



Historical Narrative for Constructing National Identity: The Case of the English-Language Lithuanian American Cultural Press in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century

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Abstract. The origins of the Lithuanian press as an especially important means of communication among the members of the Lithuanian diaspora date back to the 19th century. Historical events related to Lithuania's political situation, i.e., occupations and the establishment and consolidation of the country's independence, played a significant role in the formation and development of the Lithuanian press in a foreign language. The first attempts to familiarize Americans with the situation of Lithuania and its people in the Russian Empire, and therefore to shape public opinion in order to contribute to the homeland's national revival and liberation movement, took place in the early 20th century. The political events of the mid-20th century encouraged Lithuanian immigrants to rally their support for the restoration of the independence of the state. The English-language cultural press, most of which was published in the USA, constitute the majority of the second half of the 20th century Lithuanian diaspora press body. These include the publications by the publishing houses, *Manlyand Books* and *Lithuanian Library Press*, and a quarterly journal, *Lituanus*. The initiatives by the *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center*, *Lithuanian Encyclopedia* and other publishers are also worth of mentioning. National identity based on the state, community and its members, and common values and traditions, was the unifying feature of the English-language Lithuanian cultural press. The historical narrative, as one of the most important and decisive representations of national identity, stood out in all publications.

This article examines how different publishers, using genre diversity of texts and a broad spectrum of historic topics, were able to create an identity construct of the individual and the country. The article also looks into the general features of content dissemination in the USA, Western Europe and Australia.

Keywords: *Lithuanian diaspora, publishing, cultural press, USA, Manyland Books, Lituanus, Lithuanian Library Press.*

Anotacija. Lietuviškos spaudos, kaip ypatingos svarbos lietuvių diasporos narių tarpusavio komunikavimo reiškinių, ištakos siekia XIX a. Kitakalbės lietuvių išeivijos spaudos radimuisi ir vystymuisi svarbiais laikytini su Lietuvos politine situacija – okupacijomis ir šalies nepriklausomybės įtvirtinimu susiję įvykiai: XX a. pradžia, kai pastebimi pirmieji bandymai supažindinti amerikiečius su lietuvių tautos padėtimi Rusijos imperijoje ir taip formuoti viešąją nuomonę siekiant prisidėti prie šalies tautinio atgimimo ir išsivadavimo judėjimo, taip pat XX a. vidurio politiniai įvykiai, skatinę emigracijoje esančius lietuvius telktis atkurti okupuotos valstybės nepriklausomybę. Iš viso gausaus XX a. antrosios pusės lietuvių išeivijos spaudos masyvo, kurio didžioji dalis buvo publikuojama JAV, išskirtinas kultūrinės anglakalbės spaudos korpusas. Tai – leidyklos *Manyland books*, *Lithuanian Library Press* bei žurnalas *Lituanus*. Be jų, dar minėtinos *Lituanistikos tyrimo ir studijų centro*, *Lietuvių enciklopedijos*, kitų leidėjų iniciatyvos. Visus juos vienijantis bruožas buvo tautinio tapatumo modelio, paremto valstybę, bendruomenę, jos narius, bendras vertybes ir tradicijas aprašančių elementų raiška. Istorinis naratyvas visų jų leidyboje atsispindėjo kaip vienas svarbiausių, esmingai lemiančių tautinės savasties reprezentavimą. Straipsnyje nagrinėjama, kaip skirtingos leidybos organizacijos, išnaudodamos žanrinę tekstų įvairovę, platų teminį istorijos spektrą, kūrė tapatybinį individo ir šalies konstrukta. Nagrinėjami bendrieji turinio sklaidos bruožai JAV ir kitų Vakarų Europos šalių, Australijos visuomenei.

Esminiai žodžiai: *Lietuvių diaspora, leidyba, kultūrinė spauda, JAV, Manyland books, Lituanus, Lithuanian Library Press.*

Introduction

Culture in its broadest sense can be described as a form of active inclusion that enables an individual to establish one's own communities and identities.¹ Culture shapes personalities and creates conditions for their diverse cultivation. The cultural press is an integral part of social, cultural, and political phenomena, reflecting their relation to the

¹ KELLNER, Douglas. *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Post-Modern*, Abingdon: Routledge, 1995.

society and highlighting the dimension of value. Therefore it functions as an important feature and reflection of a cultivated society.

The aim of this article is to present the English-language Lithuanian American cultural press as a systematic effort to represent the Lithuanian community in the US, the Lithuanian nation and the Lithuanian state to American people.

The use of historical narrative in this context is one of the most important elements of the constructed model of expression of Lithuanian national identity. The authors aspired to represent the uniqueness, potential, and well-grounded pursuit of independence of the individual, the nation, and the country by creating a mesmerizing narrative with the help of essential fragments of Lithuanian history of various periods that have the greatest impact on the country's prosperity and pride, portraits of the most prominent personalities living at different times and significantly determining the country's historical development, exploiting the possibilities of genres, such as fiction, essay and scientific articles.

While the Lithuanian diaspora press in its native language was one of the most efficient tools used by Lithuanians living abroad for internal communication, English publications, along with public campaigns and cultural events organized by Lithuanian Americans, were meant to draw attention to Lithuania's situation and to seek independence for its people by highlighting the scientific, political, public, and cultural potential of Lithuanians. Translations of Lithuanian fiction, works on art, science, history, and other subjects published as books or in periodicals significantly expanded and deepened the American understanding of the Lithuanian community in the US, as well as of its people and the situation in Lithuania.

Although the amount and the content of Lithuanian diaspora cultural press in English fell well behind the scale and variety of publications in Lithuanian (in 1945–1990, the number of books in Lithuanian amounted to 10,000² and periodicals to approx. 1,500 titles;³ whereas the books in other than Lithuanian language made up only approx. 2,000 titles⁴ and just a few titles of periodicals), it played an important role in representing the Lithuanian identity. Publications in English became the most direct path to the multicultural US society. Publishers' aim was to define their personal and communal image and to show the uniqueness of occupied Lithuania, at the same time trying to establish contact with the representatives of other ethnic communities (mostly Latvians and Estonians). Philosopher Bronius Kuzmickas noted, "The society of a multicultural state is also, to a varying degree, a multi-ethnic and multi-denominational society. It is also a

² Lietuvių išėivijos spaudos bibliografija, 1945–2000. T. 1. Knygos lietuvių kalba, Vilnius: Lietuvos nacionalinė M. Mažvydo biblioteka, 2002.

³ Data comes from the upcoming publication: Lietuvių išėivijos spaudos bibliografija, 1945–2000. T. 3. Periodiniai leidiniai, Vilnius: Lietuvos nacionalinė M. Mažvydo biblioteka.

⁴ Lietuvių išėivijos spaudos bibliografija, 1945–2000. T. 2. Knygos užsienio kalbomis, Vilnius: Lietuvos nacionalinė M. Mažvydo biblioteka, 2005.

multi-level society where different values meet.”⁵ Therefore, efforts to present Lithuanian history, culture, literature, and other topics in this multi-ethnic country meant finding the right and essential access points and to develop a communication strategy that was effective and reached the target audience.

A combination of several theories is useful for the analysis of English-language Lithuanian-American cultural publications. First and foremost, cultural press, like any press, should be perceived as part of a communication activity. Therefore its research has to include the basic principles of communication theories. The following **main categories** can be used in the analysis of communication and communication strategies of the Lithuanian American cultural press: *the authors and the recipients (addressees) of the message; the content of the message; the communication activity; and the communication strategy*. The definition of the latter category, which is still an emerging concept, varies. Christopher Paul⁶ defines communication strategy as the art of presenting ideas to a targeted audience in a timely, clear, concise, compelling, and systematic manner.

Given that the object of this analysis is the cultural press which conveys a very specific message based on value, and that the press, as a means of communication, serves the social needs of members of society, the sociology of literature becomes very useful, specifically, the version of literary sociology by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002). He was the first to suggest a new conceptualization of sociability of literature, by developing a theory of *the literary field*⁷ aimed to include all elements of cultural practice and systematically interpret their connections. Bourdieu states that the main task of those analyzing cultural production is to investigate the structural links between the work (theme, genre, form, character, and etc.) and the literary field, perceived as the sphere of various competing cultural alternatives. He sees the importance of the so-called contextual network of institutions, which is particularly relevant to the analysis of cultural press (magazines, publishing companies, cultural policy, criticism, and etc.) in the process of communication.

First and foremost, Bourdieu’s perspective is important for the analysis of the English-language Lithuanian American because of its object, i.e., the content of the *cultural product* (cultural press in English) created by a certain social group (Lithuanian Americans), and its presentation and impact on the intended addressee (other social groups existing in the same space). In this context, the role of publishers and editors is particularly important, as the entire production made by them formed the image of Lithuanian identity. Their understanding of national identity allowed forming a construct of Lithuanian identity used to present Lithuania and its people as citizens of a country

⁵ KUZMICKAS, Bronius. Vertybės kultūrų kontekstuose. Vilnius: Mykolo Romerio universitetas, 2013, p. 122.

⁶ PAUL, Christopher. Strategic Communication: Origins, Concepts, and Current Debates. Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011.

⁷ BOURDIEU, Pierre. The field of cultural production. New York: Columbia university press, 1993.

that was occupied and ceased to exist. Now residing in a democratic state, the United States of America, and acting as the ambassadors of Lithuania, they could employ all legal means to disseminate the message about the political situation of their homeland and focus their efforts on restoring Lithuania's independence.

Although the Lithuanian diaspora has been the main focus of a number of recent monographs and articles, the English-language Lithuanian American cultural press, its history and reception has not yet been researched. The studies have mainly focused on the historical, sociological, literary and linguistic features of Lithuania diaspora and migration issues. The analysis of Lithuanian diaspora press of the early period, i.e., the end of 19th and the early 20th centuries, in Lithuanian language was published in a book by Bronius Raguotis, *The Lithuanian-American Periodical Publications in 1879–1919*,⁸ and in Remigijus Misiūnas's works.⁹ The latter also wrote about the tendencies of the DP press in other than Lithuanian language.¹⁰ A thorough analysis of the cultural press published in German DP camps was presented in Dalia Kuiziniene's monograph.¹¹

A Retrospective Look

When it comes to the Lithuanian diaspora publications in other than Lithuanian language, one must look back at the 19th century, when the first attempts were made to inform the Americans about the situation of Lithuanian people in the Russian Empire and to form public opinion contributing to the nation's national revival and liberation movement. "J. Adomaitis-Šernas introduced the idea to publish a periodical in English or French to Lithuanians in *Lietuviškas balsas* [*The Lithuanian Voice*] in 1886. He noted that such a publication should be published by the united efforts of the oppressed nations of Russia."¹² However, due to difficult circumstances, it took three decades for the first publication in English to come out. The first monthly magazine, *A Plea for the Lithuanians*, published in 1916 stated the same goals previously indicated by Adomaitis-Šernas: "to inform the English-speaking Americans about the current hardships of Lithuania and to introduce them to Lithuanian history and situation in general."¹³

⁸ RAGUOTIS, Bronius. Amerikos lietuvių periodinė spauda 1879–1919 metais. Marijampolė: Ramona, 2003.

⁹ MISIŪNAS, Remigijus. Lietuvių išeivių leidyba Jungtinėse Amerikos Valstijose XIX a. pabaigoje–XX a. viduryje: adresato problema. Knygotyra, 2016, vol. 67, p. 23–44.

¹⁰ MISIŪNAS, Remigijus. Barakų kultūros knygos: lietuvių DP leidyba 1945–1952. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2004; MISIŪNAS, Remigijus. Informacinių kovų kryžkelėse. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2004.

¹¹ KUIZINIENĖ, Dalia. Lietuvių literatūrinis gyvenimas Vakarų Europoje 1945–1950 metais. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2003.

¹² RAGUOTIS, Bronius. Amerikos lietuvių periodinė spauda 1879–1919 metais. Marijampolė: Ramona, 2003, p. 125.

¹³ *A Plea for the Lithuanians*, Draugas, 1916, Feb. 24.

The political events of the second half of the 20th century led to a large-scale and long-term emigration of Lithuanian citizens to Western Europe, Australia and the Americas. The Lithuanians who ended up in DP camps (1945–1952) in Germany and some other Western European countries also understood the importance of informing foreign readers about the situation of occupied Lithuania and their countrymen, while highlighting the achievements of the former independent Lithuania. As Misiūnas, who wrote extensively on the tendencies of the Lithuanian DP publishing, noted, “authors or publishers of almost every (book) were largely affected by the same aspiration to remind foreigners of the occupation of Lithuania, to publicize its name, and to keep up with other DPs who understood that a book played the role of an ambassador.”¹⁴

The Lithuanian American community produced the most numerous and largest intellectual product. Its cultural core mostly consisted of members of the so-called displaced persons, or DPs who immigrated to the US after the World War II. In their efforts to disseminate the Lithuanian identity, they relied on the same ideological values as their predecessors at the end of the 19th century and the inhabitants of the DP camps. Thus, the tradition of representing one’s national, and after a while, diasporic, identity in the country of residence, had remained alive and was implemented in various forms until the restoration of Lithuania’s independence in the early 1990s.

The Background of Communication: Social and Political Environment in the US

When analyzing the publishing processes of Lithuanian publications in other than Lithuanian language, it is important to assess the social environment of the second half of the 20th century, in which the efforts of the Lithuanian American diaspora’s representatives were made. It is useful to provide a brief overview of the US emigration policy in the 20th century.

Due to the new immigration law of 1924, the period of 1924–1965 in the history of the US is considered rather austere with regard to emigration policy. In 1924, an annual quota of 150,000 immigrants was introduced in the country. The number of immigrants was estimated for each country; as many as 82 percent of the total quota went to Western and Northern Europeans, and only 16 percent to Southern and Eastern Europe.¹⁵

The situation of Lithuanian immigration to America was slightly improved on June 28, 1948, when a special immigration law, entitled The Displaced Persons Act 774 (Pub. L. 80–774), was passed by the US Congress which allowed 205,000 war refugees from Western

¹⁴ MISIŪNAS, Remigijus. Barakų kultūros knygos: lietuvių DP leidyba 1945–1952. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2004, p. 291.

¹⁵ ХАНТИНГТОН, Самюэль. Кто мы? Вызовы американской национальной идентичности. Москва: АСТ, 2008, p. 101.

Europe to immigrate to the US. All refugees who wanted to come to the US had to have a sponsor who guaranteed them a place to live and work. Activists of the *Bendrasis Amerikos lietuvių fondas*, or BALF [United Lithuanian Relief Fund of America], which urged Lithuanian Americans to write letters of guarantee to their countrymen in German DP camps to come and live in the US, contributed significantly to the implementation of this law in favor of the Lithuanian DPs. As a result, approx. 30,000 Lithuanians immigrated to the US by 1950.¹⁶

In the 1960s, the US saw the rise of social sub-ethnic movements which provided an alternative to an integral American identity. People increasingly began talking about multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism. Their aim was to reveal the aspects of multi-ethnicity in all fields – education, culture, and society.

In the 1970s, the multicultural movement against the predominant prioritization of British immigrants and their culture became increasingly felt and visible. The aim of this movement was to bring to light other European cultures, such as Irish or Jewish.

With the goal of getting to know better the many and diverse ethnic communities, the Congressman Roman Conrad Pucinski from Chicago proposed a law to initiate ethnic research and provide federal funding for it.¹⁷ The law was in force from 1970 to 1981. In 1976, the American Folklife Center was founded in the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.¹⁸ The main activities of the Center were the organization of projects aimed at research and dissemination of the history of ethnic communities living in the US. At the same time, the Center also acted as an advisory body to the US Congress in selecting and providing information on immigration and legislation related to the questions of multi-ethnicity. In the 1970s–1980s, the map of the US as a multi-ethnic country began to appear.

It is important to note that the favorable political and social environment in the US, encouraged but did not determine the decisions of Lithuanian Americans regarding the representation of national identity. In this context, the Lithuanian immigrants of the second half of the 20th century only continued and developed the course of actions taken by previous generations of Lithuanians in the late 19th century. During the times of Russian Empire (1795–1918) and later, the Soviet occupation (1940–1941 and 1944–1990), Lithuania's independence was one of the key issues on the “agenda” of both Lithuania and its compatriots living abroad.

Thus, the favorable attitude of American society towards the multinational community and its members, representing not only different ethnic, but also racial and religious communities and their distinctiveness and equality, and legislative and executive decisions,

¹⁶ ALEKSANDRAVIČIUS, Egidijus. *Karklo diegas*. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2013, p. 442.

¹⁷ ХАНТИНГТОН, Самюэль. *Кто мы? Вызовы американской национальной идентичности*. Москва: АСТ, 2008, p. 225.

¹⁸ GROCE, Nancy. *History of the American Folklife Center Archive* [interactive]. <https://www.loc.gov/folklife/AFChist/> [accessed on Jan. 18, 2020].

created appropriate conditions and enabled members of the Lithuanian American community to make active social and cultural decisions, emphasizing equal rights for Lithuania seeking independence. In other words, the political and social environment of the country of residence became an opportune ground for the Lithuanian community, which had a strong need and potential for declaring its identity, to gain even more favorable incentives and opportunities to present itself and be heard.

Creating a Communication Message about Lithuanian National Identity: The Problem of Lithuanian Identity

It should also be noted that the members of the *Lithuanian American Community, Inc.* (“LAC”), were of different ages and experience and held diverse attitudes and professed different conceptual opinions about the future of the community. In principle they were in favor of spreading the message about Lithuanian national identity, but perceived the possibilities of constructing identity, the ways and means of representing it in the country of residence quite differently.

Older members of the LAC, formed by the cultural field of independent Lithuania, viewed their life in a foreign country as an exile and a temporary stay. As a result of such perception, they confined themselves in a *national ghetto*. Focusing more on the issue of maintaining Lithuanian nationality within the community, they saw opportunities for self-representation by presenting Lithuanian heroes and history to a foreign audience and celebrating the works of well-known cultural figures, thus constructing a rather idealized and romantic picture of independent Lithuania.

The younger generation of intellectuals who received their education at American universities and whose memories of their homeland were shaped only by the impressions of their childhood or early youth and supplemented by narratives of the elders and literature, formulated their own objectives for preserving and fostering Lithuanianess. Sociologist and public figure Vytautas Kavolis (1930–1996), who represented the “younger generation”, noted that “<...> our goal today is not only to send telegrams to senators or give lectures but also to develop personalities that will ensure the continuation of our efforts. Our ideal is an individual whose human strength would be based on Lithuanian consciousness and whose energy would be a natural expression of his youthful inner structure.”¹⁹

The representatives of the younger generation, opposing the elders regarding the unfounded romantic image of the past, or in the words of Kavolis, the exaltation of the *archival culture*, sought to draw attention to the concept of *live Lithuanian culture* created under new conditions of exile, i.e., works of young writers, artists, and scientists and

¹⁹ KAVOLIS, Vytautas. *Nepriklausomųjų kelias*. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2006, p. 118.

various activities of political and social organizations which were forming Lithuanian identity. As Kavolis highlighted, “in order to keep Lithuanianness alive among ourselves, it is necessary to bid farewell to some though precious memories of Lithuania, which no longer bear fruit today and to draw all attention to the process by which Lithuanianness is actually expressed today.”²⁰ He believed that dialogue between conservative forces that prioritize the past along with their lifestyle and traditions and the younger generation’s modern approach to the present and future is important to the development of any society. “We cannot appropriate alien culture because it has not laid the foundations for our character and will never be close to us. We cannot mechanically take over the historical Lithuanian culture, because it does not reflect our reality that each of us can express with live culture. We have to create a new cultural synthesis that would emerge from a sense of Lithuanianness and answer the demands of our urban life; which would be imbued with Lithuanian values – humanity, personality, and love for a human being and an object; and which would look amazing among other fully mature, modern, and urban cultures.”²¹

The Content of Cultural Press

When it comes to the English-language Lithuanian American cultural press in the second half of the 20th century, the main focus falls on the publications produced by publishing companies: *Manyland Books* led by a famous writer, translator and publisher, Stepas Zobarskas (1911–1984); the *Lithuanian Library Press, Inc.*, led by a photographer and Lithuanian American culture activist, Algimantas Kezys (1928–2015); and *Lituanus*, a quarterly journal, initiated and first published by the *Lithuanian Student Association* and later by the *Lituanus Foundation, Inc.* There were other publishing initiatives, for example, *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, *Voyages Press* and *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center* established in Chicago in 1981 (incorporated as a non-profit organization in the state of Illinois, USA in 1982). However, the three earlier mentioned publishing projects were the main ones that contributed the most and consistently disseminated Lithuanian cultural content to the reader of the multi-ethnic country.

It is important to look at the documents of these publishing companies, which outline the missions and directions for their publishing activities. In an interview with *Lietuvių dienos* [Lithuanian Days], Zobarskas said that the main goal of his publishing company is “... to tell the world what his brothers and sisters in homeland cannot say and to convince the powerful ones that we have strong state traditions and a potent history, that we speak

²⁰ KAVOLIS, Vytautas. *Nepriklausomųjų kelias*. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2006, p. 131.

²¹ *Ten pat*, p. 119.

and write in one of the oldest languages in the world, that we are the creators of true values, and that depriving us of our freedom is the greatest disgrace of this century.”²²

Kezys, the founder of the *Lithuanian Library Press*, wrote in a 1974 publication, *Leiskime Amerikos lietuvių etninę enciklopediją!* [*Let Us Publish the Lithuanian-American Ethnic Encyclopedia!*], “*The Lithuanian Photo Archive* has launched a pretty large-scale (and possibly significant) project to publish informative publications in Lithuanian and English on Lithuanian American culture and its contribution to American life ... For this purpose, *The Lithuanian Photo Archive* takes the lead to publish a series of informative publications; one book per topic.”²³

In 1954, members of the *Lithuanian Student Association* decided to publish a journal that would introduce its foreign readers to Lithuania and Lithuanians, reflecting the nation’s historical origins and cultural roots. A document found in the *Lituanus* archive at the *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center* underlines the political significance of a journal in counterbalancing the tendentious texts on country’s history, literature, and culture published in Soviet Lithuania.²⁴ It stresses that the main function of the journal is political. The second function of *Lituanus* is the dissemination of Lithuanian culture. The document emphasizes that the material presented in the journal should be related to the broader context of the Baltic States, Eastern Europe and the world, and should include articles of foreign authors.

One of the most important and common features of all the publishing companies in question was the construction of a model of national identity based on historical narrative. The latter became one of the most important and most decisive representations of national identity.

Manyland Books: From Fiction to Historical Narrative

Manyland Books founded in 1961, published approx. 40 books on Lithuanian history, literature, and culture. Having researched the American book market and using their own criteria, the publishers decided to select, translate into English, and publish books that were released both in independent Lithuania and in emigration, with a significant proportion of historical works. In a letter to Vincas Ramonas, in which Zobarskas discusses the translation of Ramonas’s short story *Dulkės raudonam saulėlydy* [Dust in the Red Sunset] into English and publishing by *Manyland Books*, he states, “From your earlier letters, I assume that you are very easily swayed by the opinion of Chicago critics, which, believe me, is not very solid. Keeping in touch with American and English critics

²² An interview with Stepas Zobarskas, founder and CEO of the publishing company *Manyland Books*. *Lietuvių dienos*, 1965, No. 10, p. 10–11.

²³ *Leiskime Amerikos lietuvių etninę enciklopediją*. Chicago, *Lietuvių foto archyvas*, 1974, p. 1.

²⁴ *Lituanus* archive, *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center*.

and editors, we, for some time now, came to know a little better what has to be translated and what does not.”²⁵

Manyland Books presented the topic of history in two ways:

- by translating historical fiction and
- publishing historical stories.

A short story *Lietuvos tilto atsiminimai* [Memoirs of a Lithuanian Bridge]²⁶ by Vincas Kudirka (published in Lithuanian in 1933 by Spaudos fondas in Kaunas and later in DP Gunzenhausen camp in 1947), historic short stories by Vincas Krėvė²⁷ and Vaižgantas²⁸ and a popular novel *Namai ant smėlio* [House Upon the Sand]²⁹ by Jurgis Gliauda (the Lithuanian edition came out in Chicago in 1952) were among a few published by *Manyland Books*. An especially favorable review of Gliauda’s novel was published in *Time* magazine.³⁰ *Manyland Books* also published works on famous Lithuanian historical personalities, such as Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis³¹ and Simas Kudirka.³²

Significant historical events of the mid-20th century, which were catastrophic to our country sealing the fate of the Lithuanian nation for the next half of a century, were almost unknown to Western societies. They were presented in the translations of Stasys Yla’s *Žmonės ir žvėrys Dievų miške* [A Priest in Stutthof]³³ and Juozas Lukša’s *Partizanai* [Fighters for Freedom].³⁴ A solid collective volume *Lithuania 700* dedicated to the history of Lithuania came out in at least six editions.³⁵ J. Savasis’s (born Juozas Vaišnora) book *The War Against God in Lithuania*³⁶ informed the reader about the persecution of the believers by the Soviet authorities in Lithuania. The authenticity and uniqueness of Lithuanian folklore analyzed by Vytautas J. Bagdonavičius were presented in a study, *Cultural Wellsprings of Folktales*.³⁷

A group of regular collaborators – translators, publishers, and editors – contributed to the quality of the content of the publications and more successful dissemination. The publishing company had permanent contributors to rely on: Raphael Sealey (born July 14, 1927 in Middlesbrough, England), a professor of ancient history who learned Lithuanian and helped translate works by Lithuanian authors; Charles Angoff (born 1902 in Minsk,

²⁵ Stepas Zobarskas’s correspondence, *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center*.

²⁶ KUDIRKA, Vincas. *Memoirs of a Lithuanian Bridge*. New York: Manyland Books, 1961.

²⁷ KRĖVĖ, Vincas. *The Herdsman and the Linden Tree*. New York: Manyland Books, 1964.

²⁸ VAIŽGANTAS. *Sin at Easter and Other Stories*. New York: Manyland Books, 1971.

²⁹ GLIAUDA, Jurgis. *House upon the Sand*. Woodhaven, N.Y.: Manyland Books, 1963.

³⁰ GLIAUDA, Jurgis. *At the Kremlin with Molotov*. *Lituanus*, 1966, Nr. 2, p. 6.

³¹ GLIAUDA, Simas. *The Sonata of Icarus*. New York: Manyland Books, 1968.

³² GLIAUDA, Jurgis. *Simas*. New York: Manyland Books, 1971.

³³ YLA, Stasys. *A Priest in Stutthof*. New York: Manyland Books, 1971.

³⁴ LUKŠA, Juozas. *Fighters for Freedom*. New York: Manyland Books, 1975.

³⁵ *Lithuania: 700 Years*. 6th edition. New York: Manyland Books, 1984.

³⁶ VAIŠNORA, Juozas. *The War Against God in Lithuania*. New York: Manyland Books, 1966.

³⁷ BAGDANAVIČIUS, Vytautas Jonas. *Cultural Wellsprings of Folktales*. New York: Manyland Books, 1970.

died May 3, 1979 in New York), an American author of Jewish descent and a graduate of Harvard University, who assisted in book editing and wrote introductions; and Clark Mills (born McBurney; born 1913, died 1986), an American poet and critic who helped produce and translate anthologies of Lithuanian authors, as well as works by Vincas Kudirka, Vytautas Tamulaitis and Vaižgantas. Such a collaboration of people, who were well-known in the world of literature and culture, provided *Manyland Books* with greater distribution opportunities and also contributed to the quality of published works.

A number of the US media outlets commented on the books published by *Manyland Books* in the form of reviews and presentations. In addition to the major magazines *Time* and *The Chicago American*, book reviews about *Manyland Books*' production were published in *Books and Bookmen*, *The Detroit Jewish News*, *Library Journal*, *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, *Sunday Advocate*, *The Kansas City Star*, *The Life*, *Saturday Review*, *Literature East & West*, *The Capital News*, *Central Europe*, *The Register*, and others. Such attention to a particular work and its author also drew attention to the culture of a small nation and its achievements. A comprehensive article by Bronius Kviklys about Zobarskas's life and work, which came out after his death, also recalls the observation of the American journalist Nat Honig that *Manyland Books* and its excellent translations of Lithuanian literature had become a symbolic bridge connecting American and Lithuanian cultures.³⁸

The documents of *Manyland Books*, which are stored at the Maironis Lithuanian Literature Museum in Kaunas, confirm that on Zobarskas's initiative, the books were sent to the major US libraries, universities, and colleges. The geography of *Manyland books* distribution extended to countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and even Japan. A letter of Vytautas P. Vygantas (1930–1998), psychologist, public figure and the first editor of *Lituanus*,³⁹ to Zobarskas shows that at the request of the editor of the Indian journal *Deccan Herald*, V.R. Ruthnam, the publishing company sent a selection of books, *Lithuanian Quartet*, *Selected Lithuanian Short Stories*, *Modern Stories from Many Lands* and *Lithuanian Folks Tales*, to be featured in the journal.

***Lithuanian Library Press, Inc.* – the Chronicler of the History of Lithuanian Diaspora in the US**

The publishing company *Lithuanian Library Press*, founded in 1976, is considered to be a continuation of *The Lithuanian Photo Archive* which was active in the US for almost a decade (since 1966). “The established archive emphasizes a very important communication factor, which is vital to our age ...” Algimantas Kezys, the director of

³⁸ KVIKLYS, Bronius, A.a. Stepas Zobarskas, Draugas : mokslas, menas, literatūra, 1984, birž. 23, p. 3.

³⁹ A letter of Vygantas, the editor of *Lituanus*, to Zobarskas. Stepas Zobarskas's collection, *Maironis Lithuanian Literature Museum*, S. f. R 37163.

the Archive, wrote.⁴⁰ The primary purpose of the Archive was to collect and organize Lithuanian-language video and audio material from the very first years of Lithuanians in America. The main goal of the *Lithuanian Library Press* was to trace and present to the reader the history of the Lithuanian diaspora in the US. For this purpose, the idea of a series of *Lithuanian-American Ethnic Encyclopedia* was conceived.

From 1976 to 1991, *Lithuanian Library Press* published thirteen books on Lithuanian literature, culture, and Lithuanian American identity. Five publications were released in English. Two of them were dedicated to the Lithuanian community in Chicago⁴¹ and Lithuanian history in the US. The first years of the publishing company coincided with a favorable and even encouraging period of American government policy in the field of ethnic community research and dissemination. As Kezys pointed out: “Today’s American interest in ethnic issues, their wish to know their own ethnic background and not feeling ashamed of belonging to their own ethnic group make us seriously consider providing printed material to their libraries about the Lithuanian ethnic contribution to America ...”⁴²

An important part of the publisher’s mission was learning about the roots of the Lithuanian-American community. This led to the idea of organizing expeditions to colonies in Pennsylvania, formerly populated by Lithuanians. Expeditions to “the old Lithuanian Pennsylvania” were organized in 1972 and 1973, during which photos as well as spoken material were collected. Later they were included in the book, *Pensilvanijos angliakasių Lietuva* [Lithuanian Miners in Pennsylvania].⁴³

The distribution of the *Lithuanian Library Press* books did not differ significantly from *Manyland Books*. Efforts were made to reach the major US libraries, also to send books to other countries. “The publishing company had a turnover of \$27,000 a year. The books are almost sold out (isn’t that wonderful?),” Antanas Dundzila commented on the success of *Lithuanian Library Press*.⁴⁴ A 1979 report of the publishing company states that the books were sold for over \$24,000.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ KEZYS, Algimantas. Amerikos lietuvių etninė dokumentacija. *Lituanistikos instituto 1975 m. suvažiavimo darbai*. Chicago: The Institute of Lithuanian Studies, 1976, p. 172.

⁴¹ FAINHAUZ, David. Lithuanians in Multi-Ethnic Chicago. Chicago, Ill.: Lithuanian Library Press: Loyola University Press, 1977.

⁴² KEZYS, Algimantas. Amerikos lietuvių etninė dokumentacija. *Lituanistikos instituto 1975 m. suvažiavimo darbai*. Chicago: The Institute of Lithuanian Studies, 1976, p. 174.

⁴³ RAMOJUS, Vladas. Kodėl užmiršome Pensilvanijos Lietuvą. *Draugas: Priedas: Mokslas, menas, literatūra*, 1972 m. birž. 3.

⁴⁴ DUNDZILA, Antanas. Po metų veiklos ir trijų knygų išleidimo. *Darbininkas*, July 15, 1977, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Amerikos lietuvių bibliotekos leidyklos metiniam narių susirinkimui. Chicago: Amerikos lietuvių bibliotekos leidykla, 1980, p. 9.

***Lituanus* – Platform for the Younger Generation of Researchers**

The concept of an English language journal *Lituanus*, founded on the initiative of the *Lithuanian Students Association* in the US in 1954, included the provision of publication of analytical articles on politics and society, on topics of history, as well as fiction and arts.

In *Lituanus*, the historical narrative was constructed by publishing articles dealing with issues of different historical periods, including the prehistory of Lithuania, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Battle of Grunwald (First Battle of Tannenberg or Battle of Žalgiris), the National Revival of the late 19th century, and the first independence of the Republic of Lithuania. The topic of Soviet-occupied Lithuania also received a lot of attention in the journal. There were articles on the significance of individual figures in the history of Lithuania. The circle of writers on the subject was extensive. It included well-known Lithuanian historians as well as representatives of the Latvian and Estonian diaspora (Edgar Anderson of San Jose State College; Tonu Parmin of Princeton University; and Andrew Ezergailis of Ithaca College), and American historians (Richard A. Schnorf, William L. Winter of Central Connecticut State College; Alfred Erich Senn of University of Wisconsin-Madison; and William Urban of Monmouth College). An important part of the historic narrative was the publication of texts on the occupation of all three Baltic countries which allowed focusing on the wider issues of the region.

Historical fiction was also published in *Lituanus*: an excerpt from Justinas Marcinkevičius's drama-poem *Mindaugas*; a play *Five Posts in a Market Place* by Algirdas Landsbergis; and a drama *Kazimieras Sapiega* by Balys Sruoga. The entire *Lituanus* issue of 1965 (No. 3) was dedicated to the life and work of the Lithuanian writer Vincas Krėvė, and an excerpt of his historical drama *Skirgaila* was published. Among the easily recognizable historical works were the text of Sruoga's *Dievų miškas* [Forest of the Gods], and excerpts from the works by Marius Katiliškis and Icchokas Meras, based on historical events and contexts.

It is noteworthy, that in the first issue of *Lituanus*, a short story *Už saulę gražesnis* [Fairer Than the Sun] by Juozas Grušas, a Lithuanian writer who lived behind the Iron Curtain, was published. It provided an opportunity to get acquainted with Lithuanian fiction of the occupied country. The same theme was developed in the reviews of Vincas Trumpa and Vytautas Kavolis who analyzed Soviet Lithuanian literature.

In 1964, the *Lituanus* Foundation, Inc. was established to secure and stabilize the journal's financial situation. This transition was complicated not only because of the financial instability, but also because of the question of selection criteria. Following the change of editorial board, the new editor, Dr. Tomas Remeikis (1934–2013), a political scientist, journalist and a public figure, formulated the direction of *Lituanus* – a journal of science and arts, presenting articles dealing with the issues of Lithuania and the Baltic States, as well as Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. During this period, the scope of topics concerning Soviet Lithuania – political, economic, and social – was expanded. Many

articles were analytical, written by the younger generation of Lithuanian intellectuals, already educated in the US. Trying to realize the idea of *Lituanus*' reflecting the issues of other Baltic countries, the articles of Estonian⁴⁶ and Latvian⁴⁷ authors were published.

By the mid-1960s, the US "military stance" against the Soviet Union had weakened. It was expected that it would bring rapid revolutionary change and the liberation of the Soviet-occupied countries. With the establishment of new politics and the planning of gradual "evolutionary" changes aimed at weakening the belief in the superiority of Soviet power over the West, the tools of cultural propaganda were also put into use. On January 27, 1958, an executive agreement on cultural, educational and scientific exchanges, known as the "Lacy-Zarubin agreement" was signed between the United States and the Soviet Union. Although immigrants from Eastern European countries received it with skepticism, fearing the infiltration of Soviet propaganda, or even the legalization of the occupation, some of them saw positive aspects in the agreement, believing that Soviet propaganda would be suppressed through cultural cooperation.

This period in the Lithuanian American diaspora marked a clear divide between the liberals and the representatives of the Catholic diaspora and the deepening crisis of relations between the two wings. The disagreements arose over the opinion about the choice to communicate with the homeland, as Steponas Kairys declared in his motto "Turn to Lithuania" in 1959,⁴⁸ or to refuse to cooperate with the occupier as declared by the Cleveland Resolution: "a national discipline requires that as long as Soviet Russia considers Lithuania occupied and it remains in the Soviet Union, free Lithuanians would restrict themselves to private communication".⁴⁹ During the preparation for the famed trip of Lithuanian American basketball players to Lithuania in July 1967, and especially after the tour, the collision of opinions in the Lithuanian diaspora reached its peak.

At that time, the majority of the Lithuanian American diaspora complied with the Cleveland Resolution, which directly affected the Lithuanian quarterly journal *Lituanus*. Its subscribers, who represented ideologically different opinion, said that they will stop subscribing to *Lituanus* because of the "trifling content of the journal."⁵⁰ The editor-in-chief Tomas Remeikis, as one of the organizers of the basketball tour, had to resign by the decision of the council of the *Lituanus* Foundation.

The disagreements between the "liberal" and the "Catholic" wing of the Lithuanian diaspora in the 1970s, led to fierce debate among *Lituanus* editors as well. Political views of the supporters of the journal caused the changes in the editorial board. Remeikis was forced to resign from the post of editor. The content of *Lituanus* changed and the

⁴⁶ PURRE, "New Deal" in Soviet Industrial Administration, *Lituanus*, 1965, No. 4, p. 67–70.

⁴⁷ ANDERSON, Edgar. Toward the Baltic Union 1920–27, *Lituanus*, 1966, No. 2, p. 30–56, 1967, No. 1, p. 5–28; KING, Gundar F. Management of the Economy and Political Power: The Latvian Case, *Lituanus*, 1968, No. 4, p. 54–72.

⁴⁸ KAIRYS, Steponas. Veidu į Lietuvą, Darbas, 1959, No. 1, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Laisvųjų lietuvių bendravimas su okupuotąja Lietuva. In: Draugas. 1966, sausio 25, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Raugas, Balys [a postcard attached to the subscription form], 1966. In: LTSC, *Lituanus* Foundation.

topics were narrowed down to the humanitarian profile when a linguist Antanas Klimas (1924–2016) became the editor in 1967. Because of that and for publishing of articles of less significance and of little relevance and for the attempts to lower the bar of articles published in the journal – from the academic level to “a text adapted to a mediocre reader”⁵¹ – the new editor was much criticized a lot.

In 1972, the editorial board of the journal was renewed and the journal preparation principles were changed. Every issue had to have an editor, and; a more consistent communication strategy was put in place. The general concept of the journal, introduced in the first *Lituanus* issue in 1966, became basic guidelines for preparing a new issue: permanent rubrics, topics related to the editor’s interests, research and competence; and relevant political and cultural contexts (political, historical events, and anniversaries).

In the 1980s, the journal reflected the processes of the restoration of Lithuania’s independence, published publishing secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which once again reminded the world of the legitimate demands of a sovereign state, becoming an integral part of unbiased media information. With the restoration of Lithuania’s independence and the elimination of barriers to disseminate unbiased information, *Lituanus* more focused more on presenting the research of Lithuanian researchers and publishing studies of Lithuanians in Lithuania and abroad (their geography expanded significantly). Works by Lithuanian artists also received a lot of attention.

From the very start, the editors paid great attention to distribution of the journal outside the Lithuanian American diaspora. The publication was regularly sent to US government – the Senate and members of Congress. *Lituanus* was used as an important source by *Encyclopedia Britannica* and *The World Book Encyclopedia*, thus gaining recognition and contributing to the efforts of presenting unbiased information. The fact that the journal’s articles were included into the database of Publications of Modern Language Association and Historical Abstracts also attests to the official recognition of *Lituanus*.

The journal was sent to US colleges and city libraries, becoming a historiographic resource for students in the social sciences or humanities. According to *Lituanus* documents, in 1964 the journal was subscribed to by 2,000 libraries, 1,200 foreigners, 1,000 institutions, and 1,600 Lithuanians.⁵²

The publishers made sure that readers of other countries, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Greece, Switzerland, India, Korea, Costa Rica, Chile, and New Zealand, had access to the journal, thus opening wider geographical boundaries for representation of Lithuanian national identity and broadening the scope for unbiased dissemination of information prepared by informed authors.

Throughout the 1980s and especially in the 1990s, the Lithuanian diaspora in the US made efforts to represent Lithuania and its citizens by publishing historical texts. As the

⁵¹ DAMBRIŪNAS, Leonardas. Nauja Lituanus linkmė. *Akiračiai*, 1970, No. 4, p. 14.

⁵² Lituanus archive, *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center*.

time of the restoration of Lithuanian independence approached, *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center*, established in Chicago in 1981, began publishing an increasing number of historical works. In 1981–1990, the Center published four major historical works on the Samogitian fight against the Teutonic Order,⁵³ state relations between Lithuania and United States,⁵⁴ and the Soviet aggression politics.⁵⁵ After 1990, the Center published even more historical books, some of them, such as William Urban's the Battle of Grunwald (First Battle of Tannenberg or Battle of Žalgiris)⁵⁶ and the Samogitian crusade,⁵⁷ The Prussian crusade⁵⁸ came out repeatedly.

After the restoration of Lithuania's independence and with the start of the 21st century, works on historical topics, both fiction and articles, have regularly appeared in Western scientific journals and books. Today scientists and researchers from Lithuania and of Lithuanian descent, as well as foreigners, who study Lithuanian history, participate in international conferences and actively join in public discussions on historical memory, thus constantly keeping communication of historical narrative both in public space and academia.

Conclusions

Historical narrative as a very important component of the construction of national identity in Lithuanian cultural press can be traced back to the 19th century. It was well developed and actualized in the second half of the 20th century, when the need to introduce Lithuania in the countries of residence with particular emphasis on the country's occupation and forcible incorporation into the Soviet Union became the main goal of every Lithuanian community abroad. In the US, where the largest Lithuanian diaspora community was concentrated, this desire was particularly pronounced.

Systematic efforts to present Lithuania and its citizens and the Lithuanian diaspora were carried out through the English-language cultural press. An English language

⁵³ URBAN, William L. *The Samogitian Crusade*. Chicago, Ill.: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1989.

⁵⁴ JURGĖLA, Konstantinas Rudaminas. *Lithuania and the United States: The Establishment of State Relations*. Chicago, Ill.: Lithuanian Historical Society, Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1985.

⁵⁵ *Vengeance on the Run: Documents on Stalinist Atrocities During the First Week of the Soviet-German War*, June. Chicago (Ill.): The Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1988; IDZELIS, Augustinas. *Use of Soviet Source Evidence in Denaturalization Proceedings*. Chicago (Ill.): Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1989.

⁵⁶ URBAN, William L. *Tannenberg and after Lithuania, Poland, and the Teutonic Order in Search of Immortality*. Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1999, 2002, 2003.

⁵⁷ URBAN, William L. *The Samogitian crusade*. Chicago, Ill.: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1989.

⁵⁸ URBAN, William L. *The Prussian Crusade*. Chicago (Ill.): Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 2000, 2004.

journal *Lituanus*, founded in 1954 and still active, the two publishing companies, *Manyland Books* founded by Stepas Zobarskas in 1961 and Algimantas Kezys' *Lithuanian Library Press* founded in 1976, actively exploited the potential of historical narrative in constructing and presenting a model of national identity. *Manyland Books* did this mainly through translations of historical fiction and the most relevant texts on Lithuanian history and culture of the 20th century.

Lithuanian Library Press opted to introduce the American reader with to the history of Lithuanian American community making it more accessible and open to other ethnic groups in the US. *Lituanus*, which represented the younger generation of Lithuanian diaspora in academia, strove to present the latest articles based on scientific research and publish translations of the latest works of fiction. The journal also sought to bring together representatives of the Latvian and Estonian diaspora, sending a broader communication message about the Baltic and Eastern European region.

The focused dissemination of these cultural publications in the US, as well as in Western Europe and Australia, allowed Lithuanian diaspora to constantly raise the Lithuanian case. Striving to expand the context, scientific insights into the Lithuania's situation, its achievements, and full potential were presented not only through the eyes of Lithuanian authors living in the diaspora, but also Western researchers.

From the early 20th century, the English-language Lithuanian American press had served as a reliable tool for developing a communication strategy based on representing the concept of national identity to the citizens of the multi-ethnic America and later of other countries.

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Istorijos naratyvas tautinio tapatumo konstravimui: anglakalbės XX a. II pusės kultūrinės JAV lietuvių spaudos atvejis

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama JAV lietuvių bendruomenės anglų kalba publikuota kultūrinė spauda, žvelgiant į jos visumą kaip į sistemines pastangas reprezentuoti savąją bendruomenę, tautą ir valstybę reziduojamos šalies piliečiams. Istorinis naratyvas šiame kontekste yra vienas svarbiausių komunikacinės strategijos kūrimo elementų.

Analizuojamas JAV lietuvių išeivijos kultūrinės spaudos anglų kalba (1950–1990 m.) turinys: leidyklų *Manylanland books*, *Lithuanian library press* bei žurnalo *Lituanus*, taip pat *Lituanistikos tyrimo ir studijų centro* iniciatyvos, ypatingą dėmesį kreipiant į sutelktas pastangas publikuojamais tekstais konstruoti tautinio tapatumo modelį. Lietuvių diasporos spauda gimtąja kalba laikytina viena svarbiausių lietuvių bendruomenės tarpusavio komunikacinių priemonių, o spauda anglų kalba kartu su kitomis JAV lietuvių organizuotomis ir vykdytomis visuomeninėmis, pilietinėmis akcijomis, kultūriniais renginiais, siekusiais atkreipti dėmesį į Lietuvos situaciją, į lietuvių tautos nepriklausomybės savo šaliai siekį, savo publikacijų turiniu demonstravo mokslinį, politinį, visuomeninį, kultūrinį šalies piliečių potencialą. Šiuo laikotarpiu JAV išleisti lietuvių autorių grožinės literatūros vertimai, meno, mokslo, istorijos, kitų tematikų darbai atskiromis monografijomis ar pasirodę periodinėje spaudoje žymiai išplėtė ir pagilino amerikiečių vaizdinį ne tik apie JAV lietuvių bendruomenę, bet ir tautiečius etninėse jos žemėse, apie tuometę šalies situaciją.

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