. 4 (293)

****

GERBIAMIEMS ŽINUČIŲ RĖMĖJAMS, SKAITYTOJAMS IR JŲ ŠEIMOMS LAIMINGŲ IR DŽIAUGSMINGŲ ŠV. VELYKŲ ŠVENČIŲ LINKI ŽINUČIŲ REDAKTORIUS/LEIDĖJAS.

****

VELYKOS.

LINKSMA DIENA MUMS NUŠVITO...

Su džiaugsmu krikščioniškojo pasaulio žmonės mini Kristaus prisikėlimo šventę - Velykas. Mes čia atvykę iš šiaurinio žemės pusrutulio prisimename ten tuo metu ateinantį pavasarį, išvaduojantį gamtą iš žiemos šalčių.

Velykos švenčiamos skirtingomis metų dienomis, priklausomai nuo mėnulio atmainų, todėl ir su Velykomis surištos šventės, kaip tai Užgavėnės, Pelenų diena, Didžioji savaitė ir Sekminės, taip pat būna skirtingomis metų dienomis.

Velykoms tinkamai dvasioje pasiruošti yra skirtos septynios savaitės - Gavėnia. Lietuvoje prieš Sovietų okupaciją, gavėnios laikotarpiu tikintieji griežtai vykdydavo Bažnyčios reikalavimus pasninkui ir santūrai. Šokiai ir linksminimasis nebuvo praktikuojami.

Didžioji savaitė t.y. savaitė prieš Velykas prasideda Verbų sekmadieniu, o trys paskutinės tos savaitės dienos vadinamos didžiosiomis. Verbų rytą buvo paprotys pasiplakti su verbomis, sakant "Verba plaka, ne aš plaku ..." Pykti ar priešintis buvo negalima ir dar plakamasis turėdavo prižadėti dovaną Velykoms.

Nuo Didžiojo penktadienio pamaldų ir apeigų bažnyčioje ligi Prisikėlimo Mišių per Velykų sekmadienį. bažnyčioje neskambindavo varpais ir varpeliais, jų vietoje buvo naudojami mediniai tarškalai.

Didįjį šeštadienį buvo paprotys (jis tęsiamas ir išeivijoje) dažyti ir marginti kietai išvirtus kiaušinius - margučius. Dalį jų tėvai paslėpdavo kieme ar kambariuose, kad vaikai juos Velykų rytą atradę džiaugtųsi kiškučio jiems atneštais margučiais.

Ankstų Velykų sekmadienio rytą Prisikėlimo Mišios prasidėdavo su iškilminga procesija apeinant 3 kartus bažnyčios pastatą, jei oras leisdavo, lauke, jei ne - viduje. Po Mišių visi skubėdavo namo "atsigavėti". Velykoms šeimininkės paruošdavo velykinį stalą, kuris likdavo padengtas visą dieną. Svečiams atsilankius jos galėdavo drauge bendrauti. Stalas būdavo gražiai papuoštas su žalumynais, o ant jo padėtas keptas kumpis, žąsis ar kalakutas, žinoma ir su margučiais, sūriu, pyragais ir kitais per gavėnią neleistais naudotis valgiais. Pusryčius pradėdavo su kiaušiniais. Po to buvo valgomi įvairūs valgiai ir skanumynai ir ligi soties. Gavėnia tuoj pamirštama. Atsilankiusieji pasveikinti su Velykom buvo pavaišinami su ant stalo esančiais valgiais ir gėrimais. Popietis buvo skirtas žaidimams su margučiais, dainoms ir pasilinksminimams. Margučiai būdavo ridinėjami pagal tam tikras taisykles iš tam tikslui padarytų lovelių. Margučiai būdavo ir "daužomi" su smaigaliu į smaigalį, bet ne į šoną. Įdaužtas kiaušinis atitekdavo laimėtojui. Žinoma, įvairiuose Lietuvos kraštuose papročiai skyrėsi, tad ir čia apsigyvenusieji švenčia Velykas skirtingai. Kai kur per Velykas žmonės pastebėję ypatingesnius reiškinius rišdavo juos su ateities įvykiais, net pranašavimais. Dabar tokiais spėliojimais mažai kas tiki, jie belikę tik prisiminimais, kurie, jei nebūtų surinkti ir aprašyti, daug kam nebūtų ir žinomi.

PASAULIO LIETUVIŲ BENDRUOMENĖ

plbvaldyba@aol.com или plietuvis@aol.com

Krasnojarsko krašto lietuvių kultūros bendrija "Lituanika" įsikūrė 1992m. gegužės 28d. Buvo užregistruota Krasnojarsko krašto justicijos valdyboje 1993m. sausio 11d., perregistruota 1998m. kovo 12d., dėl pasikeitimo visuomeninių organizacijų veiklos RF įstatymo. Sibiro lietuvių Jaunimo Sąjunga "Žalgiris" įsikūrė 1999m. ir buvo užregistruota Krasnojarsko krašto justicijos valdyboje, iki to jaunimas dalivavo "Lituanikos" veikloje.

Pagal gyventojų perrašymą 1989m., Sibire buvo 40 tūkst. lietuvių. Tuo galima sakyti, kad pusė iš jų gyveno Krasnojarsko krašte. Pagal nevisai tikslią informaciją, kurią pristate rajonų įeinančių į Krasnojarsko krašto kultūros skyrei-1997m. Krasnojarske gyveno apie 4 tūkst. lietuvių ir Krasnojarsko krašte irgi apie 4 tūkst. lietuvių. Dabar įregistruotų bendrijos narių yra per 400 žmonių, bet šitas skaičius nepastovus, jis pastoviai keičiasi-auga. Atsiranda vis naujų ir naujų narių, kaip iš Krasnojarsko miesto, taip ir iš krašto gyventojų. Kaip pavyzdys-bendrijos nariais 2000m. balandžio mėn. tapo V.Voverys ir N.Voveraitė iš Kizilo-Tuvos Respublikos sostinės.

Dalyvauja lietuviškoje veikloje, bendrijos gyvenime vos trečdalis bendrijos narių.

Trumpai apibrėžti bendrijos veiklos praėjusių 3-jų metų (1997-2000) nelengva, dėl to paminėsiu tik svarbiausius įvykius:

- 1997m. gėgužės mėn. šventėm 5-ių metų bendrijos įsteigimo sukakti. Į mūsų renginį buvo atvykę atstovai tautinių mažumu ir įšeivijos departamento, bei socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerijos;
- 1997m. liepos mėn. dalyvavimas PLR IX-jame Sieme;
- 1997m. nuo spalio 7d. pradėjo veikti sekmadieninė lietuvių mokykla;
- 1997m. gruodžio 16d.-kreipimas į LR premjerą G.Vagnorių, dėl pravedimo organizuotų renginių skirtų 50-mečiui pačios masinės deportacijos lietuvių į Sibirą;
- 1998m. gegužės mėn. dalyvavimas bendrijos atstovu Lietuvoje renginije skirtam 50-mečiui masinės deportacijos lietuvių į Sibira;
- 1998m. birželio mėn. – dalyvavimas bendrijos komandos V1 PLSŽ, kur estafetinio bėgimo Vilniaus miesto gatvėmis komanda iškovojo trečiaja vieta tarp II grupės komandų ir buvo apdovanota bronzos medaliais bei taure.
- 1998m. liepos mėn., bendrijos choras "Rūta" dalyvavo Dainų Šventėje, kur 17 choro dalyvių iš Krasnojarsko krašto patirė didžiulį įspūdį nuo Dainų Šventės;
- 1998m. rugpjūčio mėn. Krasnojarske praėjo antra dalis renginio "Lietuva-Sibiras", skirto 50-mečiui pačios masinės deportacijos lietuvių į Krasnojarsko kraštą. Renginyje Krasnojarske dalyvauja gausi delegačija iš Lietuvos-Seimo nariai, ministerijų atstovai, PLB atstovai, Prezidentūros atstovai, visuomeninių organizacijų atstovai, žurnalistai, iš viso 23 žmonės. Renginio atidarymą transliavo 4 vietinės TV programos. Per pasiruošimo laiką, netoli Krasnojarsko buvo pastatyti du 5 metrų aukščio kryžiai-lietuviam tremtiniam 1948-jų metų atminti. Renginys 1998m. rugpjūčio mėn. "Lietuva-Sibiras" Krasnojarske tapo pavyzdžiu, dėl kitu tautybių, visuomeninių organizacijų įeinančių į Krasnojarsko krašto tarptautinį centrą, kur dabar yra užsiregistravusių 26 visuomeninės organizacijos;
- 1998-1999m. tęsia savo veiklą sekmadieninė lietuvių kalbos mokyklą, taip pat tęsia savo veiklą lietuvių choras "Rūta", kuris antrą kartą tapo laureatu, metiniu konkursu tarp liaudies kolektyvų miesto rajonu kultūros rūmu;
- 1999m. kovo 28d. buvo surengtas gedulingas minėjimas Lietuvos žmonių tremimo iš Tėvynės prieš 50 metų-tai antroji pagal didumą deportacija. Tarp bendrijos narių daug yra aukos šios deportacijos;
- 1999m. balandžio mėn. bendrija aktyviai dalivauja pasirengime ir atidarime Pabaltijos šalių grafikos darbų parodoje. Estampas Lietuvos menininkų pristatitas parodoje-tai dalis didelės kolekcijos grafikų darbų, prieš 13 metų perduotų iš Maskvos per atidarymą Krasnojarske skyriaus Rusijos dailės akademijos. Parodos atidarymo metu, lietuvių akademinis choras "Rūta" atliko 3 dainas iš PL Dainų Šventės repertuaro.

Paroda pritraukė dėmesį netik profesionalų, bet ir plačios visuomenes todėl, kad lygis Pabaltijos grafikos buvo visada aukštas.

Vešėjusi Krasnojarske delegacija Lietuvos verslininkų vadovaujama LR Seimo pirmininko pavaduotojų R. Ozolu, 1999m. balandžio pabaigoje apsilankusi parodoje buvo nustebinta ir paliko nuoširdžius padėkojimus parodos organizatoriams.

1999m. sukako 10 metu, kaip buvo pastatytas paminklas Revūčių gyvenvietėje Krasnojarsko krašto vietoje, kur 1941m. liepos 6-7 d. buvo atvežta ir įkalinta lageryje apie 3000 Lietuvos vyrų. Dauguma šiose apylinkėse žuvo. Buvo suorganizuota jaunimo įšvyka prie paminklo, kuris buvo nuvalytas, nudažytas, prie jo buvo padėtas vainikas su trispalvėmis juostomis. Tai buvo padėta pradžia kasmetinėm įšvykom prie nurodyto paminklo.

Tokia įšvyka buvo organizuota ir atlikta 2000 m. gegužės mėn.

Krasnojarsko KLKB "Lituanica" įeina į Tarptautinį centrą Krasnojarsko krašto, kuris buvo organizuotas pastangomis Administracijos Krasnojarsko krašto 1996 m.

Kiekvienais metais buna organizuotas suvestinis koncertas, skirtas metinėms Tarptautinio centro. Per įsteigimą Tarptautinio centro buvo žadėta apie centralizuotą finansavimą iš krašto biudžėto, bet tai buvo tik pažados. Dabar krašto administracija sugeba prafinansuoti tik pravedimą Tarptautinio centro metinį koncertą. Daug priklauso nuo asmeninių santykių bendrijos pirmininko ir atsakingų darbuotojų krašto Administracijos. Taip "Lituanikai" pavyko 1998m. iš krašto biudžėto gauti 7tūkst. JAV dolerių, dėl kompensacijos kėlionės išlaidų choro dalyvių į Pasaulio Lietuvių Dainų Šventę. Daug materialinės paramos suteikė Tautinių mažumų ir išeivijos departamentas. Ypač per 1998-jų metų renginius, Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos centras, Vilniaus miesto savivaldybė, taip pat materialinę paramą suteikė Lietuvos verslininkų delegacija, vadovaujama LR. Seimo vicė-pirmininko R.Ozolo, kurį apsilankė Krasnojarske 1999m. balandžio pabaigoje.

Svarbiausi mūsų bendrijos ateities veiklos planai yra: išsaugojimas lietuvybės, o dėl to būtinai turi veikti nors sekmadieninė mokykla lietuvių kalbos, beabejo pridėsim visas išmanomas pastangas, kad Sibire skambėtų lietuviška daina, dėl to turi ekzistuoti lietuviškas choras. Jaunimas rimtai galvoja apie estradinį liaudies meno kolektyvą.

Mes tikime, kad nebūsim užmiršti esanti čia-Sibire, ir PLB Valdyba savo planuose, dar daugiau dėmėsio atkreips Lietuviams-Sibiriečiams.

PLB X-jam Seimui-tegul jis būna tvirtų dvasinių ryšių jungiančių

Krasnojarsko KLKB "Lituanica"
Pirmininkas Antanas Rasiulis

Sibiro LJS "Žalgiris"
Pirmininkas Andrei Palionis lietuvius begivenančius Lietuvoje, Rytuose ir Vakaruose.

Information sheet about the organisation "Lithuanika" since 1992 in Krasnojarsk

Krasnojarsko lietuviai tikisi paramos

Birutė VYŠNIAUSKAITĖ

Vakar miesto meras Rolandas Paksas priėmė Vilniuje viešintį Krasnojarsko lietuvių bendruomenės vadovą Antaną Rasiulį.

Susitikimo iniciatorius – R.Paksas, nes jam norėjosi sužinoti, kuo galėtų Vilniaus savivaldybė padėti į Lietuvą grįžtantiems Krasnojarsko srities lietuviams. Be to, iki šiol sostinė dar neužmezgusi ryšių su šio krašto valdžia. Nors meras diplomatiniais kanalais jau išsiuntė laišką Krasnojarsko srities gubernatoriui, tačiau kopiją dar įteikė ir A.Rasiuliui – galbūt jam greičiau pavyks jį perduoti.

A.Rasiulis per merą įteikė kreipimąsi Ministrui Pirmininkui Gediminui Vagnoriui, prašydamas paramos lietuvių kapams Krasnojarsko srityje tvarkyti ir memorialui statyti, taip pat senyvo amžiaus žmonių būsto remontui.

Pasak A.Rasiulio, didžiausia problema norintiems į Lietuvą grįžti pagyvenusiems žmonėms – paso ir pilietybę liudijančių dokumentų gavimas. „Daugelis atokesniuose Sibiro kaimuose gyvenančių pensininkų net nežino, kad jie turi teisę gauti šiuos dokumentus, kad Lietuvoje gali tikėtis piniginės kompensacijos ir buto", – sakė A.Rasiulis.

Šiais metais, sulaukusios Vilniuje buto, iš Krasnojarsko į Lietuvą sugrįžo dvi šeimos. Tie, kurie dar jo laukia, apsigyvena Naujojoje Vilnioje, laikinuose tremtinių butuose.

Krasnojarsko srityje (joje šiuo metu gyvena 10 tūkstančių lietuvių) lietuvių bendruomenė, turinti 248 narius, įsikūrė prieš penkerius metus. Kitais metais sukaks penkiasdešimt metų, kai į šį atšiaurų kraštą buvo pradėti tremti Lietuvos žmonės.

A.Rasiulis patikino merą, kad ateinančią vasarą į Vilniuje vyksiančią dainų šventę atvyks Krasnojarsko lietuvių šokių kolektyvas.

Lithuanian newspaper "Sostine", Dec 23, 1997

Поздравляем всех

литовцев,

проживающих на территории

Красноярского края,

с 10-летним юбилеем

общества

“LITUANICA”

г. Красноярск

тел. 23-83-89, Email: mkc.@ muzey. krsn. Ru

Красноярский культурно-исторический центр и музейный комплекс

Межнациональный культурный центр

Красноярское общество литовской культуры “Литуаника”

ПРИГЛАШЕНИЕ

10 ЛЕТ

г.Красноярск 2002г.

…28 мая 1992 года в Красноярск приезжают представители Литовской республики и организуют общество литовской культуры “**Литуаника**” . Постепенно собираются соотечественники: бывшие узники лагерей, ссыльные, спецпереселенцы, образуется совет общества во главе с первым его председателем Зигмасом Прискенисом. Общество регистрируется во всех необходимых инстанциях. На большом подъеме проходят собрания, встречи, общество пополняется все новыми и новыми членами.

Сейчас “**Литуаника**” признанный член Всемирного Литовского Общества, зарегистрированного в 33 странах и разбросанного по всему миру. На счету “**Литуаники**” много полезных и интересных дел и начинаний: сохранение культуры и языка нации, охрана памятников жертвам политических репрессий на территории Красноярского края и участие в их установке, помощь в получении литовского гражданства и многое, многое другое.

Поздравляем всех членов общества с 10 летним юбилеем!

СОВЕТ ОБЩЕСТВА.

Программа:

23 мая

•

18 час.

– открытие юбилейного вечера посвященного 10-летию деятельности Красноярского краевого общества литовской культуры “ **Литуаника**” – кинолекционный зал КИЦА .

Концерт .

Поздравления.

24 мая

•

17 час.

– Открытие выставки С.Сидораса “Поэзия в камне” – межнациональный культурный центр.

– Выставка работ литовских графиков 1970-1980г. зал МКЦ.

18 час:

– о творчестве М.К.Чюрлениса, художника, композитора, выставка репродукций, слайд-фильм. Из коллекции В.В.Спирова .

Кинолекционный зал КИЦА

Lithuanian activity program in Krasnojarsk

APPENDIX 13

PHOTOGRAPHS

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SIBERIA

LITHUANIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

St. Francis Catholic Church, the Lithuanian church in Perth, Western Australia (Photo by author, 2003)

Bendruomenė Namai Lithuanian Club in Perth, Western Australia (Photo by author, 2003)

SIBERIA

The Yenisei Rriver in the Krasnojarsk region (Sources:provided to author by Mr. Rimvydas Racėnas,2004).

Lithuanian deportees to Siberia in 1946 (Sources:provided to author by Mr. Rimvydas Račenas, 2004).

A jurta, a type of housing for deportees(Sources:provided to author by Mr. Rimvydas Račenas, 2004).

Male workers logging in the Krasnojarsk region(Sources:provided to author by Mr. Rimvydas Račenas,2004).

Female workers in the Kolkhoze in the Krasnojarsk region(Sources:provided to author by Mr. Rimvydas Račenas, 2004).

The Lithuanian Catholic Church in Krasnoyarsk (Photo by author, 2004)

The Lithuanian choir RŪTA in Krasnoyarsk
(Source: provided to author by Mr. Saulius Sidaras, 2004).

LITHUANIA

Typical pre-WWII farm in the Žemaitija region of Lithuania (Photo by author, 2003)

Old wooden Lithuanian church near the city of Kaunas (Photo by author, 2003)

Typical pre-WW II Lithuanian tombstone in Klaipeda, Lithuania Minor (Photo by author, 2003)

Interior of San Bernardino Church, in Vilnius, desecrated during the second Soviet occupation(Photo by author,2003)