Nationalism, Democratization and Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Lithuanian State 1988–1992

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Abstract

The thesis is looking at the relationship between nationalism and democratization in Lithuania in the period 1988-1992. Its overall perspective is that nationalism in Lithuania was a spur to democratization from below, and examines empirical events in the light of the theories of nationalism of Anthony Smith, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson.

The thesis starts by giving the main stages in the process of Lithuanian independence, and refers back to Lithuania’s incorporation into the Soviet Union, the German invasion, and resistance to Soviet rule. Chapter 2 looks at the ‘Historical Self-Image of Lithuania’ which subjects the role of historical memory in nationalist movements to critical analysis, and indicates what nationalists in Lithuania would be likely to prioritize as being important when taking over the Soviet Lithuanian state.

Chapter 3 on ‘Nationalism’ selects seven areas which are intrinsic to nationalist movements (history and culture, language, education, the environment, citizenship, the economy and symbolism) to see how far theories of nationalism relate to empirical events, and begins to explore the relationship between nationalism and democratization in the Lithuanian setting.

Chapter 4, ‘From Liberalization to Democratization’, subjects Lithuanian nationalism to theories of democratization to see to what extent Lithuanian nationalism has met democratic criteria. It does this by looking at the independent media; constitutional processes; parties, self-organizing groups and movements; elections; protection of minorities; and the process of transplacement as a means of achieving democracy in Lithuania.

Chapter 5 on ‘The Poles and Russians in Lithuania’ looks at how these two ethnic groups responded to Lithuanian nationalism, and examines their political activity against theories of nationalism with references to democratization.

The concluding Chapter brings the points raised throughout the whole thesis together, and sets out how nationalism in Lithuania brought forth both independence and democratization.
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List of Abbreviations

CC
Central Committee

CPD
Congress of People's Deputies

CPL
Communist Party of Lithuania

CPL (CPSU)
Communist Party of Lithuania (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)

LDDP
Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party

LICA
Lithuanian Inter-National Coordinating Association

LSSR
Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic

RCC
Russian Cultural Centre

SS
Supreme Soviet

SSKPL
Social and Cultural Society of Poles in Lithuania

USSR
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

ZPL
Union of Poles in Lithuania
Note on Translations

I have used the Library of Congress transliteration system for transliterated text from Russian into the English language.

I have used the original titles of articles from the Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian press where these are available to me from translators.

For personal names I have retained the spelling in the original language (Lithuanian, Polish and Russian) except where the person concerned has expressed a preference to the contrary eg Vladimir Berezov (who was the ethnic Russian Second Secretary of the Communist Party of Lithuania) uses Vladimiras Beriozovas.
Introduction

Lithuania can be seen as a test bed for nationalism and democratization and the treatment of national minorities. The impetus for Lithuania’s nationalist movement was brought about by Gorbachev’s decision in 1985 to introduce the policies of glasnost and perestroika. The ensuing emergence of nationalist political action in Lithuania as a consequence of this reform programme ultimately led to a recognition of its independence in 1991 by the international community. As communism in the Soviet Union started to decline the evolving changes within Lithuania brought together two interlocking processes - the resurgence of a Lithuanian national identity and the two-way effect of this on the relationship with its minorities and with Russia. Yet in Lithuania, since 1988, the process of emergence as a new state has juxtaposed a quest not only for national self-determination, but also an elaboration of a commitment to democracy. The impetus towards political entitlements and capacities has been inextricable from the resurgence of nationalism (they appear to have been interdependent). In this analysis I will be looking at the relationship between nationalism and democratization in Lithuania in the formative period 1988-1992.

As communism started to collapse throughout eastern Europe and the USSR, the political value that came to predominate and underpin most claims to political legitimacy was that of democracy which, although lacking any agreed overarching definition, has become the legitimating reference for what is the maximum good for any society. Parry and Moran note that a ‘striking feature of recent events was the way the opponents of authoritarianism grounded their opposition in the ideology of pluralist democracy. More striking still, the regimes which have succeeded authoritarianism have turned to the language of pluralist democracy to legitimize their new political arrangements’ even where those political arrangements have had a nationalistic base.¹

The unprecedented collapse of Marxism-Leninism followed by the transition to democracy in former countries of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has reformulated Bobbio’s observation that, ‘today, the only democratic states are those which were born out of the

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liberal revolutions..."\(^2\), because of the unique nature of the preceding Marxist-Leninist state model. Nodia has attested that ‘The transition to liberal democracy after communism...has absolutely no precedent in history'.\(^3\) The particular form of the state in post-communist countries (Lithuania) emerged from the Soviet system of Marxism-Leninism, which conceptualized parliamentary or ‘bourgeois’ democracy (and its institutions of political representation) as a constitutional form for masking the state power of capitalism.\(^4\)

In reconstituting a sovereign Lithuanian state, the transition to democracy in Lithuania is characterized by problems common to the legacy of one-party communist rule, and scholars have emphasized aspects of democratic paucity such as the lack of civil society (autonomous organizations outside of state control), competing political interests, parties, and freedom of speech and association. Whilst this forms an integral part of any transition towards democracy, democratic criteria are generally theorized without reference to inter-ethnic relations and the impetus of nationalism for the nature of the transition. In looking at the literature on the transition from authoritarian rule and from communism to liberalism, it is notable that theorists of democratization have tended to overlook ethnic relations and nationalism in their accounts of the process towards democracy. Samuel Huntington, for example, constructs a model depicting possible variations for the takeover of the state with consequent effects upon democratization, but excludes any mention of ethnicity.\(^5\)

Theorists of nationalism, such as Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Anthony Smith, have given accounts of nationalism and its relationship to national identity, but fall short of extending their brief into the realm of minorities, and therefore leave untheorized an integral part of interaction in nationalist movements. Neither are they much concerned with the interaction between nationalism and democracy whereby the former may be instrumental for the achievement of the latter. Sąjūdis (the Lithuanian nationalist movement) constituted itself as a nationalist movement for national sovereignty, but

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nonetheless, as it developed, took a stance of democratic inclusiveness towards Russian, Polish and all minorities in Lithuania.

Scholars such as Alfred Eric Senn, V. Stanley Vardys, Judith Sedaitis, and Richard Krickus have provided detailed empirical accounts of Lithuania’s nationalist movement with useful information, but without a theorized underpinning explaining the contested nature of national identity and nationalism, and without references to the literature on democratization. It is the interplay between the two concepts of nationalism and democracy which form the basis for my enquiry, and I have therefore analyzed both nationalism and democratization together in order to explore more fully the relationship between the two. The Lithuanian transition towards independence received its impetus from nationalism which extended the project of glasnost to realize the self-expression of national identity and democracy.

In order to demonstrate my perspective, I have chosen to utilize the four main theorists of nationalism mentioned above, Anderson, Gellner, Hobsbawm, and Smith, and to relate empirical events in Lithuania to their account of nationalism and national identity. I have specifically referred to theorists of democratization in Chapter 4, ‘From Liberalization to Democratization’, but have brought out the interaction between nationalism and democratization throughout. I have begun the analysis with a brief outline of empirical events constituting the main processes of Lithuanian independence which includes the formation of Sąjūdis, the Lithuanian nationalist movement, and chronological details about the transition from liberalization to democratization such as elections and defiance of Moscow’s rule. I have given background historical details of Lithuania’s occupation by the Soviet Union in June 1940, the German occupation, and the effects of Soviet rule and resistance to it.

The following Chapter on the ‘Historical Self-Image of Lithuania’ provides a foundation for looking at the basis of Lithuanian national identity through nationalist perceptions of the past. The imagery they evoke is interpreted against theories of nationalism to discern which of the theorists mentioned above provide a reasonably coherent account of the role of historical memory in the Lithuanian case. The Chapter helps to explain what course of action Lithuanians might be expected to take as they challenge Soviet rule, for example, from where they draw their strength, the basis of their fears or what they are frightened of publicly discussing.
Chapter 3 on ‘Nationalism’ relates the Historical Self-Image of Lithuanian nationalists to the changes they deemed necessary in taking over the state. It follows through their existing line of argument about their identity from Chapter 2 by examining nationalist debates about history and culture, language, education, the environment, citizenship, the economy, and symbolism, to see how far nationalists were willing to challenge Soviet control of Lithuanian civic space which comprised the first stages in the process of liberalization. Their concerns are related to theories of nationalism in determining the true purpose of independence insofar as it represented a cultural project related to an ethnic past or was driven by needs or causes unrelated to culture.

In Chapter 4, ‘From Liberalization to Democratization’, I consider various features the attainment of which is intrinsic to democracy, and discern how far the Lithuanian nationalist movement was able to institute democratic procedures. I have selected out the following democratic criteria: independent media; constitutional processes; parties, self-organizing groups and movements; elections; and protection of minorities. Huntington’s process of transplacement which depicts the agency involved in attaining statehood (referred to below), is discussed in the context of the identification of Lithuanians with the state as regards their dominance and assertiveness when compared to national minorities. I have also indicated the extent to which Lithuania’s independence movement was dependent on events in Moscow, and how nationalists had to wait until August 1991 (the collapse of communism) before Lithuania’s democratically elected leadership could fully realize its aims.

Chapter 5, ‘Poles and Russians in Lithuania’, takes a different perspective in that it examines the Lithuanian nationalist movement from the viewpoint of these minorities, and contrasts their responses to Lithuanian nationalism. This is based upon a comparison of their self-perceptions of identity which is followed through into the social and political organizations formed by Poles and Russians, and the intensity of their mobilization in the period under discussion. I have also highlighted their fears about change, and the images of themselves both before and throughout Soviet rule. Their role in the processes of the Lithuanian nationalist movement is measured against theories of nationalism with references to democratization.

In the concluding Chapter, I have discussed the interaction and the relationship between what started off with both liberalization and a nationalist movement for independence, but which
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was able to measure up to the criteria of democratization depicted by scholars in the field. I trace this process right through from the historical self-image of Lithuania to see what bearings these images might have had in the nationalist relationship with Moscow and with minorities, and the consequent enactment of legislation. The persistence of Sąjūdis in challenging Moscow forms a basis for speculation in looking at the relationship between nationalism and democratization in Lithuania.

Methodology

The methodology that I have employed is to look at theories of nationalism and theories of democratization, seeking source material with which to apply these theories in order to come to conclusions about the interaction between nationalism and democratization and to assess the usefulness of the theories.

The material I have used is a combination of printed sources from Lithuania in the period under investigation and interviews with key participants in the events as well as with a cross section of people across the ethnic divide. I have also used material from actors’ personal archives. I have not placed much reliance on opinion polls as a source of measuring public attitudes as I have a more complex level of analysis than can be supported by the available evidence.

Most of the media I have been using do not reflect objective reporting but are concerned to defend the interests of particular ethnic groups, organizations and parties. For example, Sąjūdis and pro-Sąjūdis media might have a tendency to exaggerate the tolerance and liberalism of the independence movement in relation to ethnic minorities in order to win their support. The ‘Internationalist’ Edinstvo movement and the Polish-language media in Lithuania might have been inclined to portray Sąjūdis as an ethnically intolerant organization in order to win the support of Poland and the international community or to feed ammunition to conservatives in Moscow.

Nonetheless, in order to achieve my objectives properly, it is essential, given the fact that there are three major ethnic groups in Lithuania each with their own language, to access primary material in all these languages as well as what has been made available in English. I have used, with the help of translators, Lithuanian-, Russian- and Polish-language sources
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from newspapers and articles. Using translations, however, is not the same as reading the source oneself because the full impact of the original is mediated by the translator. Nevertheless even in translation the documents yielded significant data on the attitudes of the actors portrayed. The utilisation of primary material in four languages gives greater depth to the study of the period despite the bias that might be apparent.

I selected the interviewees according to two criteria. Firstly, for the prominent and leading role which they played in Lithuania’s nationalist movement. I was fortunate to be able to secure interviews with politicians such as Vytautas Landsbergis, the leader of Sąjūdis, who became Chair of the Supreme Soviet after the elections of 1990, and Algirdas Brazauskas, who was the First Secretary of the CPL, deputy Prime Minister after March 1990, and later President of Lithuania. Leaders of the cultural groups of the ethnic minorities also fell into this category, for example, Jan Sienkiewicz, who became leader of the SSKPL in 1989, and who was able to provide information about the interaction between the SSKPL and Sąjūdis. Although the members of the Russian Cultural Centre did not contest power through elections during the period 1988-92, nonetheless, their insights as to the role of the RCC provided valuable information on the response of a former dominant majority to the collapse of Soviet identity and their perception of Sąjūdis.

Secondly, I selected interviewees who were not necessarily major political players but whose grass roots involvement throughout the political spectrum gave valuable insights into events and attitudes. For example, as in my interviews in Chapter 3 with teachers of history and the Lithuanian language who were implementing Lithuanian nationalist policies on the ground either spontaneously or as the result of legislation.

The people that I did not talk to but who played a prominent role throughout this period were politicians in Moscow, local Soviet army commanders, and KGB officials as it was impossible for me to have access to these people within the material constraints of the study. On the other hand, I did talk to leading local communist figures, and as I was primarily looking at processes in Lithuania, these interviews were actually of more relevance to my needs.

The procedure that I employed for each interviewee was to ask questions most relevant to the role they played in the period under consideration. This involved asking about their attitudes,
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their aims and objectives, their activities, organizations, allies, opponents and methods of work. I carried out these interviews mainly during the seven-month period that I spent in Lithuania between October 1996 and May 1997 in which I immersed myself in intense networking to secure contacts throughout a broad spectrum of society.

Having read the major western accounts of Lithuanian independence the purpose of my interviews was firstly to verify the existing literature and secondly to add to it within the framework of the study. I evaluated all interviews individually for internal consistency, and cross referenced the information given from interviewees where possible either from the press, memoirs, or from unpublished documents, for example, as in the meetings between Sąjūdis and the CPL to discuss the takeover of the Soviet state after the elections of 1990. At times the interviewee provided information verified from another source, for example, both Vytautas Landsbergis and Algirdas Brazauskas in interviews provided evidence of transplacement.

Nation and State

The above-mentioned theorists, Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Anthony Smith, have analysed nationalism based upon a long-term historical analysis or sociological overview which seeks to offer insights into the original historical sources of nationalism. Although my analysis of nationalism in Lithuania between 1988-1992 is based upon a specific time span, and does not constitute a macro-sociological survey, it is nonetheless interesting to relate political and social events in Lithuania to these theories, to see whether the perceptions of the authors have any resonance with the trajectory of political events in Lithuania. In other words, I am not trying to prove or disprove any theories of nationalism, but to discover whether the Lithuanian case in a particular period may shed some light on the validity and applicability of these theories in a specific context.

At the core of this thesis are two concepts integral to Lithuanian nationalism: the idea of the 'nation' and of the 'state'. It is apparent in nationalist accounts that the relationship between the two is untheorized and unproblematic, in other words, that nations are either natural in human history or eternal (made by God). In the modern period, according to the nationalists, the Lithuanians comprise a distinct group of people who can trace their origins from the tribes who settled on the shore of the Baltic in the 2nd millennium BC. Their statements attest to a
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direct line of descent between the Lithuanian Grand Dukes of thirteenth-century Lithuania who ruled in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the period of the First Republic, 1918-1940, a subjugated nation fighting for its independence from Soviet rule, and the period after March 1990. A chapter by a Lithuanian historian in a recent book is entitled, 'The Nation Creates Its State', which depicts how the nineteenth-century nationalist movement constituted the First Republic of Lithuania, and therefore implies the primary position of the 'nation' in relation to the state.6

Lithuanian nationalist rhetoric in 1988 often focused on the 'tradition of tolerance' realized within the medieval state as an exemplar for the policy of political inclusiveness of Sąjūdis. Nonetheless, many imperial dynasties straddling multi-lingual populations were tolerant of the vernaculars spoken within their realms and the traditions of the subject peoples - the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires were both quite 'tolerant' in this sense. However, Lithuanian nationalist claims were not set in the context of medieval dynasties generally, but singled out the Grand Duchy as being unique in possessing this particular virtue.

In my view, the state tradition of Lithuania was that it was multi-ethnic, and pre-dated the emergence of nation-states.7 Like most medieval states what was politically dominant was the dynasty, and as in many dynastic states the rulers did not come from the majority ethnic group. Thus when discussing the period of the Grand Dukes, it is not justifiable for the Lithuanians to talk about dominant ethnicities as it was the dynasty, and not any ethnic group, which was politically dominant. Stephen Rowell notes that, 'From his citadel in Vilnius, [Grand Duke] Gediminas [1315/16-1341/42] governed a state which controlled not only ethnic Lithuania, but also in the western principalities of Orthodox Rus', more Rus’ian territory than that held by the grand duke of Moscow.'8 In fact, Slavs, not ethnic Lithuanians, formed the majority of the subjects of the Grand Duchy.

There was no consciousness of national identity but only a consciousness of speaking different languages. Indeed, from the end of the fourteenth century, when written documents began to circulate, the official language was old Church Slavonic, a forerunner of

6 Alfonsas Eidintas, Chapter 2, in Eidintas, Vytautas Žalys and Alfred Erich Senn, Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918-1940, ed. Edvardas Tuskenis, Basingstoke and London, 1997.
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Belorusian. Rowell also notes that, 'it is clear that Vytautas and Jogaila [Lithuanian Grand Dukes] spoke with each other in Lithuanian.' This is significant in that within the dynasty there was a proto-ethnic consciousness.

In 1386, Jogaila, Grand Duke of Lithuania, married into the Polish dynasty and became King of Poland. He converted to Roman Catholicism and since Lithuania became part of the Catholic Church province of Gniezno in Poland it was subjected to linguistic Polonization through the Church. The Lithuanian state retained its independence, however, until the Union with Poland in 1569 which led to an increase in the level of Polonization. In 1795 Lithuania was incorporated into the Russian Empire through the third partition of Poland.

The growth of Lithuanian nationalism in the nineteenth century was based upon the Lithuanian-speaking peasantry within the Russian Empire. It was akin to nationalism all over Central and Eastern Europe. The nationalists wanted a cultural revival and an independent state to promote Lithuanian cultural dominance. By the late nineteenth century, Lithuanian intellectuals had created an ideology which called for the construction of an independent Lithuanian state. By that time, Lithuania had come to mean ethnic Lithuania.

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9 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania p.7; S.C.Rowell, Lithuania Ascending, p.295.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 As S.C.Rowell says, 'Since the revival of Lithuanian national sentiment in the nineteenth century, "Lithuanian" has come to refer almost exclusively in an ethnic sense to speakers of that Baltic language, rather than being used as a political term for those subject to Lithuanian rule.' op. cit. fn 8, p.xiii.
This change in state character brought about by nineteenth century nationalists was evident throughout Eastern Europe. Thus after 1918 dominant ethnic groups could be identified which had established a 'state' for a particular 'nation'. As Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan point out, ‘the dominant “nations” (or populations) in those new states, namely Serbs, Czechs, Poles, Lithuanians or Latvians could feel “liberated,” but not those peoples subjected to them, if they had or later developed a separate national consciousness, like...the different minorities in the Baltic countries.’

In response to the collapse of the Ottoman, Hapsburg, Prussian and Russian Empires at the end of the First World War, new states emerged all over Europe invoking the Wilsonian right of nations to self-determination. The Lithuanian nationalists taking advantage of the weakness of the Russian Bolsheviks and the support of western allies established their state as did their counterparts in Estonia and Latvia. Hence factors unrelated to industrialization (the core of Gellner’s theory) were dominant in this period as international relations were instrumental in the establishment of new states. What was the nature of the Lithuanian state?

According to the 1923 census, Lithuanians comprised 84 per cent out of a population of just over 2 million. Jews formed the largest minority and comprised 7.6 percent of the population. Poles were the second largest ethnic minority (3.2 percent), followed by Russians (2.7 percent) and Germans (1.4 percent) (see Chapter 1). Ethnic Lithuanians dominated the government.

In establishing the Lithuanian state there was a reciprocal relationship between many of the Jews and Lithuanian nationalists. The Jews thought their interests would be better served in an independent Lithuania rather than in Poland or Russia while the Lithuanians desired Jewish support for their state. In particular, the Lithuanians hoped that the support of the Jews who were dominant in Vilnius might lead to the inclusion of that region within Lithuania.

As an indication of reciprocity, Jews were invited to join the Lietuvos Taryba (Council of Lithuania) in November 1918, and ‘volunteered for the newly created Lithuanian army.’

There was a Minister for Jewish Affairs in the first provisional Lithuanian government.

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14 Eidintas, Žalys, and Senn, op. cit. fn 6, p.134.
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Initially, Jews had formal autonomy comprising a Jewish National Council, elected in 1920, with the right to impose taxes and oversee social, cultural and religious affairs, and a Ministry for Jewish Affairs. Lithuania’s Jews also elected Jewish representatives to the Lithuanian Parliament. Lithuania (and also Vilnius which at that time was in Poland) became a centre for the publishing of literature in the Hebrew language. The establishment and development of a large network of Yiddish- and Hebrew-language schools reflected the strong social and cultural Jewish community within Lithuania. In 1923, ethnic Lithuanians constituted only 63% of state employees and Jews 20.4% (more than double their share in the population). The following year, however, ‘the government closed the Ministry for Jewish Affairs and dissolved the Jewish National Council.’ Nonetheless, the Jewish community still retained control of its educational, religious and cultural affairs and continued to receive a subsidy from the Lithuanian government.

After the military coup of 1926 which brought former President Smetona to power, 48 Polish schools were closed, linked to Poland’s annexation of Vilnius in October 1920. In the Klaipėda region formerly known as Memel, which Lithuania had annexed from Germany in 1923, the government ‘applied pressure for German children to attend Lithuanian schools.’ During the 1930’s, Smetona spoke out against anti-semitism. The Businessmen’s Association and its newspaper had been accused of ‘chauvinism’ and anti-semitic propaganda. Mark Zingeris, a Jewish-Lithuanian writer, has described Smetona ‘as a man of the enlightenment who had made many Jewish friends and did not share the crude chauvinism of many of his supporters.’

Following on from Lithuania’s occupation by the Soviet Union in 1940, the Republic came under central Party control. The state boundaries remained the same with the addition of the Vilnius region whilst Lithuania was subjected to nationality policy from Moscow. A policy of indigenisation had been used right from the time of Lenin which had been suspended in the

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15 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.31.
16 Eidintas, Žalys, and Senn, op. cit. fn 6, p.134.
18 Eidintas, Žalys, and Senn, op. cit. fn 6, p.136.
mid-thirties by Stalin, but brought back after Stalin's death by Khrushchev. It remained in place until Gorbachev's period in office.

This policy encompassed digging roots into the ethnic minorities and creating a native political elite throughout the Soviet Union so that the Communist Party and the government in all Republics would be led by members of the titular ethnic group, and conversely that the Communist Party would have representatives in all ethnic groups. The implication for Lithuania of this is that in joining the Soviet Union it was able to maintain the form of statehood, enhanced by the addition of Vilnius, as it had the status of a Republic formally speaking with its 'own' Communist Party dominated by ethnic Lithuanians, although in reality Moscow retained control of all political and security decisions in Lithuania. Antanas Sniečkus, an ethnic Lithuanian, who was First Secretary of the CPL 1940-1974, acquired considerable political authority within the CPSU. Nonetheless, nationhood, in the modernist sense, was suppressed as national sovereignty was absorbed into the union structures.

Sniečkus could resist to some extent pressure from Moscow and defend Lithuanian national interests and the Lithuanian language could be used in the press, television, and the education system. Therefore paradoxically throughout the period of Soviet Lithuania, the Republic tended to be an ethnic Lithuanian state as opposed to a civic state, as a Russian could not become First Secretary, and neither could a Pole. If Lithuania had not been part of the Soviet Union then the language would have been unchallenged, but its role as a titular Republic in the Soviet Union enabled the language to thrive despite the occupation regime.

In 1988, Sąjūdis really wanted an ethnic democratic state but believed that in order to achieve this it had to have the support of the minorities. On the basis of the fact that 80% of Lithuanians were ethnically Lithuanian it was clear that they were strong enough on the one hand to maintain ethnic Lithuanian control of the state if they got independence, and in 1989 they were looking towards this, but they also felt they needed the support of the minorities to get independence in the first place. In contrast, Estonians and Latvians were not convinced that if they got independence they would be able to maintain the ethnic nature of the state and were therefore much less willing to make concessions.

Lithuanian nationalists saw the benefits to be gained from having the support of ethnic minorities and from the start offered liberal guarantees of minority rights. They may well
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have remembered the importance of minority support in the establishment of the First Republic, but whereas in 1924 minority rights began to be whittled away, the period since 1991 has seen the maintenance of minority rights in practice, as reflected in citizenship and in education.

The foregoing analysis has tried to show that the Lithuanian nationalist perspective drew upon the belief that the Lithuanian ‘nation’ existed before the establishment of a sovereign state in 1918. This belief is based upon a primordialist view of the inevitability of ‘nations’ which exist permanently throughout human history. In my view, it is not possible to talk about a ‘nation’ in such terms since the concept itself is a modern phenomenon and ‘nation’ requires state boundaries within which there is a general acceptance that the ‘nation-state’ is an autonomous sovereign entity.

Smith, Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm all have this ‘modernist’ position because integral to their analysis is the perspective that ‘nation’ and ‘state’ are in relationship with each other – the ‘state’ apparatus mediates the capacity for self-governance which is the expression of the popular will and sovereignty therefore comprises both ‘nation’ and ‘state’.

The political and social changes which brought ‘nation’ and ‘state’ into being are firstly in evidence following on from the American and French Revolutions when, in both cases, sovereignty was regarded as the only satisfactory method of meeting the demands of the people for self-governance. It was at this juncture in history that ‘nation’ and ‘state’ came to prominence and I am in agreement with ‘modernists’ that it is erroneous to attribute the word ‘nation’ to a ‘people’ or an ‘ethnic group’ before the historical novelty of political rights exercised by the ‘nation’ within the framework of a sovereign state.

The rhetoric of Lithuanian nationalists in their references to the continuity of the Lithuanian state tradition right through from the period of the Grand Duchy to the First Republic (1918-40) and the independent Republic of Lithuania after the collapse of communism (indeed, for many, the ‘nation’ had endured throughout the Soviet period) cannot be substantiated by empirical evidence; the diverse ethnic groups within the medieval Lithuanian state had no political entitlements and were ruled by a dynasty (notwithstanding the fact that the dynasty came from the Lithuanian ethnic group). In contrast, the nineteenth-century Lithuanian
nationalist movement was intent on founding an ethnic nation-state which was conceptually different from the medieval imperial dynastic state.

Literary Review

Nationalism

As noted above, Anderson, Gellner, Hobsbawm and Smith, whilst taking different perspectives of nationalism have been scarce on their reflections of national minorities in the process of the nationalist impetus, and have tended towards an interpretation of nationalism which depicts cultural homogeneity as the norm. Their main theoretical differences may be explained by the way in which they either give value to, or dismiss nationalist rhetoric in its portrayal of the past. Thus Gellner and Hobsbawm take a modernist position in arguing that nations and nationalism are fabrications in which nationalist ideology and myths of descent are an illusory manifestation of instrumental nationalist interest. Smith concedes that the modernist perspective is not completely unfounded as the nation requires ‘a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members’, but stresses the need for an established pre-existing ethnie in the creation of the modern nation. Anderson’s post-modern position rejects Gellner’s point that nationalism is ‘fabricated’ because this implies that ‘true’ communities do actually exist which can be favourably compared to nations. He offers instead a concept of the ‘imagined’ and ‘created’ basis of nationalism. Nation as an ‘imagined’ political community is perceived more in terms of a cultural rather than a political phenomenon.

Gellner’s argument is that nationalism, as a social sentiment, is required and therefore constituted by the state for the purpose of industrialization which requires a homogeneous culture. The political project of nation-building is pursued by elites who aim to achieve an institutionally sustained congruence between culturally differentiated groups and the polity -

the resultant units of which are nations. Nationalism is defined as ‘primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent’ and is equated with a new mode of production which requires a mobile, literate, culturally standardized and interchangeable population. State education provides the basis of national consciousness which serves the needs of the ‘society of perpetual growth.’

Given the re-emergence of nationalist movements in political societies which have now long been industrialized (eg the Baltic States), Gellner can only conceive of ‘a muted, less virulent form’ of nationalism, because the framework of modernity, once instituted, cannot and has no need to be socially and politically determined again (both motivation and result - industrialization - are in place). Gellner’s expectation is that cultural groups will either assimilate or realize a nation of their own, and therefore his depiction of nationalism reaches conceptual limits in Lithuania which recognized ethnic difference through laws and in the Constitution of 1992.

Hobsbawm (like Gellner) traces the rise of nations and nationalism to the development of the state. Generally, ‘Nations do not make states and nationalism but the other way round,’ and nations generally follow states rather than precede them. Whilst Hobsbawm’s book refers to minorities throughout, his conclusion is teleological in that capitalist development, the progenitor of states and thus nations, will subsume state boundaries in its quest for larger markets, so that historically nationalism is a force in decline. The nation is malleable because language is a construct, religion has no objective basis and alleged ethnic origin is a fallacy and moreover proto-national sentiments are unprovable (illiteracy was widespread). Modern states and their elites generate myths to create unity and a more homogeneous population. The role of minorities within nation-states is therefore of little consequence.

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26 Ibid. pp.24-29.
27 Ibid. p.122.
29 Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism Since 1780, pp.9-10.
31 Ibid. Chapter 2.
32 Ibid. pp.91-100.
John Breuilly, also a modernist, considers that the purpose of nationalism is divorced from ‘the work of intelligentsias and national sentiment’, and that nationalist ideology serves to mobilize different strata in society to support nationalist movements. Although he concedes that the ideology of nationalism is very powerful, nationalism is intrinsically about a form of politics engaged in getting control of the state. It is therefore ‘peculiarly modern’ as it seeks to redress the division between state and civil society, and Breuilly dismisses attempts to correlate nationalism to anything other than ‘some theory of modernity’.33

In contrast to modernist positions, Smith examines the ‘subjective factors’ of human association for nationalism by which he principally means the mediation of ‘social memory’ between ethnic communities (ethnies) and modernity.34 He notes that, ‘ethnies are constituted, not by lines of physical descent, but by the sense of community, shared memory and collective destiny, i.e. by lines of cultural affinity embodied in distinctive myths, memories, symbols and values retained by a given cultural unit of population.’35 Smith differentiates between a civic territorial model of nationalism (or Western conception of the nation) and an ethnic one wherein community is defined by birth and native culture.36 In the former model, lateral ethnic groups are absorbed through a process of bureaucratic incorporation into the ethnic culture of the dominant core. In the latter version, the ethnic group comprises a ‘demotic element’ and therefore as a subjugated people find solidarity in shared myths.37 Both routes to nationhood are based upon a mono-ethnic conception of the nation, and Smith’s references to Sąjūdis were made without comment on Poles and Russians in Lithuania.38

Smith’s account of nationalism lists a variety of factors for the emergence of nationalist movements including ‘the degree of political repression…and democratic freedom, the opportunities for cultural and political mobilization and the presence or absence of an intelligentsia, as well as a usable ethnic past, however recent.’39 Given the changing state formations and the different types of nationalist movement that Lithuania has undergone since

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34 Smith, Nationalism and Modernism, pp.190-193.
35 Smith, National Identity, p.29.
36 Ibid. pp.52-68.
37 Ibid. p.62.
38 Ibid. p.138
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the late nineteenth century, Smith's explanatory variants allow for more flexibility in
perceiving that nationalist movements and ideologies can stem from a reaction to oppression
which moreover can flourish in weakly industrialized areas (as in Lithuania in the nineteenth
century) as well as 'advanced' ones (Lithuania in the era of glasnost and perestroika). Smith
notes the importance of intellectuals for proposing and elaborating 'the concepts and language
of the nation and nationalism' to the masses. In Lithuania, the leadership of Sąjūdis
primarily comprised an intellectual stratum.

Anderson draws on three sources to explain the emergence of nationalism: the decline of
religious communities and dynastic realms, and a changing conception of time, which is no
longer stagnant and ahistorical, but has become measurable and progressive. Anderson
correlates nationalism to 'kinship' and 'religion' rather than with political ideologies such as
'liberalism' and 'Marxism'. His argument is that nationalism 'has to be understood by
aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural
systems that preceded it, out of which - as well as against which - it came into being.' He
considers that the facilitator in the process of the 'imagined communities' was the advent of
print capitalism, which he describes as 'a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a
system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications
(print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity.' The proliferation of print that is
produced in the form of newspapers and fiction becomes increasingly identified with a
language of state or administrative boundary, through which people make links between the
events depicted (the boundaries of the community) and each other (the 'imagined
community'). Thus creole pioneers were able to differentiate themselves from the colonial
regime although sharing a language with the metropolis. The community is created by
narrative and fictive tracts, and sustained by these imaginings.

Throughout communist rule in Lithuania, newspapers and novels were bound up with the
ideology of Marxism-Leninism, and therefore the print produced by state publishing houses

39 Ibid. p.135.
40 Ibid. p.93.
41 Anderson, Imagined Communities, Chapter 2, p.6.
42 Ibid. p.12.
43 Ibid. pp.42-43.
44 Ibid. Chapter 4, p.6.
could be more adequately described as 'print-socialism'. Nonetheless, during glasnost, the
depiction of a Soviet Lithuanian identity was replaced by a Lithuanian identity which
suggests that the content of language and the identity reflected back onto readers during the
Soviet period did not have the resonance suggested by Anderson. The Lithuanian language
had a value beyond the uses put to it by the Soviet regime. Anderson's trajectory looks at
relationships between states whereby humiliation and rejection provide a focus for identity
created by the print language of the locality (as in the exclusion of creoles from top
administrative positions at the apex of power), but does not take into account contrasting
depictions of identity within the boundaries of the state.

In contrast, Brubaker's analysis takes account of inter-ethnic relations in his depiction of the
'nationalizing nationalism' of the dominant ethnic group and the potential for 'homeland
nationalism' of minorities. His overall perspective is that it is political institutions such as
those of the Soviet Union and their elites within which create nationalism, and that 'nations'
are devoid of context, substance and form. He notes, 'the analytical task, at hand...is to think
about nationalism without nations.'

Nationalism and Democracy

Generally, nationalism and democracy are seldom theorized together in the literature, and are
often regarded as antipathetic which is clearly the case when the self-assertion of ethnic
groups or nation-states becomes an argument for an exclusive form of group identity. Yet
both nationalism and democracy are closely interlinked as nationalism is intrinsically linked
to concepts about citizenship and territory which also embody notions of democracy. Offe
notes that, 'At the most fundamental level a “decision” must be made as to who “we” are, that
is, a decision on identity, citizenship and the territorial, as well as social and cultural,
boundaries of the nation-state.' The question of boundaries is crucially important for both
nationalism and democracy.

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46 Rogers Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe,
48 Claus Offe, ‘Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East
Central Europe’, Varieties of Transition: The East European and East German Experience, Oxford, 1996,
pp.29-49 (32).
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Ghia Nodia criticizes the predominant western view ‘that democracy and nationalism are mutually hostile’, and instead argues that ‘there is a necessary and positive link between nationalism and democracy...’. He points out that,

The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has led simultaneously to dramatic new gains for liberal democracy and to a resurgence of nationalism. Many analysts appear to regard these as contradictory phenomena, inasmuch as they consider nationalism to be fundamentally antidemocratic. I believe that this is a superficial view that distorts our understanding of what is happening in the post communist countries and elsewhere as well.

The problematic, for Nodia, is to rethink the relationship between nationalism and democracy in order to better understand events in post communist countries and elsewhere.

Attempts to deny the reality and significance of nationalism often stem from a reluctance to admit that the democratic enterprise, supposedly the epitome of rationality, rests unavoidably on a nonrational foundation. The early stages of democracy-building make it especially clear that a nonrational act of political definition (determining who belongs to “We the People”) is a necessary precondition of rational political behavior.

It is impossible to conceive of a nationalism or a democracy in which this ‘We the People’ precondition does not apply. Nationalism and democracy cannot be divorced from the question of ‘democracy where?’, or ‘nationalism where?’, that is of them existing within a defined territory and with rules for inclusion and exclusion. Vardys notes specifically for Lithuania that ‘The process of social, economic, and political change...defies simplistic characterizations frequently found in the Western media. If pressed for labels, one can best identify it as an articulated movement toward national independence and democracy.’

Whilst Lithuania may have felt a threat to its borders as communism declined, it has nonetheless retained control of all its territory within which it legislated on inclusive citizenship.

The relationship between nationalism and democracy in Russia has been far more problematic, and felt to be so by the democratizers themselves, precisely because of the lack of post-communist defined territorial boundaries. The limits of community could not be

50 Ibid. p.1.
51 Ibid. p.8.
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established, and infringed on the rights of others. Nodia notes that, 'The tradition of Russian
statehood has been the tradition of an empire; in the Soviet period, this tradition merged with
Russia’s role as the leader of the communist world. The spread of communism and the
expansion or reassertion of Russian rule were almost synonymous...The Russian imperial-
nationalist tradition converged with the communist principle, leaving Russia with an
especially painful postcommunist identity crisis.'\(^{53}\)

Juan J.Linz and Alfred Stepan have attempted to examine the problems involved in the
process of democratization in multi-ethnic or unstable states. Their Chapter on "'Stateness",
Nationalism and Democratization" looks at states which have a 'stateness' problem. 'When
there are profound differences about the territorial boundaries of the political community’s
state and profound differences as to who has the right of citizenship in that state, there is what
we call a "stateness" problem.'\(^{54}\) In their view, the transition to democracy is not just about
challenging the non-democratic regime in order to replace it with a democratic one. Often, the
problems of the non-democratic regime are mixed in with conflictual perspectives as to which
groups living on the state territory should have the right to be citizens of the political
community; the question, 'what should actually constitute the polity' becomes critical when
there are competing concepts of the 'demos' (population) within the boundary of the non-
democratic regime.

For example, in Lithuania, some ethnic Poles wished to remove Polish-inhabited areas from
Lithuanian jurisdiction. Moreover, disputes about the definition of the 'demos' in Lithuania
focused on whether all inhabitants of the territory or only ethnic Lithuanians had the right to
citizenship. Linz and Stepan highlight the problems which may occur when the 'nation' seeks
control of the 'state' by promoting, for example, symbols, language, an education system and
a religion which reflects its dominant position. I look at this problem in Chapter 5 from the
perspective of ethnic Poles and Russians in Lithuania.

A negative relationship between nationalism and democracy is often conceived in terms of
the relationship between a deficient (ie unstratified) civil society and the state in post-

\(^{52}\) V. Stanley Vardys, 'Lithuanian National Politics', Problems of Communism, 38, 1989, 4, pp. 53-76 (1).
\(^{53}\) Nodia, 'Nationalism and Democracy', pp.19-20.
\(^{54}\) Juan J.Linz and Alfred Stepan, 'Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe,
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communist conditions. Thus an undifferentiated (homogeneous) social structure (similar living conditions, uniformity of education, non-existent labour market) suppressed the formation of ‘protagonists, associations and issues considered worth processing through the machinery of democratic politics’. Yet because difference is repressed and civil society uncomplicated the surfacing of conflict is not suited to compromise.

...homogeneity may just be the surface appearance of repressed antagonism. The Polish sociologist Jadwiga Staniszkis has that case in mind when she writes: “As long as the economic foundations for a genuine civil society do not exist the massive political mobilization of the population is only possible along nationalist or fundamentalist lines”...She implies that such themes of mobilization would lead to the rapid perversion of democratic openness into a populist authoritarian regime hostile to internal or external minorities.

Schöpflin has also considered that in the ideological vacuum created by the collapse of communism (and the consequent discrediting of political values based on class-lines), the ensuing anomic leads to collectivist ideologies of nationalism and religion. Their expectations were not borne out by empirical events in Lithuania as nationalists handed over power in the elections of 1992 to former communists, and ethnic difference was recognized in the new Constitution of that year.

The relationship between nationalism and democracy in post-communist societies is crucial to the question of the formation of parties. Democracy can encourage nationalism because it makes the state much more accessible to previously excluded groups such as nationalists especially in the absence of cross-cutting societal cleavages. Ghita Ionescu, for example, has stated that ‘...in the Baltic States...party political distinctions were effaced by the nationalistic passion. They still are.’ This observation ignores the perspective that in Lithuania the uniting ‘nationalistic passion’ whilst more important than political differences was able to bring about both independence and democracy. Moreover, a notable feature of the transition in Lithuania has been the role, in a parliamentary democratic context, played by the

55 Offe, op. cit. p.37.
56 Ibid.
then existing and would-be parties. As noted above, the transference of power is a crucial marker of democratization.

According to Lithuania’s situation circumstances could easily have impelled it towards authoritarian nationalism. ‘The domain of civil society that exists in the pluralist democracies was largely destroyed by the communist regimes. The destruction of civil society is relatively easy to accomplish; the reconstitution of a complex and autonomous associational life is immensely difficult... If nations turn away from Marxist authoritarianism there are no intellectually coercive reasons why they should link to democracy as an alternative source of legitimacy. They can turn instead to authoritarian nationalism, plainly a powerful force in the old communist regimes...’

This is because the federalist organization of the Soviet Union ‘had undoubtedly contributed to Soviet political stability through its use of national symbols, its co-option of local elites and its concessions in certain fields such as cultural affairs.’ ‘Co-option’ - nationalism was reflected in the composition of the Communist Party of Lithuania (predominantly ethnic Lithuanian) and helped to offset Communist Party control which without this counterbalance would have amounted to the (literal) rule of a ‘monolithic, centralised organisation, governed by the rules of “democratic centralism” which required absolute obedience to Moscow’s commands from its members in the republics and regions.’ Walker Connor has documented a complaint from a visiting Russian to Lithuania that, “To be a Lithuanian in Soviet Lithuania is [was] a political qualification.”

One suggestion for taking the democratic path was that there was a link between Lithuanian nationalist sentiment, the promotion of glasnost by Gorbachev, and the desire to be free from Soviet domination. Lithuanian nationalists could utilize the ‘formal’ ‘democratic’ constitution

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61 Ibid. pp.64-65.
of the system of federal communist republics which consisted of political institutions such as parliaments with legislatures and executives that could be converted from 'formal' to 'actual' democratic entities. This links to Huntington’s point that Marxism-Leninism’s ‘formal’ emphasis on democratic values was precipitated by a global ‘pervasiveness of democratic norms’ which was generally acknowledged even if used to justify undemocratic practice. Where nationalist movements are often (but not always) concerned with establishing a territory (a homeland), in Lithuania, Przeworski’s point has relevance that, ‘the issue we are analyzing is not founding a state but organizing a state on territory already given.’ As it is obviously the case that democracy cannot be divorced from the question of ‘democracy where?’ and ‘for whom’, democratic theory provides a framework for evaluating transitions.

Democratization

Claus Offe has referred to the concept of the ‘triple transition’ which generally encompasses the task in post-communist countries of drawing up the boundaries of the new state, and problems associated with democratization and economic reform. Offe looks at problems related to citizenship and territorial boundaries (referred to above), problems of politics such as the establishment of constitutional processes and the development of political parties, and the distribution of political and economic resources. As noted above, the literature on democratization generally looks at concepts such as the growth of political parties, civil society, a political culture supportive of democracy, a commitment to electoral procedures, and relations between legislative and executive power but without much reference to nationalism or ethnic relations.

Samuel Huntington, for example, has noted a pattern in which democracy has advanced in waves since the early nineteenth century with each wave giving way to partial reversals followed by new gains. Huntington’s The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century, starts in 1974 in the Iberian Peninsula and Greece, and culminates with the collapse of communism in Europe. ‘...democracy had come to be seen as the only

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63 Huntington, The Third Wave, p.47.
65 Offe, op.cit. pp.32-36.
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legitimate and viable alternative to an authoritarian regime of any type. He argues that
democratization received its impetus from the growing global affirmation of democracy, from
the declining internal acceptance of non-democratic regimes and from their relatively
inadequate economic performance, from the top-down decreeing (eg Gorbachev) of
mechanisms to institute a development of democratic reforms, and from the Catholic
Church’s increasing commitment to the priority of human rights.

Huntington looks at the relationship between governing and opposition groups in the process
of democratization and classifies them into three broad types: transformation, replacement
and transplacement. ‘Transformation’ occurs as a result of the external (to Lithuania) Centre
initiating a movement towards liberalization and democratization. In Lithuania,
Huntington’s general point applies, that is, whilst external influences were often significant
causes of third wave democratization, ‘the processes themselves were overwhelmingly
indigenous. These processes can be located along a continuum in terms of relative importance
of governing and opposition groups as the sources of democratization.’

Internal events in Lithuania follow Huntington’s description of ‘transplacement’ which is
brought about when the balance of forces within the regime - between those who wish to
‘stand pat’ and those in favour of reform - is such that the government is willing to concede,
but unable to initiate a change of regime; change is brought about in response to the
combined pressure of reformists within the regime (the ‘progressives’ in the CPL) and the
opposition (Sąjūdis). (Huntington’s third process of ‘replacement’ does not apply to
Lithuania because it refers to the overthrow of the authoritarian regime by the opposition as a
means of bringing about democracy). Whilst his constructs provide a useful conceptual tool,
he does not take account of the nationalist impetus for democratization or relations between
ethnic groups in the process of the transition. Similarly, Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe

66 Huntington, The Third Wave, p.58.
67 Ibid. Chapter 2.
68 Ibid. p.114.
69 Huntington, pp.112-115.
70 Ibid. p.151.
71 Ibid. pp.142-151.
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C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead ignored the concept of nationalism in their classic work on Transitions from Authoritarian Rule.72

Geoffrey Pridham’s essay, ‘Democratic Transitions in Theory and Practice: Southern European Lessons for Eastern Europe?’ does not draw out as a comparative point that ethnicity or indeed nationalism should perhaps be mentioned in the context of lessons for democratization.73 In Karen Henderson and Neil Robinson’s analysis of Post-Communist Politics, they consider that Lithuania’s inclusive Citizenship Law alleviated minority problems, but without depicting the intense political struggles of Poles and to a lesser extent Russians in Lithuania as part of the process of democratization.74 Karen Dawisha shares a similar perspective in her analysis of ‘Democratization and Political Participation: Research Concepts and Methodologies’, which looks at minorities in the context of the benefits of a proportional system of representation, but without suggesting a framework for the protection of minorities or referring to inter-ethnic relations.75 Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan consider that because of its inclusive citizenship policy, Lithuania ‘does not really have significant tension between the logic of a nation-state and the logic of a liberal democracy’.76 Again this misses out on the intensity of mobilization which took place after the enactment of the Citizenship Law in November 1989.

It is useful nonetheless to have an overall concept of democratization theory in terms of the different theoretical approaches to regime change which stem from two contrasting perspectives broadly labelled as ‘functionalist’ and ‘genetic’. Pridham and Lewis point out that the former ‘looks at the socio-economic developments in the long-term’ and therefore prioritizes ‘structural or environmental determinants’ whereby change is predetermined by

economic development, cultural patterns and modernization. The latter perspective focuses on political choice and strategy by actors. The two views are not of course mutually exclusive as the main difference between them is the time-scale involved in bringing about change.

Doh Chull Shin illustrates the difference between the two:

Conceptually, the establishment of a viable democracy in a nation is no longer seen as the product of higher levels of modernization, illustrated by its wealth, bourgeois class structure, tolerant cultural values, and economic independence from external actors. Instead, it is seen more as a product of strategic interactions and arrangements among political elites, conscious choices among various types of democratic constitutions, and electoral and party systems.

Qualitative changes in the study of democracy have reflected this by asking about the dynamics and consolidation of transition rather than about necessary conditions. What did they do rather than what were the pre-determined pre-existing conditions? Przeworski notes that 'The perspective [of pre-existing conditions] was simply too deterministic to orient the activities of political actors who could not help believing that the success of democratization might depend on their strategies and those of their opponents rather than being given once and for all by past conditions. It made little sense in Lithuania, for example, to worry about an undifferentiated social structure or the absence of a market economy. Giuseppe Di Palma considers that, 'political actors can learn to overcome objective and contingent impediments, as well as motives of personal resistance. Especially favorable conditions are not required.'

Another aspect of democratization is related to the 'meaning of democracy' which has become contested in recent years. Shin observes that, 'conceptual issues come into play because how one defines democracy and democratization determines what one identifies as the problems for democratic development and what one possesses by way of specific

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78 Ibid.
80 Przeworski, op.cit. p. 96.
82 Parry and Moran, 'Introduction: Problems of Democracy and Democratization', op. cit. p.8
recommendations and guidelines.\textsuperscript{83} The debate has consequences for the practical issue of how democracy can be measured.

The dividing line in the conceptualization of democratic ‘progress’ is a question of procedural concepts of democracy ranged against consequentialist ones. Dahl’s classic definition of democracy - contestation open to participation - implicitly conceives of democracy in procedural terms because contestation and participation have one thing in common: the very act of contestation stems from the uncertainty of democracy.\textsuperscript{84} ‘...commitment to rules constitutes at most a “willingness to accept outcomes of an as yet undetermined content”...This is why procedural evaluations of democracy diverge from consequentialist judgments [because] “consenting to a process is not the same thing as consenting to the outcomes of the process” since one is consenting to a procedure whose outcome is necessarily uncertain (and may be unacceptable).\textsuperscript{85}

Dahl states that ‘substantive [consequentialist] democracy gives priority to the justice or rightness of the substantive outcomes of decisions’ whilst procedural democracies emphasise ‘the process by which the decisions are reached.’\textsuperscript{86} O’Donnell and Schmitter point out that the normative goal of political democracy per se may imply trade-offs ‘in terms of forgone or deferred opportunities for greater social justice and economic equality,’ but analysts have agreed that ‘the establishment of certain rules of regular, formalized political competition deserved priority attention by scholars and practitioners.’\textsuperscript{87}

Huntington’s method of measuring democratic consolidation by means of a ‘two-turnover test’ is judged in procedural terms so that democracy ‘may be viewed as consolidated if the party or group that takes power in the initial election at the time of transition loses a subsequent election and turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners then peacefully turn over power to the winners of a later election.’\textsuperscript{88} Although this perspective may cover up abuses of power (a transference of office holders may not necessarily mean a new executive) it is nonetheless a useful tool to deploy. Terry Clark

\textsuperscript{83} Shin, op.cit. p.137.  
\textsuperscript{84} Przeworski, op.cit. p.10.  
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid. p.14.  
indicates that Lithuania has already encompassed the essential component of democracy in which losers step down and turn over power to their elected opponents. '...the elections [of 1992] are notable in that a transition in party rule occurred peacefully and in accordance with democratic rules, a milestone not yet reached by many democratizing regimes in the region.'

As democracy is about competition and uncertainty, 'the crucial moment in any passage from authoritarian to democratic rule is the crossing of the threshold beyond which...[it becomes increasingly unlikely that anyone could]...intervene to reverse the outcomes of the formal political process. Democratization is an act of subjecting all interests to competition, of institutionalizing uncertainty.' Thus 'the decisive step towards democracy is the devolution of power from a group of people to a set of rules.' Horowitz supplies a caveat that where those rules (to which all interests are subject) empower one group - 'whose norms and practices are symbolically aligned with those of the state' (as in Lithuania's language law) - a democratic framework must incorporate concessions to minorities. 'Special provision is an indicator of [democratic ] political priority.' 'Purely procedural conceptions of democracy are...inadequate for ethnically divided polities, for the procedure can be impeccable and the exclusion complete.' Lithuania's Citizenship Law of 1989 was enacted alongside a Law on National Minorities which legislated on minority rights, and showed that Lithuanian nationalism was attuned to making provisions which went beyond a basic definition of procedural democracy.

Will Kymlicka has argued that 'respecting minority rights can enlarge the freedom of individuals, because freedom is intimately linked with and dependent on culture.' He seeks to redress the 'benign neglect' of liberal theory in addressing issues related to 'language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, education curriculum, land claims... which were all in evidence in Lithuania in the period under discussion. Poles and Russians sought amendments to the original law of 1989 (on National Minorities) which fell short of their demands.

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88 Huntington, op. cit. pp.266-267.
92 Ibid. p.31.
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One general point made in the literature on transition is the importance of founding elections. O’Donnell and Schmitter note that, ‘founding elections must be freely conducted, honestly tabulated, and openly contested’. In the Soviet Union, elections to the all-union Congress of People’s Deputies took place in 1989, and the republican elections in 1990. Linz and Stepan point out that as the former included reserved seats for communists they were less democratic than the latter. They suggest that all-union elections in 1990 would have shored up inter-republican co-operation and inhibited ‘the parade of sovereignties’ which followed thereof. Their perspective is examined in the Lithuanian case by looking at the consequences of the interaction between nationalism and liberalization in the elections of 1989.

Nationalism and Democratization in Lithuania

The literature on Lithuania has supplied empirical information related to the nationalist movement, Sąjūdis, and the extrication from Soviet rule, as well as considering Lithuania’s ‘progress’ in meeting democratic criteria. Anatol Lieven’s analysis is pivotal to this field by discussing the nationalist movement in Lithuania (and the other Baltic States), relations with minorities, and the historical self-image of Lithuania. Graham Smith’s edited book on The Baltic states: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, is an exception to democratization theorists as he gives an account of minorities in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and incorporates questions about citizenship and democracy. Alfred Erich Senn’s eye-witness account of events in Lithuania in 1988, in Lithuania Awakening, and his exploration of Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania, provide the reader with information that is invaluable for putting into an analytical framework. His article, ‘Toward Lithuanian Independence’ explored the role of the Communist Party of Lithuania’s (CPL) interreaction with both Moscow and Sąjūdis. V.Stanley Vardys and Judith B.Sedaitis have given an account of Lithuania’s historical roots, contemporary events and references to minorities.

94 Ibid. p.1.
96 Linz and Stepan, op.cit, pp. 379-385.
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The former has looked at the interaction between Moscow, the CPL, *Sąjūdis*, and dissidents in the period of liberalization. Richard J. Krickus has provided an account of Lithuania’s nationalist movement in the context of its role in precipitating the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union. He has also discussed democratization in Lithuania and the extent to which it has met democratic criteria such as rule of law, competitive elections and the growth of civil society.

I have drawn upon these sources and others to provide a more theoretical perspective in giving an account of the relationship between nationalism, on the one hand, and liberalization and democratization, on the other, which interacted together to bring about both independence and democracy. In order to appreciate Lithuania’s challenge to Moscow’s rule, I am going to analyze theories of nationalism and theories of democratization together to better understand both the underpinnings of nationalism in Lithuania, and how *Sąjūdis* drew on the nationalist impulse to extend the project of glasnost, initiated by Moscow, to bring about democratization and independence.

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Chapter 1

The Processes of Lithuanian Independence

In this Chapter I am going to give a brief chronological outline of events from the period of glasnost until the recognition of Lithuania’s independence in 1991, and the democratic elections of October 1992. I have also referred back to the occupation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union in 1940, the German invasion and resistance to Soviet rule.

Background

As a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939 and its secret protocols, Lithuania (along with Estonia and Latvia) was assigned to the Soviet sphere of influence, and then occupied by the Soviet Union in June 1940.\(^1\) This brought to an end the period of the inter-war Republic of Lithuania (1918-1940), and the authoritarian regime of Antanas Smetona (1927-1940) who had become President of Lithuania in a coup d’etat carried out by the army and supported by right-wing political parties (December 1926).\(^2\) One consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was a boundary change which enlarged the territory of the inter-war Republic of Lithuania in the south-east by the incorporation of the city of Vilnius and surrounding area where many Poles resided (the region is referred to as Wileńszczyzna by Poles).\(^3\) The Lithuanian share of the population under Soviet rule remained steady at 80 percent whilst the percentage of the Polish proportion of the population went up from 3

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percent in 1938 to 7 percent by 1989 (257,250 people) to form Lithuania’s second largest minority after the Russians (the population of Lithuania was 3,675,000 in 1989).

Central to Lithuanian territorial aspirations in the inter-war period was the city of Vilnius which historical memory perceived as the ancient capital of Lithuania. The city had been illegally occupied by a Polish general, Lucjan Żeligowski, and annexed by Poland in 1920 (the aim of Marshal Pilsudski, the inter-war nationalist leader of Poland, was to unite into a single state with Poland the land of Lithuania including Vilnius, Ukraine and Belorussia, which in the medieval period had comprised the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). Poles and Jews vastly outnumbered Lithuanians in Vilnius before the Second World War. The city was also known as ‘the northern Jerusalem’, and was a historic centre for Yiddish culture and scholarship.

The emasculation of political life during the Smetona regime contributed to the passivity of Lithuanian authorities in defending the Republic from the establishment of Soviet rule. Soviet sympathizers and non-communist left-wing Lithuanian intellectuals were initially included into a new government imposed by the Soviets on 17 June 1940 and ‘confirmed in office by rigged elections held on 14-15 July.’ Lithuania was formally incorporated into the USSR in August 1940. Leading Baltic politicians were deported to the USSR in July 1940, and Juozas Urbšys, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister who was in Moscow for talks was prevented from returning home. The Soviet Union later deported thousands of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian citizens in the period preceding the German invasion of the USSR in

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7 Eidintas, Žalys and Senn, Lithuania in European Politics, p.183.
June 1941 (to deplete the potential for organized resistance to Soviet rule). Lithuanian partisans fought against the retreating Soviet forces in 1941 and suffered severe casualties.

Lithuania came under German occupation between June 1941-1944, and this was initially perceived by many ethnic Lithuanians as a far less severe regime than that of the Soviets. Throughout this period Lithuanians collaborated with the Germans ‘in the killing of Jews’, and in June 1941 Jews were massacred in a campaign which proceeded ‘largely independently of direct German involvement’. This included the participation of sections of the partisans who had fought against the retreating Red Army. The pre-war Jewish population was reduced by ‘more than eighty percent’.

In ‘the brutal, many-sided partisan war of 1943’, Lithuanian forces who joined the German Police Battalions (a few as Nazi sympathisers, others to revenge Bolshevism, and under duress) often fought against Polish guerrillas of the Polish Home Army (who were fighting against the German occupation of Poland). The Soviet army returned to Lithuania in 1944-1945, and occupied the country for the second time. Lithuania was re-established into the Soviet Union as the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic and subjected to the politically centralized structure of power which operated throughout the USSR. All political, economic and social life was legitimated by the official Marxist-Leninist ideology of the ruling Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

Stalinism and communism inflicted enormous damage and suffering upon the people of Lithuania. Between 1944-1952 hundreds of thousands of inhabitants were deported to

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14 Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p.139.
15 Ibid. p.137.
16 Eidintas, Žalys, and Senn, *Lithuania in European Politics*, p.190.
19 Eidintas, Žalys, and Senn, *Lithuania in European Politics*, pp.190-191.
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Siberia. The deportations served to remove many opponents of the collectivization of agriculture, a policy which took place between 1949-1952. The Soviets repressed the Catholic Church which constituted an integral part of Lithuanian national identity. The symbols of the inter-war Republic of Lithuania were replaced by Soviet ones. Historiography became subject to state control. It was not until 1989, for example, that the Soviet Union admitted the existence of secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Soviet nationality policy was rooted in the incorporation of the eponymous elites of the Republics at the expense of other nationalities living there. Whilst the Soviet Union did not respect its own Constitution in favour of freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly and religious worship, national groups, such as the Lithuanians, were able to have ‘administrative, constitutional and legal expressions of nationhood in the form of union republic status.’ This gave official recognition to the Lithuanian language which enabled schools and universities to teach in Lithuanian, and communist organizations, such as the Union of Writers of Lithuania, to defend Lithuanian language and identity (although Russian was used in many official institutions and top level Communist Party meetings). Cultural and economic autonomy was also aided by the policies pursued by Antanas Sniečkus, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Lithuania (CPL), (1940-1974). After 1968, the Lithuanian language became threatened by the educational policies of bilingualism which favoured Russian in many respects, for example, the requirement to submit doctoral theses in Russian (1975).

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21 Hiden and Salmon, The Baltic Nations, p.129.
22 Ibid. p.129. Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.64.
26 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.95.
28 Ibid.
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Industrialization began in the 1950s after Stalin’s death, and proceeded rapidly, based upon de-centralized labour-intensive industries in addition to scattered large plant. The town of Sniečkus, for example, was built to accommodate workers employed at the Ignalina nuclear power plant (in the raion of Ignalina) which began operating in January 1984. It was staffed mainly by Russian immigrants. The consequence of rapid industrialization and urban growth created social disorganization, and prioritized economic production above ecological considerations.

Many Lithuanians resisted Soviet rule, and the first phase, of open resistance, ended with the defeat of the partisan movement known also as the Forest Brothers who between 1944-1952 fought a guerrilla war utilising the forests of Lithuania as their base. Romualdas Ozolas, a member of the CPL, who became a leading member of Sąjūdis (the nationalist movement) in 1988, pointed out that the intelligentsia (‘professionals and employees with higher education’) started to join the Party in the Khrushchev era (1953-1964) as a means to defend Lithuanian national identity when it became obvious that there were no ‘legal ways’ to resist Soviet rule. They comprised one-fifth of party membership by 1975. Dissidents learnt from the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution, the failure of the Czechoslovak reform movement and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia (1968) that legal opposition was foreclosed.

There were individual examples of defiance such as Romas Kalanta’s act of self-immolation in Kaunas (May 1972). Political and religious groups emerged, for example, the Lithuanian Helsinki Committee (November 1976) which monitored violations of human rights (the Soviet Union had been a signatory to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 which guaranteed human rights throughout Europe). Lithuania found another outlet in the publication of samizdat,
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and by the late 1970s Lithuania had the highest per capita level of samizdat publications of any Soviet republic.\(^{37}\)

Notably, from 1972 onwards, the ‘Chronicle of the Catholic Church of Lithuania’ recorded occurrences of human rights violations and the persecution of religious believers, and created an underground network of priests and lay people which was unprecedented in the Soviet Union since the war.\(^{38}\) The Lithuanian Freedom League was formed as an underground organization in Lithuania in June 1978 to seek independence for the country by publicizing in samizdat form the secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Its activities were curtailed by arrest and imprisonment in 1980.\(^{39}\)

Resistance has been linked to the smaller number of post-war Russian migrants who entered Lithuania than in Latvia and Estonia (the Partisan War discouraged Russian immigration, and de-centralization and cultural autonomy, pursued by Sniečkus, encouraged Russian migrants to live in the larger, more industrialized cities of Estonia and Latvia).\(^{40}\) In addition, the higher birth-rate in Lithuania which was predominantly Catholic was able to supply an indigenous labour-force for the industrialization that occurred after Stalin’s death in 1953.\(^{41}\) In the period between 1939 and 1989 there was a percentage increase of ethnic Russians from 2.3 to 9.4% (345,450 people).\(^{42}\)

Unlike the Poles, the Russians are not geographically concentrated but dispersed throughout the cities, where they comprised 64.2 percent of the inhabitants in the city of Sniečkus, 28.2 percent in Klaipėda, and 10.5 percent in Šiauliai.\(^{43}\) They occupied managerial, party and government posts, and also were employed in public transport, and in clerical and factory work.\(^{44}\) The majority of Russians (approximately two-thirds) trace their origins in Lithuania to

\(^{37}\) Ibid. p.254.  
\(^{40}\) Krickus, op. cit. p.293; Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.66.  
\(^{42}\) Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.39; Senn, ‘Lithuania: Rights and Responsibilities of Independence’, p.357.  
\(^{43}\) Ibid. p.357. The figures are for 1989.  
\(^{44}\) Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp.69,115.
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the migration that occurred after 1944 when the country was re-incorporated into the Soviet Union. The remainder is drawn from those ethnic Russians known as the ‘Old Believers’ who fled religious intolerance in nineteenth century Tsarist Russia, and from refugees of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The religious and political refugees were well integrated into Lithuanian society (as was the case for Latvia and Estonia too). Some remained in Lithuania after the Soviet occupation although many did escape to the West.

Russians in Lithuania seem to be more integrated into the Republic than in most former Soviet republics with a non-Slav population. The proportion of Russians who speak Lithuanian is 37 percent which is the highest of any other Soviet successor state. The settlement of Sniečkus, inhabited mainly by Russians, comprised a group (along with the military, security bodies and administrators of All-Union institutions and factories) who were distinct from Lithuanian society. Ethnic Poles were (and still are) concentrated in the raions of Šalčininkai (79.6 percent), Vilnius (the area surrounding the city) (63.5 percent), Trakai (23.8 percent), and Švenčionys (23.8 percent) (the south-east) (as noted above they comprise 7 percent of the population). They generally constituted an ‘impoverished rural community’. Under Soviet rule the Poles had increasingly turned to Russian as their second language facilitated by the similarity between the two languages. The policy of Russification also precipitated this trend as Poles learnt Russian for social mobility. Lithuanians, Russians and Poles comprise 50.5 percent, 20.2 percent, and 18.6 percent respectively in the city of Vilnius.

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47 Ibid. pp.139-140.
48 Ibid. p.140.
50 Severinas Vaitiekus, Poles of Lithuania, 1994, Vilnius, p.7. The figures are for 1989. The term ‘district’ is now used for raion.
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Glasnost

Gorbachev’s decision to implement the policies of glasnost and perestroika throughout the Soviet Union enabled the Lithuanian media to begin criticizing Soviet rule, and to discuss the illegal incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union through the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939 and its secret protocols. Vytautas Martinkus, the former Chair of the Union of Writers of Lithuania, pointed out that the weekly journal of the Union of Writers, Literatūra ir menas (‘Literature and Art’), became ‘a very important channel for the public throughout all Lithuania’ since ‘the majority of (talented!) writers stood in opposition to Soviet power.’¹⁵⁴ In April 1987, for example, Adolfas Eidintas, Deputy Director of the Institute of History, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, published an article in Literatūra ir menas in which he suggested publishing the secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.⁵⁵

Gorbachev’s decision to free political prisoners (from January 1987 onwards) enabled former dissidents such as Antanas Terleckas and Julius Sasnauskas of the Lithuanian Freedom League to focus publicly on Lithuania’s incorporation into the Soviet Union. The League organized the first unofficial demonstration in Soviet Lithuania on 23 August 1987, to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.⁵⁶ The participation of the Church in commemorative services represented an important step in the development of civil society as Catholicism lay outside of state control.⁵⁷

Founding of Sajūdis and the XIX Party Conference

In May 1988, Lithuanian proposals for change attempted to feed into Gorbachev’s strategy of reinforcing perestroika through the convening of a special party gathering to be held in June 1988 (the XIX Party Conference). The decision of the Central Committee (CC) of the CPL to select names for the list of delegates to the Conference (ignoring electoral procedures

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¹⁵⁴ Interview with Vytautas Martinkus, Vilnius, 20 February 1997.
¹⁵⁶ Interview with Julius Sasnauskas, Vilnius, 20 May 1997; Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.111.
proposed by Moscow) led to widespread discontent including criticism from reformers in the CPL. One author noted that, "the fire was kindled" by nowadays extraordinary "elections" of the delegates to the XIX Party Conference...which obviously did not conform to the spirit of the announced theses and recommendations of the CC of the CPSU.

At a general meeting on 3 June to share views on perestroika, presided over by the recently established Constitutional Commission, the authority of the latter was bypassed by demands to set up an ‘Initiative Group of the Movement for Perestroika’ (Sąjūdis), to which thirty-six members were elected, half of whom were Party members. Kazimieras Antanavičius, an economist, who was present at the meeting, stated that, ‘there was no discussion about the Constitution, but about the defects of living, of the Soviet system, the necessity to go towards democracy, a normal electoral system and self-government.’ Sąjūdis set boundaries to delimit the incursion of the CPL into what it saw as its own affairs but at the first meeting between Sąjūdis and the CPL (17 June) it was obvious that a process of transplacement was possible. Vytautas Landsbergis, a Professor of Music, who became the leader of Sąjūdis, recalled telling Lionginas Šepetys, the Secretary for Ideology, ‘that we would work against those reactionary hard-liners in the CP at first. But for those more progressive among the communists it is a chance to go together.’

Moscow sent Aleksandr Iakovlev, a Politburo member and Central Committee Secretary, and Gorbachev’s ally as a leading reformer, to Vilnius (11-13 August 1988), to assess whether the aims of Sąjūdis were compatible with the principles of glasnost and perestroika. Iakovlev supported the opinions of Sąjūdis and thus further opened up the parameters of

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60 Ibid. B. Balikièienè, ‘Praėjo tik mėnų’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.4, 3 July 1988, pp.1-2; The nationalist movement as a whole was known as Lietuvos Persitvarkymo Sąjūdis (‘The Movement for the Reconstruction of Lithuania’), whilst the Initiative Group became known as the Council of Sąjūdis following on from new elections at the Congress of Sąjūdis in October 1988.
61 Interview with Kazimieras Antanavičius, Vilnius, 9 March 1997; and see B. Balikièienè, ‘Praėjo tik mėnų’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.4, 3 July 1988, pp.1-2 for an account of the meeting from tape recorded discussions.
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liberalization. One of Sąjūdis' tasks in 1988 was to persuade people like Iakovlev that Sąjūdis was pro-perestroika and not pro-independence. Landsbergis stated that in 1988, 'it was decided not to underline independence...as an immediate goal...We spoke about democratization...perestroika, about free speech...Then Moscow appeared as more progressive [than the CPL]'.

After Iakovlev’s visit, a commission of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet (LSS) approved using national symbols of the inter-war Republic of Lithuania, and recognized the ‘important role’ of the ‘national song’ written at the end of the nineteenth century. The CPL CC also introduced a resolution which rectified some of the complaints that the teaching of the Lithuanian language in schools was being marginalized by that of Russian (20 August 1988). Lithuanian communists and Sąjūdis with the approval of the Politburo in Moscow then brought about the removal of Ringaudas Songaila and Nikolai Mitkin, the First and Second Secretaries of the CPL. Songaila was replaced by Algirdas Brazauskas at the XIV Plenum of the CPL CC (20 October 1988). Landsbergis commented that ‘we saw two wings and Brazauskas was the more progressive wing.’ Requests to elect the Second Secretary by Communists from within the Republic (as opposed to selection by Moscow) were voiced by many speakers in the Plenum, and shortly afterwards Mitkin retired by force of public opinion. His successor was Vladimiras Beriozovas, an ethnic Russian born in Lithuania, who was fluent in the language.

Shortly after the founding Congress of Sąjūdis (22-24 October 1988) a movement was formed in opposition to Sąjūdis (4 November) called “Vienybė-Edinstvo- Jedność” (“Unity”) whose

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67 Interview with Landsbergis.
71 Interview with Landsbergis.
72 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, pp.210-213.
adherents were mainly drawn from the Russian and Polish communities.\textsuperscript{74} Sajūdis mobilized against proposed amendments to the Constitution of the USSR and the draft of the new electoral law, because of the increased powers that would accrue to the Centre. The CPL held back from introducing a Lithuanian veto on Soviet laws (18 November) (as Sajūdis was expecting), and instead legalized the pre-war flag and national anthem, and made Lithuanian de facto the official language of the Republic.\textsuperscript{75} In by-elections to the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet (LSS) (15 January 1989), four members of Sajūdis (including Vytautas Landsbergis) were elected without prior approval by the Party.\textsuperscript{76} Landsbergis recalled the ‘solemn oath’ taken by Sajūdis members on 16 February (to commemorate Independence) that ‘we will work for, we are sacrificing ourselves for, a free Lithuania.’\textsuperscript{77}

1989 Elections to the USSR Congress of People’s Deputies

Sajūdis captured 36 of the 42 seats available in the Congress of People’s Deputies (CPD) (the elections took place on 26 March), and withdrew its candidates from the districts where Brazauskas and Beriozovas were standing in order to support the ‘progressive’ wing of the CPL, and to keep open a conduit for negotiating with Moscow. Brazauskas and Beriozovas were the only two CPL nominees to win seats in the first round of voting. Sajūdis’ share of delegates was additionally increased by the election of its representatives from the ‘societal’ organizations.\textsuperscript{78}

Beriozovas stated that the election was won by ‘those who went to the people’\textsuperscript{79} and shortly afterwards the Supreme Soviet passed a ‘Declaration of Lithuanian State Sovereignty’ (18 May 1989) in addition to four amendments to the Lithuanian Constitution with the expectation to increase Lithuanian control over the Republic.\textsuperscript{80} The Supreme Soviet became


\textsuperscript{75} Ibid. pp.66-67.

\textsuperscript{76} Lithuanian Way I, p.31.

\textsuperscript{77} Interview with Landsbergis.

\textsuperscript{78} See Tiesa, 29 March 1989, pp.1,4 and Tiesa, 12 April 1989, pp.1,4; Vardys, ‘Lithuanian National Politics’, pp.53-76 (70); Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp.144-145.


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the centre of all political activity' and a ‘diplomatic underground’ developed as the CPL opened up the Supreme Soviet to speakers of Sąjūdis, and to legislative proposals forwarded by Sąjūdis to prepare for independence (the Supreme Soviet created a Committee to plan for this with 31 members of which ‘only a few [were] non-communists’). These laws included the Law on Citizenship and the Law on National Minorities (see appendix). The ‘Baltic Way’ brought together people from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in a human chain to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

After the elections the nationalist movements of the Baltic States, referred to as Popular Fronts in Latvia and Estonia, met in Tallinn (13-14 May 1989) and established the Baltic Assembly which succeeded in persuading the CPD (2 June) to establish a commission to investigate the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (presided over by Iakovlev). In September, the Baltic Assembly was reorganized as the Baltic Parliamentary Group. Landsbergis stated that at the Congress, the Sąjūdis leadership opposed ‘every effort to limit the sovereignty of the so-called Soviet Republics.’ Iakovlev did not formally reveal the existence of the secret protocols to the Congress until 24 December when they were condemned by a vote of 1432 to 252. Nonetheless, his distinction between the legal accession of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union, and the invalidity of the secret protocols did not meet the expectations of Sąjūdis. By this time (23 September), the LSS had validated the findings of its own commission which denounced the myth of voluntary incorporation into the Soviet Union.

Following on from the elections, the Social-Cultural Society of Poles in Lithuania (SSKPL) (formed in May 1988) held its founding Congress (15-16 April 1989), and changed its title to the Union of Poles in Lithuania (ZPL). Artur Plokszto, a former member of the Union of

84 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
86 Interview with Landsbergis.
87 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp.149-150.
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Poles, noted that 'it was not possible to separate out the development of the Polish Union from what was happening in Lithuania. We needed it to be a political movement to participate in elections.'

Ethnic Poles residing in the south-east of Lithuania made declarations of territorial autonomy in 1989. At the founding Congress of Edinstvo (13-14 May 1989) delegates objected to an 'undemocratic' caucus from the city of Vilnius, and formed another group, the Socialist Federation of Workers of Lithuania, weakening the movement as a whole.

The Split in the CPL and the Elections of 1990

The CPL responded to Lithuanian nationalism and seceded from the CPSU in December 1989. The CPL's position was initially constrained by relations with Moscow, and as Chair of the LSS as well as First Secretary, Brazauskas was 'two quite different things', because he was accountable both to Moscow and to the emergence of public opinion within Lithuania. Brazauskas stated that throughout 1989 he had 10 meetings with Gorbachev, who 'wanted to influence me that this nationalist movement here should be ceased.' In addition, 'a special Politburo Baltic States Commission was set up, and I had to report to that Commission every second week about what was going on in Lithuania.'

Brazauskas had to find an electoral platform to differentiate the CPL from Sąjūdis in the March 1989 elections. At the Seventeenth Plenum of the CPL CC (21 February 1989) he favoured the leading role of the Party, and referred to ethnic polarization as a consequence of the policies of Sąjūdis. Brazauskas and other communists had recently been criticized by some representatives of minorities within Lithuania for the 'nationalist rage' at a mass demonstration organized by Edinstvo (12 February 1989). The replacement of Šepetys (the Ideological Secretary) with Valerijonas Baltrūnas showed that Moscow was still capable of

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89 Interview with Artur Płokszto, Vilnius, 5 May 1997.
90 See 'Kronika i Informacje', pp. 171-186.
93 Interview with Algirdas Brazauskas, Vilnius, 23 September 1998.
94 Ibid.
95 Tiesa, 22 February 1989, pp.1,2.
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influencing internal affairs by inserting a conservative into position. Šepetys stated that he was 'accused by hardliners and the Central Committee leadership for giving up the mass media to Sąjūdis'.

Following on from the Seventeenth Plenum, many support groups of Sąjūdis demanded that the CPL be made accountable for its criticisms of the nationalist movement, and the electoral results to the CPD probably demonstrated to Brazauskas the irreversibility of Lithuanian nationalism (except by force). The Party now stressed unity of purpose, and Beriozovas, for example, noted that, 'both the Party and Sąjūdis aim at achieving common goals of reconstruction.' Virgilijus Čepaitis, a founding member of Sąjūdis, who later presided over its Secretariat, stated that Sąjūdis did not step down its electoral campaign staff after the elections to the CPD, but continued working towards its next goal - the elections to the LSS.

Throughout 1989 the CPL had been debating its membership of the CPSU, and Brazauskas stated that 'in January of 1989 the idea to split from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was already mature.' In preparation, on 7 December [1989], by a vote of 243 to 1, with 39 abstentions, the Supreme Soviet changed Article 6 of the Constitution which abolished the Communist Party's monopoly on leadership and legalised a multi-party system. The Soviet Union abolished Article 6 in March 1990.

At the extraordinary XX Congress of the CPL (19-22 December 1989) at which Brazauskas favoured secession, there was an overwhelming vote in support of this by 855 votes to 160

100 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 17 February 1997. Čepaitis resigned from politics in October 1991 after accusations that he had been a KGB informer in the 1980s.
101 Interview with Brazauskas.
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with 12 abstentions and 6 ruined ballot papers.\textsuperscript{105} The party was now divided between liberalizers and pro-Moscow Communists CPL (CPSU). At the end of December, \textit{Sąjūdis} and the CPL agreed upon the idea of an Interim Council for Political Consultation in Lithuania,\textsuperscript{106} and had discussions on 31 January and 5 February 1990 to plan for independence.\textsuperscript{107} The first multiparty elections in the Soviet Union were held in Lithuania on 24 February (second rounds took place between 4 and 10 March), and returned 99 \textit{Sąjūdis} deputies (out of 141), 25 pro-independence Communists, 7 CPL (CPSU) Communists, and 5 independents. The \textit{Sąjūdis} deputies included twelve members of the CPL.\textsuperscript{108} The Union of Poles got ten seats.\textsuperscript{109} The \textit{Sąjūdis} majority met the two thirds quorum required for constitutional action.\textsuperscript{110}

\textbf{March 1990 to January 1991}

The vote of the Supreme Soviet to establish the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic as an independent Lithuanian Republic (11 March 1990) was approved by 124 votes for, none against and six abstentions (six Poles elected to Parliament abstained from taking the vote). Landsbergis was elected as Chair of the Supreme Soviet (the term Supreme Council was used in English), Kazimiera Prunskienè became Prime Minister and Brazauskas and Ozolnas deputies to her.\textsuperscript{111} Gorbachev attempted to restore control, and threatened to remove parts of Lithuanian territory (Klaipédą and eastern Lithuania).\textsuperscript{112} There was an influx of Soviet military into Lithuania as the borders were sealed.\textsuperscript{113} Within Lithuania 'popular demonstrations returned to their pre-independence dimensions.'\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{106} Lithuanian Way I, p.47.
\textsuperscript{107} ‘Lietuvos politinių jėgų atstovų pasitarimo, įvykusio 1990 m. sausio 31 d. Protokolas’. ‘Lietuvos laikinosios politinės komisijos 2-jo posėdio, įvykusio 1990 m. vasario 5 d. Vilniuje, Žinijos draugijos saleje, Protokolas’. In my possession.
\textsuperscript{108} Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, pp.234-235.
\textsuperscript{109} ‘Kronika i Informacije’, pp.171-186, (176).
\textsuperscript{110} Vardys and Sedaitis, p.155.
\textsuperscript{112} Senn, ‘Lithuania: Rights and Responsibilities of Independence’, p.359.
\textsuperscript{113} Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp. 163-172.
\textsuperscript{114} Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.239.
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Moscow threatened to implement an economic blockade (13 April) which came into effect on 18 April and lasted until 29 June when the Lithuanian side agreed to start negotiations. The tendency for Communists and former Communists to compromise with Moscow 'incited intense anti-communist reaction, especially in the parliament' which itself started to polarize between 'Left and Right'. This division was reflected in the conflict between the Supreme Council headed by Landsbergis and the government of Prunskienë and her two deputies, Brazauskas and Ozolas. As the blockade gradually ceased Landsbergis delayed the start of negotiations, but by autumn 1990, Oleg Shenin, a new CPSU CC secretary for organizational questions, was advising the CPL (CPSU) (the section of the CPL which had remained loyal to Moscow) on how to 'unseat the Lithuanian government', the KGB and leaders of the military were preparing for insurgency, and Gorbachev had no reason to pursue discussions.

Amidst the public perception that 'parliament works not especially fruitfully', Virgilius Čepaitis stated that Parliament was laying the foundations of 'successful work' through 'the activity of the commissions and other structures' despite being 'blackmailed from the exterior and the interior'. Čepaitis headed the Commission of the Rights of Citizens and Affairs of the Nationalities. Another Commission on Eastern Lithuania looked at 'the complex nationality and socio-economic problems' of the region (where ethnic Poles had declared autonomy in 1989). Ozolas, the vice-premier, was appointed to head the Commission on 6 July.

Poles within Lithuania were divided and confused, and mobilized in different directions. In March 1990 the local elections returned a majority of CPL (CPSU) deputies to the Polish-dominated areas which declared autonomy throughout 1990. Oleg Shenin visited south-east

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115 Vardy and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp.165-167;172.
119 Ibid. 'Kronika i Informacjone', pp. 171-186, (176).
120 Ibid. p.178.
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Lithuania for talks with local communist activists and advised on separation.\(^\text{122}\) The ZPL switched from supporting Lithuanian independence to supporting ‘the proclamation of a Polish National-Territorial Entity within Lithuania’.\(^\text{123}\) Nonetheless, there were many examples of conflict between the ZPL and CPL (CPSU).\(^\text{124}\) In December, the Lithuanian government sought direct rule in the raions of Vilnius and Šalčininkai.\(^\text{125}\) Russians sporadically protested in support of Soviet identity whilst the emerging RSFSR opened up talks with Lithuania (June 1990) and El’tsin allied himself with the nationalist cause.\(^\text{126}\)

**January 1991 to August 1991**

Most Lithuanians were expecting Moscow to use force to keep Lithuania within the USSR. Petras Vaitiekūnas, a former *Sąjūdis* Deputy, stated that ‘we were preparing a very long time for this situation.’ He recalled a conversation he had when visiting Moscow (December 1990) with a Lithuanian Deputy to the USSR Congress, Nikolai Medvedev, who knew that ‘something terrible...was being planned at the highest levels’. Similar information was coming ‘from all sides.’\(^\text{127}\)

Tension augmented when the CPL (CPSU) appealed for Presidential rule to stop civil unrest (7 January). The next day, *Edinstvo* and the CPL (CPSU) organized anti-independence demonstrations to support the claim that Lithuania needed central control.\(^\text{128}\) Prunskienė was forced to resign because her decision to raise the price of food (7 January) went against a prior ruling of the Supreme Council (30 December) who now saw in her actions a deliberate attempt to create unrest exploitable by Moscow (as the demonstration of 8 January seemed to confirm). Demonstrations continued throughout the week as the arrival of Soviet paratroopers supplemented units sent in December.\(^\text{129}\) Prunskienė stated that the price rises were used as a

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\(^{122}\) Šalčia, 29 September 1990.


\(^{125}\) ‘Kronika i Informacje’, pp.171-186 (180).

\(^{126}\) Senn, Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania, p.109.

\(^{127}\) Interview with Petras Vaitiekūnas, Vilnius, 8 March 1997.

\(^{128}\) Krickus, op. cit. p.299.

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‘pretext’ by ‘radicals’ wanting to overthrow the government (the Freedom League and the radical wing of Sąjūdis had also demonstrated against the government on 8 January). The CPL (CPSU) announced the formation of the Committee for the Salvation of Lithuania (11 January) (thought to have its roots in the ‘Congress of Committees of Citizens’ established in Lithuania on 28 April 1990 as a response to the Lithuanian ‘coup d’état’). On 13 January, Soviet troops attacked the television station and tower in which thirteen people were killed whilst crowds gathered outside the Lithuanian Parliament in anticipation of another onslaught which did not materialize. Further conflict was restrained by the strength of Lithuanian resistance, and ‘foreign correspondents’ who portrayed ‘the huge meaning’ of unarmed civilians in crisis to the world. El’tsin’s presence in Tallinn on 13 January to sign agreements on cooperation occasioned a symbolic display of anti-Soviet unity. He ‘urged soldiers from the RSFSR who [were] in the Baltic republics not to use arms against civilians.’

The violence of 13 January brought about a change in Edinstvo. As Čepaitis noted, ‘practically all the Russian organizations, even Edinstvo, said that they were against the bloodshed...after 13 January 1991 it was finished.’ The Union of Poles and the Polish fraction in the Supreme Council (formed in October 1990) made statements in support of an independent and democratic Lithuania. The Lithuanian government amended the Law on National Minorities (29 January) to supplement the rights of the original Law of 1989, and held a referendum on Independence (9 February) which on a turnout of 84.7 percent produced a 90.5 percent vote for Independence. It seems likely that after January 1991 independence was inevitable.

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130 Ibid.; Interview with Kazimiera Prunskiene, Vilnius, 4 December 1996.
131 Vmeste i naravne, 7 May 1990, No.12, p.1; Senn, Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania, pp.122,132.
132 Krickus, op. cit. p.299.
133 Interview with Kazimieras Motieka, Vilnius, 10 April 1997, a lawyer and former Sąjūdis Deputy.
134 Kolstoe, Russians, p.115.
136 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
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Lithuania and the RSFSR recognized each other as ‘sovereign states’ in July 1991 when Lithuania gave recent immigrants from Russia concessions to facilitate Lithuanian citizenship. In practice, the Lithuanian government controlled ‘(totally or partly)…economics, the banking system, education, transport, communications, and poorly…the eastern borders’, but not ‘state defence, western borders, international treaties, or diplomatic relations except with Latvia and Estonia.’ Poles within Lithuania renewed their claims to autonomy (22 May). The government of Gediminas Vagnorius (Prunskienė’s successor) drawn from the Sąjūdis faction and its allies in the Supreme Council was faced by diminishing support as Sąjūdis started to wither.

The Coup of August 1991 to the Elections of October 1992

Conservatives in Moscow responded to Gorbachev’s signing of the ‘nine plus one’ agreement in April 1991 (which upon ratification in August would have devolved authority to the republics, and made possible secession from the USSR) by attempting a coup on 18 August 1991. The failure of the coup led to Lithuania becoming a politically independent state ‘recognized by the world’s community’ in September 1991, and to the collapse of the Soviet Union in December. The Communist Party was banned in Lithuania immediately after the coup collapsed.

The Lithuanian government sought control over the Polish dominated areas, and arrested the Chair of Šalčininkai council and others (24 August) for supporting the coup. It dissolved the local councils of Šalčininkai, Vilnius and Sniečkus (4 September) for ignoring Lithuanian

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141 Kurier wileński, 21 May 1991, p.2.
145 Senn, Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania, p.152.
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Law, and implemented direct administration for a period of six months (12 September). The City Council of Vilnius resolved to extend the boundaries of the city by adding territory from the bordering Polish communities to create ‘Great Vilnius’. Ethnic Poles protested against this violation of their rights.

In October 1991, Landsbergis made plans for the withdrawal of ‘Soviet’ troops. Negotiations with El’tsin started in January 1992, and in July El’tsin announced that troops would depart by mid-1993. This was actually completed in August 1993 before both Latvia and Estonia. It seems likely that Lithuania’s liberal Citizenship Law (November 1989) contributed to this outcome which provided for automatic citizenship for those ‘who were citizens and residents of the Republic of Lithuania [and their descendants] prior to its annexation in June 1940’. Immigrants after 1940 and Poles in the south-east who did not fall into this category had two years to decide whether they wanted to become a citizen of Lithuania which was enacted by a declaration of loyalty to the state. The July 1991 treaty between Lithuania and the RSFSR waived the requirement that newcomers to Lithuania from Russia after November 1989 would be subject to a process of naturalization (which included showing knowledge of the Lithuanian language and ‘maintaining permanent residence for ten years’). The new law on citizenship passed on 5 December 1991 entitled those who were not residents of the Republic of Lithuania prior to June 1940, but who now lived on the present territory of Lithuania (enlarged by the addition of the Vilnius region in the south-east) to refrain from taking an oath of loyalty to the state (of particular relevance to ethnic Poles). The El’tsin government ‘praised Lithuania’s policy’, and in late 1992, at a meeting between

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152 Ibid.
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Landsbergis and El’tsin, the latter 'did not criticise the Lithuanian treatment of ethnic minorities'.

David Holliday, the British Defence Attaché to Vilnius (May 1992-March 1994), suggested three further reasons for Lithuania’s success in achieving an early withdrawal of troops: the absence of any strategic sites in Lithuania; the airborne and airborne training brigades were essential items to the reform of a new Russian military which wanted them redeployed in the Caucasus; Audrius Butkevičius, the Lithuanian Defence Minister, had very good relations with Colonel-General P.Grachev, the head of airborne troops (and from May 1992 the Defence Minister of Russia), and with a network of local Russian army unit commanders. Michael Peart, the British Ambassador to Vilnius (October 1991-1994), stated that on presenting his credentials to Landsbergis, the latter mainly spoke about how to achieve the withdrawal of troops from Lithuanian territory.

From September 1991 onwards, the Sąjūdis majority within the Supreme Council started to disintegrate, and by June 1992 the government itself was so divided that Vagnorius was supported ‘by three ministers out of twenty.’ Landsbergis’ efforts to become the President of Lithuania failed when a referendum on the issue of a strong Presidency (23 May 1992) was defeated. Brazauskas and the opposition favoured an alternative version of legislative supremacy. Vaitiekūnas noted that Landsbergis was aligning himself ‘with a radical group that will not be supported by the majority of Lithuanians.' Sąjūdis attacked the opposition as ‘”enemies”’ and ‘”agents of the Kremlin”.

Aleksandras Abišala (a leading right-winger) headed a caretaker government from July until the elections scheduled for 25 October 1992. The new constitution was a compromise model hurriedly approved in October to facilitate its submission to a referendum on the day of

156 Interview with David Holliday, 16 June 1999.
157 Interview with Michael Peart, 16 June 1999.
159 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp.205-206.
the election. It was approved by 74.4 percent of the votes (56.8 percent of the electorate), and set in place a legislature (Seimas) of 141 members elected to a four-year term.\textsuperscript{163} A system of proportional representation was adopted to try to ameliorate factional infighting (70 deputies were to be drawn from a system of party lists).\textsuperscript{164} The elections gave a majority of 73 seats to the former communists, and were judged to be 'free, independent and legitimate'.\textsuperscript{165} \textit{Sąjūdis} handed over power peacefully to the opposition.

\textsuperscript{163} Vardys and Sedaitis, \textit{Lithuania}, pp.206,207.
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Historical Self-Image of Lithuania

In Lithuania, references to the historical development and stages of the nation through historical memory were part of the nationalist discourse. Virgilijus Čepaitis, a leading member of Sąjūdis, stated that, ‘history is like an engine in society and especially in Lithuania. All the time history is present.’¹ His statement on the pervasiveness of history corresponded to his perspective that ‘nations are a natural thing for human beings.’² At a rally held to protest against Gorbachev’s demand that Lithuania rescind its declaration of independence (7 April 1990), Landsbergis, the leader of Sąjūdis, referred to a ‘golden age’ in Lithuania’s past to strengthen the resolve of the nation in opposing Soviet threats. He is said to have ‘cited the battle cry of Duke Gediminas: “Iron will melt to wax and water will turn to stone before we will retreat.”’³

Theorists of nationalism contest the role of historical memory and the past in their relationship to the nation-state. Hobsbawm and Gellner both view nationalism as arising from a transition to modernity, and therefore when nationalists ‘look backwards’ to a ‘golden age’ their purpose is to construct and invent the nation to meet the demands of particular nationalist aspirations and interests. Hobsbawm and Gellner deem that whatever is looked back upon is in reality fabricated by elites to shore up mass support for the new project of nationalism.⁴ Gellner states that nationalism may use ‘the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively’,⁵ but his understanding is that these are only building blocks to achieve cultural homogeneity for successful industrialization. In both cases, little attention is paid to the idea that culture and national identity may have its roots in a pre-modern past, and historical self-imagery is

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¹ Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
² Ibid.
⁵ Ibid. p.55.
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perceived as an instrumental pursuit of an elite to justify economic ‘progress’ (Hobsbawm) or the functional requirements of modernity (Gellner).

From the perspective of Hobsbawm and Gellner (whose stance on nations and nationalism is to look at economic and political criteria) Landsbergis’ statement is an instrumental manoeuvre to rally the masses into supporting a cause favoured by the elite - that of political independence. They would probably dismiss Čepaitis’ reference to ‘history’ as valueless nationalist rhetoric, because of his primordial conception that nations are somehow ‘natural’. For them, whatever historical images are presented bear no causal relationship to the actual identity of the nation-state, which is a product of the forces of modernity. Their views on primordialism would probably be shared by most social scientists and latter-day historians. Čepaitis’ statement on the ‘naturalness of nations’ was not based on an inherent theory of nationalism but a perception of its relevance to everyday life, and therefore is best described as ‘participant primordialism’, because he is depicting how he feels, rather than analysing a concept. Hobsbawm and Gellner place no value on nationalist ideology including perceptions of primordialism, because for them culture is more or less a political project propagated through the state and the education systems of modern societies. Hence Čepaitis’ statement on nations as a ‘natural thing’ has to be understood as a self-deluding perspective which serves an instrumental purpose.

Anderson’s notion of nationalism looks at the power of print capitalism (rather than industrialization or capitalist development) in facilitating the phenomenon of nation-states. He explores the interface between print culture and national identity, and posits that historical memory is created by the printed word which forges out a consciousness amongst a given territorial group of an ‘imagined community’ which then creates its own ‘imagined’ historical past.

Supposing ‘antiquity’ were, at a certain historical juncture, the necessary consequence of ‘novelty?’ If nationalism was, as I supposed it, the expression of a radically changed form of consciousness, should not awareness of that break, and the necessary forgetting of the older consciousness, create its own narrative? Seen from this perspective, the atavistic fantasizing characteristic of most nationalist thought after the

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1820s appears an epiphenomenon; what is really important is the structural alignment of post-1820s nationalist ‘memory’ with the inner premises and conventions of modern biography and autobiography.\(^8\)

People imagine their national identity through the medium of newspapers and novels which reflect symbols, myths and fiction back upon themselves to generate communal feelings where none would otherwise exist.\(^9\) Received images and fictive text enable people to imagine a national past aided by the configuration of a new sequencing of time which establishes a ‘temporal depth’ to the nation, and facilitates this imagining.\(^10\) According to Anderson’s analysis, Landsbergis’ reference to Duke Gediminas is fictive, because there cannot be a linear progression between then (the Middle Ages) and now.

In contrast to all the above, Smith discounts ahistorical approaches towards nationalism which dismiss the idea of there being historical antecedents to the idea of the nation. He states:

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\text{...nationalists are not social engineers or mere image makers as modernist and post-modernist accounts would have it, but rather social and political archaeologists whose activities consist in the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the ethnic past and through it the regeneration of their national community.} \quad \text{11}
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In Smith’s analysis, nationalism is ‘more than an ideology’ because it is an historically embedded belief-system which rests upon ‘specific cultural and historical contexts…derived from pre-existing and highly particularized cultural heritages and ethnic formations.’\(^12\) Smith depicts nationalism as a combination of subjective factors, in which common historical memories of a pre-modern \textit{ethnie} help to define a named human population. In Smith’s theory, Landsbergis’ citation has a validity in its reference to the memory of the ethnic group’s ‘golden age’, and has no need to be ‘demythologized’.

Anatol Lieven notes that, ‘People construct stereotypes not simply when looking at other nations, but also in thinking about their own and, like self-fulfilling prophecies, self-images

\(^{8}\) Ibid. p.xiv.
\(^{10}\) Anderson, Imagined Communities, pp. 24-36.
\(^{11}\) Smith, ‘Gastronomy or Geology?…’, pp.5,7.

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play an active role in shaping national behaviour. Looking at the historical self-image of Lithuania through the nationalist reading back of history identifies the extent to which or whether Lithuanian national identity has been invented, and may be useful in providing explanations for nationalist thought and activity in relation to democratization in the period 1988-1992. How far do the unifying myths and historical memories of the dominant ethnic group, the Lithuanians, place limitations upon inter-ethnic cooperation, or allow for democratic and minority rights? (How did Lithuanians relate their political actions to the historical self-image they created?)

Myth of Origin

Nationalist historiography often refers back to a myth of origin or a foundation myth to determine who may be included in the boundaries of the nation-state. Smith refers to nationalism as furnishing a ‘compelling identity myth’ which may either look to ‘territory or ancestry’ (sometimes both) ‘as the basis of political community’. In Lithuania, nationalist rhetoric often took the form of primordialism and perennialism in its underlying assumption that the nation had existed since time immemorial or as part of human history. Landsbergis, for example, stated that,

Fate, history or God - believe whatever you want - has given us this piece of land which has such a beautiful name: Lietuva. It was good enough for our ancestors to settle here long before our era, but we have a great responsibility to leave it to our descendants. This land and this sky unite us all who are here and who live in Lithuania.

One observer melded together an image of present day Lithuania with its historical past,

We should strive to fill each of our steps, words or actions with suppleness which later will turn into spirituality - the unity of beauty and virtue. I saw this perspective of civilization in Japan, which reminded me of Lithuania in its deep harmony of old, middle and new ages.

Alongside such perceptions of the nation as a timeless entity, the founding of the Lithuanian state is also located in linear time as an event which took place in the thirteenth century. An English language publication of the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, for example, states that ‘the beginning of the Lithuanian state is considered to be the year of 1236 when Grand Duke Mindaugas united a large portion of the Baltic lands.’17 The guidebook to the Supreme Council of Lithuania for the period 1990-1992 noted in its opening sentence that ‘founded in the 13th century, the Lithuanian state flourished...’.18 Algirdas Brazauskas, First Secretary of the CPL, in similar spirit, referred to ‘1253 as the date given for the founding of the Lithuanian state.’19

Nationalist memory generally dates the foundation of the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius, to 1323 because in that year the name of the capital was officially mentioned in letters which were sent by Grand Duke Gediminas to the Pope.20 In a speech, Landsbergis reminded his audience of this,

Gediminas, the ruler of Lithuania, who titled himself in his official letters as the King of Lithuanians and Russians and, though he was not baptized, built churches for Franciscans and Dominicans in his own capital, Vilnius, in 1323, by addressing the citizens of German towns, he expressed the will of the state “to strengthen the eternal union, peace, brotherhood and real love with all confessions of Christ.”21

Legend recounts that Gediminas located the capital of Lithuania by the Vilnia river after dreaming of an iron-clad wolf howling at the summit of a hill (the ‘Crooked Hill’) ‘as if there were a hundred wolves inside it.’ This fierce image signified that Gediminas would construct a new city at the base of the hill, and the howling symbolized its future world wide fame as the capital of Lithuania. Gediminas built an Upper Castle at the top of ‘Crooked Hill’ (now called ‘Bald Hill’) and a Lower Castle further down the valley at the foot of Castle Hill, and gave the name of Vilnius to the surrounding environs.22 Crooked Castle was burnt down in 1390, and the Lower Castle has eroded into ruins, but Gediminas tower (or Gediminas Castle), a fortification on top of Castle Hill (popularly known as ‘Gediminas Hill’) remains. It

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20 Kudirka, The Lithuanians, p.5.
is described as 'the symbol of Vilnius for the majority of people.'\(^{23}\) The architect in charge of archaeological excavations on the site of the Lower Castle which began in 1987 has determined that the Castle ‘started to acquire its shape in the 13\(^{th}\) century.'\(^{24}\) This kind of analysis enables the founding of Vilnius to be associated with the reign of Mindaugas so predating Gediminas by about one hundred years.

The Lithuanian myth of origin therefore incorporates both an immemorial quality to the idea of the nation and locates the founding of the Lithuanian state in a specific time (the thirteenth century) and location - ‘the land of Lithuania’.

The foundation of Vilnius is at the centre of Lithuanian historical memory and is coterminous with the feats of Gediminas, an ethnic Lithuanian Grand Duke who is extolled because of his role in constructing Vilnius, and the texts of 1323 are deified in a way in which other documents are not.\(^{25}\) For theorists of nationalism who take a modernist or post-modernist position (Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson), views such as the above are erroneous, because the nation is only formed in the modern era. The relevance of their perspective to Lithuanian nationalism is discussed in the conclusion.

Smith notes that ‘educator-intellectuals’ regenerate communities by constructing maps from ‘a living ethnic past’ which includes the ‘naturalization’ of ‘historical events and monuments of the homeland’. As Smith suggests, the Castle of Gediminas has become integrated into the Lithuanian landscape, ‘and treated as part of its special nature.’\(^{26}\) This ‘special nature’ represents the destiny of the Lithuanian nation, but not the nation of Lithuania.

**Lithuani ans as Special**

Lithuani ans portrayed a historical self-image of a ‘special people by references to their ancient language which was linked to an Indo-European culture of great antiquity in which Lithuania comprised a central dynamic role. Lithuani ans were also ‘Great Warriors’, who had defended their territory from the incursions of both the West and the East. The memory of being the ‘last’ Pagans in Europe also provided 'specialness' because Rome could not sleep

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\(^{23}\) Ibid. p.15.

\(^{24}\) Ibid. p.19.

\(^{25}\) I owe this information to Professor Stephen Rowell, University of Klaipėda, Lithuania.

\(^{26}\) Smith, National Identity, pp.65-6.
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until Lithuania was won over to Catholicism, and conversion when it came was from inside.
In addition, Lithuanians perceived the consolidation of the First Republic, based upon the
nationalist activities of an intelligentsia drawn from the peasantry as a unique historical
model of development, because it combined the values of a ‘traditional’ life-style with those
of modernity. Finally, the tradition of national resistance showed that Lithuanians would
struggle to overcome seemingly adverse odds.

The Lithuanian language reflected a culture which embodied the values of Indo-European
principles and was coterminous with the development of ‘civilization’ and Lithuania’s central
role in the formation of ‘Europe’. The main English language reference guide to the Baltic
States (published in 1991 by the official encyclopaedic boards of Lithuania, Latvia and
Estonia) gives details about the Lithuanian language and its place amongst other Indo-
European languages, the linguistic group to which Lithuania belongs.

What sets the Baltic States apart? In what way are they unique? It begins with
language. Lithuanian is a most archaic language. Of all the living Indo-European
languages, it has retained the ancient sound system and numerous morphological
peculiarities. Lithuanian is quite unique in the sense that it has a surprisingly large
number of dialects...for such a small territory.27

At an international seminar on ‘Integration and Nationalism in Europe’, the Lithuanian
speaker, Algirdas Patackas, a former dissident, linked Lithuania to an ancient past based upon
the ‘cultural-historical nation’ of ‘Indo-Europe’ which had formed ‘the core of our modern
civilization’ and ‘played an important role in the history of the world’.28 He attributed the
strength and endurance of this culture to its fundamental value of ‘honesty’ based upon ‘a
principle of harmony’. Patackas placed Lithuania at the core of Indo-European culture when
explaining what Lithuania could give to Europe. In his explanation, he cited from a 1920
philosophical writing by Vydunas:

Jordanus (a Gothic historian) called us the roots of nations. Lithuania is the mother of
Indo-Europe even though it is very difficult to believe in this now. The understanding
of the Lithuanian nation is Brahminical, different from that of the other nations ie
‘Such a nation is stronger which has a stronger power of humanity...such nations,

even if under slavery, remain. They cannot disappear. Such a nation is the most powerful.\(^{29}\)

He concludes by pointing out that, ‘no one missed Lithuania when it was deleted from the European map. But I am sure that something is missing in Europe. Something which cannot be expressed. And that is the longing for the essence/roots [ie Lithuanian]. Lithuania is the metaphysical forefatherland of Europe.\(^{30}\)

In the nationalist newsletter, one author reminded readers that to speak Lithuanian was more than just a linguistic skill. Thus, ‘To remain Lithuanian is more than not to forget the language. To remain Lithuanian demands one thing (which means everything): to secure the Lithuanian mind and character.’\(^{31}\) The author then elaborated on the special features of the Lithuanian character which were fused with an understanding of Lithuanian history. In other words, Lithuanians were bearers of a particular culture which influenced history,

In his soul a Lithuanian is not a man of a mass. He is a true individualist. A Lithuanian opens to a man not because of an instinctive urge of a man to be in mass (company), but only his innate inborn respect for man.

The humanism which lies in the spirit of a Lithuanian in the history of the nation materializes in idealistic principles which colour the history with dignity and honour. Our history is heroic, but not in terms of imperialism or militarism, not in attempts to reach power or worship of weaponry. It is heroic for its courageous defence of freedom.\(^{32}\)

All these special qualities enabled the activists of ‘national rebirth’ drawn from ‘within the nation’ to bring their ideals to the nationalist movement. It meant that the search for ‘truth’ was more important than ‘the gains of the hunt’, and fairness in battle was more important than success. Ultimately, ‘they worry more about the goal of the battle than about chances for victory. In this way, they express not only their individual character, but also the national character inherited from their parents.’\(^{33}\)

In more practical terms, the memory of a Pagan past demonstrated that before religious conversion to Catholicism, Lithuanians had a culture which was associated with a mighty


\(^{30}\) Ibid.


\(^{32}\) Ibid.

\(^{33}\) Ibid.
empire. This 'great warrior and royal tradition dating from the Lithuanian Grand Duchy of the Middle Ages' enables Lithuanians to celebrate the martial skills of Lithuanian Grand Dukes in keeping Lithuania pagan and special.

Language isolation must have delayed Christianization of the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. By 1200, it was the only European area west of the Volga where the ancient gods and spirits still were worshipped. Crusades against the eastern Baltic were engineered. In a magnificent anachronism, Lithuania struck back and created a huge pagan-ruled state in the midst of Christian Europe. Tourists can still admire the castles of the Lithuanian rulers.

This image is also important in allowing Lithuanians to demarcate themselves from Poles to whom they attribute the subordination of their state following on from the marriage of Grand Duke Jogaila of Lithuania to Queen Jadwiga of Poland in 1386. The conversion to Catholicism this entailed is widely regarded as being ruinous for Lithuanian culture through a process of cultural Polonization.

The memory of a pagan past became prominent under glasnost, and a participant at the first meeting of Sąjūdis with the CPL (17 June 1988) asked for the introduction of a pagan holiday: 'not so long ago the Latvians announced the holiday of mid-summer, a day of not working. Is it not possible to do the same here? The holiday of Rasa (Dew) would be met with the greatest enthusiasm...' As part of their Great Warrior tradition, the Lithuanians celebrate the anniversary of the battle of Žalgiris (1410) (‘Tannenberg’ in German, or referred to as ‘Grünwald’ by Poles) when the combined forces of the Polish-Lithuanian army defeated the Teutonic Knights in battle. The memory of this battle is important (despite sharing victory with the Poles in post-pagan Lithuania), because it demonstrates that Lithuanians were mighty when fighting the West as well as in the East.

When Landsbergis travelled to Poland ‘to participate in ceremonies commemorating the 580th anniversary of the Battle [he] chose not to mention the Polish-Lithuanian alliance in his speech’. Instead, he referred to Grünwald as being ‘a symbol of the courage and resistance of

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35 The Baltic States, p.6
39 The Baltic States, p.179.
the Lithuanian people. Lithuanians...defended themselves at Grunwald just as they are defending their sovereignty today." In July 1988, the nationalist newsletter published an extract from the local Kaunas press reporting on a meeting that had been held in an industrial complex to discuss the relevance of "Sąjūdis" to the workers at the plant. The newsletter referred to the date of the meeting as having special significance since it was held on '15 July (the day of the Žalgiris battle!).

Alongside the nobility, the Lithuanian peasantry is also depicted as being special for its role in preserving national culture in the context of Polonization, and safeguarding Lithuanian culture from the ravages of modernization. The Reference Book suggests that the role of the peasantry in Lithuania (and the Baltics) is of world-wide importance generally.

After the abolition of serfdom in 1861 market economy gradually took root in the country, Lithuanian farmers grew stronger contributing to the increase in the number of intellectuals of peasant descent which led to the growth of Lithuanian national movement.

During the late 1800s, a spectacular success story unfolded: within a few decades, those peasants became nations, with national cultures and a growing socio-economic basis for existence...The success of the Baltic peasants is therefore of worldwide importance. They did something right, and the ingredients of their success story are worth studying so as to help a large chunk of humanity...By hanging on to their languages, the Baltic peoples maintained a cultural compass...Faced with the apparent dilemma between economic modernization and maintaining their roots, the Baltic nations succeeded in having their cake and eating it too - like the Japanese.

Lithuania was also special because of its ‘tradition of national resistance to occupying powers...’. Lithuanians resisted the Russian Empire and its policy of Russification (1863-1904), and both the Nazi and Soviet occupations although the Partisan War which was fought against Soviet rule in the post-war period (1944-1952) has eclipsed the imagery of national resistance. Catholic nationalist resistance helped to alleviate those criticisms deployed by nationalist memory which recalled that the Catholic Church in Lithuania had acted as a bearer of Polonization. Catholicism became strongly linked to nationalism in Lithuania because of

42 The Baltic States, p.179.
43 ibid. p.6.
the role it played both in promoting and protecting Lithuanian cultural identity under threat, and in contributing to Lithuania’s role of strong resistance to occupying powers. In accepting Catholicism in Lithuania, the peasantry could easily combine the symbolism and ritualistic practices of Pagan faith with Catholic worship so that the two could exist concurrently.\textsuperscript{46} 

The clergy are remembered for their role in defying Tsarist policy through the development of a system of secret schooling (based upon farmhouses) to instruct children in the Lithuanian language using Latin print. Clerical literary and theological works were also printed in the Lithuanian-Latin alphabet across the border in East Prussia and then smuggled into Lithuania.\textsuperscript{47} The role of the book smugglers forms a strong imagery in Lithuanian national identity. In the same period, the Catholic Church forged a link between itself and ‘the Lithuanian speaking peasantry’ by the latter’s incursion into the priesthood and often prominent clerical positions.\textsuperscript{48} The struggle of Lithuanians against Russification in the period of glasnost drew strength from the memory of the book smugglers of the past:

Jurgis Bielinis - ‘the king of the books’, a famous book smuggler, the first who openly declared the idea of Lithuania’s independence...Now we say ‘no’ to the deceitful idea that it was safe for the Lithuanian word to be under the oppression of Tsarist Russia...The sacrifice of book smugglers is holy.\textsuperscript{49} 

The First Republic of Lithuania (1918-1940) was established through collapse of empires and military struggle, and lasted until occupation by the Soviet Union in June 1940.\textsuperscript{50} The passive acceptance on the part of Lithuanians of the violation of their liberty in June 1940, has provided a focus point in rallying resistance to subsequent forms of oppression.\textsuperscript{51} Lithuanians took advantage of the German invasion of the Soviet Union (June 1941) to immediately establish a provisional government and to declare independence. Although this was rescinded with the German occupation of Lithuania, non-violent anti-Nazi resistance groups continued in their activities up until the return of the Soviets.\textsuperscript{52} The bravery of Lithuanian partisans who fought against the retreating Soviet army in June 1941 has become an integral part of

\textsuperscript{46} Information from Artūras Vasiliauskas, research student, University of London; Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, pp.25, 52.
\textsuperscript{47} Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.17.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} ‘Kovo 16 knygnesio diena’, Atgimimas, 17 March 1989, No.11.
\textsuperscript{50} Alfonsas Eidintas, Vytautas Žalys, Alfred Erich Senn, Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918-1940, ed. Edvardas Tuskenis, London, 1997, pp.182-183.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.; Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, pp.80-81.
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Lithuanian memory, but references to their autonomous anti-semitism when Jews were massacred by these same forces has been excluded from this imagery.\textsuperscript{53}

Arūnas Bubnys, a historian, and author of a book about the Nazi occupation of Lithuania, gave details about the recollections of Aleksandras Bendinskas, a partisan of June 1941:

The Lithuanian resistance to Bolshevism was so tremendous and the rebellion was so wide...Everybody - old and young, even children - took part in the rebellion, grandmothers cried...Tears of pain were washed away by tears of joy. Rebels were met with blessings of grandmothers wherever they appeared. The rebellion spread all over Lithuania. It started with tens of thousands and ended with...even hundreds of thousands of participants.

The moral importance of the rebellion is invaluable. All the nation rose.\textsuperscript{54}

The Partisans or ‘Brothers of the Forest’ who subsequently fought against the Soviets on their return in 1944 are depicted as heroic defenders of the nation. They originally comprised soldiers who had served in the German forces, those who feared Soviet power because of their collaboration with the German regime, and others who fought for patriotic reasons. Catholic priests occupied principal positions.\textsuperscript{55} Later on, the deportations and collectivization (1949) increased partisan recruitment amongst the peasantry and general populace.\textsuperscript{56}

Arvydas Juozaitis, a liberal philosopher, who became a leading member of \textit{Sąjūdis}, described the Partisans as ‘heroes’ who embodied the cultural attributes of the nation,

\begin{quote}
A nation has a soul. An old Lithuania is about substantial, ever-lasting things. For these things, one can give his life. An ‘old spirit’ survives despite the instincts of fear.

That is why those who fought in the Partisan movement can be considered as heroes. They fought in the name of substantial things, because they knew that they could not behave differently.\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

Lithuanians regard their history as being both ‘heroic for its courageous defence of freedom’ and ‘painfully tragic’ because ‘small nations can exist only if they are ready to fight
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idealistically, although tragically.\(^{58}\) The Partisan resistance was integral to this historical image of Lithuanian history because in its fight against Soviet rule, the Partisan movement drew upon national resources to signify that the nation was still in existence, ‘idealism in its deepest sense was that internal source which nurtured our nation at the most tragic and challenging moments of its history.’\(^{59}\) One consequence of the Partisan War was that it had helped to slow down the rate of Russian immigration into the region\(^{60}\) and therefore could also be seen as a ‘heroic’ fight against extinction.

Writings on the partisan war have often presented the struggle as one between “the city” and “the forest”...the partisans were fighting to defend the traditional way of life.\(^{61}\) The presentation of the Partisan war in this way links into the pagan worship of nature in which forests are considered to be considered sacred places. After the defeat of the Partisans, Lithuanian imagery of national resistance draws upon the vast amount of samizdat that was published in Lithuania which surpassed by the late 1970s the output of any other Soviet republic.\(^{62}\) In particular, ‘The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania’, published by priests and religious believers to record violations of civil liberties, stands out as a symbol of defiance to Soviet rule.\(^{63}\)

From the above, it is obvious that defending the Lithuanian language would be prioritized as a goal of the nationalist movement, and that Lithuanians could draw on the memory of a ‘Great Warrior Tradition’ and resistance to foreign rule to secure their place as a nation-state amongst other nation-states. Lithuanian specialness is also derived from the ‘uniqueness’ of the peasantry which has preserved ‘traditional’ values, and a ‘unique’ Pagan past which meant that Lithuania could be mighty as well as different and alone (in spite of the more recent link between Catholicism and nationality). This tendency towards insularity is reflected in the Lithuanian imagery of being ‘perpetual victims’, and the need to maintain this image to the exclusion of historical facts about Lithuania’s past.

\(^{58}\) Sigita Samouliene, ‘Rūpintojelis ir Vytis’, Sajūdžio žinios, No. 20, 8 August 1988, pp.3-4.
\(^{59}\) Ibid.
\(^{60}\) Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.89.
\(^{61}\) Ibid.
\(^{63}\) Ibid. pp.255-256.
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Perpetual Victims

Nationalists often referred to the sufferings endured by the nation of Lithuania, and shared this self-image with many East Europeans including Poles, Czechs, Serbs and Russians. Lithuanian suffering was particularly linked to the period of the Second World War and Lithuania’s incorporation into the Soviet Union, and included the deportations that took place under Soviet rule, the deaths incurred by the Partisan War, and the policy of collectivization. The 1991 Reference Book to the Baltic States stated in the section on Lithuania that, ‘From 1940-1958, Lithuania lost about 1 million people who were killed, exiled or left the country.’ In an article conveying ‘some thoughts before the elections’ of February 1990, the author reminded the readers of this suffering, and focused on the period of Soviet rule.

Tell me, do you think we can find a worse imperium in history than the one where our bleeding motherland is being tormented? This is one sixth of the world where the leading monsters tortured, shot and exterminated more than one sixth of their inhabitants in laagers! No one will even get to know how many citizens of this imperium were dehumanized, crippled morally, disdained their conscience, pride and decency. It made people alcoholics, dunderheads, criminals and conciliators.64

At the first Sąjūdis Congress (October 1988), Romualdas Ozolas, a leading member of Sąjūdis, told the participants that,

The history of Lithuania is among the most tragic in all of Europe. Let us pay tribute to the victims of all of the genocides that have beheld Lithuania throughout the ages. And let us for each victim, as people now suggest, gather from the fields if but the humblest pebble, and lay it down to rest in a sacred place. But how would the morning sun greet such a foreboding pyramid?...Only in the brightness of the soul can we hope to discern the essential elements of any nation’s self-definition: culture, statehood, political life.66

Ozolas’ use of the term ‘genocide’ was often used in the context of the deportations. One author wrote that:

Some claim that neither Stalin nor Hitler intended to ‘kill’ the Lithuanian nation. That is, Stalin had no such intentions because there are no documents which would prove such intentions. However, we can see such intentions in his real actions...actual

64 The Baltic States, p.177.
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evidence of such plans were the deportations in 1940 when Lithuania was not even a sixteenth republic. Perhaps this was a part of the Stalinistic 'friendship of nations', implemented with the methods of genocide.\(^7\)

One observer pointed out that even those who 'obediently ingratiated themselves' with the 'occupiers' went to the same totalitarian meat machine of the occupying regime.'\(^6\) For those who survived the deportations, rehabilitation by 'moral or material compensation' would never be sufficient to offset 'the epope of human humiliation, depersonalisation, starvation, illness and suffering.'\(^6\)

Elsewhere, one author described how the suffering of the Second World War continued through the Stalinist policy of collectivization which left Lithuanians landless and forced them into 'depressing kolkhoz settlements.'\(^7\) In addition, rapid urbanization brought about cultural and moral chaos,

...for Lithuanians WWII did not end in the spring of 1945. At first by means of exiles, repressions, later by land reclamation, forced industrialization, falsification of history, devastation of monuments of culture, devaluation of the language, and finally by alcoholism, contaminated food, water and radiation, the war is still being waged. It has been fifty years now that we are in the situation of "necessary defence" since the threat of physical extinction is still looming over the Lithuanian nation.\(^7\)

Another author pointed out that the suffering of the war (the Second World War) 'lasted fifty years'.

And let us not ask them [those who died] why they suffered because the answer is already known. They suffered because they belonged to the Lithuanian nation. This is our biggest trouble and misfortune. We live in a tragic land.

...they deported us with our hearts torn by pain, our breast stubbed by Arctic frosts and hunger because they even spared us a bullet. A great part of our small nation was thrown into the pit of oblivion.\(^7\)

In one article, this tragic history was referred to as a means of explaining the strength of nationalist passion, 'We are not guilty that the awakening of our political consciousness is destructive. We were and are an enslaved nation and, if I use an old metaphor, we still seek to

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\(^7\) Vytautas Būda, 'Rugsėjo 28-osios aidas', Atgimimas, No.11, 17 March 1989, p.4.

\(^6\) Aldona Žemaitytė, "'Nusikaltelė', vargšas žmogau', Atgimimas, No.1, 1990, pp.8-9 (8).

\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^7\) Vidmantas Valiušaitis, 'Nepasakyta kalba Santakos parke', Sąjūzio žinios, No.18, pp.1,3 (3).

\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^7\) Albinas Bernotas, 'Už tai, kad buvo lietuvių', Pergale, July 1990, No.7.
destroy our chains. This sense of suffering was also linked to a feeling of isolation in which Lithuanians had simply been disregarded by the international community, ‘Lithuania was not only devastated but also forgotten by the world. A “black work” was done so thoroughly that it was no longer possible to explain anything to a foreigner.’

In a speech to a nationalist rally (9 July 1988), Sigitas Geda, a poet and a leading member of Sąjūdis, referred to a feeling of collective guilt for failing to maintain the security of those deported or killed in the war years. He suggested this had been brought about by relinquishing the once powerful state that had belonged to Lithuania:

...what shall we say to those who...are buried in the sacred Lithuanian soil and far beyond it - in every corner of the world: in Yakutia and Udmurtia, close to the Arctic circle or close to us, who were wrongfully shot down in the labyrinths of the homes and cellars of Vilnius. We shall tell them that we are one of the oldest nations on earth, that once we had a huge state but failed to sustain it, that we as a nation had to endure countless abasements and mortifications, occupations and uprisings, exiles and resurrections.

Nonetheless, the roots of this suffering went deeper than the Soviet period, and were evident in the Lithuanian self-image of a crucified nation which might be linked to Adam Mickiewicz’ depiction of Poland as the ‘Christ among the Nations’ in the early nineteenth century. Lieven notes that, ‘this conception of Lithuania is frequently drawn on in art and propaganda’. Related imagery portrays the ‘suffering mother-figure, often explicitly modelled on the Virgin Mary’ and ‘Our Lady with her heart pierced by seven swords.’ One author noted that, ‘Our Lithuanian tribe marches towards the XXI century. After having been tortured, devastated and enslaved, now it balances between hope and daily shortages.’ This melancholic and resigned feature of Lithuanian culture is reflected in its folksongs and hymns reaching back into antiquity, and is exemplified by the ‘Man of Sorrows’ (Rūpintojėlis), a figure of pagan origin although often portrayed as Christ, whose task is to carry the burden of

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75 ‘Sigita Gedos…’, op. cit. fn 16, p.1.
76 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.28.
the world’s grief, ‘...a carved wooden figure which, before collectivisation, used to stand outside many villages and is now re-appearing.’

The figure of Rūpintojėlis was used in the nationalist press as a metaphor to describe the sufferings endured by Lithuanians throughout Soviet rule.

Right after World War Two, We, Lithuanians, no longer built rūpintojėliai near our homes. The reason was clear - we did not need crucifixes because we ourselves were transformed into them because of the tyranny. [We became] wooden crucifixes [rūpintojėliai] with pain and Lithuanian kindness in our faces...

The Lithuanian image of the nation recalled a history that was tragic, but how far did it acknowledge the sufferings of other ethnic groups who had shared a historical past with ethnic Lithuanians? Irena Veisaitė, a supporter of Independence, whose family had been victims of the Holocaust, stated that at the first Congress of Sąjūdis, ‘the Jews had no place because they were excluded from references to the shared suffering as well as from the celebration of the nation.’

There was one group in Lithuania, the Lithuanian Freedom League, which did make a public statement about the deportation of both the Jews and the Poles when it organized an unofficial ceremony to commemorate the deportations of 22 May 1948. It asked that ‘...special religious services be held in four churches in Vilnius and Kaunas to commemorate the thousands of Lithuanians, Poles and Jews who were deported in May 1948.’ In a statement supporting this appeal the signatories asked that, ‘the Lithuanian national anthem be sung at these commemorations and that in Vilnius the Polish national anthem also be sung.’

Terleckas, the leader of the League, also wrote what has been described as ‘one of the strongest and most moving denunciations of Lithuanian anti-semitism and of the Lithuanian role in the Holocaust’. His article, however, was published in the Russian language edition

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78 Ibid.
80 Interview with Irena Veisaitė, Vilnius, 7 March 1997.
81 Ibid. See also Anatol Lieven’s interview with Irena Veisaitė, in The Baltic Revolution, p.140.
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of the Lithuanian nationalist journal Atgimimas, and therefore probably less widely read by Lithuanians.

The minorities were not totally excluded from references made by Sąjūdis to suffering and an article in The Congress Bulletin noted that, ‘...the status of Lithuania in the Soviet Union meant nothing but an unbelievably hard life for the Lithuanian nation and for all the ethnic minorities residing in it...Hundreds of thousands of residents were deported to remote areas of Russia.’

In a speech made by Liudas Truska, a historian, to a nationalist rally on the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (23 August 1988), he stated that ‘we must realize that all the inhabitants of Lithuania: Lithuanians, Jews, Poles and Russians who were deported, tortured to death in prisons, who perished in post-war fights were all victims of the Ribbentrop and Molotov Pact.’

Nonetheless, the main historical image was of the suffering endured by the Lithuanian nation rather than of all ethnic groups within the collectivity.

The Lithuanian Nation has always been Threatened with Extinction

Embedded in the Lithuanian psyche was a deep fear of extinction, and life under communism sharpened this historical facet of Lithuanian identity. Such a perception of annihilation was stated in simple terms in the Reference Book. Thus, 'They [the Baltic States] were submerged to the point where their continued existence was not manifest.'

Virgilijus Čepaitis, a leading member of Sąjūdis, referred to this in an interview. 'In Soviet times, the Lithuanian nation started to disappear. Inside the nation a danger was felt of a threat to the existence of the nation. When Gorbachev instituted perestroika it was possible to make open our feelings on this.'

He had spoken about this fear to the first Congress of Sąjūdis, when he cautioned against confrontation with ethnic Poles and Russians in Lithuania.

The last decades have developed an inferiority complex in many of us. We were an ethnic minority in the huge Soviet Union. The only thing which was left to us was to

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86 The Baltic States p.6.
87 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
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maintain the national feeling in our hearts and to express it often through hatred for the other, happier, peoples.\textsuperscript{88}

The industrial plants were the most recent and obvious evidence of the corrosion of Lithuania's existence as their construction had taken place without prior consultation with the Lithuanian people, '...the industrial monsters in Lithuania as well as strangling nature are not units of stagnation, but spasms of lockjaw for they happen without the help of our will. And though it is part of our lives, there is very little life in it.'\textsuperscript{89}

The Lithuanian speaker at the international seminar in Helsinki on 'Integration and Nationalism in Europe' told the audience that fear of extinction was embedded in the Lithuanian subconscious. The speaker wanted to show that 'Baltic separatism' went deeper than Western perceptions of it as either a romantic interlude of the nineteenth century or a 'destabilizing radicalism' bracketed as 'nationalism - separatism - terrorism.' Thus when considering whether nationalism was contradictory to integration he formulated a reply that expressed the need for the Lithuanian nation to survive,

\ldots one has to understand that the roots of such 'nationalism' are in our fear to disappear, not to exist anymore. This fear goes over to our subconscious. This is an irrational fear which developed as a result of always living in the shadow of genocide. Therefore, the search for independence for any Lithuanian is not a romantic wish, but a necessity. This is a metaphysical need.\textsuperscript{90}

Lithuanians had before them the example of the demise of the Prussians, an ethnic group closely associated with their 'genealogy', as a reminder that 'nations' could succumb to the normal processes of mortality. The Reference Book gives the background to the arrival of tribes on the present-day territory of Lithuania, and links these new arrivals to the roots of Baltic lineage.

Merging with the indigenous population in the 2nd millennium BC, they gave rise to the Balts, an Indo-European ethnic group whose descendants are the present-day Lithuanian and Latvian nations and the now extinct Prussians.\textsuperscript{91}

In a speech at Cambridge University, Landsbergis pointed out that the Lithuanian language was 'the oldest among Indo-European, closest to Sanskrit, at this moment it [the language]...

\textsuperscript{88} '...steigiamasis suvažiavimas', op. cit. fn 66, p.5.
\textsuperscript{90} Algirdas Patackas, 'Ką Lietuva gali duoti Europai?', Atgimimas, No.48, 29 December -5 January 1989, p.5.
\textsuperscript{91} The Baltic States, p.179.
unites a very small family of the Baltic languages - only Lithuanian and Latvian since two other languages which were known in the past - Prussian and Jotvingian - disappeared.\textsuperscript{92}

A more recent example of cultural assimilation was provided by ethnic Lithuanians themselves who had been subjected to a process of Germanization in ‘Lithuania Minor’ or the former East Prussian territory of what is now Kaliningrad. In the late eighteenth century, approximately 100,000 Lithuanians lived under German rule in Lithuania Minor (northern East Prussia), an area which in the nineteenth century was included into the nationalist territorial conception of the future Lithuanian state.\textsuperscript{93} The celebrated poem *Metai* (The Seasons, 1760-70) which was the ‘first major work’ of Lithuanian ‘fiction’ describes the experiences of serfdom ‘as well as the survival of the ethnic identity of Lithuanians in Lithuania Minor under the threat of Germanization.’\textsuperscript{94} This region - for centuries a part of east Prussia - had developed along different lines than Lithuania proper. Its Lithuanian inhabitants had long been influenced by German culture and followed different religious, political and social traditions.\textsuperscript{95} The loss of this struggle to survive was commemorated in prose and literature by the nationalist movement at the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{96}

The experience of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the subsequent Polonization of Lithuanian culture strengthened Lithuania’s resolve to seek sovereignty and to reject less than full independence. In Sigitas Geda’s ‘Address to Lithuania’, at a mass rally organized by *Sąjūdis* to meet the delegates to the XIX Party Conference on their return from Moscow (9 July 1988), he warned about internal disarray in Poland and the fruitlessness of former past unions between the two countries, and posited that Lithuania could draw on no other source than its own ethnic roots,

> We have once again to return to the firmest strongholds, to the heads of Lithuanians. That will ensure our survival not as a third rate nation, but as a unique nation among other nations, like a sovereign state among equally sovereign states.\textsuperscript{97}

Bronius Genzelis, a leading member of *Sąjūdis*, shared this view when he pointed out that ‘outside enemies’ were more threatening than ‘internal enemies’, as whilst the latter might

\textsuperscript{92} Kembridžas, 1993 10 12...Lietuva - kas tai?, Landsbergis, *Tėvynės valanda*, op. cit. fn 21, pp.25-32 (25).

\textsuperscript{93} Eidintas, Žalys, et. al., *Lithuania in European Politics*, pp.11, 85-6.

\textsuperscript{94} *The Baltic States*, p.188.

\textsuperscript{95} Eidintas, Žalys, et. al, *Lithuania in European Politics*, p.94.

\textsuperscript{96} *The Baltic States*, p.188.
immiserate culture and the economy, they did not threaten the existence of the nation. In a reference to the creation of the First Lithuanian Republic (1918-1940), he stated that, 'It was disappointing that Lithuanians had to create a state in a smaller than original territory, however, it was understood that any unification with other nations would kill the Lithuanian nation.' He also remembered the former project of 'Litbel' which had proposed the creation of 'a multi-national state' through union with Belarus. In his opinion, 'this idea would have made the Lithuanian nation disappear because the Polish and Belarussian languages would have been predominant!'

In the proposals for the Cultural Programme of Sąjūdis, Landsbergis described how the Jewish 'nation' had sought isolation as a means of preserving its culture, and considered that Lithuanian culture needed to be bolstered by the state if it were not to meet the same fate,

...culture, which was damaged and weakened and which now is threatened with extinction can show signs of a tendency to isolate itself, especially if it considers isolation to be its last chance of survival (in this sense the history of the Jewish nation can serve as an instructive example). Thus this tendency should not be condemned, since it signifies the understanding of a tragic situation and a desperate wish of a nation to exist. The situation in Lithuania is not yet tragic, but national culture, its presence and future should be taken care of in a different way than till now.\footnote{Landsbergis recommended that a 'general compulsory [national] education' should be introduced into Lithuanian schools in order to form a firm foundation to guarantee the survival of Lithuanian culture. Fear of extinction meant that the new Lithuanian state had to guarantee the right of Lithuanians to exercise their culture through state-led institutions. Lithuanian nationalism had before itself the image of a nation struggling to survive, and emphasized that external enemies were to be feared and guarded against.}

\footnote{\textit{Sigito Gedos...'}, op. cit. fn 16, p. 2.}
\footnote{Bronius Genzelis, 'Tauta ir suverenitetas', \textit{Atgimimas}, No.9, 3 March 1989, p.2.}
\footnote{\textit{Ibid.; See Eidintas, Žalys, et. al., Lithuania in European Politics}, p.23 for a reference to this conception.}
\footnote{Vytautas Landsbergis, 'LPS kultūrinės programos metmenys', \textit{Sąjūžio žinios}, No.15, ? July 1988, pp.1-3 (1,2).}
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The Memory of a State Tradition Was Integral to the Historical Self-Image of Lithuania

Hobsbawm points out that the memory of a state tradition has a ‘potential popular appeal’ for modern nationalism ‘whose object it is to establish the nation as a territorial state.’ He points out that, ‘it has led some such movements to reach far back beyond the real memory of their peoples in the search for a suitable (and suitably impressive) national state in the past...’. In Smith’s perception, the memory of a state tradition is not the product of ‘false consciousness’ but derives from the constant interplay between ethnic past and present and ‘through it the regeneration of [the] national community.’ Lithuanians referred to previous manifestations of statehood to justify their uniqueness, their right to independence, and their strength in adversity.

The author of the English language publication of the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, for example, noted that, ‘Lithuania has had a unique history. A small state at first, it was to become one of the largest in Europe in the Middle Ages. It stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea...’. Historians such as Vardys and Sedaitis refer to ‘the height of Lithuanian power, when the medieval empire was ruled by Grand Duke Vytautas (approximately 1350-1430)’ and link this to statehood, ‘once a large state - at the end of the fourteenth century it stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea’. Antanas Terleckas, leader of the Lithuanian Freedom League, asserted that Lithuania’s ‘700 years history of independent statehood’ helped to explain why resistance to Soviet occupation and the partisan movement had been stronger in Lithuania than Latvia or Estonia. The Lithuanian declaration of sovereignty of May 1989 included a recollection that, ‘Lithuania was independent in the thirteenth and twentieth centuries’.

101 Hobsbawm, Nations And Nationalism, p.76.
102 Smith, ‘Gastronomy or Geology?...’, op. cit. fn 9, p.19.
103 Kudirka, The Lithuanians, p.5.
104 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.6; see also Misiunas and Taagepera, The Baltic States, p.3
An article in the nationalist press posited that:

The Lithuanian nation is an astonishing phenomenon, of no smaller importance than the Jews or Greeks. The Lithuanian nation established a mighty state in the Middle Ages. So now being a small nation Lithuania can take a position equal to the big and powerful nations.\textsuperscript{107}

Lithuanians also remembered that their national attributes of independent statehood had been disallowed both under Soviet rule and the Russian Empire. In an article in the nationalist newsletter, the author raised the question of ‘returning to Lithuania the true symbols of the historical continuity of its statehood.’ He noted that,

In the course of discussion some workers questioned the importance and preciousness and the necessity of the old heraldic signs to the Lithuanian nation, which we had to forget not only during the Stalinist period but also during the times of tsarist Russia. (For this reason the story was told how in the middle of the nineteenth century the heraldic sign for the Kaunas region was the obelisk of the Borodino battle).\textsuperscript{108}

In a speech made on 16 February 1989 (the anniversary of Lithuania’s declaration of Independence of 1918), Genzelis pointed out that Lithuania had always been a strong state and one which had stopped the advance of Mongolians in the Middle Ages so showing to the West ‘what Lithuania really is…’.\textsuperscript{109} Drawing on this perspective of a strong Lithuanian state that was a deterrent to invaders, he attested that the belief in sovereignty was ‘alive in the XVIII, XIX, centuries’ and linked memory of a state tradition to justify Lithuania’s right to independence, ‘A nation without independence is always in danger of its existence…If a nation can develop its culture - it survives. If it has its own economy - it exists, but without political independence it only vegetates.’ He stated that his reason for looking at ‘the roots of the Lithuanian nation’ was necessary ‘in order to understand where we are going now’ and that ‘the basis of any nation is its moral, economic, and political uniqueness.’\textsuperscript{110}

The memory of a state tradition focused upon the ‘Grand Duchy of Lithuania’ and its Lithuanian state but marginalized references to the joint state of Lithuania and Poland as a result of dynastic marriage in 1386. Jogaila (the Lithuanian Grand duke who brought about the dual monarchy) has been labelled a ‘traitor’ by Lithuanians for linking together the destiny

\textsuperscript{107} ‘Ką gali Lietuva?’, \textit{Atgimimas}, 12-19 January 1990, No.2.
\textsuperscript{108} ‘Keistas reportažas: Atviras laiškas redakcijai’, \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.12, 23 July 1988, pp.1-3 (2). The Battle of Borodino is celebrated as a victory of the Imperial Russian Army over the forces of Napoleon Bonaparte.
of Lithuania and Poland (see section below on ‘Minorities’), and Lithuanian historical memory has excluded any connection with Poland from the greatness of their state. At the first Congress of Sąjūdis, Jogaila was marginalized whilst Vytautas (a Lithuanian Grand Duke who ruled within the Duchy) was extolled: ‘...nominal power was represented by Jogaila, while Vytautas (1392-1430) became the actual ruler. During Vytautas’s rule the Grand Duchy of Lithuania attained the peak of its power.’\(^{111}\) The historical image of the greatness of Lithuania under Vytautas is a powerful exemplar of statehood which ignores the realpolitik of the circumstances of the union, and depicts relations with Poland as anathema for Lithuanian survival.

**Lithuanians as Tolerant towards Minorities**

Nationalist speeches and literature often took the view that Lithuania had a history of tolerance towards its ethnic minorities. Vytautas Landsbergis portrayed this self-image in an interview when he stated that, ‘Lithuanians are rational and tolerant in tradition.’\(^{112}\) The author of the publication of the Folk Culture Centre noted that, ‘in contrast to a great many European countries, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was a paragon of racial and religious concord.’\(^{113}\) One author noted that,

> In the second part of the XVI century, Lithuanian economic and cultural accumulation was not as high as it was in Western Europe...But one position achieved by Lithuania was a very progressive one. In 1563 the Lithuanian Parliament (the Seimas) issued a law which acknowledged equal rights for all religions. It was possible only because of the Lithuanian archaic pagan past when tolerance was one of the nation’s greatest values.\(^{114}\)

At the first Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988), speakers tended to portray a historical image of good inter-ethnic relations which Sąjūdis was intent upon restoring and maintaining. Vytautas Petkevičius, a writer, who was involved with Sąjūdis in its early stages, noted that,

> It seems that all ethnic minorities in Lithuania agree with our aims. But when the question comes about the Lithuanian language, they accuse us of being nationalists,

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\(^{110}\) Ibid.


\(^{112}\) Interview with Professor Landsbergis, Vilnius, 15 May 1997.

\(^{113}\) Kudirka, *The Lithuanians*, p.5.

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separatists, fascists and something else, as if the Russian language is the only tool of international communication. I want to say that we are definitely against such slogans and regard them as an insult to our nation. We are not nationalists. We have never been like this, we are not like this and we never will be. This is not a declaration but a natural, historically developed tradition in the Lithuanian nation.  

Algirdas Brazauskas made a similar point in his speech to the Congress,

The awakening of Lithuanian self-consciousness does not give any reason to worry for the representatives of other nationalities in Lithuania or to mistrust our nation. Hundreds of years living together is the best evidence that Lithuanians want and know how to communicate with everyone who respects our language, history, a national school and culture, traditions and life style.

One delegate to the Congress (A. Žebru纳斯) pointed out that,

People of all nationalities can take part in Sąjūdis. The relations between the ethnic minorities in Lithuania have been forming for centuries and have old traditions. The last time these traditions were broken off was in 1940. The motto then was “May all the nations flourish in Lithuania”. Two months later all the Jewish, German and Polish schools and newspapers were closed down. The task of Sąjūdis is to help restore the ethnic minorities which were destroyed in 1940.

An article in the nationalist press posited that,

...freedom for Lithuania means freedom for Catholics, Judaists, Orthodox, Reformists and unbaptized pagans; freedom for Lithuanians, Belarussians, Poles, Jews, Karaites, Gypsies and Russians.

Lithuanians often mention that Jews and other minorities were ‘invited’ into Lithuania under the rule of Gediminidas which links into the historical image of a ‘tolerant’ nation.

...but Poles threaten Lithuanian Culture and Territory

Nonetheless, this view of inter-ethnic harmony existed alongside accounts of the different historical relations that Lithuanians had experienced with each of its particular ethnic groups. Lithuania’s relationship with its ethnic Polish minority was mediated by the memory of Grand Duke Jogaila’s marriage into the Kingdom of Poland (1386) from which Lithuanians trace the

116 ibid. p.2.
subordination of their culture and state to a process of cultural Polonization.\(^{119}\) Rowell points out that, ‘real politicians of the stature of Jogaila and Vytautas have been largely erased from history to be replaced by superheroic national ciphers, and the Gediminid line almost overlooked so that historians could interpret the dynastic relationship between the two cousins as the subordination of one state, Lithuania, to another, Poland. The Lithuanian reaction has been to caricature Jogaila as “Polish” and deify Vytautas.\(^{120}\)

Hobsbawm’s point on the possible divisiveness of a shared common religion\(^{121}\) is illustrated by Lithuanian perceptions of the Polonization of its educated classes and nobility. Part of Jogaila’s marriage agreement was to baptize Lithuania’s pagans into the Catholic Church, and the Church’s role as a bearer of Polonization is still an important memory for some Lithuanian nationalists and clerics alike.\(^{122}\) In addition, pre-War Polish perceptions of Lithuania as an inferior nation - an ‘assemblage of peasants’ - are coupled with the memories of Lithuanian priests who served in Poland in the inter-war period, and who were treated with disdain. This has led to clerical resistance to suggestions that Polish-speaking priests serve in predominantly ethnic Polish parishes in Lithuania lest the Lithuanian language be opened up to the corruptive influence of Polonization.\(^{123}\)

In the inter-war period foreign policy had been overshadowed by the Polish seizure of Vilnius which Lithuanian historical memory perceived as their ancient historical capital, and as a result effectively severed all links between Poland and Lithuania.\(^{124}\) The emergence of glasnost facilitated discussion of this era, and one prevalent memory was based on the claim that ‘Vilnius was occupied unjustly in 1920’.\(^{125}\) Whilst it is true that the Poles illegally crossed the Curzon line, Lithuanian memory rarely mentions that after the First World War, Vilnius briefly came under Lithuania’s jurisdiction through the Bolsheviks, who having acquired it in their war against Poland, then gave the city to Lithuania ‘in exchange for


\(^{120}\) ibid.

\(^{121}\) Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism, pp.67-73.

\(^{122}\) Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.52,165.

\(^{123}\) ibid.pp.164-165.


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friendly neutrality. Historical memory often fails to recall that Vilnius was established as the capital of Lithuania by Stalin as part of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols which illegally incorporated Lithuania into the Soviet Union. The 1991 Reference Book points out that,

Soviet pressure and a complicated international situation forced Lithuania to sign an agreement with the USSR on October 10, 1939, by which Lithuania was given back the city of Vilnius and the part of Vilnius region seized by the Red Army during the Polish-Soviet war...

Another aspect of ‘forgetting’ is that before the Second World War demographic data shows that Poles and Jews vastly outnumbered Lithuanians in Vilnius. The re-population of the city after the War by ethnic Lithuanians was made possible by the vastly decreased numbers of Poles, especially from amongst the intelligentsia, who were deported, shot or allowed to emigrate to Poland by Soviet forces. The Jews of Vilnius were nearly all exterminated by the Nazis, and in this were assisted by the local administration staffed by Lithuanians which was installed by the German authorities.

As well as ‘forgetting’, sometimes ‘false memory’ was inserted into Lithuania’s self-image. A claim amongst some nationalists was that ethnic Poles in Lithuania were in reality Polonized Lithuanians who should be brought back to their Lithuanian roots. Lieven states that the guide on the Baltic States (published in 1991) dates this process of Polonization to “the nineteenth and twentieth centuries”, an assertion which is absurd as well as provocative. Hence Lithuanians were trying to include ethnic Poles within a myth of common descent regardless of what Poles themselves actually thought about their own identity and origins.

An article in the nationalist press captured the points made above on fear of Poland, the situation of Vilnius, and Lithuania as a perpetual victim:

126 ibid. p.340
129 Snyder, 'National Myths...', op. cit. fn 125, p.340.
130 Durant and Zubek, 'Eastern Europe's Old Memories...', op. cit. fn 124, p.376.
131 Ibid.
133 ibid.
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...Lithuanians have always thought about Poles, but Poles have never thought about Lithuanians. Even though there are only 270,000 Poles in Lithuania, they still have the psychology of a nation of 40 million... The Polish Association in Lithuania should also feel guilty about the present situation [ie conflicts between Lithuanians and Poles]... It would be interesting to get to know how the Polish Cultural Association views the Lithuanian past. It seems they regard the south-east of Lithuania as their own land.  

At a nationalist rally (9 July 1988), Sigitas Geda expressed the view that Poland still represented a threat to Lithuania,

Devastated by socialism, Poland can bring to Lithuania many threatening and alien things. With all my respect to this nation to which our country has been tied by numerous heartbreaking frustrations and apparitions, I cannot calmly watch its dramatic, convulsive efforts at trying to find the right way. We have to look for our own way, to keep to our customs and traditions, to our cultural heritage.

Fear of Polonization elicited strong responses to suggestions that ethnic Poles should be treated as a group with special cultural rights:

[A previous article] implies that Lithuania can be divided into Lithuania and Vilnija... why does the author suggest that we forget our historical questions? In order not to understand each other again? We accept the Polish nationality in Lithuania. However, we also want to say to Poles that Lithuania is with Lithuanian universities where all Lithuanian citizens will study, that the official Lithuanian language is Lithuanian, and that all nations are equally respected in Lithuania, independent of the number of their representatives. Therefore we will give no exceptions to Poles, Tatars, Kazaks.

Linked to the memory of Polonization was the view that Lithuania was threatened both by the overt cultural posturings of Poland and by the machinations of the Russian Empire. Snyder states that, 'Lithuanian patriots had to displace Polish as the language of culture before they could help to gather a united nation against the Russian empire. In the 1990s, some Lithuanian patriots retain this frame of reference. Lithuanian rebirth is seen as a struggle against Polish culture and Russian power.' Genzelis made this point in a speech in the Academic Theatre of the LSSR to mark Lithuania’s Declaration of Independence (16 February 1918):

135 ‘Sigito Gedos...’, op. cit. fn 16, p.2.
137 Snyder, ‘National Myths...’, op. cit. fn 125, p.338.
138 Ibid.
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[having experienced Polonization]...Only in the nineteenth century, our nation finally understood that the main enemy of our nation is Russian imperialism. That is why our nation woke up again - because of the natural instinct to survive.\textsuperscript{139}

\textit{Jews contributed greatly towards Lithuanian Culture}

Smith’s point that nationalist memory is selective can be illustrated by reference to the Holocaust in Lithuania.\textsuperscript{140} Tomas Venclova, a Lithuanian exile, states that many intellectuals in Lithuania express the positive contribution of Jewish culture to the country, but ‘whenever the question touches upon those Lithuanians who took part in the Holocaust, any serious discussion is avoided by all means.’\textsuperscript{141} There are examples in nationalist literature and speeches of the celebration of Jewish culture as well as references to the extermination of Jews although a specific mention of ‘Lithuanian’ participation in this is overlooked.

The 1991 \textit{Reference Book} notes for Lithuania that, ‘In 1989, the number of Jews was 12,300 (195,000 Jews were exterminated by the Nazis in 1941).’\textsuperscript{142} In the section on Lithuanian History it is stated that ‘...about 200,000 Lithuanian Jews were massacred by the Nazis and their collaborationists’\textsuperscript{143} At a Press Conference held during the Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988), Liudas Truska, a historian, commented that, ‘historians have been writing about [Nazi atrocities] for forty years, whereas not a single line was written about Stalinist crimes; they were considered blanks in our history. And it’s quite natural that we tend to focus on them now. During the years of Nazi occupation over 230,000 Lithuanian citizens were killed; 200,000 of them were Jews.’\textsuperscript{144}

In a speech to a nationalist rally, Sigitas Geda linked historical memory of Jews within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to a celebration of Vilnius as a multicultural city which gave Lithuania a special status amongst the Baltic States. He stated that, ‘With Vilnius we inherit the cultural tradition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but possession of Kaunas alone equals us to the status which both Latvia and Estonia have.’\textsuperscript{145} He referred to Oskar Milašius’

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\textsuperscript{139} Bronius Genzelis, ‘Tauta ir suverenitetas’, \textit{Atgimimas}, No.9, 3 March 1989, p.2.
\textsuperscript{140} Smith, ‘Gastronomy or Geology?...’, op. cit. fn 9, p.19.
\textsuperscript{142} \textit{The Baltic States}, p.177.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid. p.180.
\textsuperscript{144} ‘Yesterday at the Press-Centre’, \textit{The Congress Bulletin}, No.4, 24 October 1988, pp.3-4 (3).
\textsuperscript{145} ‘Sigito Gedos...’, op. cit. fn 16.

\vspace{1cm} 81
description of Vilnius as ‘the Athens of the North’, and then cited a comment made by a Hungarian contemporary that “‘only through the history of Lithuania can we fully trace, comprehend and explain the histories of many Central and Eastern European countries, since it is the complete and most unique historical model.’”

Geda seems to regard this history as being exemplified by the multiculturalism of Vilnius. He states,

Lithuania needs Vilnius with every brick in it, every church, monastery or convent, orthodox church, medreseh... And without any doubt we need this city with a synagogue or synagogues since Vilnius is also a holy city for another nation, for Jews, plying an everlasting diaspora.

Whilst this memory celebrates the previous ethnic mix of a ‘golden age’, Geda locates the decline of these ‘utopias’ as taking place under Soviet rule,

...where dismal anxiety, darkness and thriving animosity prevail. Where atheists would not listen to believers, Communists to non-party members, Lithuanians to Russians and Russians to Poles or Tartars.’

His latter citation neither mentions Jews nor makes any reference to the Holocaust, and therefore leaves unmentioned a whole area of Lithuanian history. Venclova states that Lithuanian intellectuals are more likely ‘to express comprehension and compassion with the Jews’ than to make any particular references to the Holocaust. In his opening speech to the first Jewish art exhibition in Kaunas (1988), Virgilijus Ėpaitis made veiled references to the Holocaust amidst comments on the achievements of Jewish-Lithuanian culture and the shared history of the two people.

We, Lithuanians, already for hundreds of years live together with Jewish people, the nation which was dispersed around the world suffered a lot but fantastically is alive. During these hundreds of years there was everything in the relations between our nations. Moreover, historians stated at the beginning of this century that the Jewish community felt quite secure in Lithuania which had long traditions of tolerance. The evidence of this tradition is the prosperity of Jewish culture in our country during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as during the first decades of this century.

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146 Sigito Gedos…’, op. cit. fn 16, p.2. Oskar Milašius was a nineteenth century Lithuanian playwright.
147 Ibid.
148 Ibid.
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Lithuanian-Jewish relations were darkened by political processes in the middle of this century which were not dependent on the will of a small nation. And as a result of this almost all Lithuanian Jews died and many of them had the destiny of the deported.\footnote{The Opening of the Jewish Exhibition in Kaunas, dated 10 August 1988, in my possession.}

At the first Congress of Sąjūdis, Emmanuel Zingeris, a Jewish spokesperson for Sąjūdis on Jewish matters, gave a brief summary of Jewish history in Lithuania which did not mention Lithuanian participation in the Holocaust. He stated that,

If Lithuanians regain their history so will the Jews. Since the Jewish Community was liquidated due to the long-term pre-war and post-war policies of the great empires, we now need special support from the State in order to restore national education, normal religious life and cultural activities.\footnote{From the Reports, The Congress Bulletin, No.4, 24 October 1988, pp.5-6 (6).}

Lithuanian historical memory tended towards a celebration of cultural tolerance and achievement, but Jews in Lithuania considered their status to be that of an ‘outsider’. This is illustrated by a speech made in the Cathedral Square to mark Lithuania’s Independence Day, in which the speaker differentiated between ‘us’ (Jews) and ‘you’ (Lithuanians):

We, Jews, are not the stepsons of Lithuania, but real sons. Even though we are not loved by everyone, but we are Lithuania’s sons. That is why 16 February is a big day for us, as well as for you, a big day...\footnote{Grigorijus Kanovičius, ‘Neklauskim meilės tautybes’, Atgimimas, No.9, 3 March 1989, p.2.}

References to the richness of a Jewish cultural past obscured more pertinent questions about the Holocaust, and relations between Poles and Lithuanians were seen through the prism of a shared historical past which had brought Lithuanian culture to the point of extinction. As noted above, Lithuania portrayed itself as a nation of ‘perpetual victims’, and its stress on tolerance towards minorities helped to sustain ‘the myth of national innocence.’ This required forgetting that ‘the Lithuanian state gained Vilnius after each world war by way of help from Moscow and that the LSSR was able to populate the city with Lithuanians because so many of its previous residents were dead or in exile.’\footnote{The Opening of the Jewish Exhibition in Kaunas, dated 10 August 1988, in my possession.}

Memory of the First Republic 1918-1940

The memory of the First Republic was integral to Sąjūdis because it provided a historical model for Lithuanian independence which the nationalist movement could refer to. Memories

\footnote{The Opening of the Jewish Exhibition in Kaunas, dated 10 August 1988, in my possession.}
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of the First Republic tended to emphasise its cultural achievements in consolidating Lithuanian ethno-history such as ‘the development of the press as well as literature, music, arts and theatre’ and an educational system which used ‘Lithuanian as the language of tuition’ based upon ‘the educational principles of Western Europe’. The 1991 Reference Book points out that in 1922 the University of Vytautas the Great was established in Kaunas. The image of the First Republic neglected any real analysis of the circumstances of its decline into authoritarian rule in 1926. Instead it was celebrated for the achievements of the intelligentsia in ‘finding’ Lithuanian history as an example of the similar task facing Sajūdis.

Nationalists of the Sajūdis period attested to the role of nineteenth century nationalist leaders in carrying out historical research and documentation to create a storehouse of memories for future generations. An article in the nationalist newsletter reminded Sajūdis of the importance of this history,

..."People who do not know their history will always remain children" - patriarch of the Lithuanian nation Jonas Basanavičius used this ancient maxim as the motto on the first issue of Aušra ('The Dawn') which was published in Prussia. Already at that time enlightened Lithuanians knew that a nation without memories had no future. At the end of the nineteenth century the Lithuanian national movement started to find history again.

The author referred to Sajūdis as having to face the same problem of recreating Lithuanian national history in order to stop the dissolution of the ethnic group. In this task, it was necessary to have the right ‘teachers’ in positions of power and influence,

Today we again speak about history. After a hundred years we again realized that we had been robbed of our history. It is very convenient for someone to keep the whole nation in the status of children who can be ordered around at every step...constantly suppressing their initiative and curiosity till they become without willpower and honour and without any capability to oppose the influence of their teachers. Therefore history is carefully kept under covers since its lessons could teach a lot.

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155 Ibid. p.187.
156 Ibid. p.187.
158 Ibid.
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The Soviet policy of eradicating history was linked to the continuation of the policies pursued by the Russian imperial state of undermining the 'morality' of the Lithuanian people,

After the third partition of the Lithuanian-Polish state, tzarina Ekaterina asked...the French writer Voltaire what is the quickest way to denationalization...Voltaire answered, “First of all you have to undermine people’s morality.” Taverns sprang up one after another like mushrooms in Lithuania; peasants were forced to buy huge quantities of vodka, wine and beer. The nation was drenched through with alcohol, its traditions and customs were trampled.¹⁵⁹

Today we once again speak about Sąjūdis which also has a moral slogan, ‘with a clean conscience towards a clean Lithuania’. This question is very important to us since all our current misfortunes result from the same fruit which was begotten by treachery and deception.¹⁶⁰

As an exemplar for Sąjūdis, the period of the First Republic showed that shoring up the cultural repository of the nation was crucial in defending and preserving it from external enemies. Writing in the nationalist journal, one author described the success of the ‘nationalists’ of the 1930s (who came to power after the coup of 1926) in safeguarding the cultural achievements of the nation. Thus,

The ‘nationalists’ in Lithuania in the 1930’s were not real nationalists, but people who cared about the national culture and interests of our country. They were people who knew that Lithuanian culture was the only method for the survival of Lithuania. The aim of the Tautos Pažangos Partija (the National Progress Party) was a free Lithuania with the right to self-determination for Lithuanian citizens.¹⁶¹

The author stated that preserving Lithuanian culture was more important than maintaining a democratic state, and that the interests of all were served by the aspirations of nationalist groups to protect Lithuanian culture,

A democratic Republic was the most ideal form of the state. However, the type of state is not the most important thing in the sense that constitutional monarchy does not enslave a free person, just as a Republic does not make people free [who have] a spirit of slavery. What is most important is to defend people’s rights.

The programmes of the old ‘viltininkai’ (‘hopers’)…and ‘pažangiečiai’ (‘progressives’) were oriented not towards any particular group but towards the

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.
¹⁶⁰ Ibid.
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spiritual and material culture of all the nation. This means that the national ideology does not create any ideology.\(^\text{162}\)

Another image of the First Republic deployed by nationalist memory was of inter-ethnic harmony. At a meeting organized by the Union of Writers of Lithuania, Vytautas Bubnys compared the genuine good relations between ethnic groups in Lithuania in the inter-war period to the idea of forced ‘friendship among nations’ during communism. He noted that,

...in pre-war times, there were no more salient conflicts between Lithuanians and people of other nations in our countryside and towns. Nobody talked about chauvinism, nationalism, internationalism, simply all of us just lived and worked together, meeting and celebrating together various feasts. Talking about everything but not agitating each other that the friendship must be strengthened. So it was like this from the very early days of our history.\(^\text{163}\)

The 1991 Reference Book used the memory of multicultural education to reassure post-war Russian immigrants that their cultural rights would be respected. ‘Cultural and educational autonomy for the local Russians is assured, given the Baltic exemplary track record in 1920-40 and the need to maintain good trade relations with Russia.’\(^\text{164}\) It offered an image of educational choice for all ethnic groups within Lithuania, ‘Alongside with Lithuanian schools Jewish schools and schools of other ethnic minorities functioned in the country.’\(^\text{165}\)

Lithuanians looked back upon the period of Independence as a time which demonstrated that their achievements consolidated their place as a nation equal to other nations; a nationalist movement drawn from a peasant background had not impeded Lithuania’s progress into the modern world. Sigitas Geda pointed out that modernization under Soviet rule had its roots in the Independence period. In particular, he mentioned the flight of Darius and Girėnas, the two Lithuanian pilots whose flight over the Atlantic in 1933 (in their plane the Lituanica) has come to symbolize the achievements of the Lithuanian nation.\(^\text{166}\)

Beware of those who keep emphasizing that we are a nation of farmers, who want to remind us that we do not need a higher human mind, that we do not need our politicians and military officers, our directors of plants, institutes and corporations, our pilots and navigators, our specialists of nuclear power stations and cosmonauts...in

\(^{162}\) Ibid.

\(^{163}\) Vytautas Bubnys, ‘Kas gali pažadinti nacionalinių orumą?’, Literatūra ir menas, 16 April 1988, p.4.

\(^{164}\) The Baltic States, p.7.

\(^{165}\) Ibid. p.187.

\(^{166}\) Eidintas, Žalys, et. al., Lithuania in European Politics, p.132. These two pilots ‘achieved the second longest flight in history’ although their plane crashed in East Prussia before reaching Lithuania.
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1933 we had Darius and Girėnas, who proved that we are capable not only of receiving from the world but contributing into the global experience the examples of wisdom, nobility, strength and honour.\textsuperscript{167}

Smith points out that ‘the past and its heroes’ are often associated with a ‘golden age’ as exemplars of a liberation struggle against outside rule or to remind the people of a ‘glorious past’ to which they can aspire.\textsuperscript{168} In a sense, the period of the First Republic was a second ‘golden age’ (memories of the Grand Duchy constituting the first), because memories of its cultural icons conferred on Lithuanians the knowledge that small nations could succeed against oppression. The Lithuanian Youth Association took the name of \textit{Lituanica} to express Lithuania’s struggle against Soviet rule as a hope for the future.

We assume that at this moment we badly need an association of Lithuanian youth. Let us call it ‘Lituanica’, because we need wings of air like the flight carried out by Darius and Girėnas, which lasts all our days. We think that the association ‘Lituanica’ will express longing for the homeland as well as longing of those who are in their homeland...

The moral centre of the association is Vilnius, the capital of the homeland.\textsuperscript{169}

The heroic status of Darius and Girėnas was expressed in a resolution at a meeting of ‘public representatives’ (15 July 1988) on the anniversary of their flight over the Atlantic Ocean. The resolution stated,

\begin{quote}
We regret that in Vilnius the anniversary of Darius and Girėnas’ flight was not officially commemorated. We...send our address to the public, the Cultural Fund, the LRS, the ‘Lituanica’ club as well as to the government of the Republic with the proposal from now on to turn this day into a Day of Commemoration of the National Heroes. (68 signatures)\textsuperscript{170}
\end{quote}

The achievements of the First Republic showed that small nations were capable of preserving their own culture in a world of other cultures. Nationalists often remarked on this,

\begin{quote}
Expel from the dictionaries of our serious and careless, learned and ignorant people the idiotic lamentation ‘we are a small nation’. There are no such things as small or big nations.\textsuperscript{171}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{167} ‘Sigito Gedos...’, op. cit. fn 16, p.2.
\textsuperscript{169} ‘Kreipimasis į pasaulio lietuvių jaunimą’, \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.19, 10 August 1988, pp.1-2 (1).
\textsuperscript{170} ‘Rezoliucija’, \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.11, 22 July 1988, p.3.
\textsuperscript{171} ‘Sigito Gedos...’, op. cit. fn 16, p.2.
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The image of the First Republic as a paragon of cultural blossoming was juxtaposed against the decline of Lithuanian culture under Soviet rule. In Landsbergis' speech to the first Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988), 'Living Among the Ruins of Culture', he referred back to the nationalist movement of the nineteenth century to depict the cultural reawakening of Lithuania under Sąjūdis. He used as a metaphor the names of two newspapers printed by the nationalist movement at the turn of the century, Aušra and Varpas ('The Bell') to coalesce the imagery of the First Republic with the expectations of 1988.

The time has taken a turn for the better. Aušra is rising, Varpas is ringing, the country is coming to life. The country is in need of deeds and the heroic spirit is awakening. Let us hope that we are going to make it, that we will reform our lives and ourselves. Lithuania will burst into bloom and adorn the wreath of the world.¹⁷²

Aleksandras Šromas, who was a Jewish Lithuanian political scientist, pointed out that 'village' culture in Lithuania at the turn of the century remained strong because the cities were inhabited by Poles. 'This focus on resistance and self-establishment of our culture is reflected in our politics...The controversy between universal and provincial (not national!) was the core of our political conflicts.' He posits that this dichotomy has led to a problem of isolationism in maintaining the balance between 'the complex of a small nation' and 'the conception of a great nation'.¹⁷³

The imagery of the First Republic was denuded of politics and excluded critiques of the authoritarianism of Smetona. A common assessment of the period was that parliamentary politics were ineffectual, and mild authoritarianism was needed to install some order and safeguard Lithuanian culture. Critical analysis of the period was also foreclosed because of the implication that this was colluding with the 'enemy'.¹⁷⁴ It was therefore only possible to maintain an image of the First Republic as a time of cultural effervescence which made Lithuania 'great', to the detriment of revealing the nature of political conflict (because this would have elevated politics above culture).

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Soviet Rule was Ruinous for Lithuanian Culture

Soviet rule threatened the 'repository of ethnic culture' which Lithuanians had gathered together at the turn of the century. Soviet rule and Russian immigrants (as bearers of Soviet culture) were regarded as 'alien' entities. 'Immigrants of alien culture flooded the country. The continuity of the national culture was disrupted.' Gellner argues that nationalism arises from the need of modern societies to achieve cultural homogeneity for the purpose of industrialization, and therefore 'the cultural project of nationalism' itself is not 'an important agent of social change'. In Soviet Lithuania, which had undergone industrialization prior to the opportunity for nationalism (and democratization) to emerge in 1988, Lithuanians considered that rapid expansion under Stalinism had ignored the social and environmental consequences of industrialization and had encouraged the migration of Russian settlers into the area.

'The logic of industry' was criticized by the 'nationalist' movement for its role in bringing about the cultural destruction of the Lithuanian nation, and for promoting development which had subordinated and enmeshed Lithuania's requirements to all-Union needs. This perspective is a reversal of Gellner's argument who looks at the congruency achieved between culture and the nation-state as a result of industrialization. Nationalists were opposed to industrialization on the grounds that it opened up the territory to an 'alien' culture.

Vytautas Martinkus, a former Chair of the Union of Writers of Lithuania, described how the philosophy of the 'Scientific-technical revolution' of the 1970s and 1980s was aimed at eradicating Lithuanian 'national identity'.

According to this concept ['Scientific-technical revolution'] industrialization is an inevitable and essential feature of our society and thus we should accept negative features of the industrial process and regard them as any other social problem. However, industrial growth in Lithuania (the gigantic plants of Jonava and Mažeikių, Ignalina Nuclear Power station and the like) were not simple facts of statistics. They entailed enormous environmental problems, a huge flow of immigration threatened national identity (immigrants did not learn Lithuanian, were not interested in

175 Smith, National Identity, p.38.
176 '... the Hope of Lithuania', op. cit. fn 84, p.2.
178 'Literatūra: Nacionalimo ir internacionalizmo problemas', Literatūra ir menas, 23 April 1988, pp.4-5.
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Lithuanian culture and so on). This became very obvious and this was interpreted as deliberate Moscow policy against Lithuania. At the first Conference of Sąjūdis, Landsbergis referred back to the words of Vydūnas, a philosopher associated with the nineteenth century nationalist movement, to rally the participants to the cause of moral and cultural regeneration,

We live in the ruins of culture. These are the ruins of our traditions, habits, life style and communications... Our culture was devastated by cultural warfare, plague and starvation... The poison of modern times, modestly called socialist deformations, have reached our hearts, infected them with hopelessness, indifference and anger on ourselves... Our morals, language, arts, have become ill, our unwritten law ‘to respect your father and mother’ withered... Now all of us - almost all - want to be ‘people for themselves’, as Vydūnas would say.

Vytautas Kubilius, a literary critic, used the same refrain as Landsbergis when he noted that, ‘we were the people of the autocratic state. Now we are trying to be people for ourselves.’ He described how Soviet rule had ‘levelled society’ and resistance took two forms. ‘People were either sent to laagers or hid inside themselves.’ Sigitas Geda explained that an inferior form of development ‘in the shadow of Satan’ had brought Lithuanians to a state of ‘timidness, scepticism, disorientation’ and ‘apathy’.

Arvydas Juozaitis linked the deportations to the cultural destruction of Lithuania, because not only were the intelligentsia destroyed but were no longer able to act as bearers of the Lithuanian ‘spirit’. He noted that:

the biggest stroke to our free thought and spirit were the deportations when the intelligentsia was being destroyed... that is why there was left no intelligentsia in real life... everyone who wanted to talk was forced to say not what his spirit wanted, but what the ideology required. There was sort-of no more old substantial spirit left.

Juozaitis pointed out that his ‘sort-of’ reference meant that the Lithuanian spirit was still alive, and had managed to survive the trials in laagers or prisons which themselves symbolized ‘the coming possible freedom’. In addition, ‘the generation born after 1953 revitalized the old spirit.’ He linked the search for the ‘old spirit’ or ‘soul’ of Lithuania to

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179 Interview with Vytautas Martinkus, Vilnius, 20 February 1997.
180 '...steigiamasis suvažiavimas', op. cit. fn 66, p.3.
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democratic practice, ‘to serve for democracy means to serve for the ever-lasting existence [the old spirit or soul] of Lithuania’

As a consequence of cultural destruction, Lithuanians had to make themselves known to the world, particularly as their achievements under Soviet rule had been subsumed under the umbrella of Soviet aggrandisement.

We know that it is important for us not only to get to know Europe, but to make the world know us. Not only the Lithuanian cities and villages, industry and transport were occupied. The very Lithuanian name, its spirit and creation was occupied. Victories of Lithuania in arts or sport were equally like defeats because the over-rotten regime was adorned by them.

The relation between Lithuanians and ethnic Russians was mediated by an immediate past which focused on Soviet identity as opposed to features of ethnic Russian identity. The main perception of Soviet rule was that it had brought about the degeneration of Lithuanian culture and the method of doing this (deportations, collectivization, myth of class war, imprisonment and forced industrialization) had also inflicted untold suffering upon the country. As Lithuanians started to criticize the cultural devastation of the Communist regime, Lithuanian Communists sought to defend themselves from charges of complicity with the ‘cultural destroyers’. Hence integral to the historical self-image of Lithuania in the period of glasnost were decisions about the portrayal and future role of former Lithuanian Communists.

Lithuanians could be untrustworthy

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Deportations, Collectivization, the Partisan War, and the legacy of Sniečkus, the First Secretary of the CPL, 1940-1974, provided the framework of reference through which Lithuanian Communists and non-Communists sought to recast the nation’s history after Soviet rule. Collaboration with the Germans was not a subject that was discussed. In a very direct sense, people remembered the crimes of the Soviet regime which had touched all layers of Lithuanian society, but these memories were not homogeneous. The legacy of Sniečkus is a divisive point in Lithuanian society.

184 Ibid.
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The view of Lithuanian communists is that he was ‘a good and firm First Secretary’ who ‘led the republic along the right path’\(^{186}\). This perspective draws on the cordial relationship between Sniečkus and Stalin which enabled the former to delay industrialization in Lithuania until after Stalin’s death as well as his readiness to defend Lithuanian culture from Russification. These policies consequently contributed towards fewer Russians entering the Republic as labour immigrants.\(^{187}\) One delegate to the Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988) stated in a press conference that Sniečkus ‘decentralized industry and limited its development in Vilnius, Kaunas and Šiauliai. Industry was developed in other cities and attracted people from our villages. No migration was necessary.’\(^{188}\)

Algirdas Brazauskas, former First Secretary of the CPL, stated in an interview that ‘Sniečkus was a patriot of his nation’, and is therefore aligning himself with the past role of the Communist Party in defending the people against the worst excesses of Stalinism. While he does mention that there was a ‘negative side’ to this in the form of ‘repressions against innocent people’, his overriding perspective seems to be that it was a patriotic party.\(^{189}\) Non-communists remember that Sniečkus signed the deportation orders which sent thousands of Lithuanians (and non-Lithuanians) to their deaths.\(^{190}\)

Recriminations stretched beyond those in power to fellow citizens who were accused of furthering their interests by assisting in the deportations,

One thing is certain, the deportations in 1941 were not political, as some say to us, but were simply the action of our nation’s execution. The worst thing is that some of our neighbours helped to implement this execution. They were happy that they could steal our property.\(^{191}\)

Ozolas referred to the divisions within Lithuanian society that came about as a response to Soviet rule,

All Soviet Lithuania’s society consisted of different groups and organizations. There were both our and alien occupiers. There were active and passive collaborators. And

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\(^{188}\) ‘Yesterday at the Press-Centre’, op. cit.

\(^{189}\) Interview with Algirdas Brazauskas, Vilnius, 23 September 1998.


those who took the position of resistance also made two groups of two different generations. At the same time there were many of those who knew practically nothing. They just wanted to live a normal life.\(^{192}\)

Lithuanian intellectuals who belonged to the CPL, such as Ozolas, were amongst the first to criticize the Soviet regime. This was exemplified by an article on the Partisan War written by Saulius Pečiulis, a Senior Lecturer in Political Economy at Vilnius Pedagogical Institute, who in stating that ‘we need the whole truth’ condemned Stalinism for inflicting misery upon Lithuania and elsewhere.

The [system of] law that had been developing for thousands of years was completely desecrated, a large part of the culture that entire generations had accumulated bit by bit was destroyed, the first shoots of democracy in Eastern Europe were crushed, [and] relations of production smacked of Asiatic state feudalism.\(^{193}\)

Pečiulis’ article linked the cause of the Partisan War, previously presented as a class war between ‘bourgeois nationalists’ and supporters of communism, to ‘Stalinist political mistakes and crimes’, and openly discussed, for the first time, the policy of forced collectivization and partisan recruitment among the peasantry. As he put it, ‘When was it in history that peasants became serfs voluntarily and did not resist its introduction?’ He held the Stalinists to be solely responsible for the mass deportations because the first wave (June 1941) took place ‘when there was no banditry in the forest’, and in addition ‘Siberia was full of deportees from the Soviet Union from places where there was no armed resistance at all’.\(^{194}\)

Pečiulis’ analysis marred the image of the Partisan War propagated by Soviet ideology which enabled the deportations to be mentioned only in the context of ridding Lithuania of class enemies, as many deportees were indicted for having assisted or supported the Partisans. His conclusion that ‘unlawfulness and poverty were created by the Stalinist governing methods’ implied that Lithuanian Communists were perpetrators of Stalinist terror, and not just the defenders of a socialist way of life.\(^{195}\) In July 1988, an article in \textit{Literatūra ir menas} (‘Literature and Art’) questioned the role of the \textit{Stribai} or ‘Defenders of the People’ who were aligned with Soviet auxiliary battalions in their fight against the Partisans. The article


\(^{194}\) Ibid.

\(^{195}\) Ibid.
depicted them as a self-interested group of individuals - 'drunkards, lazy, uneducated, cruel, and vindictive' - who abused their power to intimidate villagers and plunder the countryside rather than seek out the Partisans.\textsuperscript{196}

In one descriptive tract, the author imagined that a Partisan ‘about to attack a Defender [of the People]’ would whisper, ‘Die, you Soviet, Bolshevik dog, you Stalinist toady’, and so implied that the Defenders ‘had been responsible for implementing Stalin’s policies in the countryside’.\textsuperscript{197} This created an immediate reaction from surviving Defenders who had publicly referred to their role with pride in consolidating Soviet rule in Lithuania.\textsuperscript{198} Moreover, memory of the Partisan movement was divisive in those villages where poorer peasants had been recruited into the \textit{Stribai} and who had sometimes benefited from land confiscated by the Soviets of suspected partisans.\textsuperscript{199}

Bronius Kuzmickas, a Professor of Philosophy and member of the CPL, referred to the legal and cultural destruction and economic mayhem brought about by Stalinism in the nationalist newsletter. His article, ‘Publicity! To the Historical Truth’, introduced the publication by \textit{Sajūdis} of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols in the same issue. He noted that, ‘complete openness on these agreements is necessary if we want to objectively investigate into the crimes of Stalinism in Lithuania and pay tribute to their victims.’

\begin{quote}
It is becoming clear that Stalinism first of all means trampled law and order and humiliating social justice. We find out new facts testifying that after having trampled the law, the public life of the country was destroyed - people and entire nations were repressed and deported, harmful economic projects were implemented, culture was mined. In order to justify all this ideological myths were created about increasing the struggle amongst classes, demagogy and lies were used.\textsuperscript{200}
\end{quote}

Amidst these images of suffering and conflict, Lithuanian Communists started to portray themselves also as victims of Communist misrule, and chose to commemorate the deportations of May 1948 at the monument to the most senior Lithuanian Communist to be executed by Stalin. The meeting was organized by the creative unions of Lithuania (writers, artists, musicians and the like), the Cultural Foundation of Lithuania, the War Veterans

\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{199} Lieven, \textit{The Baltic Revolution}, p.88. Lieven notes that the term \textit{Stribai} is derived from the word \textit{Istrebiteln}y or ‘Destroyers’, ‘the name for the demolition units during the Soviet retreat in 1941.’

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Council in Vilnius, and the Vilnius City Executive Committee. Following on from the CPL’s decision to separate from the CPSU, the Party condemned its ‘past “crimes”’ including its role in incorporating Lithuania into the Soviet Union, the mass deportations and the destruction of ‘traditional culture’.

Nonetheless, public opinion on the role of Communists in the past life of the nation varied from conciliatory approaches to outright condemnation. A speech made in a television programme, for example, which publicized the activities of Sąjūdis, proposed that fighting amongst Lithuanians after World War Two was solely the responsibility of Stalin,

The resistance movements after World War Two and the fights against the ‘Soviet’ elements, which lasted almost for two decades were the result of an artificial, Stalin-made form of self-destruction and genocide. It was contrary to what some claim that the resistance movements represented class war. If Lithuania had been independent, such things would have been absolutely impossible.

One author cited the fact that deportations took place in 1940 when Lithuania was not yet a Soviet Republic as proof that Stalin ‘intended to “kill” the Lithuanian nation’. He also claimed that the genocide of the Lithuanian nation was implemented by Lithuanian communists themselves, ‘Gedvilas, Paleckis, Sniečkus, after World War Two.’

The period of glasnost led to Lithuanians analysing a Soviet past which for many was based upon living memory, and thinking about what levels of involvement with the ‘occupying’ regime excluded all pretensions to be called a Lithuanian. The argument was mediated through the memory of the Soviet occupation, and Lithuanian collaboration with the Germans was excluded from debate. This was the second time in history that sections of Lithuanian society had taken on another identity (or the guise of another identity), although in the case of the Lithuanian nobility which had become Polonized (before the age of nationalism), the consequences had been irreversible.

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Chapter 2

Relations with Europe are Uncertain

One facet of this relationship is the belief that Lithuania was the cultural core of Europe diffusing the principles of Indo-European values into the European foundations of ‘modern civilization’. The Lithuanian government has claimed (like Belarus and Ukraine) that geographically Lithuania is at the centre of Europe, and has established a monument to mark this geographical location just north of Vilnius. There is also an image of Europe as being destructive for Lithuanian culture, and a view that Lithuania was badly let down by Europe during the Second World War.

Lithuania’s relationship with Europe is complex not least because nationalist memory recalls that the Catholic Church and Polonization brought Lithuanian culture to the point of extinction. Thus Lithuania’s attempt to become part of Europe had virtually led to the extinction of Lithuanian culture. In Genzelis’ speech made at the first official commemoration of Lithuania’s Independence (16 February 1989) he noted that:

Renaissance to Europe meant a psychological tragedy for Lithuania, because of the formation of a common psychology with the Polish people.

There is a strand too in nationalist thinking which criticizes the West for becoming dependent on materialism. The Lithuanian speaker at the seminar on ‘Integration and Nationalism in Europe’ told the audience that ‘the current Europe’ ‘went away’ from the principles of ‘honesty’ and ‘harmony’ (at the core of Indo-European culture) ‘to materialism. People have become like barbarians. Criticisms of Europe for its materialistic and capitalist values draw upon the memory of Lithuania’s pagan past which venerated nature and the countryside, and (as noted above) enabled the Partisan War to be presented as a conflict between ‘town’ and ‘countryside’. This dichotomy received further impetus from the destructive consequences of Soviet rule which was often described as having imported an ‘alien’ culture into the country. In his speech to a nationalist rally, for example, Sigitas Geda cautioned against both socialist and capitalist development,
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Our misfortune is that things created or being created in Lithuania turn out to be distasteful and dirty monsters... We, just like other countries from Central and Eastern Europe, which were wrongfully orientated, are now facing the threat from grotesque conglomerates presenting a mixture of socialist and capitalist waste.\textsuperscript{209}

The wide acceptance of Catholicism in Lithuania enabled Lithuanian nationalists to portray the Catholic Church as a bulwark against the West, cocooning Lithuania from the immorality of materialist Western values. In addition, it provided a moral framework for redressing the cultural denigration brought about by Soviet rule.\textsuperscript{210} Juozaitis expressed the role of Catholicism safeguarding the nation,

...the Roman Catholic Church will be Lithuania’s fortress against the Western invasion, as it has been against the Eastern. Whether the nation can retain its distinctive culture once it has been re-united with Europe depends on how well Lithuanian souls are equipped to resist an unexampled wealth of pleasure. We will all melt away without Christianity.\textsuperscript{211}

Another facet of anti-European feeling draws upon the memory of the Partisan War throughout which Lithuanian nationalist resistance had nurtured the hope of Western assistance which remained unfulfilled.\textsuperscript{212} Pečiulis’ article on the Partisan War referred to the intensity of the struggle as receiving an input from promises of salvation from the West. He stated, ‘Indeed voices of western radio by promising a speedy war with the Soviet Union (which will take place soon) made a large contribution to the intensity of that struggle. Because it gave hope to the nationalists that the Soviet government would be removed.’\textsuperscript{213} At a rally to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Landsbergis expressed the view that Lithuania was abandoned by the West. He posited that,

After crimes made in their own states both Hitlerism and Stalinism struggled through as the bloody political military expansion to other territories in 1939. These forces of evil, hatred and aggression were also incited by appeasing, indulgent and indifferent attitudes towards the misfortune of nations which were far away despite the fact that they [the western states] were sufficiently strong.\textsuperscript{214}

\textsuperscript{209} ‘Sigito Gedos...’, op. cit. fn 16, p.2.
\textsuperscript{210} Lieven, \textit{The Baltic Revolution}, p.31.
\textsuperscript{211} ibid. p.32.
\textsuperscript{212} Lieven, \textit{The Baltic Revolution}, p.88.
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A memory of resistance to foreign rule was the above-mentioned battle of Žalgiris (‘Tannenberg’, ‘Grünwald’) 1410 in which the protagonists were not from the ‘east’ but Germans from the ‘west’ and links into Lithuania’s ‘Great Warrior Tradition’ and its ability to defend itself and to stand alone.

Nationalist thinking also considered that the return of Lithuania to Europe was integral to fulfilling the goal of European solidarity. The 1991 Reference Book states that:

"As for Western Europe, the dream of a common European home hinges on Baltic independence, because a home has rooms and not prison cells for some family members. The reappearance of the Baltic States on the map of Europe settles the last outstanding issue of WWII."

From this perspective, it was necessary to stress the European antecedents of Lithuanian culture before its incorporation into the Soviet Union to show that its development had been coterminous with the West. Thus, ‘The development of professional music in Lithuania follows the course of a similar development in Western and Central Europe…’. ‘In 1918-40 the education system of the Republic of Lithuania was based on the educational principles of Western Europe.’

Alongside the image of being part of Europe is the special role of the Baltic States in occupying an intermediary position between East and West, and the possibility of become a ‘bridge’ linking the two halves of ‘Europe’ together. The 1991 Reference Book stated, ‘future history books may well write: This is where the two halves of Europe began to grow together - at the Baltic bridge in the new downtown of Europe.’ In practical terms, this meant paying sufficient regard to both Russia and the West which Petras Vaitiekūnas, an active member of Sajūdis, and a deputy of the Supreme Council in 1990, called ‘the principle of sufficient balance’.

To be independent does not mean to stand apart from the processes in the east, it means to manage and control them as much as they affect Lithuania. We must individually choose and use the beneficial possibilities the East-West junction offers to Lithuania, combining the interests of East-West...Thus, when ‘making’ Lithuania’s foreign policy, the main principle should be ‘The Principle of Sufficient Balance’.

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215 The Baltic States, p.179.
216 Ibid. p.7.
218 Ibid. p.7
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This means that on a state level, Russia’s interests in Lithuania shall be neutralised by corresponding interests of the West.219

It seems that the Lithuanian desire to be part of Europe is tempered by the threat this poses to ‘Lithuanianism’. Despite wishing to integrate with Europe, the guardians of ‘Lithuanianism’ must ensure the dominance of Lithuanian values and life-style. Štromas notes that the juxtaposition between universalism and provincialism (noted above) poses the problem whether to ‘open up to the world’ or to ‘isolate’ oneself through ‘fear of the outside world.’ From one perspective, …we have a great history, we are a part of Europe, we are not worse, perhaps even better than others. On the other hand, we are small, everyone harms us, and that is why we have to argue that we are also good and big. This is a dilemma - either to isolate oneself or to open up to the world. However, it is scary to open up. If you will open to France - you will be ‘Gallicized’, to Poles - ‘Polonization’… We hope that by isolating ourselves we will be able to maintain what is characteristic only to us. On the contrary, however, because of such a conception we only destroy our nation. The key issue for Lithuanians is how to open up to the world and to maintain Lithuanianism thorough openness.220

Lieven refers to this ‘provincial’ aspect of Lithuanian politics in the context of the establishment of Kaunas as the ‘provisional’ capital of Lithuania in the inter-war period. He suggests that in transferring power to a smaller and less culturally mixed city than Vilnius, a subsequent emphasis was created upon the concept of monoethnic nationalism, which became synonymous with the name of the radical wing of the Lithuanian nationalist movement - ‘the Kaunas faction’. Amongst this group there was a lingering perception of Kaunas as ‘the pure home of the race’.221

Conclusion

The assertion of Lithuanianism in the period of glasnost generated an image of a people who were bound together by territory and common descent and united by a common culture. They were made special by their language and its links to an Indo-European culture of great antiquity. This firm belief in their identity was tempered by the memory of those who had betrayed the nation - the Lithuanian nobility who had become Polonized - and by the threats

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posed to the existence of their nation by the Russian Empire, the Prussian Empire, the Soviet
Union, and by Poland. The historical self-image of Lithuanians attained focus by their
references to the suffering they had endured throughout the ages. They were firstly victims of
cultural Polonization, and then whilst in this suppressed state, were incorporated into the
Russian Empire and subjected to a process of Russification. Their suffering continued
throughout Soviet rule. The Soviet state was seen as an ‘alien’ entity which had brought their
culture to the point of extinction.

Lithuanians also have a divided self-image, because whilst rule from Moscow established the
territory of the LSSR, they responded differently to Soviet occupation. Some chose to work
within the system, such as Sniečkus, whilst others were intent on overthrowing it, as was the
case for Antanas Terleckas, the leader of the Lithuanian Freedom League. Lithuanian
communists were viewed as ‘patriots’ but also as ‘traitors’. The strongest image in the
Lithuanian portrayal of relations with minorities was that Lithuanians were a ‘tolerant’ people
who throughout the period of the Grand Duchy and the first Lithuanian Republic had
provided minorities with cultural rights and differentiated citizenship.

Lithuanians looked at the past through the prism of their incorporation into Soviet rule, the
period of the First Republic, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the Grand Duchy of
Lithuania, which shows that historical memory was crucial for the nationalist movement in
Lithuania. Glasnost allowed for the expression of memories which were suppressed and
therefore concealed, but not extinguished. This facilitated the emergence of debates
throughout Lithuanian society in which Lithuanians discussed their identity as an ethnic group
throughout the ages. Their ethnicity rested upon a common set of myths, symbols, values and
memories. Their shared sense of identity mediated their perception of other ethnic groups and
identities within Lithuania - Poles could not be trusted, Jews contributed greatly to Lithuanian
culture, and the Soviets had brought Lithuanian culture to the brink of ruin.

The above analysis poses questions for the relevance of historical antecedents and historical
memory for nationalist movements. Gellner has no concept of an ‘ethnic’ past, because it is
irrelevant to his theory that nationalism is a function of industrialization. He notes that
nationalism may use ‘pre-existing cultures’, ‘invent’ or ‘obliterate’ them in the process of

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221 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.60.
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creating the nation. Gellner perceives that nationalism in later industrial societies will 'persist, but in a muted, less virulent form' (because the congruence between politics and culture is so widely established and accepted that challenges will be rarely forthcoming). The most important thing is that 'the industrial order requires homogeneity within political units'.

His analysis therefore dismisses the role of historical memory in nationalist movements, because in his perception there are no pre-modern roots to the nation. Gellner’s condition for later manifestations of nationalism arise from ‘counter-entropic’ unassimilable traits such as skin pigmentation or people with strong ‘religious-cultural’ convictions. This will constitute, ‘a genuine prior barrier to mobility and equality which will, having inhibited easy identification, engender a new frontier’. He does not mention the role of historical memory for later nationalist movements, and his whole thesis rejects the historical self-imagery of nationalism because nationalist rhetoric is the outward manifestation of a functional requirement - that cultural homogeneity becomes congruent with a political unit to serve the needs of industrialization.

Gellner’s thesis that nationalist movements in the later stages of industrialization will arise when a group of people are unable to assimilate ignores important issues such as resistance to oppression and an acknowledgement of past injustices. The contemporary nationalist movement in Lithuania does not seem to fit the existing theoretical category of nationalism proposed by Gellner mainly because nationalist sentiment was driven by an awareness of historical wrongs that were still in living memory (and not just by a memory of a distant ‘golden age’). He deals with the creation of nationalism (a process which took place in Lithuania during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), not its emergence from underground, as was the case in Lithuania in the period between 1988-1992. The memory of the crimes of the Soviet regime were linked to the memory of Lithuania’s independence and ancient history.

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222 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p.49.
223 Ibid. p.122.
224 Ibid. p.109.
225 Ibid. Chapter 6, esp. pp.64-75.
226 Ibid. p.75.
Hobsbawm differs slightly from Gellner in that he considers that nationalism may rest upon the underpinnings of proto-nationalism.

One reason [for the potency of nationalism as a political force] may be that, in many parts of the world, states and national movements could mobilize certain variants of feelings of collective belonging which already existed and which could operate, as it were, potentially on the macro-political scale which could fit in with modern states and nations. I shall call these bonds “proto-national”.

He nonetheless dismisses such an idea because the levels of illiteracy ensure that there is insufficient evidence to support a view that nationalist impulses existed among the common people. He regards ‘ethnicity or “race”’ as being mainly ‘negative, inasmuch as it is much more usually applied to define ‘the other’ than one’s own group.’ Memory is therefore of no consequence as nationalism (in its first stages) is linked to state rule over a ‘territorially defined “people”’ which had to meet the ‘threshold principle’ of being economically viable. He gives examples of the way this is achieved through the use of ‘exercises in programmatic mythology.’

Hobsbawm places Lithuania amongst those nationalist movements which abandoned the threshold principle by 1914 to establish a form of nationhood based upon ethnicity and language. This ethno-linguistic type of nationalism was ‘unhistorical’, and received its impetus from migration, the growth of new classes, and from traditional groups resisting modernity. New ideas about ‘race’ fostered beliefs about the indivisibility of language and nationality, and people responded to the growth of administrative states and the democratization of politics.

Hobsbawm argues that late twentieth century nationalism based upon ethnicity and language makes claims to nationhood just at a time when nations are themselves being outmoded by globalization and international population movements. Therefore while nationalism may reflect a real need for group identity and a protest against increasingly centralized and bureaucratized states, it offers no concrete way forward and is historically a force in decline.

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227 Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism, p.46.
228 Ibid. pp.48-49.
229 Ibid. p.65, 66.
231 Ibid. p.102.
232 Ibid. p.107-110.
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In this perspective, capitalist markets have outlived the age of nationalism and nation states. His thesis is not reconcilable with empirical events in Lithuania, because the memory of the First Republic shows that there is a history behind nationalist rhetoric that has very little to do with the globalization of the economy and the international division of labour. National sovereignty could be presented as the restoration of a legality lost in 1940 through the machinations of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols.

Anderson’s theory of nationalism looks at the way in which the nation is narrated to us through newspapers and books which constantly remind us that we form a community by referring to the ‘sociological landscape’ of hospitals, prisons, remote villages, and monasteries. Despite the longevity of Soviet rule, Lithuanians rejected a narrative about their identity which told them that they were a Soviet Lithuanian Republic. The narrative hid the truth about the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and demonstrated voluntary accession into the Soviet Union. This was done through books, newspapers, television, schools, plays and symbols of state which replaced those of the inter-war republic.

Lithuanians spontaneously exposed the myth of voluntary incorporation into the Soviet Union during the period of glasnost utilizing historical memory, myths, symbols and values which existed outside of the narrated text. Fifty years of ‘print socialism’ could not erase the memory of the existence of an independent Lithuanian Republic from national consciousness although under Soviet rule analysis of the period was marginalized, and the Republic dismissed as a bourgeois or fascist entity. The literary portrayal of the Partisan War in the post-war period as one of class war was another image of Lithuanian Soviet identity which was quickly routed.

The strongest self-image of Lithuanians was that they saw themselves as being victims against superior odds, but when the time came were heroic fighters capable of restoring their culture and identity. Central to this image was that they were a nation of ‘innocent sufferers’. In order to maintain this image, it was necessary for Lithuanian opinion formers to minimize the less pleasant sides of Lithuanian history, which involved forgetting, rather than fabricating, certain aspects of Lithuania’s past. Memory of the Holocaust, for example, was in some cases

233 Ibid. Chapter 6.
234 Anderson, Imagined Communities, p.30.
not simply minimized, but also completely eliminated whilst Lithuanians referred to their own 'genocide', and ignored the one that they had participated in through autonomous anti-semitism ‘before the systematic German killing of Jews began.'236 The image of ‘tolerance’ towards minorities is applicable to the period before the coup of 1926, but ignores discussions about the rule of Smetona and the authoritarianism of the inter-war period after the coup.

Focusing on the post-war Partisan resistance against the Soviets marginalized discussion of the German occupation, because this is the period when the Lithuanian myth of a nation of innocent sufferers falls apart under scrutiny. The anti-Soviet uprising of June 1941 may be depicted as heroic as long as it is against the Soviets, and denuded of links with German collaboration. The Lithuanian claim to ‘getting back’ Vilnius links into the myth of national innocence, because it enables Lithuanians to ignore the fact that this came about through Soviet intervention both in 1920 and 1939. Acknowledging other claims to Vilnius or the method of its ‘retrieval’ would have meant recalling that most of the previous residents of the city, Poles and Jews, ‘were dead or in exile.’237

Questions about Vilnius link into the territorial conception and reality of Lithuania. The demonization of Jogaila (who through marriage to Queen Jadwiga of Poland in 1386 became King of Poland) has led Lithuanians to forget the slavic past of the ‘Lithuanian’ state which they nonetheless refer to when demonstrating their ancient past and long tradition of statehood. The empire which stretched ‘from the Baltic to the Black Sea’ during the rule of Vytautas (who ruled in the Grand Duchy alongside Jogaila) attains focus through its portrayal of a mighty Lithuanian state rather than of a mighty ‘nation’. The linkages between this period and the nineteenth century creation of the Lithuanian state are inferred as a linear progression, and the more or less miraculous attainment of Lithuanian statehood is not an issue in self-consciousness, because then Lithuanian ownership of Vilnius would not be so much a question of right (through the longevity of the nation), but of politics. As Snyder notes, ‘a literal reversal of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact would thus return Vilnius to Poland.’238

236 Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism, p.173.
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The question of ownership of Vilnius is an interesting question, because it goes to the heart of nationalist theory and historical memory. Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson posit the absolute break between modernity and the pre-modern period. Thus when Lithuanians refer to ‘getting back’ Vilnius in 1939, in their perspective, Lithuanians were acquiring it for the first time in their history as a nation-state - which was the period of the First Republic. There is no prior claim to it being Lithuanian, because the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is absolutely divorced from the political context of Lithuania in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Anderson’s analysis, the only connection that Lithuanians have with the Grand Duchy is through an ‘imagined’ representation of it in print or by symbolic events.

The Lithuanian perception of the political foundation of the state is often found in references by historians who share the same perspective. Hiden and Salmon note that, ‘the native inhabitants of the three present-day republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are directly descended from the tribes who settled on the eastern shore of the Baltic some 4,000 years ago...’ The kernel of the historical awareness of the Baltic peoples is the fact that they are directly descended from the original inhabitants of their countries.” They point out that, ‘the Lithuanian tribes achieved political unity in 1248 under the “modernising autocrat”, Grand Duke Mindaugas.‘239 Other historians cite this date or thereabouts as being important for ‘early Lithuanian history’, and imply a pre-modern component to the concept of the nation-state.240 Vilnius is first mentioned in documentary sources as Lithuanian in 1323.

Hobsbawm’s point on the memory of a state tradition is that this ‘can act directly upon the consciousness of the common people to produce proto-nationalism.’

As far as Gellner and Hobsbawm are concerned, there is no point trying to expose the historical self-image of pre-modern Lithuania as marred, because it serves no purpose - except to show that it has no relevance to modern statehood. In a sense, all nationalist rhetoric is not about the past, but the future, and the goal of achieving homogeneity and capitalist development. However, Lithuanian nationalism demonstrated that it was based upon the illegal incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, and the very real suffering of

239 Hiden and Salmon, The Baltic Nations, op. cit. fn 127, pp.9, 12.
240 See Eidintas, Žalys, et. al., Lithuania in European Politics, London, 1997, p.206. The ‘consolidation of Lithuanian lands under Duke Mindaugas’ is dated as 1240s-1250s, and 1323 as the date of Gediminas’s letter to the Pope when Vilnius is ‘first mentioned as the capital of Lithuania’.
241 Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism Since 1780, pp.75-76.
Lithuanians under Stalinism and Soviet rule. Smith points out that when nationalists reconstruct the past, 'their task is indeed selective - they forget as well as remember the past' as they choose the resonances which echo their own concerns from particular ethno-histories. As noted above, Lithuanian opinion makers were adept at this, which suggests that historical antecedents in the Lithuanian case were very important since much of their history had to be forgotten. Memory was often a mythologized history, but as Lithuanian nationalism clearly demonstrates, historical memory will have a resonance when there is an interrelationship between myth and history.

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242 Smith, 'Gastronomy or Geology?...', op. cit. fn 9, p.19.
Chapter 3

Nationalism

I suggest that Lithuanian nationalism in the period of glasnost focused upon an external enemy as the bearer of all wrongs. Nationalist politics articulated a sense of homeland primarily in relation to the alien occupiers and ‘destroyers’ who were perceived as the Moscow-based centre of Communist Party control. The external enemy was identified as a ‘destroyer’ in four major areas: the history and culture, language, ecology (polluters of the homeland), and economy of Lithuania. As Lithuanian nationalism took over the Soviet Lithuanian state, legislation was passed to make the cultural attributes of the dominant ethnic group, the Lithuanians, the norm. This process obviously included changes to Soviet language and educational policy, and was underpinned by the nationalist impetus to refute the Soviet version of Lithuanian history.

As noted in Chapter 2, the dividing point between theorists of nationalism is the role of historical memory which has a bearing on their interpretation of what Lithuanian nationalists were trying to achieve in taking over the Lithuanian Soviet state, and reconstituting it as a Lithuanian one. In Smith’s perspective, ‘nationalist educator-intellectuals’ make changes to the educational curriculum and have debates about language, citizenship and national symbolism because they are engaged upon a project of cultural nationalism. Their task is to reinterpret raw material about the community’s ‘ethno-history’ (memories, myths and traditions), and to present national aspirations as deriving from an authentic historical base which lends credence to their debates about the present. Their interpretation re-educates people into their national history and must produce a resonance among the populace at large.¹

Whilst Smith and Gellner share the view that the role of education is crucial to nationalist movements, they arrive at this conclusion from two different perspectives. The former gives

value to the nationalist ‘belief that the ethnic past explains the present’, and considers that
education is about a constant reinterpretation of that past which crucially rests upon ‘a series
of traditions and memories’. Smith’s analysis by his own account gives nationalists a more
limited role than do modernists or post-modernists, because whilst nationalists are actively
intervening in the construction of the nation through ‘rediscovery, reinterpretation and
regeneration of the community’, and whilst Smith acknowledges ‘the social and political
labours of “nation-builders”,’ or from a modernist perspective ‘state-building’, the nation is
not the conceptual product of their endeavours, as Gellner, for example, would posit.

Pivotal to Gellner’s theory of nationalism is the role of education in providing a workforce
which speaks the same language, and is equipped to slot into jobs which allow the functions
of a modern, industrial society to proceed smoothly. As long as human agents possess a
common language and literacy skills and an ‘extended cultural code’ nationalism has served
its purpose in establishing the nation state as a place to exercise a common culture that facili­
tates a new mode of production. In Gellner’s perspective, it is not culture, but the needs of
industrialization which determine the founding of nation-states and culture. He would proba­
bly regard debates about Lithuanian history and its presentation in the form of an educational
curriculum as indicative that the ‘historic agents’ of nationalism were doing a good job in pre­
senting the nation as a ‘natural and universal’ political entity. This happens because national­
ists ‘know not what they do’, because they are themselves convinced of the longevity of the
‘nation’.

Gellner points out that in reality, a national educational system is kept and protected by the
state, because a uniform high culture guarantees a successful medium to serve the purposes of
industrialized societies. The task of a high culture is now so ‘onerous’ that it ‘cannot dispense
with a political infrastructure’. As noted in Chapter 2, Hobsbawm shares Gellner’s perspec­

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2 Ibid. pp.15-17.
3 Ibid. pp.15-16.
5 John A. Hall, ‘Nationalisms, Classified and Explained’, in Notions of Nationalism, ed. Sukumar Periwal,
7 Ibid. pp.48-49.
8 Ibid. pp.50-52.
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tive about the causality of culture and states, 'nations do not make states and nationalisms but
the other way round'. Education was part of the state’s method of keeping a record of its citi-
zens ‘through theoretically compulsory attendance at primary school’, which came to form
part of the state’s powerful image-making machinery by inculcating attachment to the ‘heri-
tage of the “nation”...to country and flag, often “inventing traditions” or even nations for this
purpose.’

The growth of secondary schools which taught in the written ‘national language’ was neces-
sary to make sure that people could be both adequately administered and able to keep up with
technical and economic development. Hobsbawm notes that languages are inscribed by the
state onto the agenda of nation-building, and ‘are almost always semi-artificial constructs’,
with states consciously choosing one dialect above another or merging several into one. He
gives an example of the Lithuanian language as being based on one of two dialects. His
overall perspective is that state boundaries are dictated by economic criteria, and their regimes
will reinforce ‘state patriotism with the sentiments and symbols of “imagined community”,
wherever and however they originated, and...concentrate them upon themselves.’

The symbolic side of nationalism in Lithuania was very much in evidence in the period 1988-
1992: for example, statues of former Soviet leaders were removed, and streets were re-named
back to their former versions from the ones which had been imposed by Soviet rule to rein-
force the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Evidence of the emerging nation of Lithuania was
also reflected in the restitution of symbolic attributes such as the inter-war flag of Lithuania
and the ‘National Hymn’ or anthem. This is precisely the kind of evidence that Anderson re-
fers to when he demonstrates the nationalist use of cultural artefacts to portray an image of the
‘imagined community’ to the people. He says, for example, ‘no matter how banal and medi-
cre the tunes, there is in this singing [of national anthems] an experience of simultaneity. At

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9 E.J.Hobsbawm, Nations And Nationalism Since 1780: Programme Myth, Reality, Cambridge, New York and
10 Ibid. pp.81, 91-92.
11 Ibid. pp.93-94.
12 Ibid. p.54.
13 Ibid. p.91.
precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody. The image: unisonance...Nothing connects us all but imagined sound.\textsuperscript{14}

Print language is the medium which set off these ‘imaginings’ uniting complete strangers from the void.\textsuperscript{15} He notes, ‘Language is not an instrument of exclusion: in principle, anyone can learn any language...Print-language is what invents nationalism, not a particular language per se.’\textsuperscript{16} Acquiring citizenship is about the acquisition of a language and the digestion of a narrative, but without there being any real substance to the community (such as memories, oral history, myths, symbols, landscapes) which is in reality a communion of imagery.\textsuperscript{17}

In Lithuania, history provided the pivotal point around which the nationalist agenda was discussed and implemented. In the following discussion I have looked at comments and debates about history and culture, language, education, ecology, economy, citizenship, and nationalist symbolism to see what changes in these spheres the nationalist movement, which included communists and non-communists, regarded as crucial for the attainment of a better life equated with an independent Lithuania. Their concerns will also indicate those areas where nationalism can be inimical to democracy, for example, the disagreements and objections that were brought to bear on the decision by the Lithuanian nationalist movement to adopt a policy of inclusive citizenship.

The process of liberation from Soviet rule and the construction of a nation state were based upon the promotion and defence of an ethnic Lithuanian culture which was then institutionalized into the practices of the state. In some respects, this had the effect of extending the ethnic and national rights of the majority to the minorities who also resided on the territory of the newly emerging state of Lithuania. The analysis of this process will involve a discussion as to whether the moves towards nationalism discussed below are supportive or not of the theories of nationalism outlined in the Introduction, and will begin to explore the relationship between nationalism and democratization in the Lithuanian setting.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. p.6.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. p.134.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid. pp.5-6.
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History and Culture

Recouping the Past

Anthony Smith’s contention that nations and nationalism cannot be seen only as fabricated on myths of descent in the service of calculative nationalist aims, but that nationalists are not inventing nations but rediscovering and reinterpreting communal pasts is well illustrated by the Lithuanian experience. The movement towards a nation state of Lithuania received much of its impetus from precisely the re-evaluation and re-interpretation, under glasnost, of Lithuanian history. As noted in Chapter 2, underpinning the construction of the Centre (CPSU dominated control) as criminals and occupiers was the publication of information pertaining to the way in which the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact had assigned Lithuania to the Soviet sphere of influence. A dissident appeal, for example, published in the 60th issue of the Lithuanian samizdat journal, Aušra, (‘The Dawn’) (September 1987), depicted the Pact ‘as probably “the most deceitful and most mendacious plot” in history, which had brought about World War II and cost millions of innocent lives.’ The newspaper, Gimtasis kraštas (‘Native Country’) described the delegation to the XIX Party Conference as ‘the most important group to leave Vilnius for Moscow since the committee of the People’s Sejm had gone to Moscow in 1940 to arrange for Lithuania’s incorporation into the USSR.’

Smith’s notion of myth and historical memory comes into play here, as the implementation of glasnost allowed Lithuanians to legally and openly expose and denounce the myth of voluntary incorporation into the Soviet Union. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was crucial for the campaign for national self-determination since if it showed in the ‘enemy’s’ own words that Lithuania’s incorporation had not been voluntary, and therefore illegal, then the claim for national self-determination became self-evident, a return to legality. In addition to the Pact, politically sensitive areas included the Declaration of Lithuania’s Independence on 16 February 1918, the Partisan War which was fought against Soviet rule in the post-war period, and the Deportations in the period 1940-1951.

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18 Saulius Girmius, ‘New Issue of Ausra’, Radio Free Europe Research, 4 May 1988, pp.19-22 (19). As noted in Chapter 2, Ausra was the name of the nineteenth century Lithuanian nationalist newspaper.

19 Alfred Erich Senn, Lithuania Awakening, Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1990, p83
As noted in Chapter 2, the historical self image of Lithuania included the perception of a nation of innocent sufferers which under Soviet rule had become divided in its feelings of solidarity by the willingness of some Lithuanians to work within the Soviet regime. During the period of glasnost, Lithuanians maintained their myth of national innocence by simply not debating certain aspects of the past which conflicted with this perception. Debate focused on the injustice of Soviet occupation, and the absurdity of Soviet historiography, but other themes such as analyses of German occupation, Lithuanian collaboration with the Nazis, or autonomous anti-semitism were certainly not emphasized. The divisions among Lithuanians could not be covered up, because the protagonists from both sides were either in positions of power and/or vocal in their respective ideological positions.

The Lithuanian nationalist movement exposed Soviet historiography as fraudulent (which it mainly was), and unpacked the causality of Lithuanian accession into the Soviet Union. The 1918 Declaration of Independence was officially explained as the work of a small, self-interested group of non-patriots, who wanted to forge a union with Germany in order to shore up defences against socialism. This Soviet reading-back of history was crucial in order to explain the ‘voluntarism’ of 1940. Similarly, information relating to the Partisan war was censored, because evidence of mass support for the Resistance would belie the account of Lithuania’s intentional union with the USSR. The Partisans were depicted as Fascists, war criminals and former landlords who, until defeated by Lithuanian supporters of the new communist regime, wreaked havoc amongst the populace. This description is partially correct in that, as noted previously (Chapter 2), some Partisans had indeed been supporters of the fascist regime. The Soviet portrayal of the war as an ideological one between classes also remoulded the causality between Stalinist terror and the forced collectivization of agriculture, and partisan recruitment amongst the peasantry.

The official account of the Partisan War (as noted in Chapter 2) linked the deportations to the need to overcome class enemies since the deportees were alleged to have comprised support-
ers of the Partisans. Discussing the Stalinist era was therefore censored because attaching any blame to the Soviet regime would by definition have implicated the CPL which had portrayed itself as patriotically trying to deflect the worst excesses of Stalinism.\textsuperscript{23} In Lithuania, the advent of glasnost enabled previously ‘untouchable’ or ‘distorted subjects’ associated with the politicization of history (ie in keeping with the ideology of the ‘destroyers’) to become focal points of public debate and crucial for the process of nationalism and democratization. Towards the end of 1986 the re-evaluation of history became the chief concern of Lithuanian intellectuals and an arena of contention within the CPL itself.\textsuperscript{24}

Party members who held responsible positions in the Lithuanian SSR, started to chip away at Soviet ideology (previously solely the work of dissident groups) in order to make officially public the truth about the nation’s past. The writer Vytautas Petkevičius, for example, a veteran Komsomol and Party activist, in December 1987, noted that ‘history [was] politics aimed at the past’ and that this ‘deformed approach’ had caused ‘huge damage’ to Lithuanian culture and history. He pointed out that this intolerable state of affairs arose from ‘the strange craving of the so-called socialist pay-masters to base history on lies and inventions.’\textsuperscript{25} As Lithuanian national consciousness grew into a movement to re-establish an independent Lithuanian history and culture the CPL came to find its counter ideology more and more indigestible and destroyed itself.

\textit{Nationalist History Challenges the Communist Party of Lithuania}

The loosening of censorship meant that the press, organized on national territorial lines, became involved in the ideological debate, and started to discuss the openly emerging Lithuanian national consciousness within the republican boundaries shaped by those of the Soviet state administration. On 14 November 1987, Lionginas Šepetys, the Ideological Secretary of the CPL CC, sought to assert control over the political space that had been opening up and in which Soviet historiography, for the first time, had been subject to questioning. His tactics

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
were to promote a discussion that would enable intellectuals and the Party to reiterate the cor-
rect view on the past, and by so doing, to ‘protect’ individuals from believing in nationalist
counter-ideological arguments.26 Previously, the Lithuanian Press had avoided mentioning
historical subjects which might have led to a conflict with the historical determinist explana-
tion.27

From October 1986, the ‘pre-determined’ past had come under attack, despite the Party’s in-
sistence that ‘a clear class position must shape the work of all Soviet historians’, as Lithua-
nian historians, writers and literary critics, appealed for a ‘fundamental re-evaluation of
Lithuania’s history and cultural heritage’.28 The consequences meant that the interpretation of
human affairs could be linked to a politically motivated human agent or cause. In December
1987, for example, Bronius Vaitkevičius, a historian and former head of the Institute of His-
tory of the Academy of Sciences (1969-86), stated the necessity for historians to have access
to ‘the whole collection’ of documents relating to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.29 He noted,
‘...I would like to say that “blank spots” in the science of history are not so much a problem
of science as of politics...There are no inexplicable facts in history...Whatever the documents
may show - a division into spheres of interest or zones of influence, the vital interests of the
Soviet Union, the first socialist country, were defended at the beginning of the Second World
War...’.30 Thus, Vaitkevičius raised the spectre of political purpose and will to explain
Lithuania’s incorporation into the Soviet Union as opposed to explanations of political pre-
determination based upon Marxism-Leninism.

Nonetheless, Ringaudas Songaila, First Secretary of the CPL CC, in order to contain pere-
stroika within one single vision of a collective future, and to predetermine the results of liber-
alization ‘ex ante’,31 stayed fixed within the parameters of traditional Soviet ideology at the X

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26 ‘Meninę kultūrą - Kiekvieno žmogaus ir visos visuomenės atsinaujinimui’, Tiesa, 15 November 1988, p.2;
27 Ibid. pp.29-32.
40 (37).
29 ‘...Istorija su mumis?’, op. cit. fn 25, pp.4,5,7.
30 Ibid.
31 Adam Przeworski, Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin
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Plenum of the CPL CC of 26 January 1988, convened to discuss the progress of perestroika. The Plenum revealed the leadership's concern with the emergence of an anti-Soviet historical agenda. Songaila stated that it was necessary, 'to timely notice and give a strong rebuff to any expression of bourgeois nationalism and clerical extremism.' Songaila commented on the Bureau's examination into the 23 August 1987 'gathering which was organized by a group of nationalist elements in Vilnius', the cause being attributed to 'serious failings in the work of party organizations in politically and ideologically educating the populace and of the passivity and inertia of our ideological activists...'.

In conditions of liberalization, the party's formal response to furthering Gorbachev's political and social initiatives, was a call to strengthen 'the ideological, class, internationalist, and atheistic education of workers, in order to increase the effectiveness of counterpropaganda.' In drawing upon the Marxist-Leninist 'language of interests' to distinguish between what amounted to 'the real interests of the working class and its perception of them at any given time,' Songaila's purpose was to characterize and signify 'a type of behavior a group [should] follow.' The coherence of this conception was being challenged by the 'group', which, drawing upon the experiences of 'living in glasnost', was Lithuanianising itself along ethnic lines and shedding its Soviet identity.

Along with the dissidents, Party members started to detach themselves from the dominant ideology, instigating a critical reassessment of the Stalinist era in Lithuania, the period when categories of people were designated as criminals. Appeals to set the historical record 'straight', at the same time, became a call for self-determination and democratization as 'official' glasnost’s (ie Moscow's) opposition to historical 'truth' was measured against true democracy and found wanting. Saulius Peciulis' article on the Partisan War (discussed in Chap-

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33 A demonstration organized by the dissident Lithuanian Freedom League to protest against the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.
34 'Informacinis pranešimas...', Tiesa, 27 January 1988, pp.1-3.
35 Ibid.
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ter 2), asserted that Soviet rule brought about ‘the greatest social inequality…in which some became “cogs” in a system without rights.'38

One of Songaila’s strictures to the XI Plenum of the CPL CC (5 May 1988), was that ‘the Presidium of the Academy of Science, the Ministry of People’s Education, Institutes and the Rectorates of higher schools should demand from historians and other scientists the treatment of topical and historical issues in accordance with clear methodological guidelines defined in Lenin’s theoretical heritage.’39 However, by this time, the Institute of Party History was not prepared to respond to directives from above. A report by its Director, Professor Vanda Kašauskienė, linked undemocratic practice to historical distortion, ‘a lot of harmful influence was done to the science of party history because of the biased orientation of historians and the inaccessibility to the documents of the party archives.’40 The comments made by Kašauskienė, a Party historian, and by Pečiulis and Petkevičius, both party activists, were indistinguishable from those of Lithuanian samizdat publications. By August 1988, ‘the very concept of samizdat publishing’ had become blurred. The memoirs, for example, of Juozas Urbšys, the last Foreign Minister of independent Lithuania, were circulating freely and included in them were his negotiations with Hitler and Molotov in the period 1939-40.41 The Party newspaper Tiesa (‘Truth’) was itself challenging Soviet myths by printing the reminiscences of the former Commander-in-Chief of the Lithuanian Army, General Stasys Raš tikis, on the Soviet ultimatum of 14 June 1940 which had led to the occupation of Lithuania.42

In an unprecedented gesture, former Defenders of the People (who had fought with Soviet auxiliary batallions against the Partisans) defended their actions in a letter sent to Tiesa. The Minister of Internal Affairs was one of the signatories. Their statement still adhered to the class view of history, ‘truth to say, not the deportations (the first one after the war in 1948)

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sparked such terror [of the Partisans], but the land reform, the nationalization of industrial plants and banks. 

Songaila’s statements to another Plenum of the CPL CC (4 October 1988) demonstrated the extent to which the CPL’s insistence on linking the ordering of human affairs to a predeterminded past and future had become undermined. Songaila expressed his dissatisfaction ‘with some aspects of the republican press’s discussion of recent Lithuanian history, in effect urging a halt to publication of articles that challenged certain party myths’. He stated that ‘we cannot ignore one thing that to us only the socialist variety of opinions is acceptable, but not any other kind’, and advised historians that ‘the curiosity of society in history is considerably increased and one needs to use this situation efficiently for the cultivation of the correct value orientations’. 

The change in policy towards national consciousness, by October 1988, was not yet institutionalized through contestation at elections (which would mark the onset of democratization), but nonetheless was undermining the position of conservatives in the CPL. During the XIV Plenum of the CPL CC (20 October 1988), Songaila was relieved of his position, and replaced by Algirdas Brazauskas as the new First Secretary. The circumstances of his resignation were partly prompted by a new conceptualization of ‘the people’ as no longer Soviet, but Lithuanian people, against whom Songaila had allowed violence to be employed, at a rally to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the signing of amendments to the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (28 September 1988). The organizers, the Lithuanian Freedom League, were then indicted by the authorities as ‘an anti-Soviet organization that could not be allowed to organize public meetings’ but redeemed by Lithuanian Communists at the Plenum who condemned the use of violence against peaceful demonstrators. As one speaker

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noted, ‘One cannot throw troops against the people’\(^{48}\) whose defence, when confronted by riot police, had been to scream out their non-Soviet identity, “Fascists get out of Lithuania!” and “Occupiers get out of here!”\(^{49}\) A. Žalys, the First Secretary of the raion committee of Klaipėda, pointed out that Songaila could no longer be considered to be one of the people,

…when people went out onto the street…and spoke about our consciousness of our nation, the self-respect of our nation made itself appear, and we did not notice the First Secretary among these people. The painful events of 28 September touched almost everybody. To bring the army against the people is impossible. As we understand it these actions were sanctioned by none other than the Secretaries. Therefore a change of Central Committee authority is necessary.\(^{50}\)

Songaila’s attempt to contain liberalization within the prescriptive ideology of Marxism-Leninism had been challenged, in Lithuania, at the outset by dissidents such as Antanas Terleckas of the Lithuanian Freedom League. From the late 70’s onwards, the aim of this underground organization had been ‘to raise the political and national consciousness of the nation, and to remind the world through political documents of Lithuania’s occupation.’\(^{51}\) Under glasnost, dissident activities such as hunger strikes or rallies took on importance because they publicly demonstrated to the potential liberalizers (both within and outside the Party) that there existed, within Lithuanian civil society, the possibility of an alliance with a force that so far remained unorganized.\(^{52}\)

**National Consciousness and the Role of the Dissidents**

The League had organized the first unofficial demonstration in Soviet Lithuania, on 23 August 1987, to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and at that time, ‘did not know if someone would shoot or arrest them.’\(^{53}\) However, in less than a year, many aspects of the League’s perception of Lithuanian historiography had been openly accepted by reformers in the CPL. The first sign of change was evidenced by the CPL’s decision to commemorate the deportations of May 1948 one day before the unofficial commemorations

\(^{49}\) Girnius, ‘Police Disperse Demonstrations’, p.23.
\(^{50}\) ‘...XIV Plenume, 1988m spalio 20 d.’, Tiesa, 27 October 1988, p.1.
\(^{51}\) Interview with Antanas Terleckas, leader of the League, Vilnius, 20 May 1997.
\(^{52}\) Przeworski, Democracy and the Market, p.56
\(^{53}\) Interview with Julius Sasnauskas, member of the League, Vilnius, 20 May 1997.

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planned by the League on 22 May. The pressure from below and uncertainty about the limits of reform had led to the loss of will to rule as before on the part of many members of the CPL. This contrasted with the CPL’s opposition to the League’s attempt on 16 February 1988 to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Independence of Lithuania.

Songaila had portrayed an image of Lithuania in 1918 as having succumbed to the atrocities of bourgeois rule which had deprived the people of Lithuania of their social rights. He stated that ‘bourgeois historians [are] still trying to get the thought into the minds of the Lithuanian workers’ that Independence had brought social justice to everyone. His interpretation was not shared by those Lithuanians who, in symbolic gestures of national consciousness throughout Lithuania, such as attending special masses or placing flowers at gravesides of Lithuanian national figures, or displaying the flag of independent Lithuania, had shown their support for a Lithuania free from Soviet rule. It was reported that thousands had participated despite attempts by the authorities to use force in dispersing those gathered on the streets.

Songaila later thanked the work of the Soviet and Administrative organs ‘in the formation of public opinion’ which he claimed had stopped ‘anti-Soviet actions…on the 70th anniversary of the declaration of the so-called independence.’ Yet governmental action in mobilizing troops was a sign that the policy of liberalization, as a controlled opening of political space, was failing, whilst the disintegration of order served to strengthen the position of the liberalizers in the Communist regime. The decision to hold the official ceremony to mark the deportations (21 May 1988) suggested that Lithuanian communists had started to acknowledge a perestroika-type Soviet Lithuanian identity whilst the choice of venue, at the monument to ‘the most senior Lithuanian communist official’ to be executed during Stalin’s era, showed that communists were depicting themselves as victims of the deformations of Stalinism too.

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55 Przeworski, Democracy and the Market, pp.54-60.
59 Przeworski, Democracy and the Market, pp.59-60.
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For the unofficial commemorations, the Lithuanian Freedom League asked for public acknowledgement of the shared suffering of the people of the territory of Lithuania by holding religious services for all those deported in 1948 - Lithuanians, Poles and Jews alike. Supporters of the idea made the suggestion that the Lithuanian national anthem should be included in the commemorations whilst in Vilnius the Polish national anthem should also be played. By 3 July 1988, the League felt confident enough to announce its intention to work openly to re-establish Lithuania’s independence, and asked for the government to publish secret documents on the period of Independence and the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

The problem for the CPL was that it was unable to discuss publicly Lithuania’s occupation whilst attached to the authority of the CPSU under which historians in Moscow denied the authenticity of the secret protocols to the Pact. Acting as politically motivated human agents outside of communist party control, the dissidents were able to focus on national issues proscribed by Moscow, and by so doing opened up the political space to further debate. Intellectual activity and the impetus it received from visible splits in the ruling party indicated to civil society that political space was opening up for autonomous organization. The nationalist organization Sąjūdis, established by party and non-party intellectuals, provided a focus for the interaction that was taking place between Party members and ‘representatives’ of civil society, and as such could claim that it was outside of the monopoly on historical truth as exercised by the Communist Party.

**National Consciousness and the Role of Sąjūdis**

In Sąjūdis’ first newsletter, a report of a public meeting on 19 June with ‘the initiative group’ (Sąjūdis) drew attention to ‘national relationships’ and the need for ‘the return of national history to the Lithuanian nation, [and the] publication of valuable historical documents’. The advantage that Sąjūdis had over the dissidents in realizing this aim was that it was partially composed of people who represented authority, the CPL, and was therefore capable of negoti-
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ating with the CPL and organizing events which attracted mass crowds. This publicly demonstrated to conservatives that there was an instant response and resonance to issues concerning ‘national history’ and made *Sąjūdis* aware of the possibility of representing ‘the people’ should an electoral opportunity occur. *Sąjūdis’* confidence in raising issues about national history was demonstrated very early on in its political agenda.

At a meeting on 23 June 1988 between leaders of *Sąjūdis* and the CPL CC, Bronius Genzelis, one of the *Sąjūdis* participants (and a member of the CPL) stated that, ‘there are still many signs of Stalinism in our republic. Almost at every step an ordinary man is reminded that he is helpless and inferior.’65 Prior to this, when *Sąjūdis* met with the CPL for the first time on 17 June, Šepetys (the CPL’s representative), described how the Lithuanian delegation to the XIX All Union Party Conference would be the first to demand a juridical evaluation of the Stalinist era to look into ‘the mass deportations of 1941 and the post-war years’.66 Landsbergis told a mass rally to see off the delegates to the XIX Party Conference (24 June) that *Sąjūdis* had met the previous day ‘with the highest republican authorities’ to get its proposals ‘agreed in the programme of the delegates.’67

Having instigated the first steps towards cooperation with the CPL, *Sąjūdis* continued to demand the return ‘to the Lithuanian people its history, which was kept in silence, or falsified [and] that all major historical documents concerning our nation be published.’68 The return of history was linked to comprehending that Lithuania had existed since time immemorial, ‘To have [history] back not only in the form of research and publications...but also in the form of that feeling and understanding of our everlasting existence in this land - though we are different today, but still the same.’69 When *Sąjūdis* published the three secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in August, public opinion had already acknowledged via samizdat that the founding myth furnished by Moscow to the Lithuanians was completely fraudulent. As *Sąjūdis* noted, ‘the public does not accept the pseudo-scientific conceptions concerning the

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65 ‘Susitikimas LKP CK rūmuose’, *Sąjūdžio žinios*, No.7, 7 July, pp.1-4 (2).
political situation in Lithuania in 1939-40. Silence and avoiding publicity on these issues support fiction, fibs and rumours which weakens the belief in democracy and publicity and strengthens passiveness. They bring nothing but civic, ideological and moral damage.\textsuperscript{70}

The ability of Sajūdis to initiate an agenda on national consciousness outside of Communist Party control had already been indicated in July when in an article entitled, ‘The Light and the Truth’, Sajūdis announced that a Commission had been set up to investigate the crimes of the Stalinist period.\textsuperscript{71} Its aim was ‘to bring back our true history and true social justice to Lithuania’ and surviving deportees (or anyone with knowledge of the period) were invited to fill in questionnaires with details of their arrest and exile enabling Sajūdis to publish data on the repressions with names of those responsible.\textsuperscript{72} This interaction between Sajūdis and the public showed that under glasnost civil society responded to the right to criticize the dominant ideology and challenged, along with Sajūdis, the hegemony of Communist Party control. In a letter addressed to Sajūdis, for example, one author had demanded, ‘When will the Lithuanians from Siberia be allowed to return who do not have the right to live in Lithuania?\textsuperscript{73} At a mass rally organized by Sajūdis to commemorate the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (23 August 1988) Šepetys responded to public opinion put forward by Sajūdis by stating that a process of rehabilitation would begin for those exiled without trial as a consequence of Stalinist misrule. He observed, ‘...we have embarked on the most resolute mission to rectify those mountainous grievances to rehabilitate the victims of deportations, and to denounce the deportations as an anti-constitutional act.’\textsuperscript{74}

At the same rally, Liudas Truska, a historian, told the crowd that historians were now accountable to the people, and not the Party. He stated, ‘The time for repentance has come; a repentance which purifies the individual, the society and the nation...As a historian, I am ashamed that for such a long time we have not been telling the people the whole truth, half of the truth, or even less than that; this is the biggest lie of all. Society should exert an influence

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71 The Commission was set up at the Baltic Unit of the Soviet Sociologists’ Association.
and bring pressure upon historians and demand that they should write the truth and nothing but the truth on any topic." Sepetys' admission that there was no doubt that the secret protocols existed demonstrated that Soviet ideology had become untenable. His weak defence was to state his conviction that the existing Soviet government 'would never in even the most difficult circumstances and conditions have signed such treaties as that of the shameful 1939 treaty.' In place of Soviet ideology, historical memory was able to give back to Lithuanians their past, which Arvydas Juozaitis, a leading member of Sąjūdis described as having been perpetuated by blood ties. He stated, 'We think about Lithuania’s history...we feel it oozing in our blood...Less than 50 years have passed since the time when our country was flooded by a wave of vandalism. We still live under conditions when our memories are alive, and the trees still remember our sacred places being spoiled and destroyed, our people killed, our culture ruined, our language restricted.'

The inaugural Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988), attended and addressed by top party and government officials, was an indication that Moscow's attempt to institutionalize liberalization would transgress into a national issue of one-party transplacement - joint action taken by the CPL and the principal opposition, represented by Sąjūdis. Landsbergis urged the delegates to give the communist First Secretary their support. Brazauskas told the Congress, 'we shall persistently strive to ensure that all the blank spots disappear from Lithuania’s history', a signifier that nationalism was realigning Soviet Lithuanian Communists as Lithuanian communist patriots.

One year on from the dissidents' attempts to commemorate Lithuanian Independence, Sąjūdis took the lead in officially commemorating 'the restoration of the Lithuanian state in 1918'.

The presence of Brazauskas alongside representatives of the Lithuanian Freedom League at

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78 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.234.
the ceremony indicated that the ‘blank spots’ of Lithuania’s history, at least those which Lithuanians wanted to expose, had in fact disappeared.\textsuperscript{80} As noted by Kazimieras Antanavičius, a \textit{Sąjūdis} activist, in his speech to mark the occasion:

> Just last year, any attempt at marking this event was considered to be a grave criminal act... For forty-four years, Lithuania has struggled for this day... We went through endless suffering, innumerable sacrifices, unending tears. We walked on our knees. We walked under oppression and persecution. We walked homeless through the trackless forests... We walked past the youth of Lithuania who died in battle against our oppressors, their bodies tossed into the middle of our market squares. We walked in tears through the martyrdom of concentration camps and the ice and snow of Siberia.\textsuperscript{81}

This expression of a communal past was based upon the historical memory of Lithuanians outside of the explanations derived from Soviet historiography about the ‘true’ version of events. In December 1989, Brazauskas had rehabilitated the ‘bourgeois’ declaration of Lithuanian Independence explaining that ‘the restoration of the Lithuanian state was... a progressive event in the current history of our country. It meant the end of national oppression which had lasted for 120 years for our nation...’. Brazauskas pointed out that, ‘ideas of national awakening and the creation of national statehood propagated by \textit{Aušra} and \textit{Varpas} (‘The Bell’) which were declared in a concentrated way in the act of 16 February 1918, exerted a strong influence upon the consciousness of many. Not to see this meant a mistake and a neglect of the right of self-determination of nations proclaimed by Vladimir Lenin...’.\textsuperscript{82} The Lithuanian government started to rehabilitate victims of Stalinist repression in the late 1980s, and the \textit{Sąjūdis} government passed a law to this effect in May 1990. This excluded those who had participated in “genocide crimes”, but holocaust survivors asserted that perpetrators of atrocities against Jews were rehabilitated due to ‘negligence, incompetence, or indifference’\textsuperscript{83}

When the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet passed an act restoring independence on 11 March 1990 it suspended the validity of the Constitutions of the Lithuanian SSR and the USSR. Instead it

\textsuperscript{81} Kazimieras Antanavičius, ‘On the Occasion of the Commemoration of the 71st Anniversary of the Restoration of Lithuanian Independence’, University of Toronto, 19 February 1989, in my possession.
\textsuperscript{82} ‘Revoliucinės kovos, kuriamojo darbo ir persitvarkymo keliu’, \textit{Tiesa}, 17 December 1988, pp.1-2.
reactivated the 1938 Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic in order to emphasize the continuity of the Lithuanian state, but then replaced it with a Temporary Working Law.\(^8^4\) Glasnost enabled the nationalist movement to ignore Party strictures on dealing with anti-Soviet interpretations of history, such as the response to Pečiulis’ article (on the link between Partisan recruitment and Stalinist terror) that ‘One cannot discuss slander, one simply rejects it.’\(^8^5\)

The memory of Lithuania’s incorporation into the Soviet Union received its impetus from the belief that Lithuanians had formed a distinct ethnic group throughout the ages. Sigitas Geda, a leading member of Sąjūdis, told a mass rally organized by Sąjūdis to meet the delegates to the XIX party conference on their return from Moscow (9 July 1988), that ‘...we are one of the oldest nations on the earth...’.\(^8^6\) Referring to Lithuania as an old nation forgot the vastly changed demography of Lithuania as it emerged under Soviet rule with its Jewish population depleted, and the multi-culturalism of Vilnius destroyed. In its routing of the Soviet myth of voluntary accession into the Soviet Union, nationalist discussion was sparse on remembering the authoritarianism of the inter-war Republic, and that Vilnius had been given to Lithuania by Stalin as a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

**Language**

Graham Smith’s point that the cultural intelligentsia became prominent in the nationalist movements in the Baltic States in order to preserve the social reproduction of their indigenous languages and cultures is well illustrated by the Lithuanian experience.\(^8^7\) As noted in Chapter 2, Lithuanians thought of themselves as being very special because of their language which had been threatened throughout the ages firstly by cultural Polonization, and then by the Tsarist and Soviet policies of Russification. In addition, Lithuanians had before them the image of the old Prussians whose language and culture were eliminated by the marauding Teutonic Knights. Yet Lithuanians were also special because of their resistance to alien cultures, exem-

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\(^8^4\) Ibid. p.157.
plified by the book smugglers of the nineteenth century, who sacrificed themselves for an independent Lithuania, and by the samizdat that was published from the 1970's onwards.

In the opening stages of glasnost, Lithuanians moved quickly to establish the Lithuanian language as the dominant language of the Republic. Vytautas Martinkus, a former Chair of the Union of Writers of Lithuania, has stated that, 'we were happy and proud that in Lithuania we managed to preserve Lithuanian as the priority language in the then existing system of education (particularly higher education), public events etc. Russification and the spread of the Russian language was becoming visible thus the only real opposition to this, the only real weapon against the Russian language could be only official opposition, ie acceptance of the Lithuanian language as the national language within the territory of the Republic of Lithuania.'

Martinkus pointed out that the Union of Writers sought to alter its direction from 'the instrument servicing occupation...into the instrument of destruction of occupation' and explained the importance of making Lithuanian de facto the official language of the Republic. He stated, 'the vision was elementary: the whole nation returns into the language as it makes its return home with the whole of its culture and wholeness of its spirit...The new status of the Lithuanian language was bound to restore and return to the language areas which were previously eliminated or forbidden eg military terminology (all military training in the Soviet Army was carried out in Russian), and some research language (since dissertations were written in Russian, and journals and books were translated into Russian and discussed by committees before being published in Lithuanian).' The writing of dissertations posed a serious threat to the continued existence of Lithuanian as a medium of critical thought because of the inevitable consequence that the Lithuanian language would come to occupy 'an ever-diminishing role in public life.'

These points, including a resolution 'to appeal to the Supreme Council of the LSSR to formulate a constitutional article which defines the Lithuanian language as Lithuania's state language', were made at a meeting of the primary Party organization of the Union of Writers of

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88 Interview with Vytautas Martinkus, Vilnius, 20 February 1997.
89 Ibid.
90 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.8.
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Lithuania (4 April 1988). An underlying theme, as expressed by Jonas Mikelinskas, a writer who attended the meeting, was that the Soviet theory of the ‘equality of nations was a nice myth but not a reality.’ Mikelinskas stated, ‘let us be frank and ask ourselves: can a representative of these nations [the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Belorussian, Ukrainian or the Jewish nation] teach his children in the mother tongue as the Russians can in their Soviet Republics? It is the language which is the most important component of the notion of nation.’ Jonas Avyžius, the Lenin prize laureate in literature, noted that, ‘...a graduate from the Russian secondary school is not able to put together a few sentences in Lithuanian. Can such a school, isolating itself from the language, history, culture of the fraternal nation issue to the life a new man who is connected closely by spiritual ties to the people and the land which was chosen as a new fatherland?’

Saulius Šaltenas, another participant, complained about the over-Sovietized language in much the same way as Russian nationalists were talking about the impurity of the Soviet language in the period 1988-92. He stated, ‘this feverish so broadly advertised fusion of nations into one bleak society with a baggage of 500 words of impoverished Russian language (as was mentioned in the Plenum of the Board of the Union of Writers of the Soviet Union) is pernicious also to the Russian nation itself.’ These references to the linguistic domination of Russian were comparable to similar points made in Lithuanian samizdat publications in the late 1970’s. Martinkus pointed out that the Writers’ position changed from one of ‘oppositional discourse’ in which readers had deciphered the ‘true’ meaning of the text from ‘metaphors, symbols, hints and sub-texts’ to an open acknowledgement that Lithuania was an ‘occupied’ country. Ensuing demands to make Lithuanian the language of state revealed the emotive content of the language issue in the Lithuanian nationalist movement.

Landsbergis described how Soviet rule had ruined the ‘style of communication’ and implied that the language had to be purged from outside influence, ‘An impoverished spirit which had

92 Ibid.
93 Ibid. Šaltenas was Minister of Culture in the government of the Homeland Union (formerly Sąjūdis) in 1999.
95 Interview with Martinkus.
lost its dignity and self-respect was reflected in the horribly impure state of the language, polluted with foreign influences in vocabulary, syntax and pronunciation, with swear words cropping up in almost every sentence.\textsuperscript{96} His concept of ‘pollution’ presupposed that purity was actually attainable, although no such language has ever existed, anywhere. Three academics objected that the ‘patronymics of Lithuanian were slavonized (by adding suffixes alien to the Lithuanian language) in the Russian part of their passports’ despite ‘the opinion of linguists and the resolution of the Commission of the Lithuanian Language.’\textsuperscript{97}

The mode of communication was also appraised by its resemblance to a delivery of speech associated with the illegal invader, for example, at a rally of 23 August 1988 (to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact), the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs was rendered inaudible by clapping from the crowd for talking ‘in the old stereotyped manner’.\textsuperscript{98} The visit by Aleksandr Iakovlev to Vilnius (11-13 August 1988) was also measured in such terms. His comments were received favourably by the liberal intelligentsia who noted that his usage of language was unlike the ‘officialese’ customarily deployed at these meetings. Thus, ‘he spoke in natural tones, refrained from cliches, and even quoted the Bible.’\textsuperscript{99} Tiesa, the Party newspaper, was similarly criticized by Sajūdis for choosing words ‘which were acceptable to its rigid style’ whereas ‘the words which “someone” might not like were deliberately not mentioned…’.\textsuperscript{100}

The ability to speak Lithuanian was used as a measure of trust and acceptance amongst political activists. Vytautas Petkevičius, a writer, had derided Mitkin, the Second Secretary (and an ethnic Russian), at a Sajūdis rally to see off the delegates to the XIX party Conference (24 June 1988) for his linguistic failure, because it was unacceptable “that in my native land an uncultured man demands that I speak Russian.”\textsuperscript{101} As one author noted in the nationalist

\textsuperscript{100} Remigijus Auskelis, ‘Kada Tiesa įsibrėž pasakyti visa tiesą?’, Sajūdžio žinios, No.5, pp.1-2 (1).
\textsuperscript{101} Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.81.
newsletter, ‘Petkevičius does not trust the CPL CC Second Secretary, who leads the republic not knowing the native language of the majority of its population.” This attitude was linked to demands to exclude non-Lithuanian speakers from ‘high positions’, for example, ‘those who cannot speak Lithuanian should not be given any high positions including the service sector.’ The Lithuanian Freedom League suggested in its Programme (3 July 1988) that the Constitution should make Lithuanian ‘the language of communication among all residents of Lithuania’. The subsequent replacement of Mitkin by Beriozovas, an ethnic Russian fluent in Lithuanian, showed that exclusion for non-Lithuanian speakers was pursued vigorously but was not against minorities per se although it was disadvantageous towards minorities.

Lithuanians expressed feelings of humiliation about the inferior status of Lithuanian in the Republic and articles appeared in the press to this effect. At a meeting of Sąjūdis with the CPL CC (23 June 1988) Petkevičius asked, ‘Why should we Lithuanians, before making a speech, have to apologize, “My apologies, comrades, but I am going to speak Lithuanian”?’ A University Lecturer described how it was demeaning that some employees could not speak to their questioners in the Lithuanian language. He recommended that, ‘...each employee has to know the state language...Medical staff would have to talk to the patient in his language’ as well as ‘a militia man’ and ‘saleswoman’ to their respective questioners and clients. He also stated that it was ‘an insult to the language of the local people...when some 15-20 years ago the verbal instruction came from high institutions to speak in Russian in party meetings in which one or two who do not know the Lithuanian language are present.’ In another article, three academics of the Institute of Lithuanian Language and Literature, attached to the Academy of Science of Lithuania, commented that the status of the Lithuanian language caused its decline into ‘the rank of a secondary “vernacular language”...its usage dwindles’, and that government departments often did not have forms available in Lithuanian. They noted an ‘ever widening gap between the official literary language fostered by writers, editors and linguists and the spontaneous usage of the living language...the latter situation is degrading be-

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102 Auškelis, ‘...visą tiesą?’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.5, 4 July 1988, pp.1-2 (2).
105 ‘Susitikimas LKP CK rūmuose’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.7, 7 July 1988, pp.2-3 (2).
cause of the frightening speed by which alien forms and constructions are spread.' The three
demanded a repeal of the ‘“absurd directives”’ which required all dissertations including ones
on Lithuanian Language and Literature to be submitted in the Russian language.  

Sajūdis recommended that the Lithuanian language become the state language of the Republic
which meant that it could not be ‘expelled from any field of material or cultural life’ and that
it should become ‘the written language of administrative institutions and industrial enterprises
both at the republican and All-Union level.’ The first sign of change came when the XIII
Plenum of the CPL CC (4 October 1988) was conducted throughout in the Lithuanian lan­
guage for the first time in fifty years. Brazauskas had already responded to public opinion
by publicly announcing to the rally organized by Sajūdis on 9 July (greeting the delegates on
their return from the XIX Party Conference) that the Academy’s Institute of Lithuanian Lan­
guage and Literature would prepare documentation to legislate on making Lithuanian the offi­
cial state language of the Republic. The swift enactment of the Law on 7 October, ratified
by the Supreme Soviet on 18 November, demonstrated the importance of the language issue
to the Lithuanian nationalist movement.

The nationalist movement founded itself on the redressing of wrongs committed by an illegal
invader. In language it addressed the wrong of official discrimination against Lithuanian, and
equated the new status of the Lithuanian language with ‘justice, cultural parity and the liqui­
dation of imperialism.’ Nonetheless, it saw the wrong as discrimination per se, and made
proposals for the allowance of Russian and Polish - the languages of the minorities. The reso­
lution of the meeting of the Union of Writers (4 April 1988), for example, proposed to estab­
lish the linguistic dominance of Lithuanian, but included references to the rights of minorities.
These included the setting up of schools where minorities would be taught in their native lan­
guage, support for writers ‘who compose in Russian to publish an almanac in Russian’, to

109 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.195.
110 ibid p.90.
112 Interview with Martinkus.
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publish works by Polish writers and ‘to establish a section of Polish young writers.’\(^{113}\) The Writers gave their support to plans to re-establish ‘a Museum of Jewish Culture in Vilnius’ and to protect cultural monuments ‘of all nations in Lithuania.’\(^{114}\)

The leaders of all the cultural unions and the Cultural Foundation supported the recommendations made by the Union of Writers in their proposals to the XIX Party Conference which specifically mentioned ‘preserving the principle of bilinguality’, and schools for minorities with native language instruction.\(^{115}\) The process by which this was achieved was that Lithuanians firstly established their linguistic dominance, and then legislated on minority rights from a position of control in the cultural sphere which comprised that part of the state to which they had access to (discussed more fully in Chapter 4). Gellner’s impetus of complete homogeneity was referred to in nationalist parlance, but was never realized in the Lithuanian case. The print-language of emerging Lithuanian national consciousness (in Anderson’s theory the purveyor of identity) very much took the lead from Lithuanian historical memory in becoming a forum of discussion of nationalist aspirations.

Education

As noted in Chapter 2, Lithuanians were proud of the memory of smuggling books into Lithuania which were written by ethnic Lithuanians, and of the diligence of priests aided by the laity in establishing a network of secret schooling for Lithuanian children. By the end of December 1988, Lithuanians were intent on making changes to educational policy which included prioritizing the teaching of the Lithuanian language throughout all schools in the Republic, and rewriting the educational curricula, for example, replacing both the methods and contents of the teaching of Soviet history with a new conception of the teaching of history in ‘the National School.’\(^{116}\) At the All-Union Congress of Educational Workers (21-23 December 1988), for example, the Lithuanian programme more or less discarded the standard aims of Soviet education, because ‘its moral value is associated only with the progress of science

\(^{113}\) ‘Literatūra...’, op. cit. fn 91, p.4.
\(^{114}\) Ibid.
and technology, with the cognition of the world and history of the country [the Soviet Union]."  

The newly elected Lithuanian government composed of the former communists submitted to Parliament in November 1992 a ‘General Concept of Education in Lithuania’ which outlined the new structure and goals of the Lithuanian education system. The presiding Minister of Culture and Education (Darius Kuolys), who had occupied the same position in the Sąjūdis government of 1990-1992, was able to demonstrate the ideological consensus of all parties on educational reforms given that the proposals represented the culmination of discussions that had taken place between 1988 and 1992. A group comprised of fifteen Lecturers and Deans at Institutes of Higher Education had participated in drawing up the ‘Concept’; many of them (by virtue of their office) would have been members of the CPL. The Ministry of Education’s decision (December 1988) to break away from Communist ideological control and to replace it with a ‘national school’ system provides an indication of the process of transplacement that had been taking place at the institutional level. Hence by the end of 1988 the momentum to reform the educational system had coalesced into ‘the concept of a national school’.  

The ‘General Concept of Education in Lithuania’ noted that in the period up to 11 March 1990 (when Sąjūdis declared independence after its electoral success), ‘Lithuanian teachers, scientists, and artists [pooled] their energies in an effort to create new curricula, textbooks, and educational materials based on the unique national culture’. In the section below I have looked at the criticisms made of Soviet education in order to highlight the nationalist impetus, and followed this by an overview of the attempts to reform education in the period up until 1992. The educational changes that were carried out in Lithuania in the period 1988-1992 indicate that Sąjūdis did start to reform education in the manner described by Gellner, Hobsbawm and Smith (ie to institute state-driven education along national lines), but the question

119 For a list of their names and specialisms see General Concept of Education in Lithuania, p.3.  
120 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.141.  
121 General Concept of Education in Lithuania, p.9.
assessed in the conclusion is whether these changes were related to the functional requirements of industrialization (Gellner), a reaction against globalization (Hobsbawm) or Smith’s perspective that *ethnies* will realize an ethno-cultural history formulated upon a reinterpretation of the past.

The issue of educational reform, first raised in December 1987, became a focal point of discussion amongst the cultural unions, historians, lecturers, teachers, dissidents and the public. The teaching of Lithuanian history and language were two areas which received much attention. Proposed changes to the teaching of language were initially centred upon increasing the use of Lithuanian throughout all educational institutions and achieving parity with the teaching of Russian language. At the meeting convened by the Union of Writers (4 April 1988) a resolution was passed which suggested that in non-Lithuanian schools there should be a year added to the curriculum to improve competence and knowledge of Lithuanian language and history, and demands were made to stop the proposed system of dual-language schools and kindergartens being implemented.  

An article in *Tarvbinis mokytojas* (‘Soviet Teacher’) pointed out that the Russian language was introduced too early in Lithuanian language schools, even in kindergartens, whilst pupils in Russian and Polish language schools began Lithuanian later (when they were 8 years old).  

This disparity continued throughout school-life since pupils in Lithuanian language schools received 47 hours per term of lessons in Russian language and literature, and in Russian language schools a corresponding 17 hours for instruction in Lithuanian language and literature. The Writers’ resolution had also opposed the requirement that dissertations were to be written in Russian, and asked ‘to unify salaries and working conditions’ and access to scholarships throughout the entire system of Lithuanian, Polish and Russian language schools. Teachers of Russian language and literature received a 15% bonus (instigated in

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122 Ibid. p.9.
123 ‘Literatūra...’, op. cit. fn 91, p.4.
125 Ibid.
126 ‘Literatūra...’, op. cit. fn 91, p.4.
1983) for teaching in non-Russian schools but there was no reciprocal arrangement for their Lithuanian counterparts in Russian language schools.\textsuperscript{127}

The recommendation made by the Commission for Ideological Science, Culture, and Education to amend the Lithuanian Constitution to give primacy to the teaching of the Lithuanian language in educational institutions signified the resolve of Lithuanian Communists to defend their native language.\textsuperscript{128} The need to reverse the process of Russification also brought demands to stop teaching history as a subdivision of Soviet history. What was meant by Lithuanian history initially appeared to be freedom from the referential context of the ideology of Marxism-Leninism and a return to the historiography that had existed before the Second World War.

In December 1987, historians and writers had attended a meeting to discuss history and the historical novel in which Vanda Zaborskaitė, a literary historian, noted that the Soviet science of history ‘talks about classes, and about socialist strata, about objective laws’ with nothing about ‘people, personalities, [or] historical concrete [events]’.\textsuperscript{129} References were made to the intellectual integrity of the history textbook which had been edited by Adolfas Šapoka and published in 1936 in the inter-war Republic of Lithuania. Vytautas Petkevičius, the writer, said that ‘I confess very frankly that I hold “History” by A.Šapoka as a most conscientious work as regards the facts.’\textsuperscript{130} It was at this meeting that Bronius Vaitkevičius had raised the issue of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (see section above on ‘History and Culture’). Shortly afterwards, at a meeting on ‘History and the School’, organized by the Union of Writers of Lithuania (21 December 1987), it was proposed that censorship should be stopped and the writing of a new textbook on Lithuanian history should be urgently implemented.\textsuperscript{131}

In order to meet this demand, the ‘formal’ ‘democratic’ constitution of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic was evoked, because as the writer Vytautas Bubnys noted, new textbooks

\textsuperscript{129} ‘...Istorija su mumis?’, op. cit., fn. 25, pp.4,5,7.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
underwent a difficult procedure to get to the publishing stage, "[The textbook] must [first] be translated into Russian, analyzed by a dozen committees, approved by the right instances, and then finally written...[ellipsis in original] in Lithuanian. Shouldn’t there be more openness in this procedure, shouldn’t we remember our constitutional rights." The distinction made between ‘real’ and ‘formal’ rights was a call for democracy to be made a reality through activating the sham democratic rights of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. By April 1988 suggestions for changing the school curriculum were linked to a reassessment of Soviet rule. At the meeting of the Union of Writers of Lithuania (4 April 1988), Bubnys called for new research from primary sources - ‘true and old documents’ - into the deportations, the partisan struggle and the forced collectivization of agriculture. He continued by pointing out that Lithuanian graduates did not know their own Republic’s history as Stalin’s ‘theory of the “merging” of nationalities and languages’ produced a school curriculum which marginalized the teaching of non-Russian history and languages. This had ‘pernicuous consequences’ whereby the young were indifferent to their ‘native language, history and culture’.133

In a speech at the first rally organized by Sąjūdis (24 June 1988), Landsbergis referred to the meeting of 23 June with the CPL CC in which all had approved Sąjūdis’ proposal to include in the Constitution an article, “concerning the Lithuanian language as the state language”. He added, ‘But why in the same passage can we hear those weak humiliating words asking for permission, “to secure rights for republics to approve the educational programmes and textbooks on history, literature, art and language of their native countries.”’ The Sąjūdis programme on education reiterated the demands made by the Writers and cultural unions135 and sought to defend education from the consequences of Soviet ideology, ‘...take a look at the school system which was directed to educate uniform semi-citizens filled with fear, hypocrisy, and servility.’136 Sąjūdis pointed to the shortage of educational institutions when compared to the ‘luxurious offices’ provided for officials, and on the need for Lithuania to make its own decisions on what kind of specialists to train by giving autonomy to institutions of higher edu-

132 Ibid.
133 Vytautas Bubnys, ‘Kas gali pažadinti nacionalinių orumą?’, Literatūra ir menas. 16 April 1988, p.4.
134 ‘V.Landsbergio žodis Lietuviui’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.4, 3 July 1988, pp.2-4 (3).
135 V.Čepaitis, A.Žebrisgūnas, ‘Nacionalinių klausimų’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.6, July, pp.2and 4 (1).
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cation.\textsuperscript{137} The Chair of the Lithuanian Cultural Foundation commented on the threat to Lithuanian culture raised by the clustering of Polish schools in eastern Lithuania (formerly part of Polish territory).

\begin{quote}
'...the number of Lithuanian schools in eastern Lithuania...has decreased in comparison with the true number of Polish schools that existed during the period between the two world wars. The Slavification zone is reaching the Šventoji river. Where should we retreat?'\textsuperscript{138}
\end{quote}

As Sąjūdis gained momentum in Lithuanian society it listed the instigation of 'Lithuanian schools' as one of its objectives.\textsuperscript{139} Landsbergis stated that the strengthening of 'national culture' would form 'the principle of national schools'. As he said,

\begin{quote}
all instruction has to be based on the native language, its oral folklore and songs; the history of the country and its geography has to be thoroughly taught and spiritually adopted by students. This is the only way to raise a conscious citizen and the future owner of its land and country.\textsuperscript{140}
\end{quote}

He added that it was necessary for non-Lithuanians to become acquainted with the nation's culture,

\begin{quote}
Analogous contents have to comprise the subject matter for schools of other nationalities. Their students have to be well acquainted with the past of Lithuania, its culture, they have to know the Lithuanian language, so that they would not feel aliens in this land and would not be easily instigated to chauvinism or national hatred.\textsuperscript{141}
\end{quote}

The CC and the Council of Ministers responded to Sąjūdis' demands. A resolution was passed in August 1988 to achieve parity between Lithuanian and Russian language teaching, and Lithuanian history and geography were established as separate subjects in schools.\textsuperscript{142} At the end of the year, Lithuanian educators presented their demands for educational autonomy

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{137} Bronius Genzelis, 'There is a Need for Social Justice', \textit{The Congress Bulletin}, 23 October 1988, No.3, pp.1-4 (1,2).
\item \textsuperscript{138} 'From the Reports', \textit{The Congress Bulletin}, 24 October 1988, No.4, p.6.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Brigita Balikiene, 'Pergalé', \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.9, 16 July 1988, pp.1-2 (1).
\item \textsuperscript{140} Vytautas Landsbergis, 'LPS kultūrinės programos metmenys', \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.15, July 1988, pp.1-3 (1,2).
\item \textsuperscript{141} Ibid. p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{142} Girnius, 'A Change of Policy in the Lithuanian Communist Party', pp.15-19 (17-18). The resolution on teaching Lithuanian language stated that pre-school children were to be taught in their native language (unless parents requested another input), the teaching of a second language was to be deferred until the third grade, and the 15 percent bonus was made uniform; Vardys and Sedaitis, \textit{Lithuania}, p.129.
\end{itemize}
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to the All-Union Congress of Educational Workers (21-23 December), where Professor Vytautas Liutikas, a member of the Lithuanian delegation, pointed to the folly in omitting the word ‘nation’ from the documents prepared by the Conference organizers, because ‘an individual torn from his national medium, loses the normal measure of humanitarian values...’

He argued that, ‘the national school is a distinctive spiritual atmosphere which encompasses a pupil, and provides a meaning for the totality of the taught subjects...and creates an aesthetic and ethical platform that draws the school closer to the traditions of the people.’ Whilst the Congress rejected the demands for decentralization, Lithuanian educators, supported by the CPL CC, decided to marginalize the role of the USSR State Committee for Public Education, and to pursue the right of the Lithuanian Republic to determine policy in education.

Teachers throughout Secondary Schools who considered themselves supporters of Sąjūdis (and who often belonged to a Sąjūdis group based in a School) responded to the debate on education by introducing subjects which previously had been prohibited or ideologized by Soviet rule. Gražina Petraitienė, a history teacher at a Secondary School in Vilnius, said that previously ‘all directions came from the centre - what and how to teach.’ She recalled that the ‘blank spots’ of Lithuanian history such as the Partisan War, the Deportations, and the Declaration of Independence of 1918 became classroom topics following on from Sąjūdis’ commemoration of Lithuanian Independence in February 1989. She added that she had started to discuss the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with her students after the Baltic Way of August 1989.

Her new approach to the February 1918 Declaration was to present it as a progressive step in Lithuanian history when up until 1926 there had been a Parliament, a Constitution and political parties comparable to the democratic states of the West. She stated that although the Partisan War had never been spoken about in School its consequences had touched every family, and therefore it was ‘not a secret’. Petraitienė recalled that only a few historical figures - Peter

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143 "Už Tautinę mokyklą ...", op. cit, fn 117, p.1.
144 Ibid.
146 Interview with Gražina Petraitienė, Salomėjos Neries vidurinė mokykla, Vilnius, 29 September 1998.
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the First and Ivan the Terrible - were unaffected by a reevaluation of the way they were taught, and that in 1988 she had started to place more emphasis on Lithuanian historical figures such as Mindaugas, especially with pupils in the 11th and 12th grades.  

Gražina Masiulienė, also a history teacher, stated that in the period 1988-92 when educational reforms were being consolidated, the lack of clear directives and lack of a textbook meant that decisions on the curricula were taken by individual teachers. She stated that the ‘Lithuanian nation is a very special nation, it is not comparable to others’, and commented that she stressed Paganism as a marker of its uniqueness because Catholicism came later. Similarly to Petraitienė, she stated that after February 1989 ‘teachers changed greatly’ in their approach to the Declaration of Independence 1918, and that ‘children knew from their families first about the “blank spots” and then from teachers’.

Masiulienė recalled that she had started to teach the mediaeval period of Lithuanian Grand Dukes in greater detail (to the appropriate age group), and against the grain of Soviet ideology had always presented the Declaration of Independence 1918 as a ‘progressive’ event for Lithuania (even before 1985). She began to pay much ‘greater attention’ to the particularities of Lithuania’s government between 1918-1939, and examined in more depth the ‘Russian occupation’ and ‘how it worked’. She had personalized the teaching of the deportations by asking students to bring in pictures of their family members who had been victims of Stalin’s policy, and mentioned that there had been clashes in the classroom between pupils whose families had supported opposing sides in the Partisan War.

As a source of teaching material for Lithuanian history, Masiulienė and Petraitienė both used articles found in the Sajūdis publications Atgimimas and Sajūzdžio žinios as well as the book published by Šapoka in the inter-war period. Masiulienė had sometimes utilized Komjaunimo tiesa and Petraitienė Tiesa as both newspapers had come to support the nationalist agenda put forward by Sajūdis. Masiulienė had also relied upon a Lithuanian history book by Daugirdaitė Srogienė which had been published in America in the 1950’s, and alongside Šapoka regarded

147 Ibid.
148 Interview with Gražina Masiulienė, Nr.31 Tuskulėnų vidurinė mokykla, Vilnius, 29 September 1998.
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as a text of moral worth. Andrius Žilėnas, another history teacher, stated that ‘Šapoka was like the Bible in Sąjūdis’ times’. Senn notes that ‘for many Lithuanians Šapoka presented “the true history of Lithuania” (a term much in use in 1988). Educational reforms in Lithuania quickly reversed the trend of linguistic Russification. Irena Katauskienė, an English language graduate of 1980 who previously had found it ‘impossible to get a job’ in her sphere noted that by 1990-1991 teachers of the Russian language were finding it increasingly harder to find employment. She herself became employed as an English language teacher for the first time in 1990. In history, changes occurred as an interplay between supporters of Sąjūdis within educational establishments, public debate, and official decrees. All reforms were based upon the principle of ‘a commitment to Lithuanian culture and the preservation of its identity and historic continuity. Educational reforms continued to provide a secular education although religious teaching in private schools was made available.

Alongside the promotion of Lithuanian culture in the newly emerging Lithuanian state, provisions were also made for the educational and cultural needs of the Polish, Russian and Jewish minorities (discussed in detail in Chapter 4). As the ‘Concept’ noted, ‘Lithuanian education protects and promotes a pluralistic culture enriched by national minorities.’ This concurred with the view of all the cultural unions that the children of ethnic minorities receive an education in schools which would give primacy to their respective languages.

Gellner’s concept of congruency between culture and the state whilst being part of nationalist discourse in Lithuania was not empirically verifiable, mainly because this kind of congruency is hardly found anywhere (except where instigated by brute force or because of historical an-

150 Interview with Andrius Žilėnas, Nr.31 Tuskulėnų vidurinė mokykla, Vilnius, 29 September 1998.
152 Interview with Irena Katauskienė, Nr.31 Tuskulėnų vidurinė mokykla, Vilnius, 29 September 1998.
153 This formed one of the four principles of Lithuanian Education outlined in General Concept of Education in Lithuania, Vilnius, 1994, p.11.
154 Tiesa, 10 November 1989, p.2.
155 General Concept of Education in Lithuania, p.11.
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tecedents). The most contested issue of Lithuanian educational reform was the requirement that ethnic minority students in Lithuania continue their education (beyond the Secondary level) in the official language of the state. Demands made by ethnic Poles within Lithuania for a Polish University met with no cooperation from the Lithuanian government (this is discussed more fully in Chapter 5). This reaction is not peculiar to Lithuania, and is linked to the need for ethnic majorities to be able to control the means of cultural reproduction. Against the trajectory of Hobsbawm’s argument, Lithuanian nationalism was liberation from Soviet rule, and his hypothesis that a programmatic myth about the past sustains a falsely invented national consciousness cannot account for certain aspects of Lithuanian history that educators started to include in their curricula (the Declaration of Independence 1918, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Partisan war and the Deportations which Lithuanians had experienced within living memory).

The re-opening of Vytautas the Great University in April 1989 (closed by the Soviets in 1950) which took its name from the ancient Lithuanian Grand Duke demonstrates Smith’s idea of the use of myth and symbolism in proclaiming the immortality of the nation. Smith is concerned to show that the presence of ‘myth-symbol’ complexes and competing solidarities located amongst ethnic groups within a nation-state could lead to conflict, and therefore a paradoxical consequence of educational pluralism could be to undermine the process of democratization (by escalating conflict). Whilst the memory of cultural Polonization was a source of conflict between Lithuanians and Poles, this was alleviated by allowing Poles (and Russians) more control over their culture and education (discussed in Chapter 5).

Environment

Environmental concerns, such as the effect of enlarging the nuclear power plant of Ignalina with the addition of a third reactor (scheduled for 1990) were linked to nationalism, because the perceived destruction of the environment and people of Lithuania was associated with

157 General Concept, p.21.
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Moscow’s complete control over the territory of Lithuania and disregard for its safety. The environmental group Žemyna (the Lithuanian pagan goddess of the earth), formed in late 1987, which originated from a group attached to the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, depicted Moscow’s plans to expand nuclear power in Lithuania as a form of ‘genocide’ against the Lithuanian people. This portrayal of a people at risk of extinction from outside forces was integral to Lithuanian historical memory (as discussed in Chapter 2).

In Smith’s argument, nationalists seek to give credence to the perceived ancestral homeland by personifying the ‘land’ which acts both as a ‘sacred repository’ for the historical memory of the people and as a locus for symbolizing the experiences of the nation. In this analysis, environmental concerns combine both a practical need - that of saving the nation from pollution and destruction - with the nationalist desire to renew the cultural community by purifying it from ‘alien elements’. Gellner and Hobsbawm make no comment about this aspect of nationalist politics, because of their focus on industrialization and economic growth where land is an unsentimental resource to be used towards these ends. Nationalists in Lithuania responded to the environmental threat to the landscape because of their perception, as Smith suggests, that its characteristics defined and embodied the history and identity of ‘the people’.

The nationalist tendency to personify the environment was in evidence at the meeting of Historians and Writers in December 1987. The comments of Vanda Zaborskaitė, (the literary historian), on the inadequacy of Soviet historiography had commended a novel for attempting to portray ‘sixteenth century Lithuania’ which revealed, ‘the spirit of the intellectual elite of Vilnius, and what the spirit was of this city.’ In an article by Landsbergis on ‘our suffocating, poisoned and littered country’ he observed that, ‘soil and people are calling for justice and the right to exist…’

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160 Ibid. pp.43-49.
163 ‘...Istorija su mumis?’, op. cit. fn. 25, pp.4-7 (5).
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In a speech to the first Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988), Romualdas Ozolas, a leading member of Sąjūdis, linked culture, history and the environment together,

Today we [must]...bring to life Lithuania’s people...Lithuania’s culture...Lithuania’s natural environment...Lithuania can exist only when each leg of this triad is equally strong. To bring people to life is to revive their morals, their will, their minds. To bring culture to life is to revive history, the pursuit of truth and faith. To bring nature to life is to admit its uniqueness, to respect it and to restrain all pretensions of exploitation.  

In Lithuania, ecological concerns came to express opposition to the maintenance of the Party’s monopoly of political power, because environmental destruction was linked to the Centre’s political impasse - its goal of continuous economic and social progress had founded on a decaying edifice of bureaucratic inertia. The theoretical definition of political difference in socialist society, as a symptom of inadequate political culture propagated by remnants of bourgeois class forces, relied on the notion that alongside educational correction, economic development would create the conditions for real freedom. Socialism, in its quest to overcome scarcity, was to restructure the work process into higher levels of technological advancement.

The nationalist movement sought to expose this strategy as a fraud which had encouraged pollution and decay because, ‘no one ever and anywhere has devastated the nature and land so much and destroyed the cultural monuments. Nowhere and never the Evil was so cynical, so impudent.’ In other references, the subordinate status of the Lithuanian people was emphasized, ‘Our forests and lakes have turned into feudal possessions’, because of ‘the ecologically and even economically groundless colonial politics of Union departments.’ Socialist community was depicted as ‘run down, grim, silicate, kolkhoz Lithuania where dismal anxi-

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165 ‘...steigiamasis suvažiavimas’, op.cit. fn 77, pp.1-8 (3).
167 Ibid.
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duty, darkness and thriving animosity prevails." The ‘losses’ to the environment throughout communist rule were described by Romualdas Ozolas as having been immense:

...rivers, streams and lakes have died...topsoil has eroded...cultural monuments have been destroyed...our farms are in conflict with nature, our foodstuffs are of no worth, our architecture lacks a human face...our Nation is moving to become a wasteland of carcinogenity and radioactivity.

The ‘forced collectivization’ of agriculture and the ‘depressing kolkhoz settlements’ were judged to be a pivotal point in the process of destruction which had contributed to the method employed by the Centre of continuing the ‘War’ against the independent Republic of Lithuania by other means:

At first by means of exiles, repressions, later by land reclamation, forced industrialization, falsification of history, devastation of monuments of culture, devaluation of the language, and finally by alcoholism, contaminated food, water and radiation, the war is still being waged. It’s been 50 years now that we are in the situation of “necessary defence” since the threat of physical extinction is still looming over the Lithuanian nation.

The industrial plants, the main bodies of pollution (ie the Azotas nitrogen plant in Jonava, the oil refinery in Mažeikiai, and the nuclear power station in Ignalina) were constructed and controlled by Moscow and not by Lithuanian authorities, and came to express a conflict between the nationalist movement in Lithuania and USSR Ministries. Zigmas Vaišvila, a member of the Council of Sąjūdis, and Chair of Žemyna, reported on an open meeting held at the nuclear power plant of Ignalina (29 June 1988), and expressed the view that “In Snieckus the spirit of...stagnation is flourishing. Individuals (including the atomic power plant directors) are chained by departmental dependence; they are merely the unconditional implementers of the will of the appropriate all-Union ministries to fulfil the plan.”

172 ‘...steigiamasis suvažiavimas’, op. cit. fn 77, pp.1-8 (3).
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Ecological concerns struck at the socialist theory of community-making because the sovereign authority of the Centre was perceived as the exploitative class which determined the rules of property (and therefore ecological survival) through its control of the means of production. At a meeting of Lithuanian and Estonian economists to discuss proposals for economic autonomy (26 May 1988), the organizer, Kazimiera Prunskienė, linked the control of material resources — forests, water, and land — to the survival of the nation of Lithuania. She said that, 'the basic problem...was the failure to keep separate “my” (republican) and “our” (all-Union) interests...A republic’s property should include “its land, natural resources, native environment (with rights to preserve an ecologically clean environment), cultural monuments, etc.”

The need to preserve ‘cultural monuments’ was a constant theme of the nationalists because their very existence was deemed to embody the memory and aspirations of the people. Lithuanian nationalists followed Smith’s contention that, ‘...the historical events and monuments of the homeland can be “naturalized”. Castles, temples, tells and dolmens are integrated into the landscape and treated as part of its special nature’(as was the case for the Castle of Gediminas). In the cultural programme of Sąjūdis, Landsbergis noted that ‘monuments of culture are bridges which link past, present and future. He who destroys the past erases the cultural memory of a nation, undermines its future. Therefore we should consistently, unrelentingly fight against destroyers of monuments...’ This sentiment and resolve had been expressed by a ‘worker’ from Trakai, in a speech made at the very first demonstration organized by Sąjūdis (21 June), to protest against the ‘constant methodical destruction of the material history of Trakai and the suppression of openness which is being carried out in Lithuania.’ The speaker asked for help in stopping ‘the destruction of architectural and archaeo-

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176 Prunskienė was then the Deputy Director of the Agricultural Economics Scientific Research Institute in Vilnius.
177 Kazimiera Prunskienė, ‘Ūkiskaita ar savarankiškumas?’, Literatūra ir menas, 2 July 1988, p.11.
178 Smith, National Identity, p.66.
179 Landsbergis, ‘LPS Kultūrinės...’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.15, July 1988, pp.1-3 (2).
logical monuments which has been carried out by local authorities...thus destroying the cultural layers and the stone foundations of the twelfth to fourteenth century cult building.\textsuperscript{181}

The emergence of \textit{Sajūdis} was seen as bringing the nation into being despite the ecological destruction of Communist rule, ‘We see a nation gazing at us through the Congress photographs, born in just a few months, and not spiritless housing projects,...and bleak working pillars. You cannot banish it.’\textsuperscript{182} As one participant at the \textit{Sajūdis} Congress (October 1988) noted, ‘...a diligent gene of our nation will prosper even in concrete cities...’\textsuperscript{183} Nonetheless, the success of \textit{Sajūdis} in bringing a halt to ecological pollution has varied. Whilst it was successful in stopping the construction of a third reactor at Ignalina,\textsuperscript{184} there have been no attempts (at government level) to make the nuclear power plant redundant, just as Mažeikiai and the factory at Jonava have continued to operate. During the blockade (including fuel) of Lithuania by Moscow in 1991, the Lithuanian government of Landsbergis came to regard Ignalina as a valuable resource in providing heat and electricity, ‘for the survival of Lithuania as an independent and self-sufficient state’.\textsuperscript{185} However, this does not detract from the importance of environmental groups for the process of nationalism and democratization, which are considered in greater detail in Chapter 4.

\textbf{Citizenship}

In his study of nationalism, Smith has argued against the view that identity is predominantly state-led, and points out that ‘modern nations are simultaneously and necessarily civic and ethnic.’\textsuperscript{186} In this perspective, the rights, duties and obligations of citizenship operate through a neutral state apparatus but also arise from pre-existing bonds of history and culture of the ethnic group.\textsuperscript{187} According to Smith’s analysis, the problem for the territory of Soviet Lithuania would not be that it was lacking in unifying memories and myths of a pre-modern \textit{ethnie}...
in order to become a nation-state, but that in the transition towards the civic concept of nationhood which rests upon common legal rights and duties and mass educational culture, the presence of ‘myth-symbol’ complexes and competing solidarities located amongst the Polish, Russian and Lithuanian ethnic groups could work against the process of democratization. The implication is that when an ethnic group has a strongly ethnicised conception of the state, the degree of civic space and legal citizenship that is granted to minorities may depend upon a perceived threat to the dominant ethnic group’s control over its means of cultural reproduction.

Gellner implies that citizenship is about adaptation to industrial society which in its early stages may either assimilate peripheral cultures or propel them towards a nationalist movement of independent statehood to achieve the advantages of status and economic position which accrue to the dominant culture. Sometimes (in later industrial societies) an entropic resistant group of people (either because of their pigmentation or ‘ingrained religious-cultural habits’) will prove impossible to assimilate because their differentiation does not arise from a language difficulty which education in itself would remedy; if this group has no territorial base or easy access to one then this will inhibit ‘cultural homogeneity’ which in advanced industrial societies is ‘a condition’ of the ‘smooth functioning’ of the state. Hobsbawn’s analysis implicitly links citizenship to economic advantage, and thus a diminution of nationalism as it recedes before ‘the logic of economic integration’.

In Benedict Anderson’s notion of ‘imagined communities’, citizenship is achieved by the sense of community brought about by the printed word through which alienated individuals come to develop an identity which is fixed onto the administrative unit in which they serve. Citizenship is therefore about the acquisition of a language although the ‘atavistic fantasizing’ through which nationalists refer to the longevity of the nation (as noted in Chapter 2), is co-terminous with a deep attachment and ‘love’ for the ‘imagined’ nation of their fantasies. He suggests that because the nation is ‘seen as both an historical fatality and as a community

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189 Ibid. pp. 64-73.
190 Hobsbawn, Nations and Nationalism Since 1780, p.177.
191 Anderson, Imagined Communities, pp.141-143.
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imagined through language’ it is both ‘simultaneously open and closed.’ He nonetheless implies that nations are civic (because they are accessed through language and its created community), and dismisses the ‘closed’ aspect of the nation such as ethnicity which would complicate the issue of citizenship especially regarding minority rights.

In contrast to the Russian minority, for example, the shared historical past of Poles and Lithuanians (referred to in Chapter 2) led to far more complex debates about Polish identity and citizenship based upon the ensuing historical memory of that past deployed by Lithuanian nationalists. As the Lithuanian nationalist movement started to transform the Soviet Lithuanian state along national lines all minorities within Lithuania were given the choice of becoming Lithuanian citizens. Nonetheless, a distinction was made in the Citizenship Law of November 1989 between those who had been citizens of the Republic of Lithuania before its annexation in June 1940 and their descendants, and the remainder, who had two years in which to apply for citizenship. This differentiation underscored the fact that the geographical concentration of Poles in the Vilnius region had been under Polish jurisdiction in the inter-war period, and an oath of allegiance to the new Lithuanian state was a requirement of taking up citizenship.

Debates about citizenship drew on the historical self-image of Lithuania and revealed a preoccupation with the process of cultural Polonization which began in the fourteenth century, a perception of Russians as alien occupiers and ‘destroyers’, but also references to Lithuania as a ‘tolerant’ nation which would form the basis of civic citizenship. In public speeches, Landsbergis often referred to the civic nature of Lithuanian nationalism in which Sąjūdis would invite all minorities to be citizens of Lithuania as long as they overcame their allegiance to Moscow. In a February 1989 speech to commemorate the signing of Lithuania’s Independence, Landsbergis referred to citizenship in the following way,

The nation is the ethnic concept, but in the state it can become and it becomes a civic concept. If it happens then these are the people who recognize and who perceive Lithuania as their Motherland, they perceive and protect themselves, that somebody or

192 Ibid. p.146.
something from somewhere would not use them against Lithuania. These people who have made this decision are Lithuania’s people whom we addressed many times explaining to them the problems of our country, of our land, that is our common problems and our common fate. But we still have some people who have not made the decision or who submitted to the destroyers. Unfortunately, by their actions and declarations they declare that they are not Lithuania’s people.194

Landsbergis again,

The inhabitants of Lithuania would have to feel that they are citizens of Lithuania. It is not only a right of decision, but also the duty of self-decision. Let it be felt inside not only by Lithuanians, but also by the inhabitants of different nationalities of the citizens of Lithuania.195

Ethnic minorities living within the territory of Lithuania could become citizens if they were not willing agents of what were being posited as alien occupiers and ‘destroyers’. Landsbergis stated that, ‘Sąjūdis appealed to all people living in Lithuania to reconsider their approach if they were of that Soviet mentality, to reconsider that they are proposed to be citizens of a free, European nation which is going to create a civic society.’196 He also distinguished between ethnic Lithuanians who belonged to the CPL and those who did not, and recalled that at the CPD, Beriozovas, the ethnic Russian Second Secretary of the CPL, had represented ‘a minority’, ‘the Communist Party’, whereas ‘the Russian, Nikolai Medvedev’, belonged to the majority part of the delegation - Sąjūdis.197

Members of the Sąjūdis leadership, at the first Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988), emphasized that the ‘nation’ of Lithuania would adhere to a policy of inclusiveness in its relations with ethnic minorities. Arvydas Juozaitis noted:

No matter how much we are proud of our nation and its past, we have to understand that a modern European state is based on a citizenship law...Lithuanians and people of other nationalities are equal before the law.198

Virgilijus Čepaitis stated:

195 ‘Pilies’, Ibid. p.100.
197 Ibid.
198 ‘...steigiamasis suvaziavimas’, op. cit fn 77, pp.1-8 (3).
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Now we are becoming the great nation in our homeland. Our tolerance and respect for others, living in our land, will show the greatness of our nation.\(^\text{199}\)

Algirdas Brazauskas told the Conference:

The aims of *Sąjūdis* reflect the interests of all Lithuanian inhabitants. Lithuanians and Russians, Poles and Belorussians, Latvians and Ukrainians, Jews and Karaims - all nationalities living in Lithuania can find a spiritual and moral strength in [*Sąjūdis’*] humanistic aims...we will never support any social formation which will try to encourage a national non-openness or isolationism, and especially suspicion or intolerance towards the other nationalities.\(^\text{200}\)

Landsbergis stated that *Sąjūdis* wanted ‘equal rights for everyone, despite nationality, and despite time of appearance in Lithuania’ and that there was ‘a consistent political line of cooperation and for the creation of a civic society.’\(^\text{201}\) Outside of this official policy, he identified groups which belonged to the ‘radical right’ such as the Lithuanian Freedom League and the Young Lithuanians (the youth wing of the League) which ‘tried to create a conflict between Lithuanians and non-Lithuanians, insulting them and calling that they have to be pushed out of Lithuania.’\(^\text{202}\) Landsbergis explained that these groups placed ‘the civil inhabitants of Lithuania who appeared here from the Soviet Union...on an equal footing with the occupational army...which has to be withdrawn.’\(^\text{203}\) He did not refer to *Vilnija*, a group which was specifically opposed to Poles taking up citizenship, or that part of the *Sąjūdis* leadership, such as Ozolas, which was anti-Polish (discussed in Chapter 5).

Antanas Terleckas, the leader of the League differentiated between ‘occupiers’ and indigenous inhabitants of Lithuania. He stated that, ‘The Poles have lived here always. They had a legal and moral right to live here...the League said citizenship should be recognized for people of various nationalities who used to live here before the occupation but not as a result of the occupation.’\(^\text{204}\) Nonetheless, the slogan of the Young Lithuanians was ‘“Lithuania for Lithuanians”’,\(^\text{205}\) and its particular concept of citizenship was to exclude all ethnic minorities

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\(^\text{199}\) Ibid. p.5.
\(^\text{200}\) Ibid. p.2.
\(^\text{201}\) Interview with Landsbergis.
\(^\text{202}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{203}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{204}\) Interview with Terleckas.
from the civic polity. However, up until the elections of 1990, Sąjūdis remained a coherent whole, and unlike the nationalist movements in Estonia and Latvia, radical nationalists did not form separate groupings and alternative parliaments to challenge the authority of the existing Supreme Soviet. The Sąjūdis Seimas and Council acted as an umbrella movement for all those who supported the concept of an independent Lithuania.

Whilst Latvian and Estonian communists or former Communist Party members tended to be associated with the ‘moderate’ sections of their nationalist movements in proposing inclusive citizenship, communists in Lithuania sometimes expressed the view too that Russians were occupiers and nationally subversive. As noted in Chapter 2, Vytautas Petkevičius, a prominent member of Sąjūdis, Communist Party member and a foremost Writer, had stressed in his speech to the first Sąjūdis Congress that Lithuanians were historically well-disposed towards ethnic minorities. Nonetheless, in the same speech he cautioned that, ‘Our chauvinist friends and ethnic minorities living in our land also have to have the same international responsibility which all of us have now...Thus, when moderate behaviour is required from us, we equally require this from our Brother Russians, who (the majority of them) came here as the implementers of Stalinist politics."

This opinion was shared by Bronius Genzelis, another leading member of Sąjūdis who was a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Vilnius, and Secretary of the Vilnius University Communist Party organization. In his speech to commemorate the signing of Lithuania’s Independence (February 1989), he stated,

We have to make a clear difference between local Lithuanians and those colonialists. The destiny of the former ones is linked to Lithuanian statehood. Therefore, there should be no conflict between us because we have the same aims...the colonialists have a different way of thinking and different aims. They care about one thing ie how to denationalise Lithuanians and to transform the Lithuanian territory into a province."

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207 Ibid. 2, pp.199-216 (202).
208 ‘...steigiamasis suvaziavimas’, op. cit. fn 77, pp.1-8 (3).
Algimantas Brazauskas, a Lithuanian academic, stated that characteristics of ‘the Russian nation’ explained its ability to form ‘the core of the Soviet people.’ Included amongst them were, ‘the ability to adjust and live in any situation, negligible social and cultural needs, a belief in the need for a despotic centre and collectivity.’ Alongside the viewpoint that Russians were illegal colonizers, of low status, and a cultural threat, one strand of nationalist thinking regarded the ‘Russian nation’ as an object of ‘tragedy’ for having its identity obscured by the Centre. Juozaitis pointed out that, ‘by having the functions of the centre, the Russian nation is not going to revive its sovereign power. The very existence of big numbers of assimilated [Russian] masses will not help. There is no more belief in its own spirit...’

The consequences of Soviet identity upon the Russian people were referred to by Eduardas Vilkas, an economist and supporter of Sąjūdis who stated that, ‘Many of the Russians had a feeling of belonging to the Russian Empire but there was no Russian nationalism as such - only feelings for the Empire of the Soviet Union.’ Čepaitis stated that, ‘the Russian minority was not homogeneous...as the feeling of nationalism in the Russian people had been totally destroyed in the period of 70 years of Soviet rule.’

In contrast to the Russians, nationalist discussion about the Poles often referred to the strength of their ethnic identity and the effect of this upon Lithuanians as a result of their shared historical past. One observer noted that, ‘Lithuania’s Poles are autochtonai, ie, the products of old and natural historical processes [and] for 300 years Poland and Lithuania felt as being a part of one ethnopolitical unit.’ Nonetheless, the Polonization of Lithuanian elites and culture within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of 1569 was a memory that had ‘overwhelmingly negative connotations.’ As one observer remarked, ‘the major obstacle for our

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212 Interview with Eduardas Vilkas, Vilnius, 13 May 1997.
213 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
communications is our perception of Poles as enemies, which developed throughout many
years.\textsuperscript{217}

Furthermore, the more recent memory of the annexation of the area of Vilnius in 1920 by Polish
forces led to a strand in Lithuanian nationalist thinking that was fearful of Polish irredentism. An author in the nationalist press noted that, ‘none of the LLS [Union of Poles] leaders
regards himself as a Lithuanian citizen...Poles in Lithuania ignore their local culture and try
to identify their history with that of Poland. Such a perception is very threatening for Lithuania...they cannot perceive Lithuanian history.’\textsuperscript{218} Lithuanians could not predict how Poland
would react to minority demands across the border, ‘there are many doubts about the tendency
of Lithuania’s Poles to speak in the voice of a big nation. Sienkiewicz [the leader of the Union
of Poles] asks Poland to put political pressure on Lithuania to defend local Polish interests.’\textsuperscript{219}

Petras Vaitiekūnas, a Sąjūdis activist, stated that, ‘The Lithuanian nation is not like the Polish
nation which is ten times bigger. It is afraid of the Polish nation. This creates a background
for nationalism premised upon fear of the biggest, a fear that comes from the past - many
common years of shared history.’\textsuperscript{220} Ėpaitis recalled a meeting between Sąjūdis and the Polish speaking community that had taken place in August 1988 which had degenerated into ac-
cusations of mutual distrust, ‘...a part of the Polish contingent accused us of nationalism...At
this meeting some people from Vilnius also participated who accused the Polish people of occ-
cupying Vilnius in 1922. Both sides were accusing each other of crimes.’\textsuperscript{221}

Alongside fears of Polish irredentism, there was a tendency to regard ‘locally born’ Poles as
being in danger of losing their identity by succumbing to a process of Russification. One ob-
server noted that, ‘most of the Poles in Šalčininkai (81 percent) speak Russian and write all
documents in Russian. Therefore if three languages are declared the official ones, the Russian
language would dominate in this area...’. He linked the consequences of this Polish Russi-
fication to the political aims of Soviet personnel, ‘...the activists of LLS [Union of Poles] go

\textsuperscript{217} Saulius Spurga, ‘...lenką kalbos?’, Atgimimas, No.19, 2-9 May 1991, p.5.
\textsuperscript{218} Saulius Spurga, ‘Sąjūdis ir LLS Ideologija’, Atgimimas, No.1, January 5-12 1990, pp.2-3.
\textsuperscript{219} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{220} Interview with Petras Vaitiekūnas, Vilnius, 8 March 1997.
\textsuperscript{221} Interview with Virgilijus Ėpaitis, Vilnius, 3 March 1997.
along with the regional bureaucracy, party bosses and chauvinists. The same people who organized “Edinstvo”, they contributed to the creation of autonomies in 1989... We can firmly say that the main threat for Poles is Russification in Lithuania. One author commented that Polish participation in Edinstvo was seen as a greater threat than that of the Russians,

In a way, the participation of Russians in Edinstvo is understandable and they cannot be accused of becoming the means of the colonial politics. They need time to understand from where they arrived and who actually took care about their arrival here. Poles, on the other hand, are “ours” and that is why their participation in the movement against the things that are important for Lithuanians [language, citizenship] results in an even more negative reaction.

One solution to this process of Russification was premised on the idea that Polish identity constituted an aberration from its true roots, and that ethnic Poles in Lithuania were not true Poles, but Polonised Lithuanians. This way of thinking was expressed indirectly at the Sajūdis Congress in a speech made by Petkevičius who stated, ‘It is not us who deported Russians to Siberia, it is not us who “Polonised” Lithuanians in the Vilnius region and gave them the nickname of “tuteišiai”! A writer in the nationalist press observed that Polish participation in Edinstvo,

...represents a russificatory tradition [and] will be harmful for Poles themselves. No matter how much we speak about the need to Lithuanianise Polish people... we see a completely opposite situation, i.e. we see mass Russification of Poles, which does not bring any good to Lithuanians.

The same author made the point that ‘if half of the children’ in the Polish area of Šalčininkai attended Russian schools then this could not be credited to a process of “Lithuanianisation” as the Poles claimed, but signified assimilation by Russification. The cultural development of Poles was used as a reason to reassure Poles that attempts to “Lithuanianise” the eastern part of Lithuania would have beneficial effects upon Polish culture,
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...because this part of Lithuania became very Russian ie Polish children went not to Lithuanian schools, but to Russian schools. Therefore the major question is having a better teaching level in Lithuanian schools. Only this can stop the situation which is leading Poles to “Russification” or making them provincial.  

Attempts to deny Poles their identity therefore drew upon two perspectives - either they were ‘Polonised’ Lithuanians or else the products of a process of Russification which led to their manipulation into supporting the Centre against the Lithuanian state. Lithuanians linked the Polish minority’s status as an impoverished people to their political duplicity. Vilkas described the local Poles as ‘a backward people...manipulated by the KGB, and pro-Russian and Soviet forces.’  

Dimitrii Kopelmanis, a supporter of Sąjūdis, shared this view, ‘The Poles are very backward and rural, and do not speak correct Polish, but a mixture of Polish and Belorussian - tuteišiai - and are politically very backward - they can be manipulated into it [opposition].’ Cepaitis stated that, ‘Polish nationalistic feelings were artificially strengthened by the Communist Party against Sąjūdis.’ Nonetheless he conceded that it was not just ‘artificial’ since Poles were a homogeneous group which had ‘some nationalist feeling.’

Landsbergis emphasized that Poles had been far more receptive towards claims, made by the Centre, that Sąjūdis was against minorities than were Russians. He attributed this to perhaps ‘agents of propaganda, the KGB, and infiltrators [who] worked amongst Poles more effectively than amongst Russians.’ In addition, he observed that, ‘sympathetic Poles...were threatened by [Polish] nationalists [who equated] cooperation with Sąjūdis...to treason of Polish interests.’ He noted that people of ‘different nationalities’ were ‘active supporters of Sąjūdis such as Jews and Russians but with Poles it was most difficult’, and that more Russians had been involved in the Lithuanian nationalist project than Poles. Passivity was obviously more beneficial for Sąjūdis than ethnic Polish assertiveness. Landsbergis’ statement that, ‘it was not so difficult for Sąjūdis to defend the position of civic society’ misses out

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229 Interview with Vilkas.
230 Interview with Dimitrii Kopelmanis, Vilnius, 14 February 1997.
231 Interview with Virgilijus Cepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
232 Interview with Landsbergis.
233 Ibid.
234 Ibid.
on the creation of civil society from below which involved the participation of Poles (as well as Russians) through their own organization, the Union of Poles (discussed in Chapter 5).

Ginsburgs suggests that the decision to extend citizenship rights to minorities was partly based upon a nationalist calculation as to how their right to vote would be deployed in subsequent elections which could determine policy in attempting to secede from the Soviet Union. The presence of a large immigrant population in Estonia and Latvia led to a distinction being made between citizens of the interwar Republics and their descendants who were eligible for citizenship in their respective new states, and those who came as migrants under Soviet rule, and who were excluded. One objection to the proposed new Citizenship Law (November 1989) in Lithuania was that it would initiate closer links with the Soviet Union through the principle of ‘personal self-determination’. In other words, allowing permanent residents to choose which citizenship to take - Lithuanian or Soviet - would allow for the possibility of non-Lithuanian citizens residing in Lithuania. In contrast, in Latvia and Estonia, where more emphasis was placed on ‘saving’ the nation, a policy of delimiting citizenship for the non-titular nationalities was promoted. Cepaitis stated that in debates in the Sąjūdis Council it had been argued that adopting a policy of inclusive citizenship in Lithuania ‘would betray Estonia and Latvia as it was not possible for them to have a similar law.’

This criterion of determining the right to citizenship, based upon time of arrival as opposed to ‘ethnic or racial criteria’, was an argument that was put forward by Lithuanian nationalists but which nonetheless did not prevail. Antanas Terleckas, the leader of the Lithuanian Freedom League, said that the opinion of the League had been that, ‘citizenship should be recognized for people of various nationalities who used to live here before the occupation but not...”

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239 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 6 February 1997.
240 Ibid.
as a result of the occupation.\textsuperscript{241} Kopelmanis, who had links to the League, stated that ‘the pre-war Russians in Lithuania are loyal, but the rest are colonizers, of low cultural status...who came from provincial quarters in Russia, and were not integrated into Russia itself. Here they became privileged, first-class citizens.’\textsuperscript{242}

Šepetys, the former Ideological Secretary for Ideology of the CPL, stated that because of the elections that were scheduled for 1990, the question as to ‘who has the right to take part in elections’ became pertinent.\textsuperscript{243} He pointed out that there were ‘many discussions, and some Sąjūdis people were afraid that people of other nationalities could change the results of the elections.’\textsuperscript{244} According to Vaitiekūnas, as well as the zero-option clause, the Sąjūdis Seimas deliberated upon a five, ten, and twenty year residency requirement for all minorities applying for naturalization (to take place from the moment of application).\textsuperscript{245} The Sąjūdis Seimas session of 26 August 1989, for example, concluded that, ‘the requirement of at least 5-year residence in Lithuania should be applied upon naturalization to people who arrived in Lithuania before January 1, 1989’.\textsuperscript{246}

The decision to make the Citizenship Law inclusive (November 1989) was later supplemented by a treaty between Lithuania and Russia (July 1991) which guaranteed the rights of minorities in both countries and removed the language and residency requirements for immigrants from the RSFSR.\textsuperscript{247} Thus it was no longer necessary to demonstrate knowledge of the Lithuanian language or to prove a ten year residency in Lithuania before acquiring citizenship.\textsuperscript{248}

This gave recent immigrants the right to become Lithuanian citizens, and ‘to participate in the privatization process.’\textsuperscript{249} The amendment to the second Citizenship Law of 5 December 1991 stated that ‘residents of the present territory of Lithuania between 9 January 1919 and 15 June

\textsuperscript{241} Interview with Terleckas.  
\textsuperscript{242} Interview with Kopelmanis, Vilnius.  
\textsuperscript{243} Interview with Lionginas Šepetys, Vilnius, 10 March 1997.  
\textsuperscript{244} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{245} Interview with Vaitiekūnas.  
\textsuperscript{246} '"2nd Sitting of the 6th Session of the Sąjūdis Seimas, Vilnius, August 26, 1989', Lithuanian Way 1, p.64.  
\textsuperscript{248} Ibid.  
1940, and their descendants' could get automatic citizenship,\footnote{Dzintra Bungs, Saulius Girnius and Riina Kionka, ‘Citizenship Legislation in the Baltic States’, RFE/RL Research Report, 1,1992, 50, pp.38-40 (40).} and therefore enfranchised Poles who had been living in the part of Lithuania which Stalin had taken from Poland without them having to give an oath of allegiance to the Lithuanian state (as well as Russians).

The Law on National Minorities enacted in November 1989 took citizenship beyond a territorial civic understanding of the concept by providing guarantees to minorities to get state support ‘for the development of their culture and education’, to have ‘mass media in one’s native language’, and for their monuments to be protected by the state.\footnote{’The Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania’, The Lithuanian Policy on National Minorities, Vilnius, 1996, pp.9-13.} Subsequent amendments (discussed in Chapter 5) were related to the right to use the native language of the minority group. Concentrating on Lithuanian culture to the detriment of Polish or Russian culture would have led to undemocratic practice in the distribution of citizenship rights because, for example, as a ‘Polonised Lithuanian’ there was no need to have educational or linguistic rights at variance with those of the dominant ethnic group - homogeneity (foreseen by Gellner) would facilitate the retrieval of the supposedly lost identity.

In discussions about citizenship, memories about the past had a different bearing on how Lithuanians regarded both Polish and Russian minorities. Whilst the former were threatening, Lithuanians wished to recover from the damage already inflicted by the latter in their guise as Soviet destroyers. Nonetheless, stripped of their Soviet identity, Lithuanians perceived that Russians were weakened and more inclined towards passivity. Lithuania provided its minorities with a degree of civic space which did not match the rights accorded to Lithuanians, but nonetheless, gave minorities control over many of their cultural needs. The demographic dominance of Lithuanians in the Republic is often given as a reason to explain the difference in policy between Lithuania when compared to Latvia and Estonia. However, demographic advantage can also lead to repression, for example, in Georgia in 1990-91 when Tbilisi abolished autonomous formations created for ethnic minorities. It seems likely that whilst demographic dominance was a necessary condition, the historical self image of Lithuanians as ethically tolerant proved decisive.
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The Economy

As noted above, Gellner and Hobsbawm point to the pivotal role of economics and industrialization in forging nationalist movements. The nationalist idea in terms of economic sovereignty was referred to by diverse groups within Lithuania’s emerging civil society. Lithuanians judged Soviet rule in terms of its destructive impact upon the economy, the environment and the morality of people. In addition, the influx of workers from Russia and the Soviet Union, although small when compared to Latvia and Estonia, was criticized as having a detrimental effect upon Lithuanian cultural life. Sąjūdis pointed out that since 1940, ‘the smooth-running system of the national economy was destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of residents were deported...Immigrants of an alien culture flooded the country. The continuity of the national culture was disrupted.'

A common theme was that the sovereignty and independence of Lithuania was ‘being mercilessly undermined by the big socialist monopolies, and unprecedented centralisation of our economic, political and cultural life.’ Genzelis argued that the basis of any nation was its ‘moral, economic, and political uniqueness’, and then looked at the roots of the Lithuanian nation from the Middle Ages to explain its particular characteristics. Prunskienė referred to practicalities in noting that the ‘imaginary’ unity of the command administrative system had brought about ‘a chronic shortage of goods, an unbalanced economy and low living standards...’

Work was regarded as meaningless, because it served the interests of the All-Union Ministries and Soviet power rather than those of the Lithuanian people. In other words, ‘The command-bureaucratic system tries to impose its own interests as the interests of the whole nation, and, therefore, always states that economic independence will be harmful for the nations themselves.’ Genzelis commented that work relations were distorted by a hierarchical depend-

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ency underpinned by personal contacts which resembled ‘a formation of the Byzantine variant of neo-feudal relations.’\textsuperscript{256} In the first meeting held between \textit{Sajūdis} and the CPL CC (23 June 1988), Vaišvila pointed out that investment was used to fund ‘industrial giants’ which were of no ‘vital importance’ to the Republic whatsoever.\textsuperscript{257} One commentator noted that, ‘an iron ring of industrial giants has almost finished strangling our homeland…’\textsuperscript{258}

Landsbergis stated at the mass rally organized by \textit{Sajūdis} (24 June 1988) that there was a difference between work ‘which makes a man feel happy at seeing its fruit and which makes a man spit and walk away, not giving a damn for it and finding relief in alcohol.’\textsuperscript{259} He observed at the founding Congress of \textit{Sajūdis} (October 1988) that work had lost its value and people their future inducing them towards ‘collective death, environmental and alcoholic suicide.’\textsuperscript{260} He reminded the Congress that, ‘…We are not a labour force, we are not a Stalinist mass, nor a mere fertilizer in the fields of others. We have our own aims in life.’\textsuperscript{261} He added that there should be recognition for the creative work of Lithuanian artists and musicians who like ‘serfs’ received meagre income for their trips abroad whilst the Soviet state increased its wealth and prestige. He pointed out that in their foreign engagements the name of Lithuania was not mentioned, and therefore remained unknown to the world.\textsuperscript{262}

In practical terms, Prunskienė, a \textit{Sajūdis} specialist on economics, discussed the decentralization of economic decision-making as early as July 1988, and her case rested upon the dissolution of the economic control of the all-Union Ministries.\textsuperscript{263} In her definition of what comprised the ‘economic goals’ of the Lithuanian Republic she included concerns about the environment and maladministration by Moscow, ‘…to rationally use the earth’s natural resources, to protect cultural and historical monuments, to ensure the introduction of ecologically friendly industries, etc.’\textsuperscript{264} At the \textit{Sajūdis} Conference, she reiterated the point that, ‘economy

\textsuperscript{256} Genzelis, ‘…Social Justice’, op. cit. fn 137, pp.1-2 (2).
\textsuperscript{257} ‘Susitikimas LKP CK rūmuose’, Stenogramos Santrauka (2), \textit{Sajūdžio žinios}, No.7, 7 July 1988, pp.2-3 (3).
\textsuperscript{258} ‘Gerb. Vytautai - Laiskas Vytautui Petkevičiui…’, \textit{Sajūdžio žinios}, No. 20, 11 August 1988, p.3.
\textsuperscript{259} ‘V.Landsbergio žodis Lietuvoi’, \textit{Sajūdžio žinios}, No.4, 4 July 1988, pp.2-4 (4).
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{264} ibid.

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should serve the people, it cannot be opposed to the ecological, national, cultural, and socio-demographic interests of people.\textsuperscript{265}

Just before the instigation of the economic blockade in April 1990 (as a result of Lithuania's declaration of independence) Moscow had tried to reverse the nationalist impulse by asking for compensation for the alleged economic development that had accrued to the Lithuanian Republic throughout Soviet rule. Algirdas Brazauskas referred to a meeting that had taken place between Gorbachev and himself in which the former had estimated Lithuania's debt to the Soviet Union to be ‘18 billion rubles.'\textsuperscript{266} Gorbachev wondered how long Lithuania would be able to survive without the Soviet Union given the two hundred year history between Lithuania and Russia.\textsuperscript{267}

In their turn, Lithuanians assessed the costs owed to them by the ‘socialist developers’ which included the unpaid work of political prisoners and deportees and their stolen property; the damage inflicted upon the Lithuanian economy and people as a result of World War II and the forced collectivization of agriculture; the destruction of libraries, archives and cultural and historical monuments; the stolen property of the Lithuanian military and the confiscated lands of the Church.\textsuperscript{268} There were some things which could not be accounted for in materialistic/monetary terms: ‘we do not speak about the Lithuanian people killed in exile or in laagers, or about the costs of the moral genocide - they will never be able to compensate for this.’\textsuperscript{269}

The meaning of ‘economic development’ was measured against the diminution of the moral worth of the Lithuanian nation, and contrasted to the situation that had existed in the inter-war period. As one observer noted, ‘In those times, we had less educated people, we had no personalities who were experienced in governing the state, we were beggars economically, but we still had a strong relation to our land and our spiritual nation’s culture. We had an understanding of the need for fair work and we had a strong feeling of responsibility.’\textsuperscript{270} A return to

\textsuperscript{266} Brazauskas' talk at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London, 25 November 1998.
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{268} Vaclovas Masalskis, ‘Suskaiciuokime’, \textit{Atgimimas}, No.10, 7-14 March 1990, p.6.
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid.
the situation *ex ante* sometimes included a demand to inhibit immigration from coming into the Republic.

At the meeting convened by the Union of Writers on nationality problems (4 April 1988), the Writers endorsed the view that industrial growth in Lithuania should be assessed as detrimental if it required a workforce that was not indigenous to the Republic. Included in the meeting’s resolution was the statement, ‘There is a need for a law to determine accurately the financial contribution to the life of the republic by those coming from other republics.’ Vytautas Martinkus explained that the official philosophy of Soviet industrialisation had been to regard economic expansion as an inevitable and essential feature of society which also meant an acceptance of its ‘negative features’. However, he explained that ‘environmental problems’ and ‘a huge flow of immigration threatened national identity (immigrants did not learn Lithuanian and were not interested in Lithuanian culture)…and was interpreted as deliberate Moscow policy against Lithuania.’ The Writers’ statement on the need to curb industrial growth was a response to this view. At the *Sajūdis* Congress, Genzelis asked for a halt to the construction of unnecessary factories which required ‘imported labour forces’.

The divided self-image of Lithuanians was carried through to their discussions and policies about land reform under the *Sajūdis* government. The eulogizing of the Baltic peasant and the strength of Lithuanian agriculture in the inter-war period led the nationalist movement to seek both the restitution of land by returning it to the owners of the pre-1940 era, and the break up of the collective farms. Vaitiekūnas noted that, ‘our whole reform in industry and agriculture was carried out on the grounds of ideology rather than economy.’ Prunskienė stated that suggestions to transform the collective farms into joint stock companies (to ameliorate the social disruption brought about by wholesale privatization) were treated as a defence of communism. Vaitiekūnas recalled that on expressing caution about the return of land to former proprietors, his interlocutors stated that, ‘”we do suppose that you have been bribed by

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271 *Literatūra...*, op. cit. fn 91, p.5.
272 Interview with Martinkus.
276 Interview with Kazimiera Prunskienė, Vilnius, 4 December 1996.
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the communist nomenclatura, by the chairmen of collective farms and therefore you defend their interests...". Agricultural reforms carried out by the Sąjūdis government were judged to be 'the crudest mistake in the reform of public life', because of their contribution to the economic crisis that beset the country after March 1990.

Whilst in Latvia and Estonia laws were passed in 1988 to levy a fine upon enterprises hiring workers from outside the Republic, this kind of policy was never implemented in Lithuania. The Lithuanian government issued vouchers to recent immigrants from Russia (who were enfranchised by the Treaty of July 1991 between Lithuania and Russia) who were then able to take part in the privatization process for the distribution of state property. Senn notes that, 'many Russians used these to buy their apartments or otherwise to acquire real property, and those who chose to emigrate could then sell the property and leave with a nestegg that would help them start elsewhere.' In contrast, Poles accused Lithuanians of hindering their right to the acquisition of land in the southeastern part of Lithuania (discussed in Chapter 5).

Economic considerations were important. Nonetheless, the fact that Lithuanians withstood an economic blockade and ensuing economic deprivation in order to secure their right to independence demonstrates that material considerations were not the driving force behind the nationalist impetus. Economic reform seems to have been driven more by a desire to return to the situation of the inter-war republic even if this meant impoverishment for vast numbers of people. A predominant view was that economic development had been ruinous for Lithuanian culture, a concern which united both communist and non-communist supporters of Sąjūdis.

Symbolism

The symbolic side of nationalism became very important in the period 1988-1992. The symbols selected by nationalist leaders, as shown below, had a resonance for Lithuanians based

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upon memories of a pre-modern and recent past. This was reflected in the removal of statues and re-naming of street signs. Lieven points out that, 'Lithuanians...[were] renaming whole blocks of Soviet-named streets after their ancient gods.' After the failure of the Moscow coup in August 1991, the Lithuanian government removed two statues of Lenin, those of Kapsukas and Eidukevičius, who were leading members of the CPL, and a statue of Dzerzhinskii, the founder of the Cheka (the Soviet secret police) from the streets of Vilnius. Twenty streets were renamed in 1988-89, and in the period 1990-95, 101 street names were changed. Lenin Prospect, for example, was changed to Gediminas Prospect in June 1989 to remind Lithuanians of the fourteenth century Grand Duke regarded as the legendary founder of Vilnius.

The tricolour flag of independent Lithuania had been publicly unfurled for the first time by a League activist on 14 June 1988 at an unofficial demonstration to mark the anniversary of the deportations of June 1941. Although it was removed by the authorities, it was reported that within two weeks, ‘the Lithuanian national flag was being flown throughout the republic with impunity.’ There was an instant response to Brazauskas’ announcement at a Sąjūdis rally (9 July 1988) that the flag of independent Lithuania was to be officially reinstated in the form of ‘an ovation and the singing of the Lithuanian national song’. A report on the rally described how ‘our hearts and our hopes were [there], our songs and our holy colours.’ In another reference to the flag, it was noted that, ‘Sąjūdis and all Lithuania are awakening to a new virtuous life. The political events are being conditioned by the moral voice of the nation and not by administrative directives. The most evident example - the national flag, which we have held high courageously.’

In October, the Lithuanian government conceded to a request by Sąjūdis to raise the flag over the tower of Gediminas Castle. Senn points out that the tower was a surviving adjunct of Gediminas’ Castle, built in the fourteenth century, ‘where the rulers of Vilnius had always

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placed their flag.' Moreover, 'demonstrators looked at the castle as a metaphor of their republic's sovereignty - what flag was flying above the tower?'\textsuperscript{287} An official to the Sajūdis Congress of October 1988 announced that Delegates would be able to see extracts from documentary films which 'eternalize the essential events of the nation, of which the most recent was the raising of the national flag on Gediminas Castle.'\textsuperscript{288} Prunskienė mentioned the importance of recognizing the significance of the flag for future generations. She likened Sajūdis to the birth of 'a new democratic society' in which 'the baby must know its mother tongue, must learn to recognize national colors and have a home of which he or she would be the master.'\textsuperscript{289}

There were also calls to legalize heraldry which was associated with a pre-modern past, notably, 'the Pillars of Gediminas' and 'the emblem of the Warrior'\textsuperscript{290} or Vytis, which has come to symbolize 'the Knight in Pursuit'. In interwar Lithuania, both the tricolour flag and the Warrior - a white knight on a red background - had been flown whilst the Presidential flag had displayed a pastiche of Gediminas' castle or 'the Pillars of Gediminas'.\textsuperscript{291} In Senn's eye-witness account of the Sajūdis rally of 9 July 1988, he noted the presence of all these flags, 'The flags flowed into the park that afternoon...new homemade flags quickly sewn for the occasion, as well as obvious relics of the prewar period with mothholes in their woolen fabric. Gediminas's pillars were there, the white knight was there, and the tricolor was everywhere.'\textsuperscript{292}

The importance attached to the meaning of symbolism was evident from an article written in the nationalist newsletter in which the author described how the symbols of the 'Crucifix' ('Rupintojėlis') and the 'Knight in Pursuit' ('Vytis') expressed the spiritual values of the nation. The former was said to symbolize the 'humanistic spirituality of a Lithuanian' and the latter 'his heroism'. The two symbols balanced each other out - 'Rūpintojėlis helps to express

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item The Congress Bulletin, 21 October 1988, No.1, p.4.
\item Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.36.
\item ibid. p.4.
\item Brigita Balikiénė, 'Pergalė', Sajūdžio žinios, No.9, 16 July 1998, pp.1-2 (1).
\item Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.86.
\item ibid.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the pain, but Vytis shows determination, hope and belief in man’ - and stopped either one from dominating so that ‘through both the spirit of a Lithuanian speaks.’

In November 1988, the Lithuanian flag and historical attributes were legalized as well as the National Anthem of pre-Soviet Lithuania which had come to be sung at Sąjūdis rallies throughout the summer of 1988. An observer at the rally of 9 July noted that, ‘Our anthem was not forgotten either. It was sung by 100,000 mouths.’ A commission of the Presidium of the LSS confirmed in August 1988 that ‘symbols which formed themselves during the passage of ages are a significant part of historical cultural values reflecting the self-expression of the Lithuanian nation...’ It approved using heraldic signs (Vytis, the Pillars of Gediminas, and the inter-war flag) as well as recognizing the ‘important role’ of the ‘national song’ written by V. Kudirka at the end of the nineteenth century. It was noted that ‘heraldic signs...are associated with the struggle against the unceasing expansion of the Knights of the Cross [the Teutonic Knights], and it gives a sense to the historical victory of the Lithuanian and Slavonic nations in the Battle of Žalgiris.’ At the Sąjūdis Congress, the singing of the hymn signified hope for the future: ‘We all sing with awakened hearts. We sing a hymn...while raising the flag over all of Lithuania.’

Whilst the emerging symbolism had a resonance amongst ethnic Lithuanians, ethnic minorities were excluded from this sphere of identification with the newly emerging Lithuanian state. Virgilijus Ėchaitis pointed this out in his speech to the Congress of Sąjūdis, ‘...all of Lithuania was flooded by yellow-green-and-red flags which we Lithuanians, greeted as a miracle. But let us try to imagine how in this situation, which changes so suddenly, non-Lithuanians living in Lithuania, especially those who have not lived here for long, were feeling.’ Whilst Lithuanians made concessions to minorities in the sphere of language and culture, the symbols of the Lithuanian state are purely those which have a resonance with ethnic Lithuanians.

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293 ‘Rūpintojelis ir Vytis’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.20. 11 August 1988, pp.2-3
296 Ibid.
298 Virgilijus Ėchaitis, ‘Nationality’, ibid. p.3.
Conclusion

The Lithuanian nationalist movement and its ideologists comprised mainly intellectuals including those who were members of the CPL. Their nationalism was based upon the defence of an ethnic Lithuanian culture drawn from a past that was in living memory (the inter-war Republic) or from the memory of a distant past (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania). Communists who defended Soviet ideology quickly became a minority. Landsbergis and other nationalists distinguished between communists and Sąjūdis although membership of the two overlapped. Lithuanians moved quickly to expose the falsity of Soviet historiography which was not difficult to do since few Lithuanians were actually convinced by it. The ensuing history of Lithuania focused on the occupation of Lithuania by the Soviet regime, but excluded references to Lithuanian collaboration with the Germans, the acquisition of Vilnius as a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, or the involvement of the Lithuanian Partisans of the June 1941 uprising against the Soviets in autonomous anti-semitism.

The historical memory that confers identity, it is argued by both Gellner and Hobsbawm, is a constructed or reconstructed past, in the service of nationalist movements for instrumental ends. Nonetheless, the re-evaluation of history produced by the Lithuanian nationalist movement was based upon historical experience, and the mass movement among the people of Lithuania for nationalism and democratization cannot be ascribed simply to a manipulation of a ‘myth’ by an elite. The memory of the pre-Soviet era had a validity among the population at large; hence its resonance and the corresponding destruction of the Soviet myth which was based upon perceived invention.

The main task of Lithuanian nationalists was to take control over the Lithuanian state and civic space which meant driving out Soviet personnel and culture, but the resulting changes were to weaken Russian identity so that it became less of a threat than that of ethnic Poles. The latter were a constant reminder that union with Slavs had brought about the impoverishment of Lithuanian culture, and these fears were expressed in the debates about citizenship. According to the trajectory of Gellner’s argument, Poles could have been assimilated into Lithuanian culture because they were not differentiated from Lithuanians by pigmentation or religious belief (a situation which may afflict later industrial societies). Nonetheless, attempts to assimilate Poles through education in schools which taught in the Lithuanian language (Gellner’s remedial suggestion) would have vastly contributed to conflict between these two
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ethnic groups. Implicit in Hobsbawm’s analysis (as noted above) is the expectation that education would similarly be able to ignore ethnic difference, because nationalism is about capitalist markets which have become so enlarged that attempts to differentiate are retrogressive and ultimately unsustainable. Landsbergis’ desire to defend Lithuanian culture meant that ‘concrete questions of social and economic policy [came] very much in second place.’

Lithuanian nationalism was sustainable because there was an immediate resonance to anti-Soviet depictions of Lithuanian culture and history. The restoration of symbols of the inter-war Republic of Lithuania occurred despite their removal from public life throughout the period of Soviet rule. Anderson’s concept that print-capitalism, or print-socialism in the communist setting, would provide an image of communion based upon Soviet Lithuanian identity, floundered in the period of glasnost as Lithuanians remembered a past that belonged to real experience and not the text books of Soviet ideologists.

The assertion of ethnic Lithuanian control over the state and civic life did not exclude the minorities from being able to become citizens of Lithuania. Landsbergis’ position stressed the civic concept of Lithuanian statehood which in practice was realized by the Citizenship Law of November 1989. Whilst the Law on National Minorities (November 1989) offered cultural autonomy for minorities, the provisions were really what citizens would expect to have by virtue of being a citizen of Lithuania. Amendments to the original Law were achieved by the process of democratization (discussed in Chapter 4).

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Chapter 4

From Liberalization to Democratization

Nationally-minded Lithuanians sought to establish control over the LSSR, and to transform it into the independent Republic of Lithuania in order to guarantee the continuity of their ethnocultural survival. According to Brubaker’s conceptualization, Lithuania was the “core nation”...defined in ethnocultural terms, and sharply distinguished from the citizenry as a whole. The core nation is understood as the legitimate “owner” of the state, which is conceived as the state of and for the core nation. Writing in the nationalist press about the need for changes to the Constitution of the LSSR, Arvydas Juozaitis (elected to the Initiative Group of Sąjūdis in June 1988) exemplified Brubaker’s point when he argued that one should not talk about the sovereignty of the party, or that of the people or of the republic, ‘One has to talk about the sovereignty of the nation.’

Graham Smith has described the relationship between ethnicity, citizenship, and democracy in Lithuania as resembling majoritarian-type democracy in which the prevalence of Lithuanians as a dominant majority meant that emphasis could be placed upon individual rights and not the rights of Lithuanians. The aim was to construct the ‘nation of Lithuania’ rather than the ‘Lithuanian nation.’ ‘Although ethnic tensions still manifest themselves, the core nation is sufficiently secure to prevail as a majority in the political, economic and social life of the polity, to let ethnic groups keep or drop their sub-cultures, or live apart or mix’. Smith’s analysis misplaces the importance to Lithuanians of being the ‘Lithuanian nation’ which was willing to concede rights to minorities from a perspective of dominance rather than of equality. Another consideration is that ethnic Poles and Russians became part of the process of transformation rather than passive recipients in the process of securing individual and group rights.


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Chapter 4

In this Chapter I aim to examine whether or how Lithuanian nationalists started to meet or met the criteria of democratic practice outlined in the literature on democratization, and how ‘the Lithuanian nation’ responded to demands made by minorities. The process of loosening restrictions on freedom and organization which allowed different groups to emerge originated in Moscow, and as liberalization progressed was incorporated into law by the Lithuanian Republic. Widening political participation was linked to democratization of the CPL. It was therefore essential that the state responded to an elected Supreme Soviet to bring about the process of democratization if the Lithuanian government was itself prepared to bring about democratic change. In the discussion below, I have looked at four areas which are considered integral to democracy: independent media; a working constitution; parties, self-organizing groups and movements; elections; and I have also looked at protection of minorities, and the process of transplacement as a means of achieving democracy in Lithuania, and considered the process of change within each area.

**Media**

Independent media ‘serve not only as direct advocates for societal interests but as important channels through which the members of societal groups communicate with one another and voice demands on the government.’[^4] *Sąjūdis* was able to circumvent government control of the printed media because the resources needed for publication (typewriters and photocopiers) were readily available, and its unofficial newsletter, *Sąjūdžio žinios*, was first published on 19 June 1988. It reported on the meeting of *Sąjūdis* with the public of Vilnius (13 June) during which wresting control of the media was identified as an urgent issue ‘to which *Sąjūdis* should direct the attention of the government.’[^5] A.Čekuolis, editor-in-chief-of *Gimtasis kraštas* (‘Native Country’), for example, ‘made a proposal to take concrete measures to refute fibs about *Sąjūdis*,’ and participants referred to the importance of gaining ‘a tribune in the media’ suggesting ‘live coverage’ on Lithuanian television of meetings between *Sąjūdis* and the delegates to the XIX Party Conference.[^6] *Sąjūdis* shortly received support from workers


[^6]: Ibid.

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attached to the television station who ‘frequented Sajūdis meetings, suggesting ways to obtain more coverage.’

Sajūdis continued to publish illegally whilst criticizing the official media for undemocratic practice. A plethora of publications were soon in circulation produced by self-organizing groups, and local branches of Sajūdis often informed Sajūdžio žinios of their inauguration. One article, for example, proclaimed ‘Joyful News’ and stated that, ‘a group of Sajūdis has been set up in Klaipėda! And not only set up! Its first steps have been supported by a publication! Even Kaunas cannot boast of such courageous actions…’. The article concluded by noting that, ‘diversity of the press is the source of the strength of Sajūdis.’

Shortly after Iakovlev’s visit to Lithuania (11-13 August 1988), Sajūdis’ legal acknowledgement was signified by the publication on 23 September 1988 of ‘the first issue of its newspaper, Atgimimas (Rebirth)’ printed ‘in a total edition of 100,000 copies, and a Russian edition, Vozrozhdenie, with a circulation of 30,000, followed.’ Sajūdis also published Soglasie (Accord), as a supplement to Vozrozhdenie ‘with original material.’ Kolstoe points out that, ‘…Sajudis, had many Russian members, and published a Russian-language paper with a large readership.’ One reason why Sajūdis did not publish in Polish was that under Soviet rule Poles had increasingly turned to Russian as their second language (a consequence of the policy of Russification), and this process was facilitated by ‘the similarities between Polish and Russian’.

Sajūdis was able to establish its own information agency with its own newspaper, Apie mus (‘About Us’) based upon the local branches of Sajūdis throughout Lithuania. Virgilijus Čepaitis pointed out that the central Sajūdis Secretariat ‘knew everything’ because of the information coming into it from the raions and towns. He added that ‘the Sajūdis machine worked quite well because in all critical situations we had the possibility to inform society,

8 Sajūdžio žinios, No.8, 11 July, 1988, pp.1-4 (2).
13 Čepaitis was the Secretary of Sajūdis, and used his position to build up a significant power base.
and to introduce those projects which needed to be done.\(^\text{14}\) Nationalist newspapers appeared published by groups of *Sąjūdis* based in Lithuanian cities with access to ‘official printing houses.’\(^\text{15}\) Petras Vaitiekūnas, an active supporter of *Sąjūdis*, was responsible for the publication of newspapers printed in the Russian language which were then transported into the RSFSR. He pointed out that *Sąjūdis* unofficially funded this project, ‘because it was afraid to show that it was exporting the revolution...[but] Landsbergis and Ozolas unofficially knew.’\(^\text{16}\)

*Sąjūdis* was the only Baltic Popular Front to get its own television programme in the late 1980’s,\(^\text{17}\) and its programme entitled ‘The Wave of Rebirth’ was broadcast every week ‘with a few exceptions’.\(^\text{18}\) The CPL suspended it after *Sąjūdis* virtually declared independence on 16 February 1989 until after the elections to the USSR Congress of 26 March (but in order to show impartiality, ‘the authorities’ program “The Authorities’ Studio” was also suspended.). Protests and public support for the *Sąjūdis* programme led to its retransmission when it was decided to prolong the ban beyond March. The government also gave ‘other unofficial groups such as “Edinstvo”’ access to the programme.\(^\text{19}\)

In the early stages of glasnost in Lithuania the media formed a quasi civil society. Prunskienė noted that ‘the mass media became available because nothing was happening to people.’\(^\text{20}\) In 1986, the Union of Writers circulated a petition of protest to criticize the environmental consequences of oil drilling in the Baltic, and ignored objections that this constituted ‘an anti-Soviet act.’\(^\text{21}\) *Sąjūdis* later adopted the tactic of circulating petitions, for example, in July 1989, to demonstrate public support for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Lithuanian territory.\(^\text{22}\) Landsbergis stated that, ‘we used such actions as the collection of one and a half

\[^{14}\text{Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.}\]
\[^{15}\text{Gimius, ‘Unofficial Groups...’, pp.16-19.}\]
\[^{16}\text{Interview with Petras Vaitiekūnas, Vilnius, 8 March 1997. Vaitiekūnas has an extensive collection of examples of the nationalist press published throughout all Lithuania and abroad.}\]
\[^{17}\text{Walter C.Clemens, Jr., Baltic Independence and Russian Empire, Basingstoke and London, 1991, p.115.}\]
\[^{18}\text{Ibid.}\]
\[^{19}\text{Gimius, ‘Unofficial Groups...’, pp.16-19.}\]
\[^{20}\text{Interview with Kazimiera Prunskienė, Vilnius, 4 December 1996.}\]
\[^{21}\text{Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.24.}\]
\[^{22}\text{V.Stanley Vardys, ‘Lithuanian National Politics’, Problems of Communism, 38, 1989, 4, pp.53-76 (75).}\]
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million signatures in the summer of 1989, people signed and gave their address when it was still dangerous [to do so].

Discussion groups such as Žinija (‘Knowledge’), comprised of economists and philosophers and forming an umbrella group for adult education, contributed to critical analyses.

Kazimieras Antanavičius, an economist, elected in 1989 as a Sąjūdis Deputy to the USSR Congress, recalled the period between 1986 and 1990 when at evening lectures throughout Lithuania he had spoken with ‘workers, farmers and the intelligentsia’ about the mistakes of the Soviet system. He conducted the meetings under the rubric of glasnost and tactically referred to Lenin in order to get permission for the meetings to convene.

Individuals acted as a medium for communicating to the public. Arvydas Juozaitis, a philosopher, read a paper at a public meeting of the Union of Artists (20 April 1988) which, as Vardys notes, ‘was the first time of which we are aware that the legitimacy of Soviet rule was publicly and not so subtly questioned by an intellectual who did not belong to familiar dissident circles.

Justas Paleckis, a former supervisor of cultural affairs of the CC of the CPL said of the occasion that, ‘It was the first sign that it was possible to speak the truth, to talk openly about history that was not determined by class struggle. It was a sign that it was possible to do something in the direction of democracy and human rights.

The release of political prisoners (from January 1987) had a tremendous impact on the development of the media, because the Lithuanian Freedom League, for example, ‘helped people to see that it was possible to protest, demand and have some influence.

Andrius Tučkus, who helped organize the August 1987 demonstration to commemorate the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, said that, ‘the main positive thing that the League did was to openly declare Lithuania’s aims: independence, withdrawal of troops and control of borders.

Catholic masses often accompanied dissident activities, and Lithuania’s Catholic past and tradition

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23 Interview with Vytautas Landsbergis, Vilnius, 15 May 1997.
24 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.39.
29 Interview with Andrius Tučkus, Vilnius, 20 March 1997.
enabled priests and parishioners to communicate without state interference. Julius
Sasnauskas, for example, is also a Catholic priest (Father Linas).

The League’s past practice of publishing samizdat resumed under glasnost although very
soon communist groups were prepared to oppose government censorship. The chairs of all the
cultural unions signed a statement addressed to the XIX Party Conference (June 1988) and
published it in Literatūra ir menas (28 May 1988) after Mitkin, the Second Secretary, refused
permission for the “proposals” to be published in the Party newspaper, Tiesa. Martinkus
pointed out that, “every word in these “proposals” was carefully weighed and we had to fight
for each of them separately. This cost a lot of nerves, time and energy. Today it may appear as
conformism, cowardice, possibly treachery.” The CPL became drawn into discussions about
its role under communism. A letter published in Tiesa, for example, and signed by nineteen
former ‘Defenders of the People’ (15 June 1988), including the Lithuanian Minister of Internal
Affairs, responded to an article which had depicted the ‘Defenders’ as agents of Stalinism.
The letter concluded, ‘We, former people’s defenders are proud that what we were dreaming
about and fighting for in the days of our youth became a reality.”

Przeworski’s reference to the ‘mobilizing potential’ of words under authoritarian regimes has
relevance for Sajūdis. The meeting of 24 June organized by Sajūdis to meet the delegates to
the XIX Party Conference received no official publicity, ‘but, nevertheless, thousands of
people gathered to the event, which demonstrated their solidarity with the Lithuanian
Restructuring Movement.’ One participant observed, ‘Why is the meeting not on television?
It is truly a National Holiday.’ During the meeting, Landsbergis’ complaint that the
proposals of Sajūdis for the XIX Party Conference published in the official Party press,
contained ‘contradictions’ and ‘compromises’ were said to reflect ‘the real situation in the
society of the republic as well as in its government.” At the Sajūdis meeting of 9 July to

31 Interview with Leonardas Vilkas, Vilnius, 20 February 1997
33 Interview with Vytautas Martinkus, Vilnius, 20 February 1997.
36 Adam Przeworski, Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and

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meet up with the delegates on their return from Moscow, the rally was publicized by ‘sticking
notes on walls and posts. Once again they were torn off. And once again as many came as
could only get in.’

The forum of television gave publicity to Sąjūdis at the rally of 9 July. One observer
commented, ‘We were... listening to the words of condemnation to our press and
television... from officials who formerly voted in the party...’. Nationalists made incursions
into television before the onset of their official programme, for example, Landsbergis’
announcement that Sąjūdis planned to hold a rally to commemorate the signing of the
Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (23 August 1988). The Conference of Sąjūdis was broadcast
live and included the first televizing of a public religious event in the Soviet Union - a night
time open air Catholic mass.

Everyday politics were opened up to television. Šepetys stated that after the elections to the
USSR Congress, ‘local activist members of Sąjūdis gathered, and expressed precepts to
deputies... on how to behave.’ He saw this as a form of accountability given that the sessions
of the LSS were televized, and voting conducted by raising of hands. Sessions of the USSR
Congress in Moscow were also shown live on television. In June 1989, ‘Sąjūdis spokesman
Romualdas Ozolas went on television, without the CPL’s permission’, and appealed for
signatures to the petition asking for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Lithuania.
Broadcasting for Catholics began in July 1989 which TASS said ‘was the first religious
program to be carried on local television in three decades.’

Nationalists introduced accountability into politics by printing transcripts of their meetings
with the CPL in Sąjūdžio žinios, and in the Sąjūdis press, for example, a transcript of the
meeting between Sąjūdis and General E. Eismuntas, Chair of the Lithuanian KGB (30

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41 Ibid.
43 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.242.
   ibid. No.4, 3 July 1988, pp.1,4.
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When the All-Union Congress of Educational Workers met in Moscow (21-23 December 1988), the newspaper Uchitel’skaya gazeta did not acknowledge the resolution made at the Congress on the rights of republican ministries to have increased control over their education systems (28 December). Two of the Lithuanian contingent talked with members of the State Committee for Public Education, and tape-recorded the conversations. The non-appearance of the promised corrections (in the 10 January issue) was reported on by Komjaunimo tiesa (‘Komsomol’skaya pravda’) and Tarybinis mokytojas (‘Soviet Teacher’) which also published excerpts from the tapes, for example, an official’s statement that, ‘I agree that the mistakes which occurred as a consequence of mismanagement will be corrected.’

Sajūdis protested in a statement to ELTA (the Lithuanian news agency) that it ‘blocked information’, and ‘misrepresented facts’, for example, the meeting of 24 June was reported to have been organized by ‘the representatives of the intelligentsia’ and Sajūdis was ignored, ‘besides it keeps writing the name of Sajūdis with a small letter.’ Nationalists asserted that ‘the delegates to the XIX Party Conference met with the public not by the will of the CPL CC, but by the will of Sajūdis.’ Sajūdis demonstrated outside the ELTA offices to complain about marginalization by the official media (29 June). At the meeting of 9 July, a resolution was passed ‘by the citizens of Lithuania’ to boycott Tiesa and ‘to encourage all one’s friends, acquaintances, relatives and fellow workers to join this boycott’.

By September 1988, Tiesa was printing the reminiscences of the former Commander-in-Chief of the Lithuanian Army on the Soviet ultimatum of 14 June 1940 which had led to the occupation of Lithuania. In general, ‘periodicals abandoned their communist symbols and

52 Ibid.
53 ‘Devynios Valandos TSRS Valstybiniame liaudies svietimo komitete’, Komjaunimo tiesa, 11 January, pp.1,3 (3).
55 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, pp.82-83.
56 ‘Rezoliucija’, Sajūdžio žinios, No.9, 16 July 1988, pp.3-4.
dropped the label “Soviet” or “Communist”. The reformist daily *Komjaunimo tiesa*, for example, was renamed *Lietuvos rytas* (‘The Morning of Lithuania’).\(^{58}\)

The press continued to provide an important forum of information after the elections of March 1990. Its ‘freedom and independence [was] guaranteed by the Press law adopted before the restoration of independence which abolished censorship.’\(^{59}\) After independence there was extensive coverage, for example, of the political crisis following on from the failed Referendum on the institution of a strong presidency (23 May 1992) (when *Sąjūdis* responded to defeat by deciding not to participate in sessions of the Seimas).\(^{60}\) *Sąjūdis* at times (after March 1990) seemed to expect a self-imposed censorship from journalists not to question government policy, because it reflected nationalist endeavours to keep Lithuania a unitary whole. Complaints were raised that *Lietuvos aidas* (‘Echo of Lithuania’) founded as the official state newspaper and ‘run on taxpayers’ money…to reflect a whole spectrum of political forces’ was in fact ‘the mouthpiece of *Sąjūdis*.‘\(^{61}\) When Landsbergis censored publication of ‘an allegedly pornographic sheet…judged harmful to society’ critics noted that it violated the law on freedom of the press and ‘the spirit of earlier openness’.\(^{62}\)

Five non-governmental newspapers backed by the Union of Lithuanian Journalists went on strike in November 1991 to protest against ‘unilateral increases in press distribution rates, discriminatory policies in distributing printing paper, [and] the refusal of the government to provide information to the press’.\(^{63}\) Vaitiekūnas noted that,

> The press is the mirror of our life and our society, it reflects the face and the poles of politics…we should not allow ourselves to make redundant one of our main achievements - the free press- just because it is not perfect. The only requirement for the government is to stay away from the press and not to bother it.\(^{64}\)

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61 Domas Šniukas, ‘Not Easy to Be Independent…’, p.10.
63 Šniukas, ‘Not Easy to Be Independent…’, p.10.
Democratization may be measured by the rule of law, and as a good example of the rule of law in Lithuania, the free press vigorously campaigned for its right to publish without government control. Independent newspapers became an integral part of civil society. Although Russia has a free press it has no impact whereas in Lithuania there is a much greater susceptibility to public opinion.

Constitutional Processes

Linz and Stepan note that, 'some nondemocratic constitutions [as in the former USSR] may enshrine a very elaborate set of decision-rules, procedures, and rights that had no effect on the operation of the nondemocratic regime because the constitution was a fiction. However, in more electorally competitive circumstances, this constitution can take on a life of its own that may make it almost impossible to arrive at democratically binding decisions. In such cases, the constitution can help destroy the state and should be changed extremely quickly…'.

Henderson and Robinson place constitutions at 'the second level of politics' which involves 'establishing the ground rules of the democratic game' (the first level relates to 'questions of nationhood' or citizenship). They state that 'revolutionary change in post-communism is negotiated, and this was most apparent when dealing with questions such as the role of the President, and the means by which the first democratic parliament - the one most likely to effect lasting constitutional changes - was to be elected.'

Events in Moscow precipitated demands for changes to the Constitution. In Lithuania, the beginnings of the rule of law started with the release of political prisoners (a symbolic promise that people were now as free as the Constitution said they were), and from then onwards nationalists struggled to get the Soviet Constitution working in respect of freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly and religious worship. At a mass rally organized by Sąjūdis (23 August 1988), Šepetys referred back to the XIX Party Conference where 'true sovereignty…was spoken about…in relation to the Constitution of the Republic. I congratulate the efforts of the Academy of Sciences aimed at organizing a special session, and

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I will take an active part in it myself in order to see that our science contributes greatly to the preparation of the new Lithuanian Constitution.'\(^67\) The Constitutional Commission of the Academy of Sciences had already recommended that Lithuanian law take precedence over Soviet law (July 1988).\(^68\)

\textit{Sajūdis} originated from discussions ‘to establish a social institution for the defence of constitutional rights’\(^69\), and once established stated that it ‘supports and coordinates self-arising public initiatives independent of all government organs’ and that ‘it represented all the Lithuanian nation and all national minorities in Lithuania.’\(^70\) Landsbergis described the gradual process of attaining the right of association, ‘…even to have \textit{Sajūdis} as a legitimate organization was very difficult, we did not achieve it immediately….but they [CPL] had no power nor recommendations from Moscow to disband \textit{Sajūdis} or arrest leaders of \textit{Sajūdis} so it was co-existence on a very fragile basis in that first year. So we avoided sometimes such radical formulas which could be used against \textit{Sajūdis}…of course we worked in legitimate Soviet terms. Because perestroika was proclaimed we pressed our local communist authorities using the slogans of perestroika in Moscow.’\(^71\)

Individual acts by communist leaders eroded the norms of communist federalism. Brazauskas stated that, ‘During meetings and rallies, I allowed myself to make certain deflections, certain deviations from the limits that I had to be in.’\(^72\) Brazauskas (of his own volition) announced to the \textit{Sajūdis} rally of 9 July that the party would soon be legalizing the display of the tricolour flag.\(^73\)

Relations between \textit{Sajūdis} and the CPL were subject to a continuous process of interaction in regard to the Constitution. It was especially important for \textit{Sajūdis} to have the right to hold meetings and to demonstrate. \textit{Sajūdis} stated in a letter to the press that, ‘restrictions to organize the meeting [of 9 July] and efforts to block it were anticonstitutional…\textit{Sajūdis}

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \(^{68}\) Senn, \textit{Lithuania Awakening}, pp.96-97.
\item \(^{69}\) ‘Praėjo tik mėnuo’, ‘\textit{Sajūdis Žinios}, No.4, 3 July 1988, pp.1-2.
\item \(^{70}\) ‘Lietuvos persitvarkymo \textit{Sajūdis}’, \textit{Sajūdio Žinios}, No.11, 22 July 1988, p.1.
\item \(^{71}\) Interview with Landsbergis.
\item \(^{72}\) Interview with Algirdas Brazauskas, Vilnius, 23 September 1998.
\end{itemize}}
demands that similar actions which violate human rights shall not occur.\textsuperscript{74} Moscow sought to impose a ten day notification period before the convening of public gatherings (July 1988) which gave to the city Executive Council the authority to withhold permission.\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Sąjūdis} objected that the right ‘to hold meetings, rallies, demonstrations and public gatherings’ belonged ‘to the sphere of interests of all citizens of the republic’, and should be decided by all deputies of the LSS, and not by the Presidium alone.\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Sąjūdis} arranged a protest meeting to coincide with the passage of the legislation (26 July) shortly before which two members of the Initiative Group were told by the Vilnius Mayor that \textit{Sąjūdis} was ‘spreading anarchy’ and involved in ‘antisoviet activities’.\textsuperscript{77}

The unauthorized demonstration went ahead (attended by about five thousand people) despite efforts by a militia officer to persuade members of the Initiative Group to disperse the crowd, and showed the uncertainty of the CPL in its hitherto prerogative to maintain order and act as the final arbiter.\textsuperscript{78} After a few days delay, the legislation became law at the end of July,\textsuperscript{79} but \textit{Sąjūdis} circumvented the ban, for example, it demonstrated against violations of safety at Ignalina nuclear power plant (17 September), but avoided ‘acts that would enable the authorities to construe the gathering as a “meeting.”’ The authorities did not interfere.\textsuperscript{80}

The decision by the CPL leadership to deploy troops to disperse the rally of 28 September organized by the Lithuanian Freedom League led to the resignation of the First and Second Secretaries.\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Sąjūdis’} protestations against the use of troops (29 September) brought them together with the Lithuanian Freedom League in public for the first time (\textit{Sąjūdis} had previously avoided public association with former dissidents).\textsuperscript{82} The event introduced accountability into government when a commission was formed to investigate events which included ‘representatives of society and a group of Sąjūdis members’.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{74} ‘Iš laiško “Vakarinėms naujienoms”’, \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.9, 16 July 1988, p.4.
\textsuperscript{75} Senn, \textit{Lithuania Awakening}, p.94.
\textsuperscript{76} ‘Ne valdžios sauvali!’, \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.13, July 1988, p.4.
\textsuperscript{77} ‘Mitingas!’, \textit{Sąjūdžio žinios}, No.14, 27July 1988, p.3.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} Senn, \textit{Lithuania Awakening}, p.95.
\textsuperscript{81} See Chapter 3 for more details.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Lithuanian Way 1}, published by \textit{Sąjūdis}, Vilnius, 1990, p.27.
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Tiesa}, 5 October 1988, p.1.
report published by the Council of Ministers underlined the point that the meeting was not sanctioned, and that the Lithuanian Freedom League had been warned about the responsibility of going ahead with the meeting.  

However, shortly afterwards Sąjūdis published the full text which stated that deploying a ‘special military team’ was illegal, because permission to do so could only be given by the Minister of Internal Affairs, and not by clerks of lower rank such as Songaila and Mitkin.

Przeworski states that ‘...authoritarian regimes abhor independent organizations; they either incorporate them under centralized control or repress them by force.’ Landsbergis exemplified this when he pointed out that the CPL ‘feared organization. So we had to create an organization and to press them.’ In a meeting between Sąjūdis and Lionginas Šepetys, the Secretary for Ideology, Sąjūdis rejected Šepetys’ proposal to join commissions to which they had already been nominated. Landsbergis stated that Šepetys ‘tried to persuade us against creating an organization covering all Lithuania [and] to become advisers to CP leaders...and to work together for reforms.’ Sąjūdis disagreed and pursued its own organizational strategy.

Sąjūdis outlined its organizational structure which consisted of ‘groups of Sąjūdis, commissions on problems, the Council and its Secretariat...’. The Council was to be a replacement for the Initiative Group of Sąjūdis (elected on 3 June). Lieven’s reference to the historical differences between Kaunas and Vilnius were incorporated into the organizational structure of Sąjūdis. It established a Coordinating Council for Vilnius (13 September) to stop criticisms from the Kaunas group that Sąjūdis was ‘nurtured’ by Vilnius, and that the Kaunas branch of Sąjūdis was marginalized. Čepaitis stated that by September 1988, branches of Sąjūdis had been established throughout all of Lithuania, and that after the

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84 ‘Lietuvos TSR Ministrų Tarybos Prezidiume’, Tiesa, 18 October 1988, pp.1-3; Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.207.
87 Interview with Landsbergis.
89 Interview with Landsbergis.
91 See Chapter 2 for an account of this.
Congress the institutionalization of Sąjūdis was completed. At the Congress, approximately '1,000 registered voting delegates' elected a Sąjūdis Seimas (or Parliament) consisting of 220 members from which 35 people were elected onto the Council. The Secretariat, headed by Čepaitis, formed the apex of the organizational structure.

Sąjūdis tightened its organizational structure after the decision of the CPL not to introduce a Lithuanian veto on Soviet laws (18 November) by electing Landsbergis as President of the Sąjūdis Seimas, and emerged, 'a stronger, more united organization'. Sąjūdis wanted Lithuanian law to take priority in the Republic, because it objected to three paragraphs of the proposed new Soviet Constitution. Sąjūdis argued that the powers given to the establishment of a new USSR Congress would take away the theoretical right for individual Republics to secede from the USSR (article 72) by transferring this right to a collective decision of Congress; Sąjūdis stated that proposals for increased centralization would threaten its own existence if the USSR Supreme Soviet was allowed to determine "the legal status of social organizations" - such as Sąjūdis. Sąjūdis objected to proposals to expand the powers of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, because it saw in them the arbitrary 'right to replace republican governments and supreme soviets'.

The Presidium of the LSSR had asked for comments on these proposed changes from 'people's deputies of the republic, citizens, working collectives, public organizations [and] the mass media'. Brazauskas explained the decision in the LSS not to change the Constitution (18 November) by positing that, 'every political process has to have a certain logical development and it should happen gradually...Landsbergis and his partners did not bear any responsibility for everything that was happening here in Lithuania, but I myself was the Chair of the Supreme Soviet so I had to be responsible for everything...'. He added that 'radical decisions' were, however, taken by the Supreme Soviet which included making

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93 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
95 Interview with Virgilijus Čepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
96 Vardys, 'Lithuanian National Politics', p.68.
100 Interview with Brazauskas.
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Lithuanian the language of state, raising the status of the tricolour flag to that of the state flag, and reasserting the national anthem of independent Lithuania.\(^{101}\)

*Sąjūdis* proceeded as if a declaration of sovereignty had taken place by asserting its authority into those areas to which it had access - education and language. When Moscow ignored Lithuanian requests for decentralization in education (December 1988) the Lithuanian Minister of Education and other signatories sent off a letter of protest claiming that the situation contradicted the ‘principles of democracy’, and demanded the rectification of the ‘genuine text.’\(^{102}\) Lithuanian educators, supported by the CPL, marginalized Moscow and pursued the right of the Lithuanian Republic to determine policy in these areas.\(^{103}\) The measure of *Sąjūdis’* success was evidenced by its ability to determine policy even before the convocation of competitive elections.

The increased respect for constitutional procedures in Lithuania demonstrated that it was meaningful to have voting and elections, and on 23 February 1989 the government passed rules which allowed for ‘the registration of unofficial organizations’.\(^{104}\) The results of the elections to the USSR Congress (March 1989) which gave *Sąjūdis* a majority of votes brought about changes to the Constitution and new legislation in preparation for the elections of 1990. Landsbergis pointed out that ‘it was in our programme of *Sąjūdis* which laws have to be prepared during 1989 as a threshold to the liberation and establishment of a newly restored independent state.’\(^{105}\) After the declaration of sovereignty in May 1989, ‘the majority of laws were adopted by the Supreme Soviet under pressure from *Sąjūdis.*’\(^{106}\) Changes were made to the Constitution to reflect changes that were already taking place in society.\(^{107}\)

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\(^{101}\) Ibid.


\(^{105}\) Interview with Landsbergis.

\(^{106}\) Interview with Virgilijus Cepaitis, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.

\(^{107}\) Vardys, ‘Lithuanian National Politics’, p.73.
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The government responded to Catholic demands for ‘equal rights to all citizens, believers and non-believers’ by an amendment to Article 50 of the Lithuanian Constitution (3 November 1989) which guaranteed this request. It provided for ‘educational establishments’ which were secular, but asserted that private schools were not prohibited, and referred to state-church cooperation for the purpose of ‘fostering society’s morality’. The government included in the political system everyone living on the territory of Lithuania enacted in its Citizenship Law of November 1989 (zero option), and passed a Law on Ethnic Minorities to provide cultural safeguards (November 1989). The decline of the ideological dominance of the Communist Party was made de jure on 7 December 1989 by the abolition of Article 6 of the Constitution (by a vote of 243 to 1), and by the legalization of a multi-party system.

Throughout 1989 groups within Lithuania were already seceding from Moscow.

The Lithuanian state apparatus existed in parallel to that of the USSR state between March 1990 (when independence was declared) and August 1991 (the collapse of communism). Sajūdis claimed it was not seceding from the USSR as it based its claim to independence on the unlawful occupation of its territory by the Soviet Union in 1940. In this semi-stateless position Moscow was able to contravene the rule of law (the increased movement of Soviet troops after 11 March 1990, the forcible seizure of Lithuanian conscripts intended for the Soviet Army (27 March 1990), and the violence of January 1991), but within Lithuania itself there were no examples of inter-ethnic violence. Soviet troops were used to replace the Lithuanian Prosecutor with a representative of Moscow (30 March 1990), but employees and lawyers refused to cooperate.

The Lithuanian government tried to exert its control over the state by setting up Ministries of Defence, Energy and the Economy. A member of the CPL (CPSU) who was secretary of the party organization in the Lithuanian Prosecutor’s Office, reported on 13 June that the Party ‘had lost influence in the republican MVD, in the Justice Ministry, and in the courts’.

109 Tiesa, 10 November 1989, p.2.
112 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.164.
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He attributed this to a law passed in April which had created an independent Prosecutor’s office.\(^{114}\)

Linz and Stepan’s warning about the destabilizing effects of an activated Constitution were partially realized in the Lithuanian case. After August 1991 and the collapse of communism, the task of drawing up a new Constitution fell upon the \(\text{Sąjūdis}\) government. Landsbergis attempted to gather signatures for a referendum that linked the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Lithuanian territory to the issue of a strong presidency on the basis that, ‘voters would be more likely to turn out for a strong presidency if it was presented as a continuation of the struggle to be free of Russia.’\(^{115}\) He was prevented from doing this by the Supreme Council which separated the votes (May 1992).\(^{116}\) When \(\text{Sąjūdis}\) deputies were reduced to a minority of 57 in June 1992 they responded by transferring to another hall to avoid defeat (the tactic of walking-out was first employed by the Left and Centre in Spring 1991 when they were a minority).\(^{117}\)

The crisis demonstrated ‘that the adapted Soviet constitution had wholly broken down...’ but all factions - both \(\text{Sąjūdis}\) and the opposition - were nonetheless able to reach a compromise on the drafting of a new Constitution.\(^{118}\) The main criticism of the Constitution was that it propounded, ‘the primacy of nation and family over the individual.’\(^{119}\) It incorporated an article that ‘the state “shall recognize those churches and religious organizations which are traditional in Lithuania [Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Orthodox and Jewish] while other churches and religious organizations [shall be recognized] if they have support in society and if their teaching as well as their rituals do not contradict law and morality”’.\(^{120}\) Vaitiekūnas observed that ‘especially nasty is the fact that it will be possible to limit a man’s freedom to practice and spread religion or faith on the basis of a motive of “public security”.’\(^{121}\) He noted

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\(^{116}\) Ibid.
\(^{118}\) Ibid.p.265.
\(^{119}\) Ibid.
\(^{120}\) Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, pp.206-207.
that the Constitution was discussed 'for only one day and people saw it only ten days before the referendum.'

Transplacement

As noted in the Introduction, Huntington describes a process of transplacement when democratization is produced by the combined actions of government and opposition.\(^{123}\) When applied to Lithuania, Huntington's model is deficient because it excludes the role of ethnicity from his classification of agents who take over the state (and thus implicitly conflates nation and state). In the Lithuanian case it is important to note that change was brought about by a process of ethnic transplacement, because this had consequences on the political activities of minorities within Lithuania.

A key factor of the transition was that many elite positions in Lithuania were held by ethnic Lithuanians who were willing to promote nationalism and democratization. Under Soviet rule, '...native cadres held most of the top posts after 1940',\(^{124}\) and the First Secretary of the CPL, for example, had always been an ethnic Lithuanian.\(^{125}\) Changes in cadres at the X Plenum of the CPL CC (26 January 1988) were noticeable because there was 'for the first time since at least 1955... two non-Lithuanian members of the Buro. Berezov and Second Secretary Nikolai Mitkin [were] Russians.'\(^{126}\)

By the late 1980's Lithuanians comprised 79.6 percent of the total population, and held 91.5% of administrative-managerial posts.\(^{127}\) The percentage of Lithuanians in the Party in 1986 had reached 70.4 percent (slightly below the Lithuanian percentage of the population),\(^{128}\) and this group was very important for forming the basis of a negotiated transition with \(\textbf{Sąjūdis}\). Liberalization was aided in Lithuania by a body of people in Party and

\(^{122}\) Ibid.


\(^{127}\) Graham Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', in \textit{The Baltic States} op. cit. fn 3, pp.121-143 (123).

\(^{128}\) Misiunas and Taagepera, \textit{The Baltic States}, p.281.
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State occupations, by the nonparty intelligentsia and former dissidents or those who had distanced themselves from the Soviet regime who interpreted Gorbachev’s reform programme as a signal to accrue as much power as possible to Lithuanian control.

Vaitiekūnas stated that, ‘our power was in our Sajūdis and the Communist Party acting together. In the wide sense, Sajūdis was the progressive part of the Communist Party, as well as the Political Prisoners and Terleckas.’ Brazauskas provided evidence of transplacement, ‘we might say that relations with Sajūdis were permanent especially when I was First Secretary of the Communist Party.’ Ozolas asserted that, ‘it was clear that much would depend on how the Lithuanian Communist Party would react. If the Communist leadership would have taken a negative position towards Sajūdis in the very beginning there would have been much bloodshed.’

Snyder states that intellectuals who compromised with the CPL did so in order ‘to preserve Lithuanian culture in the freedom of their hearts and homes.’ Eduardas Vilkas (a member of the CPL), who was Secretary of the Academy of Sciences Presidium and Chair of the Constitutional Commission from which Sajūdis originated, stated that there were ‘two visions - of the heart and spoken. The former always wanted an independent state, but before Gorbachev this could not be expressed.’ Prunskienė (a member of the Sajūdis Initiative Group) explained that she decided to join the CPL in 1980, at the age of thirty-seven, despite ‘the death of my father at the hands of the Bolsheviks’, because ‘without this damned membership card I would never have been able to strengthen my professional position.’ She discerned three groups from amongst her generation who belonged to the Party:

(1) active propagators of communist ideology (there were not a lot of them in Lithuania since the ideology itself was an import); (2) formal members who acquired membership without any scruples for the purpose of a career in the power structure;

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130 Interview with Petras Vaitiekūnas, 8 March 1997.
131 Interview with Brazauskas.
132 Interview with Romualdas Ozolas, Vilnius, 14 April 1997.
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(3) superformal members who compromised for the sake of professional interest unrelated to a career in the structures of power.\(^{136}\)

The ethnic dominance of Lithuanians was reflected in the composition of the Initiative group of Sąjūdis which was ‘almost exclusively’ Lithuanian, and of its thirty-six members, seventeen belonged to the Party.\(^{137}\) The Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988) was attended by 1021 delegates and comprised 980 Lithuanians, 9 Poles, 8 Russians, 6 Jews and 13 other.\(^{138}\) Thus the delegates were ‘96 percent Lithuanian, 0.8 percent Russian, 0.6 percent Jewish and 0.9 percent Polish, with 11 from other ethnic minority backgrounds.’\(^{139}\) Seventeen members of the newly elected Council of Sąjūdis (which replaced the Initiative Group at the Congress) out of thirty-five belonged to the CPL.\(^{140}\) Zygmunt Mackevič, who attended the Congress as a delegate from the Social Cultural Society of Poles, noted that although the delegates were elected by regions, ‘everywhere there were only Lithuanians, even from Šalčininkai [which had a majority of Poles].’ Mackevič was the sole representative of ethnic Poles to be voted to the Seimas of Sąjūdis.\(^{141}\) There were also representatives from the Russian Cultural Centre at the Congress. Mackevič stated that after his election to the Seimas of Sąjūdis he realized that independence was the goal of the new movement.

Landsbergis commented on the relationship between Sąjūdis and the CPL, and concurred that right from the beginning the goal was to divide the CPL and to take it over.\(^{142}\) He stated that, ‘the idea was to split them [the CPL] into reactionaries and progressives...I discerned two trends in that communist administration and organization ...’.\(^{143}\) Sąjūdis guarded against CPL control over its activities. The first meeting of Sąjūdis (7 June), for example, voted to exclude Stasys Šibrasas, the supervisor of higher education of the CC, as ‘an uninvited guest’, from its discussions.\(^{144}\) As early as 17 June 1988, Sąjūdis had a meeting with Šepetys and some

\(^{136}\) Ibid.

\(^{137}\) Vardys, ‘Lithuanians', op. cit. fn 26, p.80; Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.98.

\(^{138}\) Lithuanian Way 1, p.28.

\(^{139}\) Vardys, ‘Lithuanian National Politics’, p.57.


\(^{141}\) Interview with Zygmunt Mackevič, Vilnius, 30 April 1997. Mackevič was the Secretary General of the Social and Cultural Society of Poles for a short period. Czerwony sztandar, 23 October 1988, reported that two Poles, one of whom was ‘Z.Mackiewicz’ took part in the Congress of Sąjūdis.

\(^{142}\) Interview with Landsbergis.

\(^{143}\) Ibid.

\(^{144}\) Lithuanian Way 1, p.23.
section heads of the Union of Writers. Martinkus, an organizer of the meeting, stated that Šepetys’ presence:

was meaningful and symbolic: this hour marked the beginning of a very complex, variable yet absolutely indispensable dialogue, also attacks and retreats from both camps....this [meeting] could be rightfully viewed as the ice-breaker, one of the first dialogues that later compelled many members of the Communist Party to make their own decisions and enter the ranks of Sąjūdis.

Landsbergis asserted in the meeting that ‘Our Sąjūdis will help the progressive part of the party to overcome the conservative part.’ On 23 June, Sąjūdis had a meeting with Songaila, First Secretary of the CPL, members of the CPL CC Bureau, and delegates to the XIX Party Conference where it asked for legal recognition. ‘Sąjūdis should be given some official status so that we could all together, shoulder to shoulder, make perestroika happen.’

The CPL began to include Sąjūdis into political discussions, for example, Sąjūdis had a meeting with General E.Eismuntas, Chair of the Lithuanian KGB (30 August), where ‘views on Soviet power [were] exchanged and the limits of tolerance from both sides [were] discussed’. After negotiations between the Vilnius Party boss and members of the Vilnius Sąjūdis Council, the latter were allowed into the XIII Plenum of the CPL CC (4 October) where a Sąjūdis representative demanded the resignation of Songaila. During the Plenum which oversaw the resignation of Songaila (20 October), Lithuanian communists commented on the central role of Sąjūdis in political life, ‘The [political] vacuum was filled by Sąjūdis, informally, which in the period of a few months has been acknowledged and has acquired authority’. They also expressed the need for less supervision from Moscow, ‘we would like the new First Secretary and Bureau not to give into any pressures and that all solutions are issued self-reliably and in accordance with the needs of the people.’

One participant expressed a common goal of Sąjūdis and the Party, ‘...communists and non-party people demand why, for so many decades, the Second Secretary of the Communist

145 Ibid.
146 Interview with Martinkus.
149 ‘Susitikimas LKP CK rūmuose: Stenogramos santrauka (2)’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.7, 7 July 1988, pp.2-3.
151 Sevn, Lithuania Awakening, pp.193-197.
Party Central Committee has been sent from Moscow, instead of being elected by the Communists of the Party organization of the Republic? His view was supported by many of the following speakers, for example, Juras Požela, President of the Academy of Sciences, stated that, ‘we truly believe in our Party organization, in our cadres, and we do not need special guardians.’ Brazauskas deferred the question of Mitkin’s resignation to a decision of the CC of the CPSU, but shortly afterwards Mitkin retired by force of public opinion. The Lithuanians replaced him with Vladimiras Beriozovas, an ethnic Russian born in Lithuania, who was fluent in the language.

Aloyzas Sakalas, the Chair of the Sąjūdis Coordinating Council for Vilnius, said that the Council had meetings with the CPL to discuss issues such as education including the removal of Marxism-Leninism from the school curricula. Brazauskas’ address to the Congress of Sąjūdis (October 1988) showed that the communist authorities and the ‘principal opposition’ represented by Sąjūdis were together promoting liberalization.

After the elections to the USSR Congress (March 1989), Šepetys stated that Sąjūdis and the CPL discussed ‘the curriculum’ and ‘the scheduling’ of sessions for the Supreme Soviet in which both sides ‘agreed’ and ‘found common ground’. He stated that ‘according to the rules of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, Lithuanian members of the USSR Congress had the right to participate’ in sessions of the LSS, and this process was regulated by the Sąjūdis leadership. Brazauskas noted that Sąjūdis participated in preparations for the declaration of sovereignty (18 May), ‘the method of discussions with Sąjūdis...is practised, and everybody took an active role in preparing documents for the session of the Supreme Council of the Lithuanian SSR, which will take place on 18 May, and this is very good.’

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153 Ibid.
154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.
156 Ibid.
157 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.213
159 Interview with Aloyzas Sakalas, Vilnius, 13 May 1997.
161 Interview with Lionginas Sepetys, Vilnius, 19 May 1997. The entitlement to speak seems to have been made by his own personal decision, and was not ratified by a decision of the LSS.
Prunskienė entered the Lithuanian government in the summer of 1989 as deputy Prime Minister. The CPL included into its Bureau four members of the Sąjūdis Initiative Group after its secession from Moscow in December 1989. This move into the CPL created the possibility for some members of Sąjūdis to be victorious either way. Ėrautė noted that, ‘it was a very strange situation because in one day part of the Sąjūdis council had a different hat and although the CPL supported independence Sąjūdis was not part of the communist party.’ As noted previously, Landsbergis too made a distinction between the CPL and Sąjūdis despite his willingness to work with them.

After Gorbachev’s visit to Lithuania in January 1990 (to persuade the CPL to remain within the CPSU), Sąjūdis and the CPL held joint discussions to prepare for the elections of March 1990 (the Consultation Council). Ėrautė stated that ‘the decision was made in this transition period that we must keep the state stable. During the discussions, Landsbergis commented that ‘we should look at the main objective [independence] as our common one…’. Ėrautė (CPL) stated that, ‘Already this year destructive processes and economic chaos may expand in the Soviet Union. It is necessary to save Lithuania, the Lithuanian nation, and people have to feel that all political movements are concerned about steps towards an independent state.’

At the second meeting (5 February), discussion centred upon the need to demonstrate the illegality of the Soviet Army on Lithuanian territory. Ėrautė noted that, ‘it was explained to M.Gorbachev that the spring conscription is already impossible in Lithuania.’ J.Jaronis (Union of Workers) suggested making the office of the Lithuanian Prosecutor General independent from the Soviet Union. The group published a ‘Declaration of the Temporary Political Consultative Council of Lithuania’ which following Landsbergis’ suggestion stated...

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163 Interview with Virgilijus Ėrautė, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
164 See his comments in Chapter 3 on the differences between Beriozovas (CPL) and Medvedev (Sąjūdis).
165 Senn, Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania, pp.82-85.
166 Interview with Virgilijus Ėrautė, Vilnius, 9 December 1996.
167 ‘Lietuvos politinių įėjų astovų pasitarimo, įvykusio 1990 m. sausio 31 d. protokolas’, in my possession.
168 Ibid.
169 ‘Lietuvos laikinosios politines komisijos 2-jo posėdžio, įvykusio 1990 m. vasario 5 d. Vilniuje, Žinijos draugijos salėje, Protokolas’, in my possession.
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the need to liquidate the consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact from Lithuania, because this would form the basis to all legislation.\textsuperscript{170}

After the elections of 1990, communists and non-communists held high positions of office, and four out of the seven new ministers appointed by the end of March 'had been members of the previous government.'\textsuperscript{171} Lieven notes that in Lithuania 'the national government took control of both the chairmanship [of the Supreme Council] and the government', and contrasts this to the situation in Latvia and Estonia where 'for the sake of compromise' the 'Chairmanship' went to the Communist leaders.\textsuperscript{172} He noted that there was one Russian represented in the Lithuanian government (Evgenii Petrov). Czesław Okińczyk, a lawyer, and a Polish \textit{Sqūdis} deputy, ‘…urged Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene…to appoint a Pole to her cabinet, but to no avail.’\textsuperscript{173} Emmanuelis Zingeris, a Jewish \textit{Sqūdis} deputy, chaired the Foreign Relations Committee, but was ‘forced to resign’ (autumn 1991) after raising questions about ‘Baltic involvement in the Holocaust.’\textsuperscript{174}

The process of transplacement was initiated by Gorbachev, and Iakovenko’s support for \textit{Sqūdis} enabled the CPL to replace Songaila and Mitkin with two communists responsive to the new reforms (Brazauskas and Beriozovas). Gorbachev and party officials in Moscow supported the changes in personnel evidenced by their discussions with Brazauskas just before he attended the Plenum of 20 October (and where Moscow’s two representatives also demonstrated its approval).\textsuperscript{175} Moscow replaced Šepetys with Valerijonas Baltrūnas (21 February 1989), a conservative, to attempt to bring Lithuanian politics back into Moscow’s influence.\textsuperscript{176} Šepetys stated that he was criticized by ‘hardliners and the Central Committee leadership for giving up the mass media to \textit{Sqūdis}, but Šepetys was able to retain his position as Chair of the Supreme Soviet (until the elections of 1990) when a vote of no confidence intended to displace him was voted against by the majority of Deputies.\textsuperscript{177} After

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{170} 'Lietuvos laikinosios politinės konsultacinės tarybos pareiškimas', in my possession.
\item \textsuperscript{171} Vera Tolz, ‘The USSR This Week’, Report on the USSR. 2, 1990, 13, p.34.
\item \textsuperscript{172} Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.237.
\item \textsuperscript{174} Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.265.
\item \textsuperscript{175} 'Diskusijos Lietuvos KP Centro komiteto XIV Plenume 1988m spalio 20d.', Tiesa, 27 October 1988.
\item \textsuperscript{176} Alfred Erich Senn, ‘Toward Lithuanian Independence’, Problems of Communism, 39, 1990, 2, pp.21-29 (22-23).
\item \textsuperscript{177} Interview with Lionginas Šepetys, Vilnius, 10 March and 19 May 1997.
\end{itemize}
the elections of March 1989, the process of transplacement was unstoppable except by force
or through electoral choice.

Parties, self-organizing groups and movements

The literature on democratization points to the importance of inter-organizational competition
especially political parties and intermediate public groups as a crucial part of the process of
democratization. Linz and Stepan point out that civil society and political society are both
distinct from each other, but also complementary. They place political parties within the
sphere of core institutions of political society (such as elections, electoral rules, and political
leadership) which in a democratizing setting ‘specifically arranges itself to contest the
legitimate right to exercise control over public power and state apparatus.’ Henderson and
Robinson state that, ‘democracy needs civil society’ because it creates groups, parties and
organizations which check state power, and institutions which then ‘channel interests into the
policy-making process.’

As shown above, the lack of any kind of autonomous associations outside of communist
control meant that the breakdown of the unity of the party took place within research
institutes and societal organizations. The party secretary of the Institute of History of the
Academy of Sciences, for example, criticized Moscow’s method of giving the post of Second
Secretary to a Moscow appointee (15 June 1988), and on 21 June the Academy asked for
Mitkin’s removal. According to Martinkus, ‘To act against Mitkin’s person was an open
declaration about striving for independence.’ Martinkus stated that Brazauskas supported
the leaders of the creative unions when they sent a telegram to Gorbachev expressing their
lack of confidence in both Songaila and Mitkin (18 October). The text of the telegram was
drawn up at a meeting of the Union of Writers on 12 October. Brazauskas pointed out that
his participation in a meeting of the Creative Associations of Lithuania (early 1989) (attended

179 Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, pp. 7-10.
180 Henderson and Robinson, Post-Communist Politics, p.8.
181 Brown, The Gorbachev Factor, p.316.
182 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.77.
183 Interview with Martinkus.
184 Ibid.
by about 900 people) encouraged him to think about secession from the CPSU. ‘There were architects, musicians, teachers, artists, writers…and I felt their aspirations and support for me, and it was easier for me then to promote the idea [to secede].’

The legislation making Lithuanian de facto the official language of the Republic was prepared by the Academy’s Institute of Language and Literature. Alfonsas Maldonis, a poet and Chair of the Union of Writers of Lithuania (April 1988), stated at a meeting that ‘the impulse for this, our conversation, was the Plenum of the Board of Writers of the Soviet Union devoted to national issues [and] we have to approve the idea which was raised in the Moscow Plenum of Writers. The state language is the language of nationality which gave its name to the Republic.’

Universities in Lithuania ‘were among the first public institutions…to seek active ties with the West.’ The University of Vytautas the Great, for example, was reestablished in April 1989, a Lithuanian-American was elected to the post of rector, and professors from abroad started to teach there. Since international recognition in 1991, many exchange programmes have been organized between north America, the European Community and Lithuania.

In the early stages of glasnost, the Green movement was able to act ‘legally and publicly’, because of the alleged concern of Moscow about the environment. The ecological protests organized by the Union of Writers in 1986 ‘were implicitly nationalist’. Martinkus explained that,

Ecological problems were “legal” but the discussion also had its limits and taboos. In their opposition to the oil production in Nida, the Writers were expressing their resistance to the Russian (Soviet Union) imperial ecological policy on the outskirts of the Empire. “Province” had no decisive voice in the Empire, and used to be treated at

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186 Interview with Brazauskas.
187 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.90.
189 Ibid.
191 Henderson and Robinson, Post-Communist Politics, p.54.
the Empire’s will, therefore the problem of the oil reservoirs in Nida became a big political issue, a taboo that had to be routed. And this has been achieved.193

Groups emerged which focused upon ecology and history, for example, history students organized a group called Talka (Assistance) in 1987 to protect historical monuments particularly in the old city of Vilnius.194 Ecological clubs such as Žemyna (the Lithuanian pagan goddess of the earth), and Atgaja (Revival) circulated information to a public previously denied any facts about the dangers of Lithuania’s ecological situation. The merger of these clubs into a broader Green Movement was institutionalized at the end of 1988 with the formation of a Coordinative Council of the Greens.195 The Green Movement was constituted as a Party in June 1989, but disagreement over the decision to politicize reduced its influence.196

The CPL commented upon demands for improvements in education and the environment. At the XI Congress of the Union of Artists of Lithuania (13 November 1987), Šepetys referred to society’s help ‘in making our efforts more concrete and stringent...by timely informing us about the still occasionally occurring devastation of monuments.’197 He noted that a resolution had been passed by the Party, ‘...concerning measures to improve the preservation and usage of historical and cultural monuments in the Republic’, and the introduction of a ‘separate course on the history of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic’ for the 1988-1989 academic year. Šepetys also signalled the party’s intention to excavate the site of the lower Castle of Gediminas to express ‘the physical eternalization of the birth of the town.’198 These proposals were brought to fruition after the formation of Sąjūdis (however, as noted in Chapter 2, the excavation work began in 1987)

The demands of ‘the triple transition’ in the Soviet Union involved economists in discussions about devolving control of the economy to the Republics. Prunskienė organized a meeting with economists from Estonia (26 May) where she stated that:

193 Interview with Martinkus.
194 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.38.
196 ibid.
198 Ibid. See section on ‘Symbolism’, Chapter 2, for the importance of the Castle to Lithuanian historical memory.
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In economics, democratization is being halted by a thick layer of bureaucracy, passage through which causes even the most progressive decisions to degenerate into yesterday’s norms. The fight is like banging one’s head against the granite bureaucratic wall. Only the people, I believe, can knock it down.\(^{199}\)

The economists from Estonia spoke the next day about the activities of the ‘Estonian National Front for the support of reforms’, where participants expressed ‘the necessity to unite the efforts of all layers of society in order to begin the reforms here [in Lithuania].’\(^{200}\) Vilkas assembled the general meeting on 3 June to discuss perestroika (from which Sąjūdis originated) at the behest of environmental groups and the Young Economists who had attended the discussions.\(^{201}\) The Lithuanian government responded to economic debates by sending ‘dozens of managers and economists’ abroad (summer 1988), and in return received visiting delegations to the Republic.\(^{202}\)

Cultural groups emerged from amongst the ethnic minorities. The leaders of Jewish Lithuanians, for example, ‘closely cooperated with Sąjūdis’.\(^{203}\) The First Congress of the Jewish Cultural Society of Lithuania (5 March 1989), elected Emmanuelis Zingeris, a member of the Council of Sąjūdis, as Chair.\(^{204}\)

Polish journalists founded the ‘Social and Cultural Society of Poles in Lithuania’ (SSKPL) (5 May 1988), and elected Jan Sienkiewicz, a journalist with Czerwony sztandar, as its Chair.\(^{205}\) He observed that ‘we used the position [of perestroika] to found our own organization...to formulate our own problems, and our own solutions.’\(^{206}\) Ryszard Maciejkianiec, also a founding member, and a local party worker in the raions of Vilnius and Śalčininkai, stated that ‘it was the first time we could say whatever we liked and really thought in our minds. Since then we have lived only with the problems of the Polish minority and decisions relating to Lithuanian Poles.’\(^{207}\) This group contested the elections of 1990 as the Union of Poles

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\(^{199}\) Prunskienė was then the Deputy Director of the Agricultural Economics Scientific Research Institute.


\(^{201}\) Ibid; Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.57

\(^{202}\) Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.109.

\(^{203}\) Ibid. p.108.


\(^{205}\) Ibid. p.171.

\(^{206}\) Interview with Jan Sienkiewicz, Vilnius, 12 May 1997.

\(^{207}\) Interview with Ryszard Maciejkianiec Vilnius, 8 May 1997.

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(ZPL) (with Sienkiewicz as Chair) to protect and further the rights of ethnic Poles in Lithuania.

The Russian Cultural Centre (RCC) was formed in October 1988 and allied itself with Sajūdis in order to develop Russian identity. Tatyana Michniova, a co-founder, explained that, 'in Soviet times...there was no common culture of Russians inside Lithuania. Perestroika gave Russians the chance to find their own place here [in Lithuania] and develop their culture.'

Professor Pavel Lavrinech, a co-founder, noted that the Russian intelligentsia established the RCC and joined Sajūdis because, 'whilst having a lot of different opinions, they realized that they had not been given a Russian culture, but a Soviet one.' The RCC did not become politically organized, and unlike the ZPL, remained a small organization.

Edinstvo was founded in opposition to Sajūdis as the Socialist Movement for Reconstruction (4 November 1988). It was the Lithuanian variant of the pan-Soviet movement of Interfronts (International fronts) which had the objective of perpetuating and defining Russian identity, and that of all ethnic groups, within the framework of a broader Soviet identity and territorial Union. The founding Congress of Edinstvo took place in Vilnius on 13-14 May 1989, and supported 'the idea of the Vilnius Polish community to establish national-territorial autonomy.' Many delegates to the Congress objected to the undemocratic means by which Valerii Ivanov, the leader of the 'ultra revolutionary flank' of the city of Vilnius Council and his supporters, were trying to exert control upon events. Twenty-four leading members, amongst them some of the original founders, disassociated themselves from the movement. As a result, another organization was formed, the Socialist Federation of Workers of Lithuania, which claimed to support parliamentary methods of political struggles. A statement issued by the RCC condemned Edinstvo, and suggested that the way forward was to pursue a 'dialogue of mutual respect' so that 'it will be possible by common efforts to achieve

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208 Interview with Tatyana Michniova, Vilnius, 6 May 1997.
209 Interview with Professor Pavel Lavrinech, Vilnius, 13 March 1997.
equality for all citizens in Lithuania.\textsuperscript{215} Edinstvo had little support in the elections of 1990, and by 1991 had ceased to exist.

Attached to the Sąjūdis Coordinating Council of the city of Vilnius was a Commission of National Minorities chaired by Vladimiras Gražulis. He stated that throughout 1988 ethnic associations started to emerge, and ‘after several consultations with the national minorities it was agreed to establish a Lithuanian Inter-National Coordinating Association (LICA) in November 1988.’\textsuperscript{216} ‘Lithuanians, Russians, Poles, Jews (two organizations), Tartars, Belorussians, Estonians, Armenians and Ukrainians’ were listed amongst its affiliates.\textsuperscript{217} Gražulis stated that ‘the main aim was to get the situation controlled, and to show Moscow that here in Lithuania the situation was different from what Moscow would like to see [interethnic conflict].’ He recalled that there were discussions inside the Association whether to support Sąjūdis informally or formally, and therefore he ‘refrained from being officially declared as Chair as it might damage unity and induce a split.’\textsuperscript{218}

Gražulis added that there was unanimous agreement that the minorities should seek cultural autonomy, ‘but that Lithuania was indivisible.’ He pointed out that the ZPL sometimes participated in activities with the Association, and became divided about the decision of two of its members (Czesław Okrągłak and M. Czobot) to stand for election in 1990 as part of Sąjūdis. He added that Poles also joined the Association of Deportees and Political Prisoners (as many had been deported to Siberia).\textsuperscript{219} All the associations of smaller ethnic groups within Lithuania were supportive of Lithuanian independence, and protested in Atgimimas against a meeting organized by Edinstvo (12 February 1989) which had sought to reverse the decree making Lithuanian de facto the official language of the Republic. Under the heading, ‘Great Russian Chauvinism’, the Inter-National Coordinating Association of Lithuania stated that, ‘the leaders of Edinstvo do not care about any single national culture or the nurturing of history’, and supported the implementation of Lithuanian as the state language.\textsuperscript{220} Gražulis left his post after 1990, but pointed out that the minorities were then represented by the

\textsuperscript{216} Interview with Vladimiras Gražulis, Vilnius, 17 April 1997.
\textsuperscript{217} ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.172. The Kronika gives the founding date of the Association as 17 December 1988.
\textsuperscript{218} Interview with Gražulis.
\textsuperscript{219} Ibid.
Department of Nationalities, described as ‘the first ministerial-level organization of its kind in the former Soviet Union.’ 221

The success of Sąjūdis in challenging the ideological monopoly of the CPL led to declarations in the first half of 1989 of the restoration of political parties based on the inter-war Republic. These included, ‘the Christian Democratic and Social Democratic parties’ and ‘the Tautininkai (Nationalist) Union.’ New parties included the Democratic Party, the Green Party, the Liberal Union, and the Party of Humanism and Progress. 222 The participants at the meetings between Sąjūdis and the CPL in January and February 1990 (to discuss independence) were listed as Sąjūdis, Christian Democrats, the Union of Lithuanian Exiles, the CPL, the Social Democrats, the Democrats and the Union of Lithuanian Workers. 223

All political groups were led by ethnic Lithuanians (with the exception of the ZPL and Edinstvo), but the results of elections were not necessarily determined by ethnicity. Nikolai Medvedev, for example, an ethnic Russian and the Sąjūdis candidate in Kaunas for the elections to the USSR Congress (1989), received more than sixty percent of the vote. 224 Beriozovas stated that he had received ‘about 80 percent’ of the vote in his constituency (March 1989). 225 Iakov Kanovich, a Jewish writer, was elected at the second-round of voting (April 1989) in a district of Vilnius. 226

After March 1990, the Supreme Council became the centre of Sąjūdis’ activities, and Landsbergis had to make the transition from being a leader in civil society to a political leader per se. Linz and Stepan note the danger of setting up a false contradiction between civil society and political society, for example, when ‘civil society leaders view with moral antipathy “internal conflict” and “division” within the democratic forces.’ 227 Sąjūdis

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223 ‘...1990 m. sausio 31 d. protokolas’.
224 ‘TSRS Liaudies deputatų rinkimų lietuvoje 1989 metų kovo 26 dieną rezultatai’, Tiesa, 29 March 1989, pp.1,4 (1); See Chapter Two for a description of Kaunas as ‘the pure home of the race’ in the historical memory of Lithuanians.
227 Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, pp. 7-10.
problems in adjusting to political difference in the period 1990-1992 reflected this perspective. Vaitiekūnas observed,

> how naive and poisonous it is to declare that if deputies (or factions) voted in some specific way regarding some practical issue, that they are the enemies of Lithuania! There are no enemies among Lithuanian citizens! There are different people and various interests. But there is a frightening majority of people in Lithuania who cannot believe that people are different, and that everybody has to have the same rights as they do.\(^{228}\)

By the elections of October 1992, the CPL had reorganized itself into the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) (December 1990). Henderson and Robinson note that the early secession of the CPL from the CPSU (December 1989) gave it ‘solid social support’, and that it ‘began to act as an independent party.’ Lithuania therefore had both ‘a strong left’ and ‘a strong right-wing party’ (although this was not apparent of Sąjūdis in 1992).\(^{229}\) The election results of October 1992 showed that ethnicity was not ‘a primary determinant of party identification’ - the ZPL ‘shared the Polish vote with the LDDP [whilst] peasants and Russians [identified] most closely with the LDDP.’ The communist successor-party did not use its position ‘to retreat from democratization’ or ‘contestation for political power.’\(^{230}\)

### Elections

In the literature on transitions, the defining moment between liberalization and democratization is often distinguished by the onset of democratic elections. Karen Dawisha notes that, ‘democratization is said to begin when the first set of free and fair elections for national-level office takes place.’\(^{231}\) Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter refer to democratization as overcoming ‘the conditions that restrict party competition and electoral choice’ and ensuring fair methods of voting. Restrictive practices include ‘banning certain political parties or ideological currents, fixing prohibitively high thresholds for their formation, restricting admissible candidacies, rigging constituency boundaries and

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\(^{229}\) Henderson and Robinson, Post-Communist Politics, p.209.


overrepresenting particular districts and interests, and/or limiting the means of party finance.\textsuperscript{232}

In Lithuania between 1988-1992 four sets of elections took place which included those to the XIX Party Conference in June 1988, the all-Union elections to the Congress of People’s Deputies (CPD) in March 1989, the republican elections of February 1990, and the elections of October 1992. The literature on democratization often fails to note the importance of elections which fall within the boundaries of liberalization (such as those to the XIX Party Conference), but which generated much discussion about democracy. Henderson notes that the Conference represented a ‘real leap forward’ as ‘the Balts took advantage of the opportunities for political debate that the Conference afforded to establish popular fronts.\textsuperscript{233} The Conference acted as a catalyst for precipitating the notion of accountability into politics. Martinkus pointed out that,

\begin{quote}
...in that period when the Conference was in preparation, when it was in progress and after the Conference it was discussed, and its decisions taken into consideration for further action, and everything then appeared to be far more significant...At least, I myself did not call it then political kitsch...Everything: every liberated utterance, every step and every new approach seemed significant.\textsuperscript{234}
\end{quote}

The basis of discussions in the meeting on 17 June (between Sąjūdis and Šepetys) had been the ‘urgent problems of the XIX Party Conference’ which included those ‘of the development of democracy and publicity, of the broadening of socialism, cooperation with government organs, deployment of manpower, the economic situation, improvement of inter-minority relations, the restoration of historical and cultural memory (heritage), the reform of the people’s education, of bureaucracy...and other questions.\textsuperscript{235} Sąjūdis’ proposals for the XIX Party Conference had been discussed at the meeting on 23 June with the CPL CC Bureau and the delegates to the Conference, and ‘were included into the programme of the delegates.’\textsuperscript{236}

\textsuperscript{233} Henderson and Robinson, Post-Communist Politics, p.55.
\textsuperscript{234} Interview with Martinkus.
\textsuperscript{235} ‘Susitikimas su L.Šepetičiu’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.3, 28 June 1988, pp.1-3 (2).
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As much as the Conference itself, it was the CPL’s attempt to circumvent public participation in the elections to the Conference (bypassing the recommendations of Moscow) which generated debate. The CPL had met secretly (28 May 1988) and announced the list of delegates whilst the Lithuanian press was still receiving nominations for consideration. Martinkus emerged as the sole spokesperson for the creative intelligentsia, and altogether only three delegates were elected ‘out of a large army’. One observer’s comment that the delegates were ‘selected, not elected’, became a reference point for several months. He noted, ‘...my opinion was not needed, as well as the opinions of thousands of communists in Lithuania. Who will go to Moscow was decided without us...We are used to the fact that everything is determined by the all-mighty people at the top...The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPL elected the delegates to the Conference. What do we know about this XII Plenum?'

At a public meeting of Sąjūdis (19 June), many speakers referred to the manner of their undemocratic election, and ‘a suggestion was made to call them ”the appointed to the Conference”’. A member of the Initiative Group proposed having ‘a meeting of the public with the delegates of the XIX Party Conference’. Arvydas Juozaitis (a member of the Initiative Group) publicly spoke about the impact of the Estonian People’s Front which had ‘embraced the whole nation’ - thousands, for example, had attended ‘the farewell meeting of delegates to the XIX Party Conference.’ Two other speakers mentioned that in the meeting with Šepetys (17 June) he had promised a similar meeting, but cautioned that ‘promises are not kept and information is blocked’.

The mass rally convened by Sąjūdis on 24 June to meet with the delegates showed that the nationalist movement was challenging the closed character of state institutions. During the rally, Landsbergis stated that, ‘if our delegates on their return from Moscow will say that they,

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238 Ibid.; Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.57.
239 Vytautas Žemaitis, ‘Po rinkimu’, Literatūra ir menas, 11 June 1988, p.3.
241 ‘Informacinis Pranešimas’, Sąjūdžio žinios, No.3, 28 June 1988, pp.1,3 (1). These comments were made at the first public demonstration organized by Sąjūdis on 21 June. See Chapter 3 for more details.
242 Ibid. p.3.
together with the rest of the delegates, passed good decisions for the people and for Lithuania, then we will say that they were our delegates.\textsuperscript{243} He noted that,

\ldots the republic’s government feels it has made a mistake, and I hope it is a bit ashamed. Maybe we have a certain guarantee that this election will be the last false election in Lithuania.\textsuperscript{244}

The mass meeting organized by Sąjūdis on 9 July to meet with the delegates who had represented Lithuania at the Conference pursued the notion of accountability in politics. On returning from the Conference, the delegates and Songaila had initially met up with a few select members ‘of the society of town and party and economic organizations of the capital’ (8 July).\textsuperscript{245} This was contrasted to the mass crowd attending the rally the next day ‘for an unofficial accountability session with Party leaders’.\textsuperscript{246} Ozolas told the meeting that,

we have to reorganize our political system according to the principles of the XIX Party Conference: to elect people who would be willing to express our will in the Soviets, to learn to vote against candidates who do not have the confidence of the people, to do away with the administrative Party style...\textsuperscript{247}

The recommendations of the cultural unions to the XIX Party Conference (28 May 1988) followed Estonia’s proposals, and urged for greater democratic practice. This included ‘the introduction of a multicandidate system of elections’, ‘the realization of the accountability of deputies to their electorate’, and for a law to define the ‘mutual obligations and rights between the governing of a republic and the whole state’.\textsuperscript{248} When nationalists mobilized against the proposed amendments to the Constitution of the USSR and the draft of the new electoral law (published by Moscow on 22 October), they were acting to defend the republic from a new distribution of powers which they anticipated would reduce the level of representation in the republics.

Gorbachev had first proposed constitutional changes at the XIX Party Conference (28 June 1988) when he suggested reorganizing the USSR Supreme Soviet into a new CPD of 2,250 members. His proposal to insert into the Congress 750 deputies chosen from public

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Lietuvos persitvarkymo Sąjūdžio mitingas...} ‘Lietuvos persitvarkymo Sąjūdžio mitingas...', Landsbergis, Atgavė viltį, pp.7-10.
\bibitem{Ibid.} Ibid.
\bibitem{Lithuanian Way 1} Lithuanian Way 1, p.24.
\end{thebibliography}
organisations on a federal basis was seen as an attempt to de-link territory from electoral rights, and in addition, the policy was expected to reduce 'the proportion of non-Russians among the deputies'. The Congress was to act as an electoral college for the more powerful Supreme Soviet of 400-450 deputies which would retain its original format of a Council of the Union and Council of the Nationalities. Gorbachev also proposed reducing the proportional representation of each union republic in the Council of Nationalities from 7.1% to 3.3% which was seen as another incursion into the ‘theoretical’ electoral rights of the republics.  

The very first session of the Sąjūdis Seimas (13 November) described the proposed amendments ‘as being undemocratic and contrary to the spirit of the 19th Conference of the CPSU’. The cultural unions had asked the Conference that the change in composition to the Council of Nationalities be ‘on a parity basis (by electing an equal number of representatives from each republic to it...)’. In a massive demonstration of public support for Sąjūdis, 1,800,000 signatures were appended to a petition to protest against the proposed changes which represented 'about two thirds of the voting population of Lithuania'. One signatory to the petition was Eduardas Eismuntas, Chair of the Lithuanian KGB, whilst the conference of the party organization of Lenin raion in Vilnius (which comprised 11 percent of all Lithuanian party members) passed a resolution which supported Sąjūdis’ objections.  

Hence nationalists responded to an anticipated attempt by Moscow to devolve more power to the centre by organizing what ‘was really a popular referendum on independence from Moscow.’

The above example shows that by the end of 1988, and preceding the elections of March 1989, Lithuanians were already prepared to defend the republic from electoral mechanisms
aimed at reducing the republic’s representation. In their comparison of ‘electoral sequences’ between the Soviet Union and Spain, Linz and Stepan conclude that in democratizing states which have a ‘stateness’ problem, it is advisable to hold the first elections at the all-union level because, as in Spain, the process of participating in a supra-national general election will reconstitute ‘stateness on even firmer grounds.’ In Spain, these statewide elections correlated to the concept of ‘founding elections’ upon which ‘much depends’ for a process of successful democratization. The literature stresses the need to balance out the divisions between left and right (by intervention if need be) to ensure that both sides will benefit from the electoral process from the very beginning.

Linz and Stepan point out that if the Soviet Union had firstly ‘submitted itself to an all-union election’ then this would have founded political identities which, similar to Spain, would have become, ‘more multiple, cross-cutting, inclusive, and supportive of participation in a reconstituted… democratic state.’ They assert that the decision to hold the ‘founding elections’ at the regional level in 1990 contributed to the ‘parade of sovereignties’, the shift into ethnic nationalism, and the ‘war of laws’. However, empirical evidence shows that their argument is not sustainable in the Lithuanian case, because by 1988 the nationalist movement would not countenance any move other than devolving electoral representation to the republics, and away from Moscow.

The majority of Lithuanian politicians at the USSR Congress in 1989 already exhibited an intense lack of identification with the Soviet state (despite its all-union configuration). The elections enabled representatives of Sąjūdis to meet with Anatolii Luk’yanov (6 April), the first Deputy Chair of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, where they discussed issues such as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (prompted by the proposals of a commission headed by Iakovlev to publish Soviet foreign policy documents 1939-1940), and the relationship between Sąjūdis and the Party. According to Landsbergis, ‘the Sąjūdis leadership controlled the behaviour and political line of the Lithuanian group’ at the Congress and ‘we

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255 Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, p.382.
256 Ibid.; On ‘founding elections’ see Chapter One, and O’Donnell and Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, pp.61-64.
257 Ibid.
258 Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, pp. 382-385.
259 Ibid. p.385.
260 Senn, Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania, pp.57-58.
even called ourselves the delegation of Lithuania’ and ‘established our national flag [in the hall].’ He added that ‘we introduced drafts of laws and other statements which had been rejected or even not put on the agenda by Luk’yanov, the real manager of details, and we kept the disposition of the delegation of Lithuania fighting for full sovereign rights.’

At the Congress, the delegates sat according to regional or republican groupings, and the Baltic deputies were successful in obtaining the right for three speakers of each non-Russian Union republican group to participate in debates (to offset the dominance of the RSFSR). The decision to allow speakers to be chosen by the Republican group itself enabled the majority (in Lithuania, Sąjūdis) to have access to the floor. The Baltic Deputies were described as, ‘the most active and best prepared...seeking at every opportunity to establish and defend the sovereignty of their republics...’ Sąjūdis walked out of a session when it objected to the creation of a constitutional committee that would be able to decide on the compatibility of laws between the republics and the Centre, and thus could revoke the sovereignty declaration of 18 May. The resulting deferment of the committee to another session (to consider its legal basis to act in greater detail) demonstrated to the Lithuanians that opposition was worthwhile.

Although Linz and Stepan consider that the elections to the CPD (March 1989) were competitive at the all-union level, they reject them as ‘founding elections’ because up until the repeal of article 6 there was no possibility of developing a multiparty system, ‘so democratic political society in the real sense could not develop.’ Nonetheless, throughout 1989, without recourse to a party system, Lithuanian nationalists prepared for independence by passing legislation normally equated with the onset of democratization. Landsbergis pointed out that ‘we prepared the draft of the citizenship law and it was then made in cooperation with groups of committees in the Council of the Supreme Soviet. This law gave the same political rights to all inhabitants residing on the territory of Lithuania

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261 Interview with Landsbergis.
263 Ibid.
264 Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.149.
266 Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, p.381.
267 Interview with Landsbergis.
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regardless of their ethnic background. The repeal of clause 6 in December 1989 gave recognition to a party system that was already in the process of developing.

Alongside this, Sąjūdis attempted to debar representatives of Moscow from voting in elections by ‘eliminating servicemen’ from eligibility in the Republic (November 1989). Sąjūdis circulated a petition to this effect, and approximately ‘two hundred thousand signatures’ were collected by the end of November. Thus Lithuanians had already utilized the elections to the all-union institutions of the Congress to prepare for independence.

Linz and Stepan criticize the elections of 1989 for undemocratic practice - a quota of 750 seats were reserved for communists, and the nomination procedure was often controlled by the local Communist Party. In Lithuania, by 23 February 1989, Sąjūdis candidates were nominated in all of the 42 electoral districts, and were registered in all of them bar one. Judged by the standards of a ‘founding election’, the decision to withdraw Sąjūdis candidates from the districts where Brazauskas and Beriozovas were standing, showed that Sąjūdis was willing to concede seats to the ‘left’ to ensure that both would benefit from the electoral procedure. Sąjūdis’ share of delegates to the Congress was also increased by the election of its representatives from the quota of sixteen seats in Lithuania reserved for ‘societal’ organizations. In ‘the two “Polish” electoral regions’ two Poles were elected ‘for the first time’ from the start of the new democratic process.

The election campaign was unfavourable to Sąjūdis because the Lithuanian Freedom League, the Helsinki Group, and the Christian Democratic Party advised the public not to participate in elections that were being organized by an occupying power. Many Sąjūdis candidates stopped campaigning on the Wednesday before the elections (26 March was Easter Sunday).

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269 Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, pp.381-382.
to respect Holy Week. However, '82.5% of those entitled to vote exercised their right', and 36 out of 42 seats went to Sąjūdis. These elections constituted the 'founding' ones for Lithuania, because they instituted the processes of Lithuanian nationalism and democratization which after 1989 could only have been stopped by electoral choice or force.

O'Donnell and Schmitter describe founding elections as 'moments of great drama' when 'turnout is very high'. The elections of 1990 were described as 'the most massive in the history of the Lithuanian parliament...2,581,000 had the right to vote; 1,851,000 voted, which is 71.72% of all the electorate.' The turnout was therefore lower than for the elections of 1989. Linz and Stepan state that the late repeal of article 6 (March 1990) meant that there was no serious alternative to 'local nationalism' in the elections of 1990 throughout the whole of the Soviet Union. However, the elections of 1990 were fairly contested, and the nationalist majority was the outcome of a democratic procedure (article 6 was abolished in Lithuania in December 1989).

Sąjūdis again gave special concessions to the CPL, as Krickus notes, 'the moderates in Sąjūdis realized that Brazauskas and the independent communists...continued to enjoy popular support and dominated the country's ministries and economic enterprises, so they did not run a viable candidate against him in the parliamentary election. There was also a 'gentleman's agreement' whereby leading representatives of both Sąjūdis and the CPL refrained from competing against each other in the same electoral districts. Lieven states that this decision was later regretted by the communists who lost seats to unpopular right-wingers, but there was no coercion behind the agreement not to compete.

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274 Ibid.
275 'Kronika i Informacje', p.174.
276 See Archie Brown's paper, 'The Russian Transition in Comparative Perspective', presented at the Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association of the UK, University of Glasgow, 10-12 April 1996, which refers to the elections of 1989 as constituting a 'crucial breakthrough'. Cited with permission.
277 O'Donnell and Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, p.62.
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When Sąjūdis and the CPL agreed upon the idea of an Interim Council for Political Consultation in Lithuania (December 1989), ‘composed of representatives from Lithuania’s political parties’, its goal was ‘the characterization of positions of every Lithuanian political party, coordination, consultation and consolidation in case of crisis.’ During the inaugural meeting of the Consultation Council (31 January 1990), Landsbergis stated that, ‘the most important thing now is the situation of Lithuania in the international context, and Lithuania’s internal problems in the context of the Soviet Union (the danger of destabilization). One needs to avoid extremes in the elections. We can regulate that. Opponents should not be slandered.’ Nonetheless, at the pre-election conference of Sąjūdis (3 February 1990), Landsbergis warned about the dangers of the communists reforming to ‘continue their negative activities’, based upon ‘toadyism and [a] spirit of subservience and compromise’.

As noted above, this line of thinking continued throughout the period 1990-1992. Lieven points out that ‘although Landsbergis surrendered power [in 1992] with very bad grace, continuing to make hints about Moscow’s influence and the threat to Lithuania’s independence, he promised “constructive opposition”. It was obvious he would not countenance a coup…’ Landsbergis helped to fulfil his own wish that the elections of May 1988 to the XIX Party Conference would be ‘the last false election in Lithuania.’

Protection of Minorities

Kymlicka observes that, ‘In Eastern Europe…attempts to create liberal democratic institutions are being undermined by violent nationalist conflicts.’ He notes that, ‘minorities and majorities increasingly clash over such issues as language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, education curriculum, land claims, immigration and naturalization policy, even national symbols…’ He argues that cultural minorities have become vulnerable to majoritarian rule, and that it is necessary ‘to supplement traditional human

283 ‘Lietuvos politinių jėgų atstovų pasitarimo, įvykusio 1990 m. sausio 31 d. protokolas’. In my possession.
285 Ibid. p.270.
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rights principles with a theory of minority rights. As Resler notes, ‘the term “minority rights”...refers to the rights of minority peoples who want to further their groups’ interests and require special protection or preferential treatment to do so. In Lithuania, the inclusive Citizenship Law that was passed on 3 November 1989, without any other additions, would have included minorities within the framework of civil and political rights accorded to all citizens residing in Lithuania. The right to practise freedom of association, religion, speech, mobility and political organization has formed the basis of liberal theory in protecting group difference and accommodating cultural differentiation. Citizenship was linked to the constitutional changes which were taking place throughout the period 1988-1992, although by the end of 1989, adjustments to the Constitution had already set in place basic civil and political rights associated with liberal democracies.

One aspect of constitutional change was the Law on Language (19 November 1988) which made Lithuanian de facto the official language of the state, and as Horowitz suggests, symbolized ‘the priority of the group speaking the official language’. Lithuania was the first of the Baltic States to legislate on language, and ‘in its initial form [the law] required that all state employees must acquire a rudimentary knowledge of Lithuanian within two years. Language became a contested issue.

One Russian author, for example, observed that the Law was a means to ‘Lithuanianise the population of the Republic’, and criticized both Sąjūdis and the CPL for its implementation.

'Democracy is not the rule of the majority, but equality before the law for everyone.' There were about ‘80 thousand participants’ at the rally organized by Edinstvo (12 February 1989) to protest against the use of Lithuanian as the official state language. During the meeting, an assistant to the Chair of the Presidium of the LSS told the demonstrators that ‘an edited and legally approved resolution [would] be accepted by the government of the Republic’ to

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287 Ibid. p.5.
amend the Language Law, and that ‘to those demands which seem justified, attention [would] be paid’. 294

Sąjūdis had acknowledged its role as the movement of the dominant ethnic group by inserting into the programme of its Congress (October 1988) that, ‘...Sąjūdis aspires to ensure for the national minorities of Lithuania the right to give open expression to their national consciousness and encourages and supports their cultures and also literature in their own languages.’ 295 There was simultaneous translation of the Congress into both Russian and English, 296 and Landsbergis appealed on television shortly afterwards ‘for cordial and understanding relations between the nationalities of Lithuania’. 297 Landsbergis pointed out that, ‘we had support for Sąjūdis and for independence from such an influential person as Archbishop Khrisostom of the Orthodox Church. He participated in the Sąjūdis Congresses [to which] he was invited.’ 298 After the violence of January 1991, Landsbergis utilized television to make ‘a special appeal to the Russians in Lithuania [in the Russian language] which had a certain calming effect.’ 299 The text of his message (conveyed in the Russian language newspaper Soglasie) was as follows, ‘Do not have the fear of hatred. The Russian people and the people of other nations who feel themselves the citizens of free Lithuania. I want to talk to you.’ 300

Demands to empower the interests of Lithuanians as a group - ‘whose norms and practices [were being] aligned with those of the state’ 301 - had often included references to minority rights within Lithuania. As noted in Chapter 3, the resolution of the meeting of the Union of Writers (4 April 1988), had asked for the creation of schools in Lithuania ‘in which children of...national minorities would be taught in their native language.’ It also resolved to redress the current ruling that all dissertations be written in Russian by asking ‘the Academy of Sciences of the LSSR and the Ministry of Education to address the relevant institutions

295 ‘Kronika i Informacije’, p.172.
297 Senn, Lithuania Awakening, p.242.
298 Interview with Landsbergis.
300 ibid. p106
concerning the presentation of dissertations in [each] native language’. In practice, entrance requirements for Lithuanian universities may be taken in Lithuanian, Polish or Russian. Martinkus commented on the plans made at the same meeting to publish a literary almanac in Russian and for the systematic publication of collective literary works in Polish.

He pointed out that in 1988 there were about 12-15 members in the Union of Writers who wrote in Russian, some of whom were Jewish, but no Polish writers. He stated that the Writers ‘never questioned the importance and the necessity of the Russian language’ and continued to publish Litva literaturnaya (‘Vil’nius’ after 1988), a Russian cultural magazine, despite proposals to stop publishing it. He added that ‘literary almanacs and poetry collections in Polish started to appear only after 1990. These publications are taken care of by the Polish authors who live and write in Vilnius and their number is growing.’ The proposal (made at the meeting on 4 April) to re-establish a Museum of Jewish Culture in Vilnius has been fulfilled.

The recommendations of the cultural unions to the XIX Party Conference (28 May 1988) asked for legislation to empower the Lithuanians as a group, ‘the renunciation of the dehumanizing trend in the people’s system of education, the protection and fostering of the language… the writing of an objective history of the republics’, but also referred to minority rights. The proposals included ‘supporting the tolerance and respect towards nations living in Lithuania, [and] the establishment of schools according to the needs of the population in all republics in which children of national minorities would be taught in their native tongue’.

The demands raised by ethnic Poles and Russians throughout 1989 concentrated upon language and education, and the inadequacies of the Law on National Minorities (enacted on 23 November 1989) which was at committee stage in the Supreme Soviet. The local CPL in Šalčininkai brought the issue of language to the fore when at an extraordinary meeting of the Council of People’s Deputies in Šalčininkai (6 September 1989), one deputy stated that the

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304 Interview with Martinkus.
305 Ibid.

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project of a Law on National Minorities stipulated only cultural, and not political autonomy, and that the period of two years allowed for learning Lithuanian was not long enough. He added, ‘central government ignored earlier local requests and the decisions of local councils.’ Another deputy, Anicet Brodawski, who was one of the two Poles elected to the USSR Congress, wanted guarantees for local people to be educated in their native tongue ‘from primary school level to University’. During this meeting, the deputies ‘proclaimed a Polish national-territorial region: and declared the equal rights of the Polish, Russian and Lithuanian languages.’ On 15 September, the Council of Vilnius raion also declared itself to be an autonomous district.

One observer noted that, ‘The raion [of Šalčininkai] comprises 60% Poles, 40% Lithuanians. We have lived together peacefully, however, people got organized when the Law on Language appeared. It is impossible to learn the language in two years. Therefore, we want to prolong the period of transition for using the Lithuanian language in office work until 2000.’ J. Oblaciński, the head of Šalčininkai subdivision of the ZPL, commented that Poles wanted their own University in order to have their own intelligentsia to help revive ‘our culture and national self-consciousness.’ S. Peszko, a member of the ZPL, stated that ‘the Law on Languages allows Poles to be educated in Polish only in Secondary School, and we are denied a higher education in the mother tongue.’ The complaints about higher education were similar to the one which had been directed towards Soviet central government by Sajūdis in 1988 which had objected to the ruling that dissertations at third degree level be written in Russian.

The Lithuanian government invalidated all declarations of autonomy, and decided upon the creation of a Committee on Nationality in the Council of Ministers (21 September 1989).

Soon after the Šalčininkai declaration, the Presidium of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, on 12 September 1989, met with local and party leaders of the Polish-inhabited raions and

309 'Kronika i Informacje', p.175.
310 Ibid.
311 A. Svirbutavičiūtė, Komiaunimo tiesa, 26 October 1989.
312 Ibid.
314 See Chapter 3 on Nationalism.
315 'Kronika i Informacje', p.175.

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representatives of the Polish community. As a sign of raprochement, it was acknowledged by participants from both sides that ‘problems [the Poles’ complaints about inferior medical care, high rates of infant mortality and education and language issues] should be solved in a democratic manner.

The enactment of the Law on Ethnic Minorities (23 November 1989) showed that the Lithuanian government was prepared to go beyond procedural democracy by guaranteeing minorities the right ‘to get support from the state for the development of their culture and education’, and ‘to have mass media in one’s native language’. However, the Law did not respond to complaints about higher education, the time-scale for learning Lithuanian, or ‘the right to use the Polish language in governmental offices in areas where Poles predominate. Brodawski stated that the law had not met the Polish claim for ‘territorial self-government’. Okińczyc, who was a founding member and Vice-President of the ZPL, and who was elected to the Supreme Council in 1990 under the Sąjūdis banner, ‘praised’ the proposals outlined by the Law on Ethnic Minorities, but said that ‘it should have been adopted sooner.

At the meeting between Sąjūdis and the CPL (5 February 1990), the language issue was raised by K.Uoka (Union of Lithuanian Workers). He proposed extending the deadline for learning the Lithuanian language ‘in some cases’, and pointed out that ‘it is needed to do that now already in the town of Sniečkus’. The proposal was unopposed. The declaration attached to the meeting of 5 February included a recommendation that, ‘a change or supplement shall be introduced in the law about the Lithuanian language...which would allow to prolong the deadline for learning the Lithuanian language in some places in Lithuania where there are objective causes for that. The deadline should be prolonged for the settlements of Sniečkus by the decision of the session as it is recommended by the

317 Ibid. p. 45.
320 Ibid.
322 ‘...1990 m. vasario 5 d. Vilniuje,…Protokolas’, op. cit. fn 169.
commission of the Lithuanian SSR Supreme Soviet for the examination of issues of the settlements of Sniečkus.  

After the elections of 1990, a Commission on Eastern Lithuania was established to look at 'the social and economic problems of the region' (where Poles comprised a majority).

Landsbergis pointed out that the Commission was not concerned with Poles exclusively, but 'for the solution of social and all problems of the region. Because from some quarters we had a problem for the Lithuanian minority which did not feel at ease among the Polish or Slavic majority.' The local elections of March 1990 returned a majority of CPL (CPSU) deputies to the Polish areas, for example, in Šalčininkai, 40 deputies out of 42 were from the CPL (CPSU) which included 32 Poles, 4 Lithuanians, 3 Russians and 1 Belorussian. Deputies to the local councils continued with demands for autonomy throughout 1990.

The Lithuanian Parliament acted on a recommendation from the Commission on the Affairs of Eastern Lithuania (29 November 1990) to extend the date 'for the mastery of the Lithuanian language' for bureaucrats 'where non-Lithuanian speakers represented a majority' from 29 January 1991 to 1 January 1995. It did not amend the Law on Ethnic Minorities until 29 January 1991 after the ZPL, the Polish deputies in the Seimas, and the Russian community within Lithuania expressed their support for an independent Lithuanian state during the crisis of 13 January 1991 (when Soviet troops attacked the television tower).

The ZPL and the Polish fraction in the Supreme Council (formed in October 1990) publicly supported an independent and democratic Lithuania after Moscow’s violence in January. The Address of the ZPL:

It is acknowledged that inter-ethnic relations are not the best ones in Lithuania, but the ZPL stands for an independent and democratic Lithuania where international law is respected. The ZPL protests against any acts of coercion and vandalism in Lithuania. Every Pole has a moral and political duty to solidarize with Lithuanians during this hard period.

The Polish fraction in the Supreme Council:

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323 ‘Lietuvos laikinosios politinės konsultacinės tarybos Pareiškimas’, in my possession.
324 Interview with Landsbergis.
325 Kurier wileński, 27 March 1990.
Chapter 4

In such hard times for Fatherland Lithuania, Poles are asked to stay calm, to forget what divides, and to seek what unites all, that is a general will for freedom, democracy and independence.\textsuperscript{329}

The amendments to the Law on Ethnic Minorities allowed, ‘state employees in areas with non-Lithuanian majorities (South-east Lithuania which is predominantly inhabited by Poles) to use the language of national minorities in addition to the state language. It allowed street signs to be written in both languages.\textsuperscript{330} The amended Law also included a provision to be educated in one’s native language, and for ‘the right to receive higher education in the mother tongue, including the right to set up institutions of higher education from their own funds and to benefit from state help in the development of their [educational and cultural institutions].’\textsuperscript{331}

The Lithuanian government gave special concessions to citizens of Russia within Lithuania in order to gain support for independence from the newly emerging RSFSR which wanted ‘to secure the rights of Russians in the region.’\textsuperscript{332} Vladimir Iarmolenko, an ethnic Russian who joined \textit{Saţi\c{d}is} in 1988, arranged meetings on several occasions between Landsbergis and El’tsin, because each were prepared to cooperate to gain independence for their respective states. He stated that, ‘the feeling between Landsbergis and El’tsin became closer, what we needed, they needed.’\textsuperscript{333} In his opinion, amendments to the acquisition of Lithuanian Citizenship of July 1991 were ‘part of the homework for negotiating with El’ltsin. There were many difficult discussions about it in the Supreme Council and the Working Group.’\textsuperscript{334}

Lithuania signed a treaty with the RSFSR (July 1991) which recognized the sovereignty of both states, and facilitated citizenship for recent immigrants from the RSFSR by removing language and residency requirements (as noted in Chapter 3).\textsuperscript{335} It was reported that ‘extensive negotiations’ had been necessary to reach a compromise on the issue of citizenship.\textsuperscript{336} Article 1 of the Treaty recognized the ‘territorial continuity and inviolability of...

\textsuperscript{327} Kolstoe, Russians, pp.140-141.
\textsuperscript{328} Kurier wileński, 16 January 1991.
\textsuperscript{329} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{330} Popovski, ‘Citizenship in Lithuania’, pp.102-117.
\textsuperscript{332} Kolstoe, Russians, p.115.
\textsuperscript{333} Interview with Vladimir Iarmolenko, Vilnius, 2 May 1997.
\textsuperscript{334} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{336} Ibid. pp.19-21.
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borders' which amounted to Lithuania's acceptance that it had no claims on the territory of Kaliningrad Oblast. In nationalist ideology, the region was referred to as 'Lithuania Minor', a territory which formed an integral part of Lithuanian historical memory. The Lithuanian government replaced the Citizenship Law of November 1989 with a new one passed on 5 December 1991 after the collapse of communism. As noted in Chapter 3, the new law entitled Poles and post-war migrants to get automatic citizenship without taking a declaration of loyalty to the state.

From a very early stage in the process of liberalization, the Lithuanian government entered into negotiations about group rights at the instigation of the minorities. Lithuanian nationalism responded to language and educational demands made by minorities, but strengthened those rights only after the Russian community, the ZPL and the Polish deputies in the SS publicly declared their loyalty to the Lithuanian state in the crisis of January 1991 (other complaints relating to regional autonomy, political representation, land claims and gerrymandering are discussed in the next Chapter). The constitution of the Republic (adopted on 25 October 1992), 'stresses both the guaranteed rights of individuals, regardless of nationality as well as rights of national communities.'

Conclusion

Democratization in Lithuania was brought about by a relationship between reform processes in Moscow, and the response to those processes by the CPL and an emerging anti-Soviet opposition in Lithuania. Widening political participation depended upon democratization of the Party, and in Lithuania, 'reform communists were supported by the opposition forces from the very beginning and came to the top of the CPL easily in 1988...in 1989-1990 the CPL was able to transform itself into a representative parliamentary party' A 'crucial factor' was the ethnicization of the CPL which gave, 'a relatively high degree of legitimacy to the party on the domestic political stage compared to other Baltic countries, where the

337 Ibid. pp.19-21
340 Algis Krupa, 'The Postcommunist Transition and Institutionalization of Lithuania's Parties', in my possession.

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Communist Parties were perceived mostly as external and alien institutions. The Sąjūdis leadership worked with the CPL up until 1990 towards gaining independence, but after that there was a differentiation between communists and non-communists in the Supreme Council and government.

The provision of an inclusive Citizenship Law in Lithuania provided a framework for both nationalism and democratization within which minorities could struggle for their rights. The process of democratization was initiated after the elections of March 1989, and as far as it was possible the state responded to the elected Supreme Soviet by bringing about changes in areas to which it had access – language and education. The democratic criteria referred to above (independent media; a working constitution; parties, self-organizing groups and movements; elections) came to fruition in Lithuania at different stages in the process of liberalization and democratization, but following on from the elections of March 1989 (to the CPD), Lithuania was up and running as a democratizing state.

Conservatives in Moscow (together with their allies in Lithuania) tried and failed to mobilize minority nationalism against Lithuanian independence in January and August 1991. This demonstrated that in terms of the battle for allies and consciousness Moscow had failed which reflected the ethnic Lithuanian component of the process of transplacement in the period 1988-1991, and the strong ethnic Lithuanian identification with the state of the LSSR. After 1991, the democratically elected leadership in Lithuania was able to realize fully its aims, an independent and democratic Lithuania, symbolized by the transference of power to the former communists in the elections of October 1992.

\[341\] Ibid.
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Poles and Russians in Lithuania

In this Chapter I am going to look at the responses of the two major ethnic minority groups in Lithuania, Poles and Russians, to Lithuanian nationalism. The empirical evidence clearly shows that the historical memory of Poles led to a completely different relationship with Lithuanian nationalists than that of Russians. Whilst Lithuanians in the period of glasnost very much identified an external enemy (the CPSU) as having instigated the demise of Lithuanian culture, for Poles it was the Lithuanians who were the internal enemies in their bid to make Lithuanian culture the dominant one of the Republic. Poles were very concerned to defend their rights as an ethnic group. Russians were different in that their focus was on preserving the status quo and their citizenship of the Soviet Union, but without referring to their identity in terms of ethnicity. As the Soviet Union entered into crisis Russian identity weakened whilst Poles within the Union of Poles (ZPL) and the CPL (CPSU) became increasingly more mobilized, and made declarations of autonomy in the period 1988-1991 (as shown in Chapter One).

Poles emerged as a highly politicized group within Lithuania in 1988 determined to defend and promote their culture and ethnic rights. Some Poles looked to Moscow for support whilst others primarily sought to influence Lithuanian decision-makers in Vilnius. Russians were far less mobilized than the Poles, and their political activities were mainly based upon transcending nationalism in Lithuania as opposed to declaring their rights as an ethnic group. The identity of Russians as well as Ukrainians, Belorussians and probably some Jews was unusual because of their identification with an ideologically based non-ethnic identity (without a strong geographical base). This reflected the greater degree to which these ethnic groups had internalized the official Soviet ideology of Marxism-Leninism which posited that nationality would be superseded by a ‘multinational workers’ state directed from Moscow’, and had conferred upon them an identity linked to the ideological boundary of the Soviet Union.¹

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Russian identity derived features from the history of the Tsarist Empire and Soviet Union which led to the evolution of a strong cultural identity without the acquisition of a clear political focus. Imperial Russia was legitimated by loyalty to the Tsar, and not specifically to the Russian nation. Although non-Russians may have understood the emphasis on Russification as Russian nationalist assimilation (as did the Lithuanians) Russians themselves did not because Russian nationhood was not specifically enhanced by Tsarist policies. After the revolution, Soviet identity replaced the imperial one and the ethno-cultural dimension of ethnic Russian identity was not translated into an ethno-political one.\(^2\)

Linz and Stepan take the view that problems of what they call ‘stateness’ may arise when ‘there are profound differences about the territorial boundaries of the political community’s state and profound differences as to who has the right of citizenship in that state’.\(^3\) Although Lithuania adopted an inclusive Citizenship Law (November 1989) (which met Linz and Stepan’s requirement for avoiding problems of ‘stateness’), the Polish minority in Lithuania made claims to political autonomy throughout the period 1989-1991. Sometimes political autonomy was consistent with the territory of an independent Lithuania or was expressed as political recognition within the USSR. In contrast, Russians were more concerned to defend Soviet identity within the territorial boundaries of the USSR without recognition for Russians as an ethnic group.

As noted in Chapter 1, Poles were concentrated in the south-east of Lithuania, and were mainly a community of poor farmers whilst Russians were dispersed throughout the cities. The dynamics of the relative strength of the groups are brought out below in references to the consequences of identity for political organization and interaction in Lithuania. The ideologically based identity of Russians who ingested their own nationhood is contrasted to the emerging ethnic identity of Poles. Interethnic relations in Lithuania in the period 1988-1992 are then conceptualized against the theoreticians of nationalism (Anderson, Gellner, Hobsbawm, Smith) to see whether their account of national minorities is matched by empirical events in Lithuania.

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\(^2\) Information from Professor George Schöpflin.

Identity

Russian membership in the CPL as a proportion of population was higher than that of Lithuanians because of their stronger identification with Soviet ideology. January 1989 figures showed that out of a total of 209,510 full and candidate members, 35,983 (17.1%) were Russian, double their share in the population. In contrast, Poles were underrepresented in the CPL. Senn notes that ‘of the 1,038 delegates’ who participated in the vote to secede from the CPSU in December 1989, ‘81.3 percent were Lithuanians, 10.2 percent Russians, 2.6 percent Poles, 2 percent Belorussians, and 3.7 percent other nationalities’. Snyder has commented that ‘...Lithuanians who were themselves party members accuse Poles as a group of communist tendencies; even though a smaller portion of the Polish population joined the party, Poles did not join in order to preserve Lithuanian national life.’

The Poles expressed the fear that in a new, Lithuanian, state, the process of democratization would eventually stifle and exclude their right, as a group, to be different. Hence democracy would come to be expressed as a procedural process which neglected the need for substantial outcomes for minority rights. Jan Sienkiewicz, Chair of the ‘Social and Cultural Society of Poles in Lithuania’ (SSKPL), and later Chair of the Union of Poles (ZPL), stated that ‘whilst being part of the Lithuanian state, and part of the citizens of Lithuania, we have some peculiar features as an ethnic group which we want to preserve, and to enjoy all the rights and freedoms as in any other civilized state.’ This difference was based upon a feeling of ‘deep ties with Polish history, culture, religion, and customs.’ Jan Mincewicz, one of the founders of the SSKPL, and chief of the Vilnius district (and who became Chair of the Union of Poles in 1994) described the aim of this organization as being ‘the cultural rebirth of Polish society in Lithuania.’ He noted, ‘the major activities were social and cultural...we tried to revive and maintain Polish national identity in Lithuania.’

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4 Tiesa, 9 September 1989. Lithuanian membership accounted for 148,067 (70.7%)  
7 Interview with Jan Sienkiewicz, Vilnius, 12 May 1997.  
8 Ibid.  
9 Interview with Jan Mincewicz, Vilnius, 8 May 1997.
The longevity of the Poles’ attachment to their land was cited to defend and promote their aspirations. Zenon Bartowicz, an ethnic Pole living in Lithuania observed that, ‘This area is inhabited by Slavs - Tutejszy...Slavs have always lived in the Vilnius region. We are Baltic in our blood, but we speak the Slav language.’¹⁰ Lieven notes that ‘Tutejszy is one of those curious words which can be used to describe oneself, but which represents an insult if used, for example, by a Lithuanian.’¹¹ It implies that Poles have a regional and not a ‘national identity’ and therefore ‘could be transformed into Lithuanians.’¹² One author commented that, ‘Poles are not merely benighted “locals”. They have lived here for centuries and aspire to remain Poles. Whilst it is necessary to learn Lithuanian, the Poles have a right to retain their identity.’¹³ The same writer urged Lithuanians to understand that Poles did not want to reoccupy Vilnius. Sienkiewicz referred to this local attachment, ‘Local Poles distinguish themselves from Poles in Poland. Even in pre-war Lithuania [when the Vilnius region belonged to Poland].’¹⁴ Zygmunt Balcewicz, the editor of Czerwony sztandar, ‘the sociopolitical daily of RN [the Supreme Soviet] and the Lithuanian government’,¹⁵ indicated that Poles living east of the river Bug, ‘have their spiritual base not in Poland proper but in Wileńszczyzna [the name used by Poles to describe the area of the south-east] which possesses its own distinctive Polish culture.’¹⁶

Delegates to the First Congress of the ZPL (11-15 April 1989) made an ‘Address to the Lithuanian Nation’, and recalled the past to justify their ‘right’ to be acknowledged as an ethnic group:

Brother Lithuanians,

We, Poles, live beside you, and our parents and ancestors, side by side, worked and lived here. We have had our own language, culture, traditions and customs throughout

¹⁰ Interview with Zenon Bartowicz, Vilnius, 23 November 1996.
¹⁴ Interview with Sienkiewicz.
¹⁶ Kurier wileński, 3 January 1991.
the ages. We are Poles and like Lithuanians, intend to defend our ethnic identity and civic rights to the end.  

The Poles listed five 'truths' about themselves: We are Poles; Lithuania is our Fatherland, Poland is our Motherland; the land of our ancestors is our land; the language and faith of our grandfathers is the language and faith of their grandchildren; a Pole is a brother to a Pole and to all people. In October 1990, several Polish activists in Lithuania signed the 'Memorandum On the Situation of the Poles in Lithuania' (addressed to the President of Poland, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Council of Europe, and to many people in the Polish Sejm [parliament]), which pointed out that Wileńszczyzna had been an integral part of Poland before the Second World War, and that Vilnius and the Vilnius region had been populated by Poles since ancient times.

In contrast to Poles, ethnic Russians who were affiliated to the Russian Cultural Centre (RCC) (formed in October 1988), did not mention a myth of common descent or ancestry, or a shared history, but supported Sąjūdis as a means of developing Russian identity, and very much identified with the Lithuanian state. Pavel Lavrinech, the Director of the RCC, stated that, 'our big wish was to recreate a real Russian culture, and in 1988 this was a drastically new idea.'

Tatyana Michniowa, a founding member, stated that the RCC concerned itself with 'all questions relating to Russians in Lithuania, and supported Lithuanian independence. The main objective was to make it clear to Lithuanians that we were non-antagonistic.'

It seems likely that a much larger group of Russians than those who belonged to the RCC supported Edinstvo whose appeal was supra-ethnic, and emphasized the teachings of the Soviet state that nationalism was both a retroactive and harmful political ideology. The extent to which there was a greater Russian involvement in Edinstvo than other minority groups was suggested by the social and ethnic composition of the 590 deputies who attended the founding Congress of the Vilnius branch of Edinstvo (22 January 1989). This was given as: 59 percent Russians, 17 percent Poles, 10 percent Belorussians, 6 percent Ukrainians, 3 percent Lithuanians.

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17 Czerwony sztandar, 14 June 1989.
19 ‘Memorandum’, Zavetv Lenina, 12 October 1990; On 4 October, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania had asked the UN to send a special commission to investigate the minority question in Lithuania.
21 Interview with Tatyana Michniowa, Vilnius, 6 May 1997.
ans, and 2 percent Jews. Amongst them were 38 percent Workers, 37 percent Scientific-Technical Intelligentsia, 10 percent Lecturers in Higher Education, 1.8 percent Party and Soviet Officials, 0.7 percent Veterans, 3 percent Pensioners, and 1.5 percent Scientists. The statistics showed that 45 percent of those attending were Communist Party members.\textsuperscript{23} One social stratum not specifically mentioned is Soviet army officers, but who nonetheless were supporters of the organization.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Edinstvo}'s founding statement was printed in \textit{Tiesa} (11 November 1988) in which it recognized 'the leading role of the Communist Party', supported its policy of implementing perestroika, opposed 'chauvinism and nationalism', and considered it 'a duty of every citizen...to serve in the Soviet Army'. Its only policy proposal was that questions about the Lithuanian language and citizenship should be made by a 'democratically elected Supreme Soviet' consisting 'of different nationalities equally drawn from the deputies of all nations'.\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Edinstvo} emphasized those aspects of Soviet ideology which supported the interdependence and equality of national cultures, and opposed the adoption of Lithuanian as the sole official language of the Republic.\textsuperscript{26} The language issue was crucial for Russians for whom, 'being a Russian-speaker continues to form [and formed] the main substance of their identity.'\textsuperscript{27}

Under Soviet rule the Poles had increasingly used Russian as their second language as evidenced by the press runs of newspapers in Polish-dominated areas. In the raion of Vilnius, for example, populated by more than 60,000 Poles, the raion newspaper printed 3,500 editions in Polish, 6,000 in Russian and 1,700 in Lithuanian. In the raion of Trakai, where approximately 20,000 Poles resided, only 690 copies of the Polish edition of the local newspaper were printed.\textsuperscript{28} Another aspect of these raion newspapers was that they had a very strong local identity. The official Communist Party newspaper of the local committee and regional council of the raion of Šalčininkai, \textit{Zavety Lenina} ('Lenin's Precepts'), for example, reported on the formation of the SSKPL (5 May 1988), but between June-November 1988 reported either local

\textsuperscript{23} These statistics were given in \textit{Soglasie}, No. 2, 2 February 1989.  
\textsuperscript{25} 'Socialistinio judėjimo už persitvarkymą Lietuvoje "Vienybė", "Jedinstvo", "Jedność", Deklaracija', \textit{Tiesa}, 11 November 1988, p.3.  
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.  

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events in the raion or in Moscow such as the XIX Party Conference with some news from Poland. Reportage on political developments in the CPL CC was mainly factual, and the Congress of Sąjūdis in October was excluded.

The first time that Zavety Lenina reacted to political events occurring in the Lithuanian Government was when it printed the reaction of the local CPL to the Lithuanian Language Law, ‘that the Constitution should guarantee the equal rights of Polish and Russian Languages in all governmental institutions’. The newspaper continued to give local events an important focus, for example, it published the programmes of all the candidates from Šalčininkai who were contesting the elections to the USSR CPD (26 March 1989), and excluded the others. Throughout June 1989 it reported on political events in the CPD using as its only source the Soviet News Agency, TASS.

Nonetheless, Polish culture in Soviet Lithuania had been supported by ‘the only Polish-language publications in the USSR… Czerwony Sztandar [Red Banner]; the journal Kobieta Radziecka [Soviet Woman]; and Polish language editions of four raion newspapers.’ Poles increased their share of the media in the Polish language with the onset of glasnost. In August 1988, a half-hour television programme was transmitted in the Polish language in Vilnius, and in October 1989, a fortnightly information bulletin of the Union of Poles, Nasza gazeta, was published for the first time. A Polish bimonthly current affairs magazine called Znad wilii was issued in December (published by Czeslaw Okińczyc) which was followed by the publication in January 1990 of Magazyn wileński (‘Vilnius Magazine’), ‘an independent illustrated fortnightly magazine [and] a periodical for Poles in Lithuania.’ The name of Czerwony sztandar (Red Banner), was changed to Kurier wileński (‘Vilnius Courier’) in February 1990. Shortly afterwards came, ‘the re-transmission of programme 1 of Polish Television (in place of the Leningrad transmission), fulfilling the repeated demands of the Polish community in Lithuania.’

31 Ibid. pp. 171-186.
The struggle to establish legal recognition for the Polish language was a unificatory factor for the Polish minority who otherwise were politically divided on strategy and goals. Janusz Oblaciński, for example, a former member of the CP, and Chair of the local division of the ZPL in Šalčininkai, commented on the resolution of the ZPL which had condemned attempts to establish autonomy in a political sense. Oblaciński stated that he was an advocate of territorial administrative autonomy (non-political), and that the ZPL backed the Lithuanian struggle for sovereignty, but with the proviso that 'equality between the Lithuanian and Polish languages in Wilna is necessary, and the Polish language should function in government offices in the region.'

After the elections of March 1990, Stanislaw Pieszko, who was a Polish Deputy from Šalčininkai, and a member of the CPL (CPSU) wanted to speak to Parliament in Polish, a request which the Deputy Speaker initially disallowed on the grounds that this would contradict the Law on the Official Language. Nonetheless, after a break in the session, Pieszko was given the right to speak in Polish, and he addressed Parliament about the failure of democracy for the Poles, 'The Supreme Authorities do not listen to the voices of the people of Vilnius and Šalčininkai. Thus what is the point of such perestroika and democracy. Poles are not geese. They have their own language.'

In contrast to the Poles, during the period 1988-1992, Russians did not publish their own independent newspapers (although there were newspapers available published in the Russian language). More Russians than Poles had knowledge of the Lithuanian language (as noted in Chapter One), and there was a perception that the Lithuanian state was exerting an influence upon their identity. Kolstoe notes that 'many Baltic Russians point out that their own lifestyle has been influenced by the habits and values of the local populations, and some even indicate that they feel strangely out of place when visiting Moscow or other Russian cities.'

Valentin Meshcheriakov, a member of the CPL, who had come to Lithuania in 1956 from Samara in Russia to work and study, stated, 'I never felt Lithuanian although I felt quite well integrated

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35 Kolstoe, Russians, p.108.

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into Lithuanian life (my wife is Lithuanian), but when I returned to Russia, I did not feel myself to be a real Russian, only some kind of Lithuanian.'

Poles never expressed a similar view, because being Soviet was not the only identity to which they ascribed. Oblaciński, for example, stated that Poland, Lithuania, the West and communist authorities paid scant attention to 'the plight of the Poles in Lithuania.' His office was decorated with 'a calendar emblazoned with a portrait of General Pilsudski'. Poles differentiated themselves from Russians because their self-image was linked to memories of a past and an identity outside of that depicted by official Soviet ideology.

Historical Memory

Ethnic Poles in Lithuania referred to the joint historical past of Lithuanians and Poles, and mentioned the Middle Ages, inter-war Lithuania, and issues surrounding the Second World War and the Soviet regime. In contrast, Russians attached to the RCC mentioned the need to expose the falsity of Soviet myths. Ethnic Russians who were represented by groups which remained loyal to Moscow referred to the Great Patriotic War and the anti-fascist struggle as a marker of Soviet identity.

Poles stressed the Slavic roots of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Adam Blaszkiewicz, a former teacher at a mixed Polish-Lithuanian-Russian school, stated that, 'This facilitated the tradition of toleration in Lithuania as many different nationalities had lived together peacefully over many centuries, and suffered together.' The memory of the fact that the boundaries of Lithuania had reached almost to the Black Sea was crucial, because for the Poles it showed that Lithuanian citizenship was a fluid concept dependent upon shifting borders. Mr Jankowski, who in 1987 was the Chief of the Education Department in Šalčininkai local government, and later a member of Sąjūdis, stated that the acquisition of Lithuanian citizenship was not a 'problem' for the Poles, because 'there have been many changes of government in this century, and homeland for the Poles is here in Wileńszczyzna. All these Polish and

36 Interview with Valentin Meshcheriakov, Vilnius, 7 May 1997.
38 Interview with Adam Blaszkiewicz, Vilnius, 14 May 1997. Blaszkiewicz became a deputy of Vilnius City Council in 1990, and later headmaster of the first Polish secondary school to be built in the new districts of Vilnius.
39 Ibid.
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Lithuanian cultures were mixed in the course of centuries. The Poles were loyal to the Lithuanian state although there is a difference in Polish culture.40

Henryk Sosnowski, who founded the ‘Józefa Montviša Polish Cultural Foundation in Lithuania’ in October 1989, and who was a member of its Committee for the Protection of Monuments and Cemeteries, pointed out that the Foundation’s aim was ‘to protect the 600 year-old Polish tradition’.41 The right to protect ‘their’ monuments was stated as an article in the Foundation’s statute as ‘the right to the Polish heritage,’ and the Foundation’s work included the restoration and erection of architectural monuments and estates and the establishment of the Polish language on plaques related to Polish cultural and literary figures.42

Poles recalled the status of Vilnius in the inter-war period. The Polish authors of the Memorandum to the UN (October 1990) referred to the first Republic of Lithuania to justify their claim to autonomy. ‘The pre-war Lithuanian Republic had many times expressed a readiness to guarantee regional autonomy to Vilnius should the Vilnius region join Lithuania.’43 Zygmunt Mackevič, who was elected as General Secretary of the SSKPL, and was also a member of the Seimas of Sąjūdis (1988-1990), recalled that the first public meeting between Sąjūdis and the SSKPL was a failure (17 August 1988), ‘there was too much nationalism on both sides in references to 1920 and the occupation of Vilnius.’44 The meeting was described as having ‘degenerated into a display of mutual resentment and ill-feeling.’45 (As noted in Chapter 3, Čepaitis referred to this meeting in similar terms). Sienkiewicz mentioned the divisions between Poles and Lithuanians during the Second World War. ‘For us, the Home Army is a symbol of Polish resistance against the Nazis and fascists. To the Lithuanians, it was a gang of bandits whose main task was to slaughter Lithuanians and who wanted Vilnius to be Polish. These deep anti-Polish complexes led to Sąjūdis isolating us.’46

There is a shared history in Lithuania of Poles belonging, being ‘of the area’, but nonetheless, there was on the Polish side, an acute sense of a pecking order in which Poles came somewhat below ‘real’ Lithuanians. Mackevič made a comparison between the Poles, Lithuanians and

40 Interview with Mr. Jankowski, Šalčininkai, 14 May 1997.
41 Interview with Henryk Sosnowski, Vilnius, 12 May 1997; ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.175.
42 Ibid.
44 Interview with Zygmunt Mackevič, Vilnius, 30 April 1997
45 ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.172.
Russians in the post-war period. ‘During WW2 and after, the Soviets used local Poles as a counterweight to Lithuanian nationalism. The decision was taken to promote the [titular] republic’s language and ruling people, but nothing was said about Poles, Jews and Karaims…The Poles were the least educated as they were suppressed from both sides [from the Russian side and from the Lithuanian]. The Lithuanians exploited the return of Vilnius by Stalin by closing the Polish University in 1939. And they closed Polish schools.147 Czesław Okińczyc, a lawyer, who was a founding member and Vice-President of the ZPL, and who was elected to the Supreme Council in 1990 as a Sąjūdis candidate, referred to inferior Polish schools and educational neglect on the part of Lithuanian teachers towards their Polish students.48

Błaszkiewicz stressed the positive aspects of education for the Polish minority within Lithuania, both before the War and immediately afterwards, until Party policy came to challenge educational access to both the Lithuanian and the Polish languages. ‘Schooling for national minorities in Lithuania has deep roots – even after the War there was a Polish Gymnasium in Vilnius, and a number of Polish schools appeared in the 1950s. In the 1970s the process of Russification began...Many Poles gave their children to Russian schools and not Lithuanian ones for social mobility.’49

Sosnowski recalled that initially Sąjūdis was seen by many Poles as an open organization that could remedy both the Nazi and Soviet emasculation of Polish intellectual life. ‘During the German occupation the Polish people were very heavily defeated here. The [Polish] underground movement was very strong. In Panerai about 25,000 Poles were shot by the Nazis...Polish intellectual life was crushed...The Soviets killed a lot of people before the Germans came, and during their withdrawal from the Germans. The main victims were Polish officers, teachers, intellectuals and the aristocracy who were shot or deported to Siberia.’50

Jarosław Wołkonowski, an acting editor of Kurier wileński, pointed out that the very important achievement of Sąjūdis was that the mobilization of people for the recreation of the state was achieved almost without bloodshed. ‘The leadership of Sąjūdis just felt that there were

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46 Interview with Sienkiewicz.
47 Interview with Mackevič.
49 Interview with Adam Błaskiewicz, Vilnius.

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some limits which if they crossed there would be much blood.’ He credited this fine balance to the historical past. ‘Sąjūdis held back because in history the relationship between the Poles and Lithuanians has not been as tragic as in other countries.’

In contrast to Poles who recounted the past through the experiences of the ethnic group and its relationship with Lithuanians, *Edinstvo*’s founding statement (11 November 1988) attempted to appeal to Russians (and other ethnic groups) by including into its statement that the movement, ‘defends the honour of the victims of the antifascist struggle’ and mentioned the need ‘to defend the socialist fatherland’. Russian emphasis on the Great Patriotic War stressed a past and an identity that prioritized the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Shortly after Lithuania’s declaration of independence (11 March 1990), for example, the Congress of Committees of Citizens issued a statement addressed to ‘Sister, Brother, Comrade’ which referred to the role of *Sąjūdis* in demeaning the relevance of the anti-fascist struggle, and imposing the inferior democracy of the Lithuanian nationalists.

Now, when after the decision of the Supreme Soviet, some young people are throwing away army tickets, destroying red (pioneer) ties, pouring petrol and burning the doors of army officers, spitting in the faces of the elders whose bodies still carry the wounds of German bombs…the Committees of Citizens is the power which will stand firm against the bourgeois-nationalistic regime in Lithuania…

The ‘Congress of Committees of Citizens’ had been established on 28 April 1990 (about 500 people attended the initial meeting), and protested against the erosion of Soviet identity, for example, ‘the dismantling of a Lenin monument in Kaunas…’ *Edinstvo* referred to the supporters of *Sąjūdis* as renegades from Soviet identity - ‘separatists’, ‘extremists’, ‘nationalists’ and ‘Nazis’ in the demonstration of 12 February 1989 (to protest against the imposition of Lithuanian as the sole official language).

Another organization, founded by Valentin Meshcheriakov was the Association of Russian Citizens, *Rossiya*, which uses as its emblem the flag of the Tsarist Empire - a black two-headed eagle on a yellow shield as well as the state flag of the Russian Federation. It held its

50 Interview with Sosnowski.
51 Interview with Jaroslaw Wolkonowski, Vilnius, 12 May 1997.

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founding meeting in Vilnius on 3 November 1991 although the statutes of this organization had originated in the period following the events of 13 January 1991. The organization’s statutes state that ‘the basic aim of Rossiia is to help citizens of Russia living in Lithuania to adapt to the conditions of life in an independent Lithuanian state’, but makes no reference to the ethnic base of Russian identity (unlike the SSKPL).

Russians attached to the RCC wanted to expose the myth of Russian superiority, promulgated by official Party historians to explain the ‘voluntary’ accession of nationalities, such as the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians, into the Soviet Union. One observer noted that ‘...the myths concerning “the friendship of the nations” and the benevolence of the Russians are extremely deep-seated and resilient.’ The example given was of Gorbachev’s speech in Riga (19 February 1987) when he claimed ‘that one should not forget that for many centuries...the Russian liberator-soldier helped the peasants and fishermen of the Baltic to defend their native land from defilement and slavery, to defend it from foreign aggressors.’ The role of the Russian Empire in subjugating the Baltic was therefore overlooked.

Lavrinech stated that, ‘the Russian intelligentsia thought that they were responsible for stopping all Russians from becoming the tools of the KGB, especially as a lot of Russians could not speak Lithuanian, and were ignorant about history - seeing themselves as an upper class which had given freedom to Lithuania...We felt it our duty to help ordinary Russians who possessed at least some solidarity amongst themselves.’ Artem Inozemtsev, a Russian actor, and a founding member of the RCC, stated that ‘it had been very difficult to understand that the [Soviet] Army which had rescued us from the Nazis, had become an army of Occupiers.’

Education

The low levels of education amongst ethnic Poles did not prevent them from becoming politically organized and contesting elections to defend their ethnic identity. The higher levels of
education amongst ethnic Russians did not correspond to the appearance of any Russian political parties or groups to further their identity through political organization. According to statistics, 'the percentage of Poles who go on to some form of higher education is more than six times lower than the corresponding percentage of Lithuanians; ...only Gypsies rank lower.' A 1989 survey showed that ethnic Poles within Lithuania came below Lithuanians, Russians and Jews in educational levels. The Lithuanian government has referred to the historical legacy of the aftermath of the Second World War when 'Polish intellectuals were repatriated from Lithuania' to explain the discrepancy whereas ethnic Poles (as noted above) have referred to neglect. Lithuania was the only Soviet Republic to have had Polish-language primary and secondary schools, and the Vilnius State Pedagogical Institute had courses in Polish, Lithuanian and Russian.

In the period of glasnost, Poles sought to rectify their inferior status which was linked to having their own University. The Memorandum on the Situation of Poles in Lithuania (October 1990) included a statement that, 'Poles are discriminated against in Higher Education.' Polish students who attended university in Poland often did not return to Lithuania and deprived the Polish community of 'the educated, middle-class leadership it desperately needs.'

The Poles have criticized the decline in the number of Polish-language schools which fell from 260 in the 1950’s to 88 by 1990. However, there was a general decrease in the number of schools within Lithuania as a whole, and many Polish parents chose a Russian-language school to further the educational and employment opportunities of their children. Czerwony sztandar started to publish articles which compared the educational levels of Poles to other ethnic groups in Lithuania, and criticized the fall in the number of ‘pure’ Polish schools (from 49 in 1984-85 to 45 in 1987-88). The number of mixed language schools fell from a total of 53 to a total of 47 for the same period. The latter figure comprised 26 Polish-Russian schools, 17 Polish-Russian-Lithuanian schools and 4 Polish-Lithuanian schools (and demonstrated the

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62 Severinas Vaitiekus, Poles of Lithuania, State Centre for National Studies, 1994, p.34. The survey showed that ethnic Jews had the highest proportion of students at a course of higher education, followed by Russians and then Lithuanians.
63 ibid. p. 34; Krickus, ‘Lithuania’s Polish Question’, pp.22-23 (22).
67 Ibid.

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There is a common perception of ethnic Russians in Lithuania as being poorly educated and of low-status, and the majority have been depicted as ‘working-class people’. Nonetheless, in 1989, the percentage of Russians completing higher education was greater than that of Lithuanians and of all ethnic groups (except Lithuanians), the Russian intellectual elite was the largest. Unlike Poles, ethnic Russians did not make any demands for a Russian University.

Sienkiewicz emphasized the necessity for the Poles to have their own ‘intelligentsia’, because in order ‘to function and exist in the context of the modern world ...we must educate our own people - from primary schools to scientific degrees.’ Sosnowski pointed out that, ‘Sąjūdis had its first meetings in the University, in the Academy of Sciences... because Lithuanian intellectuals were on a higher level than the Polish.’ Defensive measures were mooted to ensure that newly-created intellectuals assisted their own ethnic group, ‘Specialists having finished education should be appointed to their place of origin for work.’ Oblacinski, the Chair of the local division of the ZPL in Šalčininkai, referred to the need ‘to educate our own cadres who are native’. In 1988, the SSKPL had lobbied to change the law to guarantee that cadres would be ‘native’ - by ensuring that entry exams to university could be conducted in the native tongue.

At the meeting in Šalčininkai (where the local council declared autonomy on 6 September 1989) one of the deputies noted that only 17 percent of pupils from the raion had entered higher education that year, and that overall the proportion of the population with a higher education was 20-30 percent lower than in the Republic as a whole. Another speaker expressed concern with the practical impossibility for pupils from Wileńszczyzna to get to University,
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‘and as a result we would have no intelligentsia.’ Oblaciński compared the demands made by the Poles as similar to those the Lithuanians had made to Moscow, ‘What do Poles want? First of all a Polish University so that we could have our own intelligentsia. A new intelligentsia would help to revive our culture and national self-consciousness. At first our demands were met by a rigid “no”. Lithuania has a similar type of dialogue with Moscow. Moscow resists in the beginning but later concedes.’

After the elections, Kurier wileński (27 March 1990) printed some statistics on the levels of Polish education and showed that there were no Poles in the Lithuanian Academy of Science, compared to the presence there of one Russian, and that there were five Polish-language kindergartens compared to 196 for Russians in 1989. A letter to the same newspaper pointed out that the Lithuanian Parliament spoke a lot about freedom and democracy, ‘but this democracy, perhaps, is not applied to all nations if the decisions of the self-governed councils are revoked. Many talks stress how many secondary schools are opened, however, what is the point, if there is no higher school in the native tongue to accomplish education. One hand gives - the other retakes.’

Błaszkiewicz recalled how the demand for new Polish schools in the early days of glasnost outstripped their supply so that teaching staff were available before schools had been constructed. The lack of financial resources in 1991 stopped the construction of a new Polish school, and in response Poles set up a fund to enable the school to be built. Błaszkiewicz became Chair of the Fund, and later headmaster of the School. He stated that, ‘this school was probably the only school to be built by common efforts - the city council, the government, and Polish ex pats. Much of the work was done by the parents of pupils who participated in the construction, installation and painting of the building.’ This project, documented as having been initiated in the early stages of democratization showed that Poles felt secure enough to invest in the future of their children.

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77 ibid.
78 Komjaunimo tiesa, 26 October 1989.
79 Kurier wileński, 27 March 1990, p.3.
80 Kurier wileński, 20 July 1990, p.3.
81 Interview with Błaszkiewicz.
82 See Severinas Vaitiekus, Poles of Lithuania, State Center for National Studies, 1994, p. 20. ‘In the autumn of 1990 Vilnius city council presidium accepted a resolution to build a new Polish school in Justiniskes district, this would be the first Polish school to be built in the capital’s new districts.’
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Fears

Artur Plokszto, a former member of the Union of Poles and editor of their newspaper Nasza gazeta between 1989-1992, observed that, ‘Lithuanian nationalism was also against the Poles - otherwise there would have been no case for Polish nationalism. Lithuanian Poles felt in a position when the [renewed post-Soviet] development of their culture was threatened.’

Okińczyc stated that Lithuania ‘made some mistakes such as when nationalistic slogans were used a lot from the very beginning eg “Lithuania for Lithuanians” as if Lithuania had no Polish population, no Lithuanian Polish category at the beginning.’ Sienkiewicz pointed out that, ‘Sąjūdis has great influence in the information media. It is able to distort the situation and present the Poles in Lithuania as faithful supporters of Moscow imperialism.’

Wolkonowski recalled the ‘dark perspective’ for Poles in Lithuania when the latter were categorized by ethnic Lithuanians as occupiers and as Polonized Lithuanians. Wolkonowski stated that after the creation of Sąjūdis in 1988 there was an ‘explosion of nationalism’ in which Poles were blamed in newspaper articles ‘for various things. We were told that Jogaila [the Lithuanian Grand Duke who in 1386 formed a Union with Poland through marriage and became King of Poland] was a traitor. Pilsudski was an occupier.’ He stated, ‘general demands for Polish autonomy were caused by all those problems from one side [Lithuanian], so there were some attempts from the Polish side to create an alternative to the dark perspective in Lithuania, and many people supported this idea. From the other side, manipulation by Moscow cannot be discounted.’

Plokszto recalled, ‘Poles felt there was a threat that one of the first things would be the enforcement of the Lithuanian language everywhere...that the ending of surnames would have to be in Lithuanian, and that on passports there would not be Polish nationality but Lithuanian.’ The ‘Memorandum on the Situation of Poles in Lithuania’ noted that ‘the Lithuanian authorities have forgotten autonomous ideas, and are proceeding with a process of assimilation. The Lithuanianisation of surnames and geographical names is taking place;...In some Church ser-

83 Interview with Artur Plokszto, Vilnius, 5 May 1997.
84 Interview with Czesław Okińczyc, Vilnius, 26 November 1996.
85 Tygodnik powszechny, 24 September 1989.
86 Interview with Wolkonowski.
87 Ibid.
88 Interview with Plokszto.
vice, the celebration of mass in Polish is forbidden...’ 89 Poles had made a request ‘to settle
the transliteration of surnames and geographical names’ at a meeting in 1988 organized by the
SSKPL. 90 Sienkiewicz observed that the Poles ‘felt endangered, and this made the chances of
cooperation more and more unreal.’ 91

Okińczyc stated that denial of identity was the most frequent complaint among all elements of
the Polish community, ‘the Lithuanians say we are not really Poles, only Polonized Lithuanians.’ 92 Eugenijus Vasilevskus, an ethnic Pole and ‘scientific historian’ working at the Lithuanian
Academy of Sciences in 1991, argued that there was no historic evidence for such
claims. 93 Michel Mackiewicz, the editor of Magazyn wileński (the Polish independent bi-
weekly journal established in January 1990) stated in an interview that, ‘Some Sąjūdis activists hold a theory that there are no problems because there are no Poles in Lithuania, just
Polonized Lithuanians and Belorussians.’ 94 Sienkiewicz recalled that the press campaign
against the Poles had served to promote solidarity and organization, ‘A series of articles appeared in the press stating that there are no Poles here – Lithuanians must bring them to their
Lithuanian origin. Maybe the merit of such articles was that they organized us better than we
did ourselves. The source of our achievements was that the anti-Polish press campaign con-
solidated and organized Poles in Lithuania.’ 95

Ryszard Maciejkianiec, a founding member of the SSKPL, stated that newspapers such as
Gimtasis kraštas (‘Native Country’) and Tarybinis mokytojas (‘Soviet Teacher’) ‘related the
rebirth of Lithuania with anti-Polish attitudes - there are no Poles in Lithuania’, and that mem-
bers of the Sąjūdis leadership had participated in anti-Polish attitudes which focused on
language. The presence of a third party was also cited as instigating discord between Lithuani-
ans and Poles, ‘It is obvious that amongst Sąjūdis and in the Polish organization there were
KGB agents who provoked these conflicts.’ 96

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90 Czerwony sztandar, 4 September 1988.
91 Interview with Sienkiewicz.
92 Krickus, ‘Lithuania’s Polish Question’, pp. 20-23 (21).
93 Ibid.
94 Tygodnik powszechny, 24 September 1989,
95 ibid.
96 Interview with Ryszard Maciejkianiec, Vilnius, 8 May 1997.

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Pieszko analyzed why deputies adopted a positive attitude towards autonomy (6 September 1989), and stated that ‘Sąjūdis central government, Lithuanians in general, neglected the Polish question. It is insulting to hear Poles being called Tutejszy or Polonized Lithuanians.’

One of the participants at the meeting in Šalčininkai referred to the injustice of calling local people ‘Polonized Lithuanians’ because ‘the real commonwealth could only be among equals.’ One of the points raised in the Polish Memorandum of October 1990 was that ethnic Poles were being categorized into new ‘nationalities’ - either as Tutejszy or as Vičiai - the latter was identified as those inhabitants having the suffix -icz at the end of their surnames (as many Poles do). Lithuanian scientists had been trying to persuade the public that Vičiai were ‘really’ Lithuanians who spoke the Slavic language. Polish fears about the spelling of their surnames were realized when a resolution passed by the Lithuanian Parliament (31 January 1991) stated that ‘the spelling of first names and surnames in the identity cards of Lithuanian citizens...have to be spelt in accordance with the rules of the Lithuanian language...(there existed the possibility of choosing the grammatical or the ungrammatical form).

From interviews and printed material, it can be seen that for many Russians, even amongst those who supported Lithuanian independence, there was a general feeling of uncertainty and fear, especially about language. Michniova stated that, ‘the emphasis [on nation-building] was on forming a nation state not a multi-national state’ but she distinguished between the practice of Sąjūdis and the perception of the political atmosphere - ‘there was quite an aggressive feeling or attitude towards everything which was Soviet...although it did not influence policy towards the national minorities.’ Vladimiras Beriozovas, an ethnic Russian who in 1988 was selected by the CPL to replace Mitkin as Second Secretary, stated that the majority of Russians had supported Edinstvo because they ‘feared separating from Russia [used as a synonym for the Soviet Union]’ Sąjūdis was criticized by ethnic Russians either for equating all Russians with Soviets or for the erosion of Soviet identity in Lithuania. As noted in Chapter Three, Lithuanians sometimes expressed sympathy for Russians because they had succumbed to a process of Sovietization.

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98 ‘Na sessii raionnogo Soveta narodnykh deputatov’, Zavetv Lenina, 12 September 1989, pp.2,4,
100 ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.181. The ‘grammatical form’ would be without diacritics, eg, Okinczyc, and the ‘ungrammatical form’ would be with a Lithuanian ending, eg Okinczycas.
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Busyk, a Russian intellectual, indicted Sajūdis for equating all Russians with Bolsheviks, and a priori dividing Lithuania into a ‘democratic nation’ (the Lithuanians) and ‘agents of the Empire’ (Russian-speakers). He noted that the effect upon the Russian community was to create two groups - the supporters and members of Edinstvo and the CPL (CPSU), and an apathetic, isolationist, group (to which he belonged) who would have joined the democratic process in Lithuania, but had been put off by Lithuanian nationalism. A.I. Fedorov, a member of Edinstvo’s organizational group, stated that the main reason why Edinstvo emerged was that ‘people of other nationalities felt that they were separated from perestroika, and that Sajūdis represented only Lithuanians.

Valentin Meshcheriakov who was not ‘opposed to the idea of Edinstvo as a way of continuing and improving the socialist way of development within a united Soviet Union’ measured the activities of Sajūdis against the internationalism of socialist ideology. ‘When Sajūdis first started in Lithuania some people felt a threat from its dogmas which were dividing people according to national and social lines.’ He stated that he could distinguish ‘the positive side of Sajūdis - fighting against corruption, ideological monopoly and mismanagement. However, I heard from Sajūdis, from colleagues and the press that I was a chauvinist and an occupier.

The Russian community’s fear that only the supporters of Sajūdis would be favoured by citizenship was expressed in a reply to an article in Sovetskaia Klaipeda, written by Gazarian, an active member of Sajūdis in Klaipėda, who had linked citizenship to “all who back the sovereignty of the Republic.” The respondent to Gazarian felt, ‘deeply embarrassed by such a conception of democracy’, because it implied that citizenship of Lithuania would be denied to a person if against the ideas of Sajūdis. ‘Such an understanding of citizenship is against “real” democracy.’ In another article, the author compared ‘the Lithuanian type of democracy’ to ‘Herrenvolk democracy’. He suggested that in order to improve upon a process of democratization which favoured Lithuanians, it was necessary to establish bilingualism in territories.

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101 Interview with Michniowa.
104 In an article on Edinstvo’s founding Congress in Soglasie, 1989, No.2.
105 Interview with Meshcheriakov.
107 Ibid.
where the minorities lived compactly, and to introduce proportional representation for all nationalities in the Supreme Soviet.\textsuperscript{108}

Despite the Citizenship Law (November 1989) and amendments to the Law on National Minorities (January 1991) Russians continued to express fear about the status of the Russian language. One article in Ekho Litvy stated that ‘there was now talk in the Lithuanian teaching community that Russian would acquire the status of a foreign language...in Lithuanian schools this year [and] suggested that many schools might no longer offer Russian at all because “most regrettably, the Russian language in Lithuania is now, in the opinion of many, the language of the occupiers.”'\textsuperscript{109} This kind of perspective reflects the difficulty of Russians in perceiving that their status had changed from being a dominant majority to a minority increasingly unsupported by the diminishing adherents of Soviet ideology in Moscow.

Ethnic Poles within Soviet Lithuania referred to groups such as \textit{Vilnija} and from within the Academy of Sciences which adopted a stance of anti-Polish nationalism. This attitude was seen to be condoned by \textit{Saqūdis} not only because some of its leadership was associated with anti-Polish attitudes, but because it had not publicly declared itself against such behaviour. Plokszto stated that ‘there were nationalist factions in \textit{Saqūdis} arguing against the Poles, and the conflicts which followed could have been avoided if the leaders of \textit{Saqūdis} had separated themselves from nationalism, and from statements that undermined the rights of the nations living in Lithuania.'\textsuperscript{110}

Wolkonowski stated that ‘many intellectuals and scientists from the Academy of Science [were against the Poles]’, and politicians such as ‘Ozolas and his wing. Under pressure of these people a few organizations were created which were [home to] radical nationalists.'\textsuperscript{111} Sosnowski observed that it was a ‘great \textit{Saqūdis} mistake that \textit{Saqūdis} did not reject extreme groups like \textit{Vilnija} who...tried to say that we were not true Poles, but only Polonised Lithuanians.'\textsuperscript{112} Oblaciński inferred that, ‘...Lithuanian nationalist organizations like “Vilnija,” which are “bitterly anti-Polish,” best express what Lithuanians feel in private.'\textsuperscript{113} (In Chapter

\textsuperscript{108} Edinstvo, June 1989, No. 4, p.4.
\textsuperscript{110} Interview with Plokszto.
\textsuperscript{111} Interview with Wolkonowski.
\textsuperscript{112} Interview with Sosnowski.
\textsuperscript{113} Krickus, ‘Lithuania’s Polish Question’, pp. 20-23 (21).
Three, I noted Landsbergis’ recollection that people from the far right such as ‘people from the so-called Freedom League and especially the Young Lithuanians …treated civil inhabitants of Lithuania who came from the Soviet Union…on an equal footing with the occupational army’. This focused on the abuse of Russians rather than of Poles.

Political Representation

Wolkonowski stated that whilst Sąjūdis brought about a peaceful transition, nonetheless, ‘there were some fatal mistakes. The pushing off of national minorities from the process [of democratization] caused additional tensions which were totally unnecessary.’ Ryszard Maciejkianiec stated that ethnic Poles, ‘felt very isolated, excluded, even from some government officials’, despite their unique position in representing the ‘only local group [territorially homogeneous] outside of Poland’. A participant at the meeting of the local Council in Šalčininkai which declared autonomy (6 September 1989) stated, ‘We are not aliens from another planet. We are indigenous people.’ As noted previously, the RCC did not see its role as being in Parliament, but in developing Russian identity and exposing the myths of the Soviet Union. The main difference between Poles and Russians was that Poles became increasingly more mobilized as democratization progressed to the extent that the ZPL and Poles within the CPL (CPSU) made declarations of autonomy between 1989-1991 in order to secure representation for their demands. In contrast, Russians became more passive as communist power and Soviet identity in Moscow started to disintegrate.

The first Polish declaration of autonomy took place in May 1989 in the Vilnius region, when ‘a congress of representatives of 3 urban and 27 local councils of people’s deputies from Wileńszczyzna demanded the formation of an autonomous Polish District in Lithuania.’

On 6 September 1989, at an extraordinary session of the Council of the Šalčininkai raion, the deputies ‘proclaimed a Polish national-territorial region’. The Council of Deputies of the Vilnius region ‘announced the creation of a Polish national-territorial region’ on 15 Septem-

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114 Interview with Vytautas Landsbergis, Vilnius, 15 May 1997.
115 Interview with Wolkonowski.
116 Interview with Maciejkianiec.
119 Ibid. p.175.
ber.\textsuperscript{120} After Lithuania’s declaration of independence in March 1990, the raion of Šalčininkai proclaimed itself a ‘Polish national-territorial region’ (May 1990) where the constitution of the LSSR was still operational.\textsuperscript{121}

Shortly afterwards (6 October 1990), ‘at the Second stage of the Second Congress of Deputies of Wileńszczyzna’, delegates from the raions of Vilnius, Šalčininkai, Švenčionys and Trakai, passed a resolution ‘’On the Proclamation of a Polish National-Territorial entity within Lithuania’’.\textsuperscript{122} At the third stage of the above Congress (22 May 1991), delegates ‘almost unanimously accepted the project for the statute of the Wilno [Vilnius] Polish national-territorial homeland…within the framework’ of the Republic of Lithuania.\textsuperscript{123} On 14 December 1991, after the collapse of communism, the third Congress of the ZPL in Vilnius ‘presented a new project for the statutes of the national-territorial land of the Vilnius region’ to submit to the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Lithuania.\textsuperscript{124}

At the First Congress of the ZPL (11-15 April 1989) a resolution expressed deep concern about the ‘economic, social and cultural backwardness of Wileńszczyzna’, and sought as a solution to these problems ‘an autonomous Polish national unit.’\textsuperscript{125} Poles referred back to the inter-war status of Vilnius to justify their demands for autonomy. A deputy at the Second Congress of Wileńszczyzna (6 October 1990), for example, noted that the Lithuanian Parliament had reestablished the independence of the Republic of Lithuania on the basis of the 1938 Constitution when the Vilnius region had not been linked to this Constitution [because it was then part of Poland]. Thus the inhabitants of the Vilnius region maintained the right of self-determination.\textsuperscript{126}

Just before the third stage of the Wileńszczyzna Congress (22 May 1991), Pieszko, a Parliamentary Deputy, put forward a proposal for a statute of the Vilnius region. It included demands for the Polish language to be used in all offices, for the establishment of local diets and a Parliament of the area which would have its own budget and control its own bank, and for the Chair of this autonomous Parliament to be the Deputy Speaker of the central Parlia-

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid. p.177.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid. p.178.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid. p.182.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid. p.185.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid. p.174

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ment. Shortly afterwards, the Congress adopted the statute of ‘Vilnius-Polish National-territorial Region’ which determined the cultural, legal and economic self-government of Wileńszczyzna.

Sienkiewicz attributed declarations of autonomy to lack of co-operation. He stated that ‘the biggest failure was that there was no common platform.’ Landsbergis and himself had met and ‘spoken about how to unite our efforts [Sąjūdis and ZPL]’ since independence did not automatically mean that all problems for the Poles would be solved. Sienkiewicz wanted Landsbergis to tell the Poles how to solve their problems so that ‘we could unite our efforts as “two organizations”’. His position during official public meetings was that ‘[Polish] national problems [should be] in first place.’ In contrast, ‘Landsbergis and Sąjūdis just wanted to find as many individual supporters of Sąjūdis as possible. So we could not find a common language although we were ready to become collective members of society. But Landsbergis wanted us to join Sąjūdis as individuals.’ ‘The paradox is that we wanted the same [to be free of Soviet rule]. We formulated the problems of [our] ethnic group and Sąjūdis, and we tried to solve our problems in parallel with the Lithuanian ones. But we could not unite."

At a public meeting organized by the SSKPL in September 1988, Poles asked for safeguards to ensure representation throughout political and civil society, for example, ‘appropriate representation in administration…for Poles in working collectives where they constitute the majority’, and for ‘adequate representation at all levels in all institutions dealing with nationalities’ issues [and] special offices dealing with Polish affairs in the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Culture. These demands were made before Edinstvo had been formed, and showed that Poles wanted representation for their own ethnic group. At the meeting in Šalčininkai (6 September 1989) Anicet Brodawski, (a Communist Party Secretary of the raion, and a USSR People’s Deputy) requested that ‘all nationalities living in the Republic would have representatives in the upper levels of government.’ Another

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128 ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.182.
129 Interview with Sienkiewicz.
130 Ibid.
131 Czerwony sztandar, 4 September 1988.

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participant wanted ‘judicial guarantees to national minorities to participate in government at all levels’.\textsuperscript{133}

Z. Palewicz, the Deputy Mayor of Šalčininkai, recalled a meeting with Landsbergis (following the 6 September declaration of autonomy) in which the latter had not acknowledged the distinctiveness of Polish identity. ‘Here is the same as in all Lithuania – no exceptions will be made.’ Palewicz had supposed that Landsbergis’ position would have been more ‘benevolent’, because ‘we felt different from other parts of Lithuania.’ Sosnowski recalled the speech made by Landsbergis in Mostiškės (Mościszki) when he was invited by the ZPL to speak at a meeting in May 1991 following on from a declaration of autonomy (within the framework of the Republic of Lithuania). He recalled that Landsbergis spoke about the territorial integrity of Lithuania, ‘first, we have to achieve independence and then guarantee rights to national minorities. Every enemy tries to separate us.’\textsuperscript{135} Lieven notes that at the meeting Landsbergis failed to speak in Polish until pressurized (although he is fluent in the language), and ‘to address a single one of their [Polish] concrete demands or concerns.’ He also observed, ‘the arrogant and boorish treatment by local Poles of the head of the state to which they belonged’.\textsuperscript{136}

Ethnic Poles who belonged to the CPL (CPSU), such as Jan Ciechanowicz, the Edinstvo candidate elected to the CPD (26 March 1989), were not averse to using declarations of autonomy in an instrumental manner against both Lithuania and Moscow. At the Second Congress of Wileńszczyzna (6 October 1990), for example, Ciechanowicz suggested that if the Lithuanian government reacted in ‘an anti-Polish manner’ to the declaration of ‘a national district within Lithuania today’, the next step ‘should be the declaration of a sovereign Republic of Eastern Poland within the USSR. If Moscow would react in a similar manner as in previous years, then you, legitimate representatives of your nation should declare an independent Republic of Eastern Poland within the territory occupied by Stalin in 1939 [part of which was then in Belarus]...I suggest that we organize Polish units of territorial defence.’\textsuperscript{137}

During the period of the August coup, the local government in Šalčininkai declared that only laws of the USSR had validity in the region, and that all officials were obliged to carry out the

\textsuperscript{133} ‘Na sessii raionnogo Soveta narodnykh deputatov’, Zavetv Lenina, 12 September 1989, pp.2,4.
\textsuperscript{134} Interview with Z. Palewicz, Šalčininkai, 14 May 1997.
\textsuperscript{135} Interview with Sosnowski.
\textsuperscript{136} Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p.170

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orders of the Emergency Committee. After the failure of the coup, the Lithuanian Supreme Council suspended the Chair and Deputy Chair of Šalčininkai Council and formed a commission to investigate their political activities. The local councils of the regions of Šalčininkai and Vilnius and the district of Snieckus were dissolved by central government for not complying ‘with the temporary basic law of the Republic of Lithuania.’ Czeslaw Wysocki, the Chair of the council of Šalčininkai, and the Second Secretary of the CPL CPSU in Šalčininkai, was arrested by the Lithuanian state for treason.

The Lithuanian government imposed direct rule on Šalčininkai and Vilnius (12 September) for a period of six months, and suspended the law on local government. Ethnic Poles complained that by targeting the whole councils and not individuals, the Lithuanian government could undermine local-government activities through the policies of selected ‘administrators’ such as gerrymandering to facilitate the ‘Lithuanisation’ of the regions. In addition, Poles who had not signed a declaration of loyalty to the state to meet the requirement of the Citizenship Law would be excluded from citizenship and the right to vote in any forthcoming local elections (because the two year period for making a decision about citizenship was about to expire).

It was reported that the dissolution of the local council of Snieckus (where there was a majority of Russians) had ‘failed to trigger local protests.’ The dissolution of the councils came after the collapse of the Moscow coup when Soviet identity was in decline, and consequently inhibited expressions of Russian assertiveness in Lithuania. Polish demands for political representation were to ensure the survival of their ethnic group by having Polish representatives throughout political society in Lithuania (rather than to aim for ‘homogeneity’ as depicted in Gellner’s theory of nationalism).

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140 Ibid.
Economic Considerations

Poles considered themselves neglected as a deliberate result of policies carried out by the Lithuanian state, and that the consequences for health were to be found in insufficient doctors and medical care, and high rates of infant mortality. It seems likely that Russians were more concerned to protect the status quo. Meshcheriakov referred to 'the threat of the collapse of the economy and losing social guarantees.'

At the founding Congress of the ZPL (15-16 April 1989), its first resolution expressed dissatisfaction with the backwardness of the Wileńszczyzna region. A deputy at the meeting in Šalčininkai (6 September 1989) pointed out that, 'the raion provides more agricultural production on average than other raions, but the Ministries of the Republic subjectively distribute products, goods and building materials to the raion in return.' He added that the region was industrially under-developed and that there was an obvious lack of services in comparison to the whole of the Republic. Maciejkianiec indicated in his speech to the Second Congress of People’s Deputies of the Wileńszczyzna region (October 1990) (to justify autonomy) that the roots of the conflict were not only to be found in language which came into being when the Law on the State Language was passed in 1988, but was preceded by conflict over 'insufficient investment, underdevelopment, and unjust distribution - these were the main causes of the grievances.'

After the republican elections of 1990, Wysocki stated that those who were seeking independence for Lithuania were those who were intent upon establishing oligarchical rule based upon economic domination. Thus, '...only 6 or 7% of the population possess all the wealth which is in private hands. And these people seek independence.' Stanisław Pieszko, a Deputy from Šalčininkai, stated in Parliament that social inequality existed in many work collectives in the region where the administration was Lithuanian, but the ordinary workers were Poles and other Slavs. He pointed out that only if Parliament proclaimed Wileńszczyzna a national terri-

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142 See Krickus, 'Lithuania’s Polish Question', p.21, and Girmius and Sabbat-Swidlicka, ‘Current Issues in Polish-Lithuanian Relations’, p.44.
143 Interview with Meshcheriakov.
itorial unit would the Poles believe that the process of the creation of a democratic state was taking place in Lithuania.147

About this time, central government was accused of putting forward proposals to ‘colonise’ the land of Wileńszczyzna through the proposed project of Great Vilnius which was regarded as a means of diluting the ethnic Polish vote, and increasing ethnic Lithuanian hegemony in the region through economic measures. Pieszko commented that the main aim of the project (to expand the borders of the city limits of Vilnius into adjoining land where the Poles predominated) was ‘to settle newcomers, to take land away from the locals and in general to subdue rebellious raions.’148 The project was enacted on 25 September 1991, and proposed joining to Vilnius ‘thirteen communities of the Wilno region [Vilnius], part of the community of the Troki [Trakai] region, the town of Landwarów and the settlement of Grzegorzewo.’ Poles complained that ‘they would be deprived of the right to settle questions of property (the land belonging to the city cannot be privatised).’149

Minczewicz stated that the project of Great Vilnius was related to the redistribution of land which took place after Soviet rule. Expanding the city meant that it became impossible for Poles to reclaim land that was formerly theirs, and that recovering land in rural areas, even when former landowners had documents to prove possession, was a very slow process. He added that when the Lithuanian Government disbanded the local councils of the raions of Vilnius and Šalčininkai (12 September 1991), land was distributed during the ensuing direct administrative rule not only to rightful owners, but also to Lithuanians who used bribes to secure ownership.150 The construction of new buildings and the resettlement of people either as city dwellers or landowners was seen by the Poles as part of a process of gerrymandering. The Memorandum on the situation of Poles in Lithuania, issued the day after the ZPL backed the declaration of an autonomous Polish region within Lithuania, included the statement that ‘Land in Wileńszczyzna is distributed to newcomers.’151
Economic grievances and political strategies varied. The ‘common people’ of the raion of Tra­kai, for example, expressed the opinion that whilst not ‘trusting’ either Vilnius or Moscow, staying in a renewed Soviet Union might be a better choice than participating in capitalism. They anticipated that in a new raion all would be equal according to the law, whereas an independent Lithuania would try to reestablish capitalism where some would be owners of the plantations - ‘the planters’ - and some ‘dirty creatures’. At the same time, the demand made by Poles to further the educational opportunities of their children and having a local Polish intelligentsia was linked to the idea of bringing greater economic prosperity to Wileńszczyzna and the prospect of better jobs.

Political Interaction

The political actors and groups motivating the aspiring Poles were divided and sub-divided on action, strategy and goals. Piotr Hlebowicz, a former member of the Polish organization ‘Fighting Solidarity’ who had contacts with the ZPL, as well as the Lithuanian Freedom League and Young Lithuania (the youth wing of the Lithuanian Freedom League) observed that ‘the Polish people [were] very divided here in Lithuania. There [were] different factions. The Polish Union [was] only one of them, and there [was] no unity’. Despite the appearance of Edinstvo the Poles kept up pressure for the institution of minority rights within the framework of their own organization. Amongst ethnic Russians, the contrasting roles of the RCC and Edinstvo in influencing Sqūdis were based upon different perceptions of identity. As a consequence of their weak ethno-political identification, the Russian community (unlike the Poles) did not seek election through a Russian political party as such but through other groupings such as Sqūdis, the CPL, the CPL (CPSU), and Edinstvo. The RCC did not attempt to put forward candidates for election (in contrast to the ZPL).

The reservation, expressed by Sienkiewicz, that Polish identity would be subsumed by a dominant Lithuanian nationalism, is reminiscent of Gellner’s thesis on the role of nationalism.

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153 Interview with Piotr Hlebowicz, Vilnius, 5 May 1997. ‘Fighting Solidarity’ was founded on the basis of radical anti-communism and disagreement with some of the policies pursued by ‘Solidarity’, the Polish movement for democracy, but deemed to be too conciliatory with communist authorities.
which codifies, standardizes, and unifies culture into a homogeneous context-free referential language for industrial societies. Sienkiewicz stated that,

We are not servants of the Kremlin, and also we do not want to secede from Lithuania and join Poland. We want to keep our language, culture and ethnic identity going alive...We were and are under a double oppression, Lithuanian and Soviet...Lithuanians talk to us in the same manner as Russians talked to Lithuanians. ‘We know what you need, we will take care of you, you do not need legal guarantees, the establishment of an independent Lithuania will automatically solve all your problems.’ Lithuanians think that due to their demographic hegemony they can pay no attention to us.155

Yet Sienkiewicz’ position was to defend group rights through political struggle within the Lithuanian state. There was no necessarily determined homogeneous direction by ‘adjustment’ to industrialization as Gellner posits, and political relations between groups inside the structure helped shape the process of nationalism. Wolkonowski reported that amongst the membership of the ZPL, one faction [comprised of Ciechanowicz, Maciejkianiec and Bradowski,] did not believe in the collapse of the Soviet Union whilst the leaders of the second faction, Sienkiewicz, Okińczyc and Plokszto, thought that the possibility of Lithuania becoming an independent state was very high, and that ‘Poles should support this new rebirthing state.’156 Poles participated in common actions with Sąjūdis. Palewicz, the Deputy Mayor of Šalčininkai, pointed out that the ZPL took part in the ‘Baltic Way’ (August 1989), to demonstrate against Soviet oppression.157

Balcewicz (the Editor of Kurier wileński) had been elected onto the Bureau of the CPL CC after its split from Moscow in December 1989, the first Pole to have such office. Ethnic Poles accepted invitations to sit on Commissions which provided an arena for interaction despite complaints that the Polish claim for territorial self-government had not been met.158 Brodawski, for example, had been a member of a group which had prepared the draft of the Law

156 Interview with Wolkonowski.
157 Interview with Palewicz.
on National Minorities. After 1990, Ryszard Maciejkianiec (a founding member of the SSKPL), and Balcewicz sat on Virgilijus Čepaitis’ Commission of ‘The Affairs of the Nationalities and the Rights of Citizens’. Some of the Poles elected to Parliament abstained from taking the vote on Independence, but this did not exclude positive support from the Polish minority, for example, a section of the ZPL in Naujoji Vilnia, passed a motion which backed the Lithuanian declaration of Independence.

There were Poles who criticized attempts by Moscow to use the ‘Polish card’ to divide Poles and Lithuanians. One author referred to a mass rally organized by Edinstvo during which the Lithuanians had been accused of oppressing the Poles. The author vigorously rejected one speaker’s claim that in donating the Vilnius region to Lithuania, Stalin could equally have given it to Belarus, because Vilnius equally belonged to Lithuania and Poland. ‘This land is ours (ie Polish), because we were born here, but it does not belong to Poland only to Lithuania.’

Zygmunt Mackevič’s account of his experiences at the first Sąjūdis Congress (22-23 October 1988) demonstrated the ideological differences amongst the Poles. He noted that his speech was ‘warmly accepted’, and was later published in the Lithuanian nationalist journal, Atgimimas (as noted in Chapter 4, he was the sole Pole to be elected to the Seimas of Sąjūdis). Nonetheless, as the Secretary General of the SSKPL, Mackevič was ‘denounced’ and labelled an ‘enemy of the Poles’, and expelled from the Polish organization. Mackevič stated that, ‘Communist-driven (probably KGB) Polish politicians labelled me a traitor...I was paralyzed. Being a Pole I could not represent the interests of Poles.’ He became the Director of the Polish Institute in 1990.

Another example of division amongst Poles came after the declarations of Polish autonomy in the raions of Šalčininkai and Vilnius in September 1989. Balcewicz (the editor of Czerwony sztandar) was accused in a ‘Letter to the Editor’, written by W.Tomaszewicz, also a member of the ZPL, of distorting and not representing readers’ opinions on the subject of autonomy. Balcewicz had described the proclamations as ‘Moscow-induced action’, but Tomaszewicz

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159 Ibid.
161 Kurier wileński, 22 March 1990.
countered this by referring to a survey which showed that 80 percent of Poles had supported the proclamation of autonomy. Both Balcewicz and Okińczyc were criticized in the letter for demeaning the identity of the Poles, because of the implication that the Poles were incapable of their own decisive action. Tomaszewicz said they had turned, 'to a pro-Lithuanian, pro-
Sąjūdis position. Their way - Lithuanianisation. The majority of Poles, however, want to keep their identity.' Tomaszewicz acknowledged that newspaper staff were divided in their reactions to the declarations of autonomy. Okińczyc’s reply stated that dialogue with the Lithuanians was the only way forward which should be based on international legal and democratic norms. ‘Lithuanian and Polish survival was only possible within the family of free nations of free Europe.’

At a local Conference of the ZPL in Šalčininkai (7 April 1990), the majority of delegates condemned attempts to separate the region of Vilnius, and opposed confrontation with Lithuania. Some speakers criticized Wysocki for describing the area as ‘a red proletarian raion’. The ZPL expressed support for Sąjūdis at its Second Congress (22 April 1990) where it backed ‘Lithuania’s endeavour to achieve independent statehood.’ Shortly before this, at the Second Congress of the Vilnius section of the ZPL (31 March 1990), Okińczyc was forced to resign from its Council following accusations of being ‘pro-Sąjūdis’, and ‘abandoning Polish interests’, but this did not prevent him from continuing to defend the rights of Poles.

Poles contested the question of who qualified as the sincere protector of Polish identity. Wysocki deemed that the ZPL was ‘hand-in-hand’ with Sąjūdis in carrying out an anti-Polish campaign in Šalčininkai. Oblaciński viewed the Deputies and self-government officials as power seekers, whose avowal to safeguard ‘Polishness’ was really a means of maintaining their positions as party functionaries and nomenklatura. The establishment of autonomy was therefore a defence policy of the CPL (CPSU) in disguise.

At the Second Congress of Wileńszczyzna on 1 June 1990, 200 delegates elected a Coordinating Council to make preparations for Polish national-territorial autonomy. The Congress made

163 Interview with Mackević.
164 W. Tomaszewicz, Czerwony sztandar, 6 February 1990.
165 C.Okińczyc, Kurier wileński, 22 February 1990.
167 ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.177.
168 Kurier wileński, 4 April 1990.

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an appeal to Gorbachev and to the SS of the Republic of Lithuania. Kurier wileński’s report of the Congress noted that a high proportion of delegates belonged to the CPL (CPSU), and that one of the leaders had tried to denigrate the ZPL by calling it a ‘splinter’ group, because in his opinion it had retreated from its earlier support of a Polish autonomous unit. At the second stage of the Congress of Wileńszczyzna (6 October 1990), Sienkiewicz came out in support of the declaration of a ‘Polish-National-Territorial Region within Lithuania’. The same Congress rejected ‘a project of the deputies from [Salčininkai] for the calling into being of an independent Polish republic’.

Wysocki (the Chair of the council of Salčininkai), stated that he was against the secession of the CPL from the CPSU, because the ‘USSR is the common house of all nations’. At the local elections of 24 March 1990 a majority of CPL (CPSU) deputies were returned in the Polish-dominated areas. In Salčininkai, for example, 40 deputies out of 42 were from the CPL (CPSU). This included 32 Poles, 4 Lithuanians, 3 Russians and 1 Belorussian. Oleg Shenin, a CPSU CC Secretary, held talks with local communist activists in south-east Lithuania, and offered Moscow’s support. ‘This [independence] would not have happened if you had overthrown Brazauskas in time yourselves. Proclaim yourselves even a Republic [ie a Sovereign Republic within the USSR]. Moscow does not object to this. We will endeavour to put our efforts into keeping the Republic [Lithuania] within the USSR.’

Ciechanowicz founded the Polish Party of Human Rights with the aim of establishing an East Polish Republic of the USSR. The programme of this proposed Party was published, without comment, by Nasza gazeta, the newspaper of the ZPL. Znad wili (the independent cultural weekly paper, established in December 1989 with Okińczyc as one of the editors) responded by arguing that such a “nationalistic concept” would harm Polish-Lithuanian relations, and that Polish interests should be defended within the context of changes currently under way in Lithuania. Płokszto stated that adverts for Ciechanowicz’s ‘highly controversial’ Party

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169 Kurier wileński, 20 July 1990.
170 Kronika i Informacje, p.177.
171 Kurier wileński, 9 June 1990.
172 Kurier wileński, 11 October 1990.
173 ‘Kronika i Informacje’, p.178.
were placed in newspapers, and represented ‘an attempt to find out if a union between Communist and Polish ideas would attract any supporters. It was proven to be not attractive there being hardly any response to the proposals.’

Poles mobilized in different directions but interacted through overlapping membership of political groups. In contrast, the RCC had condemned Edinstvo and disassociated itself from the organization. following the founding Congress of Edinstvo in Vilnius on 13-14 May 1989.

Against Gellner’s expectations, the RCC’s statement suggested that the way forward in Lithuania was to pursue a ‘dialogue of mutual respect’ so that ‘it would be possible by common efforts to achieve equality for all citizens in Lithuania.’ A Co-Chair of the RCC, T. Iasnitskaia, later commented that ‘Only in a common cultural field can we become equal members of society.’ Moreover, the extent to which this group of Russians regarded the Lithuanian state as a primary focus of loyalty was expressed in the RCC’s dual aim of promoting the social integration of Russians alongside their active participation in defending the interests of the Lithuanian state (legal, ecological and economic).

Michniova stated that political inactivity amongst ethnic Russians stemmed from the resonance amongst Russians to Soviet ideology – ‘the main thing [for Russians] was not to organize themselves into a Russian party as there was a strong feeling of internationalism, especially with Belarus and Ukraine.’ Artem Inozemtsev attended the first Sąjūdis Congress (October 1988) as a representative of the Russian community, but concluded that the way forward for the Russian intelligentsia was not through parliamentary office. He stated, ‘Parliament and power were not the right place for the intelligentsia…the Russians had another mission - to develop the Russian national character.’ Inozemtsev’s work as a representative of the RCC involved going to factories and speaking to workers, ‘in order to deflect the power of the KGB from trying to turn Russians away from supporting Lithuanian independence.'
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It is interesting to note that from opinion polls conducted in Lithuania in 1989 the results suggested that Edinstvo was unpopular amongst non-Lithuanians, "...on a scale from +100 to -100, it received a rating of only +9 among non-Lithuanians on May 25-31, dropping to -8 on September 30-October 6." Its unpopularity therefore preceded the uncertainty of the details of the Lithuanian Citizenship Law which in November of 1989 had given all ethnic groups in Lithuania the choice of becoming Lithuanian citizens. At the elections to the CPD (26 March 1989), only one Edinstvo candidate, Ivan Tikhonovich (who became known by his original Polish name of Jan Ciechanowicz) was successful, but only at the second round of voting. Ciechanowicz taught at the Philosophy Department of Vilnius State Pedagogical Institute.

Rallies organized by Edinstvo attracted large crowds, but not comparable to those of Sąjūdis (the largest rally was on 12 February 1989 when an estimated 80,000 protested about language). At a Edinstvo meeting of 25 June 1989 (where the number of participants was estimated to be 10,000), Edinstvo condemned the status of Lithuanian as the official language and preparations for the Lithuanian Citizenship Law. Edinstvo was therefore not offering any specific policy proposals, but sought a return to the situation ex ante. At the elections of 1990 Edinstvo gained only one seat.

Apart from the RCC, Russians interacted with Sąjūdis through the Russian Orthodox Church which traditionally formed an integral part of Russian identity. Archbishop Khrisostom of the Russian Orthodox Church in Vilnius ‘appealed to Gorbachev against using military force in Lithuania (5 April 1990) and said that, "many Russian-speaking people in Lithuania were “very upset” that the Republic’s Moscow-allied Communist party had “asked Soviet soldiers to help defend their material interests”". He placed himself alongside the supporters of Lithuanian independence in the barricaded parliament building in January 1991, and condemned Moscow’s actions when he attended the ceremony in Vilnius Cathedral (16 January) to bury the victims killed at the Television Tower. Landsbergis commented that the Ortho-

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188 Vardy and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.115.
dox Archbishop Khrisostom had supported Sajūdis and stood alongside with him in the Parliament on 13 January 1991.  

The electorate in the district of Ignalina failed to register enough votes at the republican elections of March 1990 to elect the CPL (CPSU) candidate (who was an engineer at the Ignalina atomic power plant) to office. He had stood unopposed as the other contestant, Russian Orthodox Bishop Antonii of Vilnius, had been withdrawn against his will to another diocese in the RSFSR. It had been to this constituency, which comprised the settlement of Sniečkus, that Iurii Masliukov, First Deputy Chair of the USSR Council of Ministers, had visited in January 1990 in preparation for Gorbachev’s visit to Lithuania. The low turn-out (35 percent in the district of Sniečkus) was attributed to the voters’ displeasure at Antonii’s forced withdrawal (and necessitated another round of voting). As noted in Chapter 1, ethnic Russians in Sniečkus were less well integrated into Lithuanian society, but a representative from the community, Sergei Piroshkov, was a member of Ėpaitis’ Commission of ‘The Affairs of the Nationalities and the Rights of Citizens’. Workers at Ignalina joined in condemnations against Moscow’s actions in January 1991. As noted in Chapter Two, after this date, Edinstvo was irrevocably weakened.

Although Catholicism formed an important part of Polish and Lithuanian identity, Okińczyc’s suggestion to invite more Polish-speaking priests into Lithuania’s Polish parishes to undermine the influence of the Polish nomenklatura (as Lithuanian priests had little knowledge of the Polish language) was rejected. Okińczyc claimed that the reaction of Sajūdis was to regard it as a purely clerical issue, but on referring the matter to Church officials it was conceded that the proposal was opposed by Sajūdis. The demand by Poles that they be allowed to celebrate mass in Vilnius cathedral in Polish was similarly refused. As Lieven points out, ‘the fact that the medieval Church was a major source of “Polonisation” has not been forgotten.’ He adds that memories of the fighting that took place between Lithuanians attached to German

192 Interview with Landsbergis.
197 Kolstoe, Russians, p.140.
198 Krickus, ‘Lithuania’s Polish Question’, pp. 20-23 (21).
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'police battalions' and the Polish Home Army (referred to in Chapter One) was another factor in the decision to celebrate mass only in the Lithuanian language in Vilnius Cathedral.200

The Polish government consistently supported Lithuanian independence from March 1990 onwards, and refrained from any attempt to revise the eastern frontiers established by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.201 The Polish government acted as an intermediary between Poles in Lithuania and the Lithuanian government, for example, during talks in Vilnius 12-13 September 1991 in which Poles attempted to resolve unmet demands. These included the right to have Polish spelling on official documents, the right to receive Lithuanian citizenship automatically (without taking an oath of allegiance to the state), to keep the boundaries of the Polish-speaking areas unchanged, and the need to have a Polish University.202 As noted in Chapter 2, the Citizenship Law was amended on 5 December 1991, but the administrative borders of the city of Vilnius were changed in such a way as to encroach upon Polish electoral districts. Disputes about the Polish University were not resolved in the period up until October 1992. As noted above, the Lithuanian Freedom League had links with Fighting Solidarity, and Terleckas, the leader of the League differentiated between 'occupiers' and indigenous inhabitants of Lithuania, such as the Poles.203

Michniöva observed that there was a contradiction between the political atmosphere and the policies actually pursued by Sąjūdis which made concessions on the use of the Russian language and adopted a policy of inclusive citizenship. In overall terms, it meant that Russians could come to identify with the Lithuanian project of independence, because their collective identity was assured. Russians affiliated to the RCC and/or Sąjūdis saw Lithuanian independence as a chance to develop Russian identity against the undemocratic practice of the Soviet Union. In contrast, ethnic Polish identity wanted more than linguistic concessions and citizenship, because it based its claims on its rights as an ethnic group which had inhabited the Vilnius area since ancient times.

200 Ibid. pp.165-166.
201 Burant, 'Polish-Lithuanian Relations', pp.67-84.

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Conclusion

As noted in the Introduction, in their account of national identity in the making of a nation-state, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith, make few references to minority relations, and their theory at times cannot account for the political interaction that emerged between Lithuanians, Poles, and Russians in Lithuania. The RCC, for example, developed a form of symbiotic nationalism utilizing the resources of the emerging Lithuanian state to strengthen the identity of Russians as an ethnic group. Gellner’s perspective is that the function of a nation-state depends upon solidifying one culture which fills out the state to inhibit ‘rival’ ones, and his monocultural theory of nationalism makes no allowance for such interaction. I have identified below examples of the processes of nationalism in Lithuania to highlight those areas where inter-ethnic relations resonate with or deviate from the overall perspective of nationalism suggested by Gellner, Anderson, Hobsbawm and Smith.

In Lithuania there was a concurrent surge of national identities and culture, located amongst diverse ethnic groups (Lithuanians, Poles, and Russians) within the same bounded territory (the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic). There was not a linear progression of Poles and Russians being subsumed by the emerging dominant culture, but a real political struggle within political and civil society to establish their rights - an area neglected in Gellner’s top-down model of centralization. The Lithuanian state guaranteed Russians, Poles and other minorities the right to develop their own culture, and made special concessions to Russian migrants in order to secure the support of the emerging Russian Federation. Such reciprocity amongst cultures is alien to Gellner’s model (nor does he look at inter-state cooperation).

Gellner’s premise of ‘one coherent world...reduced to a unitary idiom’ was not borne out by empirical events. Gellner stresses the unificatory factor of language, but the linguistic demands of the Poles expressed a duality of goals - to be well-educated in their own language, but also to have a knowledge of the Lithuanian language. Gellner seems to expect that cultural ‘sub-groups’ will either assimilate or bring to fruition a nationalist movement of their own (in the early stages of industrialization). His variant of nationalism for later industrial societies is when the route to ‘cultural homogeneity’ and ‘social entropy’ is blocked for one identifiable

group (because it cannot assimilate) which then threatens the norm of uniformity or the condition for the smooth functioning of the state.\textsuperscript{206} As noted above (in Political Interaction), Poles did not want to assimilate, and also showed that they were very much attached to the territory of Wileńszczyzna. The emerging Lithuanian state was threatened or felt threatened by not conceding to demands based upon recognition of difference. In many respects, the rural population of the region did not need to know Lithuanian, and could live (as they had done) outside of the standardization required by the Lithuanian state (according to Gellner’s model).\textsuperscript{207}

Nonetheless, Sienkiewicz noted that, ‘From the beginning we stressed that we wanted to know the Lithuanian language.’\textsuperscript{208} The Statutes of the SSKPL asked for the promotion, alongside Lithuanian, of written and printed Polish.\textsuperscript{209} The Polish community was aware that ‘knowledge of the state language [could] help their children to get both a better education and jobs…[but] are still much more oriented towards their own language.’\textsuperscript{210} The number of pupils in Polish schools began to grow from approximately 11,000 in 1988 to 19,000 in 1997\textsuperscript{211} (whereas Gellner expects that minorities will assimilate or become irredentist).

In contrast to Gellner’s theory, whilst the RCC wanted to raise the national consciousness of ethnic Russians within the newly emerging Lithuanian state, there was no intention that Lithuanian culture itself would have to be marginalized.\textsuperscript{212} Edinstvo drew attention to the grievances of Russians, Russian speakers and Poles in the process of Lithuanian nationalism to which the Lithuanian state did respond despite the weakened role of Edinstvo after May 1989 (contra Gellner’s theory).\textsuperscript{213} Russian and Polish collusion with Moscow was threatening to the stability of the Lithuanian state, but only whilst the Soviet state was prepared to support Poles and Edinstvo against Lithuanian independence. After the collapse of communism, the recognition of ethnic difference which had been incorporated into law in 1989 and 1991 was then written into the new Lithuanian Constitution of October 1992.\textsuperscript{214} Gellner’s theoretical

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\textsuperscript{206} Ibid. pp.64-73.  \\
\textsuperscript{207} Ibid. pp.120-121.  \\
\textsuperscript{208} Interview with Sienkiewicz.  \\
\textsuperscript{209} Czerwony sztandar, 9 September 1988.  \\
\textsuperscript{210} Popovski, ‘Citizenship in Lithuania…’, pp.113-114.  \\
\textsuperscript{211} Interview with Błaszkiewicz.  \\
\textsuperscript{212} Kolstoe, Russians, p.142.  \\
\textsuperscript{213} Vardys and Sedaitis, Lithuania, p.115.  \\
\textsuperscript{214} Ibid. p.206.
\end{flushleft}
exclusion of the possibility of culturally pluralistic groupings being taken account of in a centralized homogeneous culture was not borne out by empirical events.

Gellner posits that for industrial order to be maintained, there must be ‘homogeneity within political units’, which precludes ‘the “ethnic” identification of either advantage or disadvantage, economic or political.’\textsuperscript{215} Polish demands argued against homogeneity, and for recognition of ethnic difference in the polity as opposed to assimilation. Gellner’s point about economic underdevelopment was raised by Poles who ‘perceived ethnic inequalities with regard to access to and possession of economic and social resources…’\textsuperscript{216} in the Wileńszczyzna region. Their economic demands were nonetheless strongly linked to the memory of existing in the region and forming a distinct ethnic group throughout the ages.

Brubaker points out that within an emerging state, an ethnic group may define its identity in terms of its affiliation to a nation (a homeland) which lies outside of the territorial boundaries of the ‘nationalizing nationalism’ of the dominant ethnic group. He states that, ‘…despite their directly opposed orientations, homeland and nationalizing nationalisms share one key similarity: both are orientated to a “nation” distinct from the citizenry of the state.’\textsuperscript{217} This was not an option for Poles as Poland supported Lithuanian independence, and was unofficially opposed to declarations of autonomy on the part of its co-nationals.\textsuperscript{218} Citizens of Russia initially lay outside of Brubaker’s analysis because of their ascription to a non-ethnic ideologically based identity. As shown above, as the RSFSR started to detach itself from the Soviet Union in May 1990, the emergence of Russian nationalism associated with El’tsin and the democrats was supportive of Lithuanian demands for independence. The RCC in Lithuania was not premised upon defending Russian identity in an irredentist sense.

In contrast to Gellner, Smith’s analysis demonstrates how the myth of a single ethnic origin creates a national identity that integrates both culture and politics through a state apparatus which develops over time. Smith rightly points out that competing myths among ethnic groups who share the same territory may lead to conflict, because the myths will assert the indisput-

\textsuperscript{215} Gellner, op. cit., p.109.
\textsuperscript{216} Burant, ‘Polish-Lithuanian Relations’, p.79.
\textsuperscript{218} Burant, ‘Polish-Lithuanian Relations…’ , p.81.
Chapter 5

able right of one’s own ethnic group to predominate in the region. Lithuanians overlooked
the Slavic roots of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (as noted in Chapter Two) whilst
Poles (as noted above) frequently referred to the historical facts about this union.

Similarly to Gellner and Hobsbawm, Smith sees the state as being important because it is the
principal institution through which ‘national identity can achieve form.’ Russians who had
migrated from Russia commented that their identity had undergone change, because they no
longer felt Russian – although not fully Lithuanian. Poles never referred to their identity as
having been weakened as was indicated by their political activities and assertiveness between
1988-92. Russians who were unable to identify with a Russian state were therefore more in­
clined towards identifying with the Lithuanian state.

In general terms, Smith’s focus upon a monocultural theory of nationalism obviates the in­
tense political struggle over ethnic rights that may ensue when movements such as Sąjūdis
start to take control of the state. His emphasis on elites and masses in nationalist movements,
either in its ‘civic’ western version or its ‘ethnic’ variant has very little to say about inter­
ethnic relations such as those which were found in Lithuania in 1988-1992. In National
Identity, for example, Smith refers to ‘a third wave’ of ethnic nationalisms including those in
the USSR, and mentions that ‘a few movements, as a whole, have expressed separatist aspira­
tions, as with Sajudis in Lithuania’. He does not indicate the intense political struggle be­
tween and amongst Lithuanians, Russians and Poles in this expression of a ‘separatist aspira­
tion’. Like Gellner, Smith makes little reference to real political struggle in political and civil
society or to interaction amongst groups, and misses out on the unfolding of political struggle
and its consequences for the outcome of nationalist struggle.

Smith is more concerned with explaining that ethnic conflict is premised upon the ‘myth-
symbol complexes’ of historical memory and competing solidarities, than offering explana­
tions based upon concrete political situations to suggest ways of transcending it. His analysis
tends to celebrate the nation-state in which the very real problems of national minorities are

and New York, pp.146-174 (151).
222 Smith, National Identity, pp.54-68.
223 Ibid. p.138.
occluded by the use of abstract concepts. The project of Great Vilnius, for example, premised on the need to expand the city for development, has denied some Poles any possibility of claiming back land which they owned in the inter-war period (when the south-east of Lithuania belonged to Poland). From the Polish perspective the links with gerrymandering and ethnic dilution present real problems. Smith points out that ‘neglected, oppressed or marginalized ethnic communities or categories fuse their national grievances and aspirations with other non-national aspirations and grievances…’ He does not look at the effect upon this of minorities.

Anderson’s model gives priority to print-capitalism in facilitating national consciousness. When looking at the role of the print media in the USSR, Anderson’s term - ‘print-capitalism’ - is best changed to ‘print-socialism’ because all publishing houses were owned and controlled by the state, and the CPSU imposed censorship throughout society. In contrast to Anderson’s expectations, Russians in Lithuania who supported the RCC and its policies ‘imagined’ themselves as Russians despite not having their identity reflected back upon themselves through the symbolism of a Russian state. These were people who had been through a Russian language education system politically intent on imposing the official historiography of the Soviet state throughout the ‘Imagined Community’ of the boundaries of the Soviet Union.

As noted above, it seems likely that the majority of Russians in Lithuania supported Edinstvo for whom identity was very much based upon the Russian language and Soviet historiography (as Lavrinech, a co-founder of the RCC, pointed out). The Russian language was used on official forms, maps and signs throughout the structures of the Soviet Lithuanian state which enabled Russians to ignore their Lithuanian language equivalent. Russian language newspaper editors and journalists were associated with the leaders of Edinstvo, for example, A.P.Gel’bak, the Deputy Editor of Sovetskaia Litva. Nonetheless, the apathetic Russian response to Lithuanian nationalism shows that a powerful language of state will not necessarily maintain

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224 Popovski, ‘Citizenship in Lithuania’, p.112.
225 Smith, National Identity, p.145.
its identity fixed onto the administrative unit it serves if that state becomes unviable (especially if state identity has been based upon a failed political project of social engineering).

There is a resonance with Anderson in that Russian language newspapers, such as Ekho Litvy and Sovetskaia Litva contained much information about the locality, Lithuania, as well as referring to Moscow. Sovetskaia Litva carried both the name of Lithuania and of the broader federation in its title. The Russian-language edition of Atgimimas, the Lithuanian nationalist newspaper, was published in the Russian language by Sąjūdis and widely read (as noted in Chapter Four). In contrast, Poles had veered towards Russian under Soviet rule, but from 1989 onwards started to increase the stock of newspapers which were published in the Polish language. Nonetheless, throughout communist rule, local newspapers, such as Zavetv Lenina, had concentrated on the locality and perhaps helped to reinforce the strong identification of Poles with the region of Wileńszczyzna.

Hobsbawm’s argument is based upon the ultimate dissolution of ethnic difference because of his underlying assumption that capitalism will subsume the ‘negative’ and ‘divisive’ nationalist movements of the late twentieth century. The latter are superficially based upon ‘ethnicity’ and language, and represent fear of the social and economic changes brought about by the erosion of national economies over which the national state now exercises little control. His analysis is teleological and leads him to reject the emancipatory aspect of twentieth century nationalism which clearly was an integral part of Sąjūdis’ opposition to Soviet rule, and provided Poles in Lithuania with a political party to defend their ethnic rights. He misses out too on the resilience of ethnic identity - the Polish minority was poor, ill-educated and with a weakened intelligentsia, but assimilation was always resisted. His analysis is ineffectual because in predicting the demise of nationalism it makes no recommendations for multicultural states or the very real problems of minorities.

As noted in the Introduction, theorists of democratization have also had little to say about minorities in the process of the transition towards democracy. Linz and Stepan, for example, point out that the classic work of O’Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead (Transitions from Au-
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Authoritarian Rule) which focused on southern Europe and Latin America contained 'virtually no
discussion of stateness problems or even of nationalism.'²³¹ Although Linz and Stepan con­sider that problems of 'stateness' can arise not only over territory but entitlement to citizen­ship,²³² the provision of an inclusive Citizenship Law in Lithuania was not a progenitor of re­duced conflict (although a necessary condition for democracy). As noted in Chapter 4, Hunt­ington's depiction of transplacement failed to incorporate the concept of ethnicity into his analysis.

In Lithuania, minorities reacted in different ways to Lithuanian nationalism, and this had con­sequences for the process of democratization. Poles remembered themselves as a former
dominant majority as exemplified in their depiction of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
and the memory of being in possession of Vilnius. They were prepared to defend their rights
as an ethnic group despite having become weakened and marginalized during the period of
Soviet rule. Russians had much more recent memories of being a dominant majority, but ex­cluded themselves from political society because of their strong identification with the ideol­ogy of Marxism-Leninism. As the Soviet Union started to disintegrate, it was increasingly dif­ficult to be a Soviet person in Lithuania when there were no Soviet people in Moscow. This
undermined their moral and capacity to resist as the former dominant majority succumbed to
rule by Lithuania.

²³¹ Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, op. cit. fn 3, p.16.
²³² Ibid. p.16.

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Chapter 6

Conclusion

Here in the first two sections I shall review the established theories of nationalism and of democratization which I have considered in this thesis in relation to Lithuania. In the final section I will present my own views on the relationship between nationalism and democratization in Lithuania.

Theories of nationalism

How far does my analysis which looks at political and social events in a brief, albeit dynamic, period of time (1988-92) match up to the theories of nationalism of Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Anthony Smith or with the theory of Imagined Communities of Benedict Anderson, and how do these theories help us to understand empirical events in the study? Admittedly, my analysis is not concerned with very long-term trends of the type depicted by the above theorists. Issues related to the theories are best illustrated by reference to the Historical Self-Image of Lithuania, ethnic minorities, industrialization and the press.

Chapter 2 clearly demonstrates the importance of history for Lithuanian nationalists, but what does it tell us about the relationship, if any, between the past (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, its incorporation into the Russian Empire, the First Republic, the LSSR) and the independent Republic of Lithuania after September 1991? Is Lithuania a product of the longue durée as depicted by Gellner and Hobsbawm for whom the exigencies of economic development and industrialization render almost meaningless any link with the pre-modern past? Does Smith’s depiction of ethnic consciousness have more relevance for the Lithuanian case?

One problem of relating empirical events in Lithuania in the period 1988-92 to the above theories is that in the Lithuanian case the nationalist movement, Sąjūdis, emerged from underground, and referred back to a prior period of independence (1918-1940) to justify its claims to independence and statehood. Hobsbawm’s argument in the last Chapter of Nations and Nationalism Since 1780 shows clearly that he would ascribe Lithuania’s independence drive to a reaction against the forces of modernisation and globalisation. Nonetheless, what
the political events of 1988 show, as depicted through the historical memory of Lithuanian nationalists, is not only the importance of the First Republic as a model of ethnic Lithuanian control over the state, but a legal case for referring back to the occupation of Lithuania in 1940 by the Soviet Union. The arguments put forward by Sąjūdis for independence were based upon a return to a democratic constitution that had been in place in the First Republic (in practice up until 1926).

Lithuania wanted to join the world politically, economically and socially given that the Soviet Union had imposed severe restrictions on the ability of its citizens to interact with the outside world (let alone allow western investment). As political events pointed to the impending disintegration of the Soviet Union, even those who had accepted the idea of a Soviet people were forced to look backwards towards a more ethnically-based identity which had existed throughout the Soviet period.

As depicted in the Introduction, the creation of a Lithuanian state in 1918, does not, on the empirical evidence available, seem to mesh with the materialistic concerns of Gellner and Hobsbawn. Of course, this is not to say that economic prosperity was not in the long-term a goal of Lithuanian nationalists, indeed in the period 1918-1940 ‘the laying of an industrial foundation in Lithuania had begun.’ Nonetheless, the driving force, the underlying impetus, was given by international considerations such as the collapse of Empire, the civil war between Reds and Whites, and foreign intervention.

These had far greater consequences for a future Lithuanian state than the long-term trend of industrialization and capitalist development. The intelligentsia, of peasant background, who wanted the state to be ‘culturally’ Lithuanian were prepared to fight and die for their cause which perhaps they would not do so for a privileged position in the labour force (as Gellner might have expected). I think it is viable to say that in 1918 Lithuanians formed an *ethnie* in Smith’s terms because their consciousness did seem to fit Smith’s criteria of shared historical

1 Alfonsas Eidintas, Vytautas Žalys and Alfred Erich Senn, Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918-1940, ed. Edvards Tuskenis, Basingstoke and London, 1997, p.116.
memories, myth of common origin, association with a homeland, a collective name, shared
cultural elements, and a sense of solidarity (as discussed in Chapter 2).

The Soviet-Lithuanian Republic was from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism created as
a concession to the cultural identity of ethnic Lithuanians in order to control its political
expression. Stalin appreciated the strength of Lithuanian nationalism and wanted to win it
over to the Soviet Union by taking ‘the historic capital’ Vilnius from Poland and giving it to
Lithuania. The First Secretary of the CPL, Antanas Sniečkus, was concerned to defend the
ethnically Lithuanian nature of his Republic which he saw as threatened by Moscow’s
policies of industrialization which would have led to the large-scale immigration of Slav
settlers into the area. After Stalin’s death, when industrialization could no longer be deferred,
Sniečkus was able to take advantage of Khrushchev’s policy of decentralization to make sure
that factories were placed throughout Lithuania and not concentrated in one particular area.
He thus avoided the situation in Tallinn and Riga where there is a far larger Russian
proportion of the population.

What is apparent about the period from 1988 is that the nationalistic historical self-image of
Lithuania (as depicted in Chapter 2) had a resonance at large despite 50 years of Soviet
occupation. In his theory, Smith argues that nationalist movements are likely to be more
successful if their claims resonate with the historical memories of the population. Here
Smith’s argument is amply justified by the case of Lithuania from 1988. There was an instant
response to memories of the First Republic, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the deportations,
collectivization, the Partisan War and the legacy of Sniečkus which were all publicly debated
in the media. The fact that there was a network of newspapers (Anderson’s point) which
could be used to deploy the nationalist cause in Lithuania undoubtedly contributed towards
the dissemination and strengthening of nationalist argument.

Whilst Lithuanian nationalists found resonance in their propaganda with these positive
aspects of Lithuanian history as Smith would have expected, they ‘forgot’ those aspects of
Lithuanian history which did not confirm their ideological view. Debate about the Holocaust
during glasnost was marginalized, or if referred to, Lithuanians failed to debate the role they
played in anti-Semitic autonomous actions. Why was this? As noted in Chapter 2, a phrase

much employed by Squüdis to describe the history of Lithuania’s relationship with its ethnic minorities was a tradition of ‘tolerance’, and that Lithuania’s Jews had contributed greatly towards Lithuanian culture. Rowell has noted that ‘the acknowledgement of local traditions...contributed to the cohesion of ethnically, politically and religiously diverse elements within the Grand Duchy.' Thus Lithuanian opinion-makers in order to justify their claims to being tolerant brought into play an image of a medieval state where the rulers had allowed for diversity, and praised the democratic nature of the First Republic whilst omitting any serious debate about the period after the 1926 coup.

The reason for covering-up the Lithuanian role in the Holocaust, a shameful and tragic period in recent history, was to safeguard the role of Lithuanians as ‘perpetual victims’. Lithuanian nationalists aimed to project an image of a democratic Lithuania which would rally ethnic Lithuanians and minorities alike to the cause of independence. This is not to suggest that the use of an idealized image of Lithuania’s past was purely instrumental rather the nationalist ideologues undoubtedly believed and were motivated by the self-image that they were clinging to.

Turning to the question of industrialization, the experience of Lithuania does not fit with Gellner’s model. Contrary to Gellner’s expectations, the complaint raised by Lithuanian nationalists against the Soviet regime was that industrialization had brought in its wake an increase in immigration into the country. In Latvia and Estonia where industrialization pre-dated that of Lithuania and was more intense, the level of immigration in the Soviet period had been much higher. Moreover, industrialization in Lithuania had neglected the area of Wilenszczyzna in south-east Lithuania (given to Lithuania by Stalin) where Poles resided which suggests that territorial aspirations were not necessarily conducive to developing the infrastructure of a locality. These examples suggest that industrialization, far from increasing homogeneity, actually opens up the labour force to diversity.

The Lithuanian communists clearly feared that the increased use of the Russian language in industry, whether through immigration or through the industrialization of the Polish areas, would ultimately challenge the leading role of the Lithuanian language in Lithuanian society.

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and hence the special position of ethnic Lithuanians in the Republic. In fact, Lithuanian communist leaders actively sought to slow down the rate of industrialization in order to maintain as far as possible ethnic Lithuanian homogeneity.

Poles demonstrated that they had a strong local traditional ethnic identity despite marginalization in the LSSR and repression by Stalin during the Soviet period. In contrast to Russians, whose identity had been subsumed into a Soviet identity which was now threatened by the disintegration of the USSR, Poles mobilized more intensely and showed much greater levels of coherence and co-operation because of their roots in an ethnically-based past.

The Russian Cultural Centre’s decision to work with Sąjūdis, and support for Sąjūdis from within the Polish community were examples of inter-ethnic co-operation which is omitted from Gellner’s account of nationalism.

While Anderson may be right to say that a press is a pre-condition of modern national identity the converse does not follow. The Soviet press portrayed a Soviet identity but when the Soviet state began to break down and Soviet identity was being undermined the Soviet press ceased to provide a unifying function in the USSR as a whole. In Lithuania, the official Soviet Lithuanian press became a battleground which was won at an early stage by the supporters of Lithuanian independence and hence shored up the struggle of the nationalists.

Theories of Democratization

One general point that emerges regarding theories of democratization of the state is that they are concerned primarily with the internal factors influencing the state as a unit whereas this thesis is concerned with the democratization of a geographical part of the state, the Lithuanian Republic within the Soviet Union. The impetus for glasnost was given by Gorbachev and subsequent political action in Lithuania was very much a result of the elections called for by Moscow. The CPL’s decision to secede from the CPSU thus precipitating the disintegration of the CPSU was based upon the need to compete in elections with Sąjūdis in 1990, a further result of perestroika in Moscow.

Linz and Stepan’s implication that all-Union elections would have reined in Lithuanian nationalism was not upheld by empirical events because as shown in Chapter 4, the March 1989 elections to the CPD of the USSR were seen as already having a legitimacy in
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Lithuania. It was after these elections that Lithuanian representatives to the CPD who were mainly drawn from Sąjūdis were given permission to sit in the Seimas where in tandem with the CPL they started to pass policy to prepare the state for independence. Contrary to Linz and Stepan’s macro-level of analysis, which states that the March 1989 elections to the CPD ‘were not multiparty’¹⁴, in reality at the micro-level in Lithuania where Sąjūdis was a registered movement a de facto multi-party system existed. As argued in Chapter 4, the 1989 elections did constitute the founding elections for Lithuania. The sequencing of Republic and all-Union elections with which Linz and Stepan are so preoccupied would have made no difference in Lithuania.

On the other hand, the transition in Lithuania is a fairly classic case of the process of what Huntington calls ‘transplacement’, some leading members of the ruling party joined the nationalist movement while remaining in their Party positions, and the Party itself split into conservatives (pro-Union) and reformers (pro-independence). The transfer of power was negotiated between the CPL and Sąjūdis, and indeed, members of Sąjūdis were also prominent in the CPL as, for example, when Kazimiera Prunskienė, who sat on the Council of Sąjūdis, was invited to join the CPL Buro after December 1989 when the CPL had seceded from the CPSU. The transition process was facilitated by the fact that the leading bodies of both the CPL and Sąjūdis were overwhelmingly ethnic Lithuanian.

Nationalism and Democratization in Lithuania

The foregoing analysis has clearly shown that Lithuanians comprise a distinct ethnie as defined by Anthony Smith because of their firm belief in forming a historical community throughout the centuries bound together by a myth of common descent and ancestry, shared memories, tradition, symbolism, values and language. There are both primordial and perennial images of the community alongside distinct dates for the development of the Lithuanian tribes into statehood and mighty Empire. Vilnius is integral to the identity of Lithuanians which historical memory regards as their ancient capital founded by Grand Duke Gediminas in the fourteenth century.

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The strong identification of Lithuanians with an ethnic past had consequences for their reaction to the introduction of glasnost and perestroika. Gorbachev’s expectation was that perestroika would initiate a greater degree of liberalization throughout all institutions of the CPSU. In Lithuania, the nationalist movement, Sąjūdis, acknowledged right from its inception in June 1988 that its goal was an independent Lithuania. The weak lack of identification of Lithuanians with the Soviet state was shown by the even division of the 36 members of the Sąjūdis Initiative Group into communists and non-communists. From comments and discussion on Soviet rule which emanated from within the communist infrastructure and public discussion it was clear that there was a perception that Moscow was an external enemy which had to be overcome. One way of doing this was to utilize the external enemy’s own project of reform to break away from Lithuania’s involuntary union with Moscow. Sąjūdis therefore supported glasnost and perestroika as a means of bringing about both nationalism and independence.

Lithuanian nationalists struggled to promote liberalization and by so doing, opened up the parameters of Gorbachev’s project to democratization which could be used as a tool to separate Lithuania from the Soviet Union. The strength of Lithuanian national identity retained throughout the period of Soviet occupation was a causal factor in the promotion of democracy. The desire to be free from oppression was inextricably bound up with an unfolding interaction between nationalism and democratization. Sąjūdis was able to challenge unremittingly the boundaries of Moscow’s reform programme, because the historical self-image of Lithuania was related to a community of people whose fortune had been mediated by contact with outsiders, but who were nonetheless distinctive in their special role in being different and alone.

Lithuanians have a strong image of being geographically as well as culturally at the centre of European civilization linked to a mystic past of the Indo-European roots of the Lithuanian language at the dawn of civilization - ‘the metaphysical forefatherland of Europe’. The linear progression of Lithuania throughout the centuries showed that its special role as the nurturer of European culture could not be sustained in its encounters with other nations. Its own unique culture was undermined and brought to the point of extinction by contact with its western neighbour, Poland. Related to this tragedy was the image which Lithuanians had to endure that cultural disintegration was not brought about by conquest and military might, but by wanton design on the part of Lithuania’s ruler, Jogaila. Its political leadership was
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therefore suspect and had to be watched carefully in case of further collusion with overtly friendly but culturally threatening powers.

The image of the West as a potentially harmful influence surfaced in the period of glasnost when Lithuanian nationalists cautioned against the West’s corruption and materialism and the culpability of Poland. The West had also treated Lithuania with contempt, as when Lithuanians had waited desperately for its intervention in the period following the Soviet occupation. Landsbergis’ comments to a rally to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (August 1988) depicted the idea that the West was unworthy of Lithuania which had a higher moral standing as a bearer of an ancient culture and language, valiantly struggling to preserve this against all odds.

Despite Lithuania’s subjugation to Poland and the diminution of its culture, the Lithuanians were clever and resolute enough to safeguard the kernel of their culture by bestowing onto the peasantry a special role as the hibernators of their language and traditions. There is an image of the peasantry, quietly living out their lives under Polish and then Tsarist oppression, biding their time, and waiting for a fortuitous moment to propagate Lithuanian identity. Through sheer hard work and dedication, the peasantry laid the foundations of the nineteenth century nationalist movement by providing a unique model of economic development which shored up Lithuanian culture as it came into contact with the modern world. The peasantry also contributed towards the leadership of the nationalist movement at the turn of the century.

There is a strong image of the inter-war Republic as a haven of harmony where the populace could bathe in the plushness of their surroundings because they were furnished by the culture of Lithuanians who were in charge of the state. It also gave Lithuanians a chance to continue with their special role as the harbingers of European civilization (a role which might have waned but had never been extinguished). This they did by making special provisions for minorities, so showing to the world their integrity and moral worth. This image was maintained despite the decline into authoritarianism which, when compared to what had come before (Polish and Russian subjugation), was still preserving Lithuanian culture from outside predators and external enemies. Freedom was therefore equated with the defence of Lithuanian culture even if it meant authoritarian rule.
The onset of the Second World War brought about severe disruption which had two serious consequences for the historical self image of Lithuanians. The decision of some Lithuanians to work within the Soviet system was reminiscent of Jogaila’s betrayal along with the Lithuanian nobility who had come to adopt the Polish language and traditions. Yet again, the Lithuanian leadership was merging itself with another culture- this time Soviet - which in its early stages had participated in the ‘genocide’ of its own people (through deportations and ‘class war’). An equally horrendous but intrinsically more damaging ‘betrayal’ preceded the surrender to Soviet hegemony. This was the slaughter of Jewish citizens of Lithuania, because the perpetrators were themselves Lithuanian who indicted Soviet citizens for acts of atrocities. Lithuanians had therefore betrayed themselves, because their special role as the keeper of all things civilized and unique had become indefensible.

The memory of this knowledge in the period of glasnost was suppressed, because unlike other memories, its very utterance would threaten the survival of the Lithuanian nation by bringing into question its moral worth. The portrayal of Lithuanians as innocent victims suffering under Polish, Russian and Soviet rule would have to be relinquished. Just as the peasantry had done before them, nationalists during 1988 held back and watched the development of perestroika, before striking back at the Empire which had occupied them in 1940, leading to a declaration of Independence in 1990 before both Latvia and Estonia (also victims of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact). Lithuanians could draw on their image of a Great Warrior and state tradition when Lithuania was Pagan and alone, but successful, and in this were aided by their fear of extinction as a result of the encroaching policies of Russification which were again threatening their existence in the late twentieth century.

The need to survive was dependent upon Lithuania taking control of its own culture, and in this Lithuania brought to the fore images of its tradition of resistance to occupying powers. Of particular relevance was the memory of nationalist Catholic priests, often drawn from the peasantry, who had preserved the Lithuanian language from the Tsarist policy of Russification by publishing books in Prussia in the Lithuanian language from where book smugglers then brought them across the border into Lithuania. The interaction between the clergy and nationalism helped to offset the image that Catholicism had been instrumental to Lithuania’s demise having been introduced into the country through Jogaila’s marriage into the Polish nobility.
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As Lithuanian nationalists started to take over the Soviet state, the Lithuanians engaged in debates about the distribution of citizenship rights, and unlike neighbouring Latvia and Estonia, introduced a Citizenship Law which gave all residents on the territory of Lithuania the choice of becoming citizens of Lithuania. In their discussions, nationalists had evoked the imagery of Poles as being threatening for Lithuanian culture, and excluded references to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth because this represented Slavic control and tutelage. Nationalists also recalled the illegal occupation of Vilnius in 1920 by the Polish army leaving the Lithuanians bereft of what they considered to be their ancient historical capital. Poles were sometimes referred to as polonized Lithuanians who must be brought back to their Lithuanian roots or as having succumbed to a process of Sovietization, and therefore harmful because of their collusion with Moscow. Lithuanians depicted the more recent and empirical evidence of the destruction of their cities, countryside and culture as a result of Soviet occupation. Russians were portrayed as ‘vagabonds’ - wandering people without any real roots who had lost their identity to Soviet domination.

These images were tempered by another strand in nationalist thinking based upon the portrayal of the mighty state of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a locus for religious and cultural tolerance. Related to this description was the desire to point out that Lithuania’s former glory could be attained by a Lithuania that was reduced in size but not in status. This perspective afforded Lithuania several opportunities. In stressing tolerance in 1988, Lithuania could again link up with its role as the bearer of European civilization as evidenced by its liberal policies towards minorities during the medieval period and the First Republic of Lithuania. It also allowed Lithuania to be small (in the geographical sense) and innocent, because in stressing tolerance there was no need for the image of victimhood to be taken away from them.

The favourable demographic situation in Lithuania where Lithuanians comprised 80 percent of the population was probably a necessary condition to the introduction of inclusive citizenship in November 1989 accompanied by a Law on National Minorities. The ‘Lithuanian nation’ and its ideologists could take control over Lithuanian civic space and dispel the image of threatening extinction alongside the recognition of the right of ethnic groups to have their own cultural associations and media with state support for education and culture. Thus the ‘Lithuanian nation’ was able to integrate the ‘nation of Lithuania’ into its quest for independence and democratization. The image of Lithuanians in their previous state
forms as having enjoyed good relations with minorities could be drawn upon in discussions which proposed a policy of inclusive citizenship. Nonetheless, Lithuanians quickly found that a policy of inclusive citizenship and cultural provisions for minorities as a portrayal of their liberalism was not sustainable in the period of democratization.

Since the introduction of the Lithuanian Language Law in November 1988, ethnic Poles within Lithuania, along with Russians, had contested the right of Lithuanians to take control over the state. The difference between the two groups was that as the process of democratization progressed, Poles became more organized and politically assertive, quick to identify Lithuanians as the internal enemy, whilst Russian identity was increasingly quietistic as Soviet identity in Moscow diminished. Poles were able to draw on the memory of being the dominant partner in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and of being in control of Vilnius during the inter-war period. From the Lithuanian perspective, declarations of autonomy by Poles who were geographically concentrated in the south east of Lithuania including the raion of Vilnius, were seen as a threat to the integrity of their state and historical capital.

From 1988 onwards, when Lithuanian was made the sole official language of the Republic, a right enshrined in the Soviet Constitution but not realized in practice, Lithuanians demonstrated that whatever tools related to democratization were held by Moscow would be used to promote independence and utilized to the fullest. Sąjūdis used glasnost to expose the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as an instrument of oppression wielded by the would be Soviet democratizers, and pursued every opening to revoke its consequences. The elections to the CPD in 1989 returned a majority of nationally minded politicians in Lithuania, and these elected delegates used their position to promote legislation (outside of Gorbachev’s directive) in the LSS, presided over by Lithuanian communists, which was required for the foundations of independence and democracy.

Such was the strength of nationalist passion that the legislation which changed Article 6 of the Constitution abolishing the leading role of the Communist Party, and thereby recognizing autonomous parties and self-organizing groups, was merely acknowledging the situation that had proceeded apace in the Republic. The LSS also guaranteed freedom of religious worship for all, thus showing that Lithuanian’s nationalist movement was receptive towards its Catholic roots often linked to dissident groups, such as the Lithuanian Freedom League,
Conclusion

which had helped to keep alive the memory of independent Lithuania, and helped to radicalize the Lithuanian national movement in 1988. The CPL’s decision to leave the CPSU at the end of 1989 was important for both nationalism and democracy. It showed that Lithuanian communists shared the commitment to taking Lithuania out of the union with Moscow, and enabled the CPL to evolve into a left-wing party with a solid constituency of support in the Republic, balanced out by a strong right-wing party of the former nationalists.

All these above groups, dissidents, Sąjūdis and nationalists within the CPL, had already shown in 1987 and 1988 that Lithuanian history and culture was the driving force of the independence movement, and used this as a basis to make changes in the spheres of language and education. Nationalist educators promoted Lithuanian schools and stripped the curricula of the contents of Marxism-Leninism. Ecology groups challenged Moscow because the latter’s professed concern about the environment was used as a tool to show that pollution was a consequence of Moscow’s own policies, from which Lithuanians were completely debarred. The solution, Lithuanian control over its own environment and economy, was portrayed as a necessary act to inhibit Moscow’s ‘genocidal’ intentions against the Lithuanian people which was reminiscent of Polonization and the policies of Russification under Tsarist rule.

Lithuanians showed reluctance to meet any of the minority demands for increased cultural parity whilst uncertain of Moscow’s influence in determining the outcome of Lithuania’s independence movement. Conservatives in Moscow, together with their allies in Vilnius, were unsuccessful in January 1991 in their attempt to mobilize minority discontent against Lithuanian independence. This stemmed from the strong identification of Lithuanians with the Lithuanian Soviet state which had brought about a change of leadership in the republican elections of March 1990. After the violence of January 1991, Russians within Lithuania disassociated themselves from Moscow’s policies and Edinstvo was severely diminished as a political force. Polish political groups made declarations of loyalty to the Lithuanian state. The Lithuanian government responded by introducing amendments to the Law on National Minorities, because evidence suggested that in terms of the battle for allies and consciousness, Moscow was failing, and that Lithuania was probably secure in its territorial boundaries. The collapse of communism in August 1991 showed that Soviet identity in Lithuania was indeed a spent force.
Conclusion

The Lithuanian experience of nationalism and democratization shows the benefit of linking a Language Law with a Citizenship Law and Law on National Minorities which would help to offset minority discontent (in knowing that the state gave credence to the exercise of languages other than that of the dominant ethnic group). It clearly demonstrates that a historically indigenous community such as the Poles in Lithuania will question the right of the nationalizing nationalists to have sole control over the apparatus of the state. The Lithuanian experience was unique amongst the Baltic States in that by focusing on a historical image of tolerance the Lithuanian nation was willing to make concessions to the ‘nation of Lithuania’ in order to win the democratic struggle.

The struggle for democracy was used as a tool by Lithuanian nationalists to prise apart Lithuania from the Soviet Union. The Lithuanian path towards democracy demonstrated how parts of the state related to history and culture, language, education and symbolism were more readily available to nationalists than others (such as the security apparatus), and that the more easily accessible parts could be used by nationalists to promote and shore up liberalization and democratization. The impetus for doing so in the Lithuanian case was derived from the knowledge that as democratization advanced, there was greater opportunity to bring about independence.

Democratization is about breaking up a totalitarian state and replacing it with competitive multi-party elections, the rule of law, and free media. These criteria matched the aims of Sąjūdis and were not just implemented in order to win over the minorities to the cause of independence. Nonetheless, Sąjūdis wanted an ethnic democracy and sought a means of getting it not through explicit forms of ethnic democracy eg selective citizenship, but by Lithuanians maintaining control by virtue of their overwhelming demographic majority.

Therefore these were not instrumental aims as there was a genuine desire for democracy as in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and not only a desire for independence. Democracy undoubtedly was a core value. What makes the Lithuanian case so interesting is that it does present nationalism in a multi-ethnic state and shows that there are two strands: a genuine desire for democracy and the willingness to incorporate minorities into Lithuanian civic space. The nationalist movement was always certain that it could maintain the ethnic nature of the Lithuanian state, ie Lithuanian would be the official language and ethnic Lithuanians would dominate the political system.
Conclusion

I hope that in analysing nationalism and democratization together I have made a contribution towards the understanding of the relationship between nationalism and democracy, and the interaction between the two. In Lithuania, nationalism not only facilitated but was a principal spur to democratization from below, and democratization also promoted conditions for the growth of nationalism and the achievement of independence.
Appendix

The Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania

The Republic of Lithuania shall guarantee to all its citizens regardless of ethnicity, equal political, economic, and social rights and freedoms, shall recognise their ethnic identity, the continuity of their culture, and shall promote ethnic consciousness and its self-expression.

People of all ethnic groups residing in Lithuania must observe the Fundamental Law of the Republic of Lithuania and other laws, protect Lithuania’s state sovereignty and territorial integrity, contribute to the establishment of an independent, democratic state of Lithuania, and respect its State language, culture, traditions, and customs.

Article 1. The Republic of Lithuania, abiding by the principles of national equality and humanism, shall guarantee to all ethnic minorities residing in Lithuania free development, and shall respect every nationality and its language.

Any discrimination with regard to race, nationality, language or other aspects related to a nationality shall be prohibited and punished under the procedures provided by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania.

Article 2. The state shall provide equal protection for all the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, regardless of their nationality.

The Republic of Lithuania, taking into account the interests of all ethnic minorities and on the basis and procedure established by its laws, shall guarantee them the right:

- to get support from the state for the development of their culture and education;
- to be educated in their native language, providing them with the conditions to have preschool institutions, classes and secondary schools, as well as groups, faculties and subsidiaries at institutions of higher education to train teachers and other specialists needed by ethnic minorities (amended on January 29, 1991);
- to have mass media in one’s native language;
- to profess any or no religion, and to perform religious or folk observances in one’s native language;
- to form ethnic cultural organisations;
- to establish contact with persons of the same ethnic background abroad;
- to be represented in government bodies at all levels on the basis of universal, equal, and direct election;
Appendix

to hold any post in state or government bodies, as well as in enterprises, institutions or organisations.

**Article 3.** Depending on demand and possibilities, Lithuanian institutions of higher education and specialised secondary schools, through contract with state and public organisations, shall train specialists to respond to the needs of particular ethnic cultures. When necessary, the citizens of Lithuania may be sent to study abroad.

**Article 4.** In offices and organisations located in areas with substantial minority groups, the language spoken by that minority shall be used alongside the state language (amended on January 29, 1991).

**Article 5.** Information signs used in the areas indicated in Article 4 of this law may be both in the Lithuanian language and in the language used by that minority (amended on January 29, 1991).

**Article 6.** The historical and cultural monuments of ethnic minorities are considered as a part of the cultural heritage of Lithuania and shall be protected by the state.

**Article 7.** The cultural organisations of ethnic minorities shall also have the right to establish educational and cultural institutions on their own money. The state shall provide support for the organisations and institutions which serve these minorities' educational and cultural purposes (amended on January 29, 1990).

**Article 8.** Every citizen of the Republic of Lithuania upon obtaining a passport shall be free to identify his ethnicity on the basis of the nationality of his parents or of one of his parents.

**Article 9.** The public and cultural organisations of ethnic minorities shall be established, function, and be dissolved or terminated according to the procedures established by law (amended on January 29, 1990).

**Article 10.** On the decisions of the Supreme Council and local Councils of the Republic of Lithuania public committees of ethnic minorities may be established under the said bodies. The composition of said committees shall be co-ordinated with the public organisations of ethnic minorities. The powers of these committees shall be established by the bodies that have formed them.

Vilnius, November 23, 1989
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Note: Sąjūdis reconstituted itself as a political party, the Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives, after its electoral defeat in October 1992.

Antanavičiūtė, Kazimieras. Vilnius, 9 March 1997. Antanavičius, an economist, was a member of the group Žinija (‘Knowledge’), which comprised economists and philosophers who engaged in debates with the public to further glasnost and perestroika. Antanavičius was elected in 1989 as a Sąjūdis Deputy to the USSR Congress. He became Chair of the Social-Democratic Party of Lithuania on its emergence in 1989.


Błaszkiewicz, Adam. Vilnius, 14 May 1997. Błaszkiewicz was a member of the ZPL, and later headmaster of a Polish School built in 1991 in Vilnius through fundraising efforts on the part of the Polish community in Lithuania and abroad. He remains active in Polish politics.
Bibliography


Čepaitis, Virgilijus. Vilnius, 9 December 1996; 6 February 1997; 17 February 1997; 3 March 1997. Čepaitis occupied a powerful role as the head of the Secretariat of Saįdis, the apex of its organizational structure. He resigned from politics in October 1991 after accusations that he had been a KGB informer in the 1980s.

Gražulis, Vladimiras. Vilnius, 17 April 1997. Gražulis was Chair of the Commission of National Minorities attached to the Saįdis Coordinating Council of the city of Vilnius. As ethnic associations started to emerge throughout 1988, the Lithuanian Inter-National Coordinating Association (LICA) was established at the end of 1988 with Gražulis as the unofficial Chair. Gražulis headed the Lithuanian Department of Refugees in 1997.

Hlebowicz, Piotr. Vilnius, 5 May 1997. Hlebowicz belonged to the Polish organization ‘Fighting Solidarity’, and had contacts with the ZPL, as well as the Lithuanian Freedom League and Young Lithuania (the youth wing of the Lithuanian Freedom League).


Inozemtsev, Artem. Vilnius, 6 May 1997. Inozemtsev is a Russian actor, and a founding member of the RCC in Lithuania.

Jankowski, Mr. Šalčininkai, 14 May 1997. Jankowski was the Head of the Education Department in Šalčininkai local government in 1987, and later a member of Saįdis. He was working in local government in Šalčininkai in 1997.


Kopelmanis, Dimitrii. Vilnius, 14 February 1997. Kopelmanis was associated with the Lithuanian Freedom League, and has worked in committees in the Seimas as a representative of the Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives.

Landsbergis, Vytautas. Vilnius, 15 May 1997. Landsbergis, a Professor of Music, became leader of Saįdis and Chair of the Supreme Council in the period 1990-1992, but was commonly referred to as ‘President’. He is leader of the Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives, and is currently Chair of the Seimas in Lithuania.

Lavrinech, Pavel. Vilnius, 13 March 1997. Lavrinech, a professor at Vilnius University, was a founding member of the RCC and later its Director. He remains a leading figure in Russian cultural affairs.
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Maciejkianiec, Ryszard. 8 May 1997. Maciejkianiec was a founding member of the SSKPL, and a local party worker in the raions of Vilnius and Šalčininkai. He was Chair of the ZPL in the period 1994-1997, and remains active in Polish political life.

Mackevič, Zygmunt. Vilnius, 30 April 1997. Mackevič, an ethnic Pole, was Vice-President of the Scientific Society of Lithuanian Pathologists (1982-1990), and a member of the Seimas of Sąjūdis throughout 1988-1990. He became the Director of the Institute of Polish Culture in Vilnius (1990-1992), and was a Homeland-Union/Lithuanian Conservatives Deputy to the Seimas in 1997.

Martinkus, Vytautas. Vilnius, 20 February 1997. Martinkus was Chair of the Union of Writers in 1988, and helped organize a petition to protest against oil drilling in the Baltic in 1987.


Medvedev, Nikolai. Vilnius, 30 April 1997. Medvedev is an ethnic Russian who was elected to the CPD in 1989, as a representative of Sąjūdis, and is a Deputy of the Seimas of Lithuania.


Michniowa, Tatyana. Vilnius, 6 May 1997. Michniowa was a founding member of the RCC, and in 1997 represented the Russian community at the Department of National Minorities and Regional Problems.

Mincewicz, Jan. Vilnius, 8 May 1997. Jan Mincewicz, a teacher, was one of the founders of the SSKPL, and Chair of the Union of Poles 1991-1994. He was a Polish Deputy to the Seimas in 1997.


Okińczyc, Czesław. Vilnius, 26 November 1996. Okińczyc was a member of the ZPL, who was elected to the SC in 1990 under the Sąjūdis banner. He is active in Polish cultural affairs, and is head of Znad Wilii, a radio station based in Vilnius which broadcasts in Polish.

Ozolas, Romualdas. Vilnius, 14 April 1997. Ozolas joined Sąjūdis in 1988, and entered the Bureau of the CPL in 1989 after its secession from the CPSU. He was elected to the Supreme Council in 1990, where he became Deputy Prime Minister. Ozolas has subsequently formed the Centre Party in Lithuania, and is a Deputy to the Seimas.


Palewicz, Z. Šalčininkai, 14 May 1997. Palewicz was a Deputy Mayor of Šalčininkai, and remains active in local politics.

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Płokszto, Artur. Vilnius, 5 May 1997. Płokszto was a member of the ZPL, and editor of its newspaper *Nasha gazeta* between 1989-1992. He is a Deputy to the Seimas.


Prunskienė, Kazimiera. Vilnius, 4 December 1996. Prunskienė, an economist, was a leading member of *Sąjūdis* who in 1989 became Deputy Prime Minister of Lithuania. She became Prime Minister in March 1990, and although she resigned after the violence of January 1991 has remained active in political life.

Sakalas, Aloyzas. Vilnius, 13 May 1997. Sakalas was Chair of the *Sąjūdis* Coordinating Council for Vilnius, and is currently the leader of the Social Democratic Party in Lithuania.

Sasnauskas, Julius. Vilnius, 20 May 1997. Sasnauskas (a Catholic Priest known as Father Linas) was associated with the Lithuanian Freedom League in the period of glasnost after his return from exile in Siberia.

Šepetys, Lionginas. Vilnius, 10 March 1997; 19 May 1997. Šepetys was the Secretary for Ideology of the CPL, and Chair of the Supreme Soviet in the period up until March 1990.

Sienkiewicz, Jan. Vilnius, 12 May 1997. Sienkiewicz, a Polish journalist, was Chair of the SSKPL, and in 1989 became Chair of the ZPL. He has remained active in politics and in 1997 was a Deputy to the Seimas.

Sosnowski, Henryk. Vilnius, 12 May 1997. Sosnowski was a founder of the ‘Józefa Montvilia Polish Cultural Foundation in Lithuania’ established in October 1989, and a member of its Committee for the Protection of Monuments and Cemeteries. He is active in Polish cultural affairs.

Terleckas, Antanas. Vilnius, 20 May 1997. Terleckas has remained the leader of the Lithuanian Freedom League, and is active in political life.

Tučkus, Andrius. Vilnius, 20 March 1997. Tučkus was a member of the Lithuanian Freedom League, and later adviser to Landsbergis (Chair of the Seimas) in the Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives government of 1996.

Vaitiekūnas, Petras. Vilnius, 8 March 1997. Vaitiekūnas, a physicist, was an active member of *Sąjūdis*, who was involved in the publication of *Sąjūdis* material. He became an adviser to Algirdas Brazauskas after February 1993, and is currently working in the Lithuanian diplomatic corps.

Veisaitė, Irena. Vilnius, 7 March 1997. Veisaitė is a survivor of the Holocaust in Lithuania, and is engaged in extensive projects of the Soros Open Society Fund in Lithuania.

Vilkas, Leonardas. Vilnius, 20 February 1997. Vilkas was a member of the Lithuanian Freedom League, who is currently teaching at Warsaw University in Poland.


Žilėnas, Andrius. Vilnius, 29 September 1998. Žilėnas is a teacher of history at the secondary school level in Vilnius.