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Lithuanian Culture in the Conditions of Post-War Emigration (Literature and Fine Arts in Camps for Displaced Persons)*

As a result of World War II, some 50 million people were deprived of their homeland. Expelled, evacuated, imprisoned, or resettled in foreign countries, they were deprived of a permanent home.[1]

On November 9, 1943, the 44 Allied countries signed the Washington Treaty on the care for refugees and displaced persons. This is how a new structure, the United Nation Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), was created to deal with refugee problems more broadly. In the form of the English acronym, without translation into other languages, UNRRA was known around the world, primarily among refugees themselves.

The goals of the organization were the following:

1. To guarantee material assistance to refugees from UN member countries.

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[1] See: M. Proudfoot, *European Refugees 1939–1952*, London 1957.

2. To enable the return of prisoners, expellees, and refugees to their homelands.

3. To support the reconstruction of the destroyed home towns of the refugees.[2]

The term Displaced Persons (DP) first appeared in government memorandum no. 39 of the Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force dated November 19, 1944. In 1945, 5,846,000 people, including 58,805 Lithuanians, were recognized as Displaced Persons.

But to these 58,805 registered Lithuanians must be added those who, for some reason, could not apply for assistance from UNRRA. For example, of the 49,000 so-called Memelländer (residents of Little Lithuania), only 3% lived in UNRRA camps and received support. The archives of the council of residents of Little Lithuania listed 12,000 people as UNRRA members.[3] It can be said that in 1945 more than 70,000 Lithuanians stayed in Germany (the number of Latvian refugees in Germany was 94,730 or, according to other data, 111,495, while the number of Estonian refugees was 30,978).[4]

It can be debated whether the stated number (70,000) is accurate and definitive, whether it is large or small compared to the entire nation (3.5 million Lithuanians worldwide, including 355,000 abroad).[5] What is undeniable, however, is that this group, no matter how large or small it may seem to someone, had a special position and played a remarkable role in the entire history of all waves of Lithuanian emigration. This émigré group included the political and intellectual elite of the Lithuanian nation, almost all of its intelligentsia. The fugitives and refugees (*išeivijai*) from Lithuania, who in 1944 found themselves in the territory of the war-torn Third Reich and later in the first Displaced Persons (DP) camps in the west-

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[2] G. Woodbridge, *UNRRA – The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*, New York 1950, p. 23.

[3] See: "Kiek lituvių liko Vokietijoje?", in: *Lietuvninkų kalendorius 1952 metams*, Munich 1952, p. 71.

[4] V. Bartusevičius, "Die Litauer in Deutschland 1944–1850," in: N. Angermann and J. Tauber, eds., *Deutschland und Litauen. Bestandsaufnahmen und Aufgaben der historischen Forschung*, Lüneburg 1995, pp. 137–174. Here: p. 146.

[5] "Литовцы," in: *Народы мира. Историко-этнографический справочник*, Moscow 1988, p. 256.

ern occupation zones, were the most valuable group of Lithuanian nation in terms of education, experience, mentality, and activity.

The first problem for the refugees was to maintain their Displaced Person status and prove its legitimacy. As was clear from the very first article of UNRRA's constitution, and as was later emphasized many times – citizens of non-UN countries could not receive support from UNRRA. The Soviet Union considered Lithuanians to be Soviet citizens and supported their repatriation to Soviet Lithuania. The question of which country the Lithuanian refugees belonged to was of critical importance to them. Not immediately, but only in the supplement to Directive no. 40A, dated July 9, 1946, issued by the European branch of UNRRA, it was decided that the list of countries whose citizens could be considered Displaced Persons would also include the former residents of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.[6]

However, long before this decision and regardless of all agreements between the Allied countries, the threat of forced repatriation to the Soviet Union loomed over the Lithuanians in Germany like the sword of Damocles. Although the USA and Britain had already agreed in the spring of 1945 not to recognize the annexation of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union, this did not prevent either the USA or Britain from signing the US-Soviet and British-Soviet treaties later that same year, which stated that all DPs in the occupation zone should return to their homelands.

Not a word was mentioned about the specific situation of the Balts. The first such Soviet-American agreement was concluded as early as on February 11, 1945; the next agreement, concluded in Leipzig on May 22, 1945, supplemented the previous agreement by confirming that all Soviet citizens and Anglo-Americans were to be repatriated first, while other DPs were to be repatriated only when means of transportation were made available.[7] Also, both agreements did not mention how this provision applied to the residents of the Baltic states. Also, the French (the fourth occupying power) had absolutely no intention of making an exception for the Lithuanians (there were not many Latvians and Estonians in the French occupation

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[6] G. Woodbridge, *UNRRA...*, p. 399.
[7] E. Jahn, *Das DP-Problem. Eine Studie über ausländische Flüchtlinge in Deutschland*, Tübingen 1950, p. 43.

zone), so in their agreement with the Soviet Union on June 27, 1945, they pledged to send the Balts home as well. In general, the French government did not intend to follow the agreement too strictly, and according to Jacob-mayer's research[8] practically no Lithuanians were deported against their will to Soviet Lithuania, and the number of Lithuanians returning of their own accord was very small and was equal to 1,028 people.

However, the situation was still quite dangerous. On January 23, 1946, the Swedish government handed over 143 citizens of the Baltic states, participants in the Kurland war operations, to the Soviet Union. This event showed how fragile and dangerous the situation of refugees from the Baltic states was in post-war Europe.

It is also important to remember that only civilians could have the status of Displaced Persons. This caused serious difficulties for those refugees who had to prove that they were not members of any military units and did not take part in warfare. It was not until July 1946 that the United States Forces, European Theater (USFET) asked UNRRA to take under its wing Baltic and Polish prisoners of war who had served in the German Wehrmacht. UNRRA decided to accept only those persons who were confirmed not to be collaborators, war criminals, traitors, Volksdeutch, or German Balts, and furthermore only those who had been conscripted into the Wehrmacht against their will and had not taken part in the war effort. This issue must be taken into account in order to understand how far from the truth were the prevailing schemes of late Soviet propaganda, according to which UNRRA provided assistance in the DP camps to "helpers of the fascist occupiers" and "war criminals."

In fact, the "Soviet zone" was not very far from the places where Lithuanian refugees in Germany stayed – both geographically and in terms of worldview. Soviet liaison officers were often brought to the camps, where the door for the Soviet propaganda were open. Soviet literature, newspapers, and magazines were distributed in the camps, and Soviet propaganda films were shown. They promised exemption from punishment upon return to the homeland and a prosperous life at home. On August 3, 1947, the first

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8 W. Jacobmeyer, *Vom Zwangsarbeiter zum heimatlosen Ausländer. Die Displaced Persons in Deutschland 1945–1951*, Göttingen 1985; E. Jahn, *Das DP-Problem*, p. 89.

issue appeared of the Soviet propaganda newspaper *Tėvinės Balsas* [Voice of the homeland] published in Lithuanian (200 issues of the newspaper were published by 1953). The Soviet intelligence service also tried to recruit agents from among DPs.[9]

It took a considerable amount of time and, most importantly, consistency, moral courage, and humanitarianism in politics for the Western Allies to finally conclude that the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian refugees were not Soviet citizens and therefore were not subject to forced repatriation to the Soviet Union. The contribution of Lithuanian politicians-in-exile and former ruling circles and the Lithuanian diplomatic service to the development of this view should also be recognized.

It should be noted that from the start international law defined Displaced Persons as follows: "Civilians who, as a result of the war, found themselves outside their country, who, although returning to their countries or trying to find a new homeland, are unable to do so without assistance."[10]

This formula, which includes an alternative – returning or finding a new homeland – opened up the possibility for Lithuanians to seek assistance

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[9] I have no data on the effects of the agent recruitment operations, but I would like to cite an episode from my own experience. Back in the 1970s, the topic of my research was "Baltic artists in exile." The head of the Institute of Theory and History of Visual Arts of the Academy of Visual Arts of the USSR, where I worked at the time, Professor Lebedev, personally didn't mind, but he didn't want to take any risks and asked me to discuss the possibility and prospect of writing an academic paper on the subject at the Ideological Department of the Central Committee. At the Central Committee in Moscow, however, I received no guidance, as it was stated that the "comrades on the ground" knew the subject better, so I should go directly there (to Vilnius, Riga, and Tallinn) and ask for advice. So I went to Riga, where I had a meeting with a high government official at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, who listened to me very carefully. Hoping to receive permission and approval for my project, I told him that I had no intention of idealizing the activities of artists in exile, that I would also present their ideological tendencies that were hostile to the Soviet Union. "Yes, yes," said the official, "but how do you know who is actually our enemy and who is our friend? Do you know how many efforts have been made and resources have been used to recruit 'our people' in those circles? And you will now criticize them from Moscow, having no idea what a dangerous and important double role some of them played, and I have no right to give you the list of our secret collaborators among the émigrés" (no comment is necessary).

[10] The quote (translated from German) is given based on: V. Bartusevičius, *Die Litauer in Deutschland 1944–1850*, p. 147.

from international organizations, with no intention of returning to their homeland.

The first post-war stage of the history of Lithuanian refugees in Germany under the care of UNRRA lasted from April 15, 1945 to June 30, 1947. This stage mostly consisted of life in a camp. What were the DP camps? How was life organized there? These are important questions for the understanding of the conditions under which the culture of the young émigré community developed.

There were initially 169 DP camps in Germany, and refugees from Lithuania lived in 113 of them. The map "Lithuanian DP Camps in West Germany in 1948,"[11] which was later compiled and published in a book by Milda Danys, shows how dispersed these camps were in West Germany: from Flensburg in the north to Constance, Ravensburg, and Lake Constance in the south, near the Swiss border. Anyone living in Germany today could find on this map his or her locality, in which directly or next to which there was once a camp inhabited by Lithuanians. There were small camps (with a population of about 100), medium-sized camps (from 100 to 1,000 residents), and large camps (over 1,000 residents). The largest and most important camps for Lithuanians were located in Hanau, Schweinfurt, Scheinfeld, Schwäbisch Gmünd, Kempten, and near Munich and Augsburg.

In July 1947, 38,000 Lithuanians lived in DP camps in the American occupation zone, 27,000 in the British zone, and 5,000 in the French zone.[12] As can be seen, the French occupation zone contained a relatively small proportion of the Lithuanians, but their cultural activities, taking place partly under the care of the Lithuanian Consulate in Tübingen, were particularly intensive and effective – thanks precisely to that consulate and the French administrative structures of the Prisonniers-Deportes-Refugier (PDR). The moral "climate" that prevailed there was easier than in other zones, but the supply of goods and food by the American Red Cross was better organized in the American zone.

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[11] M. Danys, *DP. Lithuanian Emigration to Canada After the Second World War*, Toronto 1986, p. 47.

[12] V. K. Matranga, *Refugee Artists in Germany 1945–1950*, Chicago [1984].

The camps had a double significance in the history of Lithuanian emigration. They were not a paradise for the refugees and life in such camps was not easy. Human rights were often restricted and violated, so the "camp" period can by no means be idealized. Suffice it to mention that there was four square meters of living space for one person, and since the rooms in the former barracks were 30 to 40 square meters each, two to three families had to live in one room. Some buildings had been damaged by bombs and were only partially heated. The situation of the DPs in the camps was the worse, the more the view spread in the government circles that the DPs would be reluctant to return to their homes as long as life in the camps was better than that in the homeland. Therefore, various ways of harassment were used to make life difficult for the refugees in the camps, such as constantly moving them from one camp to another. The Lithuanian architect Jonas Mulokas, who spent the post-war years in the DP camp in Bavaria, later wrote in his memoirs[13] that it was very hard there; he used the term *sunkų*, meaning bad, unpleasant, not good – and this Lithuanian word is the key word for describing and understanding the stay in the camps.

But on the other hand, a DP camp was a unique example of the creation not of extermination or death camps, but of life and rescue camps, in a sense also of national revival camps, through which thousands of Lithuanians passed and thanks to which they survived. In these camps, not only were the lives of the refugees and their children saved from extermination, but also the pieces and treasures of national culture that these people had taken with them from their homeland or had already created in exile. These included books, manuscripts, private archives, works of art, as well as craft and folk art creations. It was in these camps that Lithuanians, their creative forces, their mother tongue, their traditions, living thought, and Lithuanianness were preserved.

The administration of the occupation forces and UNRRA did not usually meddle in the affairs of camp life. The DPs themselves elected the camp leadership from among themselves, held meetings, wrote, printed and published newspapers, conducted radio broadcasts in their native languag-

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[13] J. Mulokas, *J. Muloko architektūra*, redagavo kun. P. Celiešius, Los Angeles 1983.

es, etc. The spontaneous individual and collective activities of Lithuanians in DP camps were intense and effective for several years. Each of the Lithuanian camps had choirs, folk dance groups, kindergartens, and schools. Bulletin boards and other newspapers were created, and actors, opera singers, ballet dancers, musicians, and athletes were active. Music courses were held in the camps, there was a theater studio, an actual theater, and dance groups, which became an important center for consolidating, nurturing, and spreading Lithuanian culture abroad. For example, a Lithuanian theater group performed in 1946–1947 at the Hanau camp (the play was *Princess Turandhot*, with decorations by Kostas Jezerskis and others).[14] There was a Lithuanian theater troupe for children in Würzburg. The Lithuanian Theater rehearsed in the Augsburg camp, and in Detmold another theater troupe staged a Lithuanian drama *Šarunas* by Vincas Krėve.

Lithuanian choirs, groups of writers and reciters traveled between camps and performed as guests.

A special question that often escapes the attention of historians and that I do not want to overlook concerns the issue of financing of the living expenses of refugees in DP camps. The Allied forces decided that the costs associated with the support of DPs would be borne by Germany and would not be paid from UNRRA funds under any circumstances. This fact should not be forgotten. The Allied military administration was responsible for maintenance and food, for coordination and change of accommodation, for providing the necessary means of transportation, and for maintaining law and order in the camps. UNRRA, on the other hand, was required to take care of the rest, i.e. the social and cultural life of the camps' residents. The role of the Allies was only that of an organizer of the processes of rescuing and assisting the refugees, with the burden of the material costs associated with the operation of the DP camps being borne by the German society and the defeated German state. Vincas Bartusevičius describes the situation clearly:

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[14] Archives of the Lithuanian Cultural Institute (hereinafter: ALIK), Hüttenfeld-Lampertheim, Files for 1947. Unnumbered letters.

> UNRRA was tasked with helping to solve the problems with refugees. The basic supplies were provided by the military, the costs were borne by the Germans. UNRRA was to organize and support the social and cultural life of camp residents, i.e. areas such as self-government, schools, vocational education, courses, sports, leisure time, and others. It should be noted that although UNRRA supported educational institutions and cultural activities, this support was not very effective, as it was not allowed to use UNRRA funds for these purposes. Therefore, the assistance was rather organizational. [...] Therefore, those who, using their energy and ingenuity, organized cultural life in the camps were the refugees themselves.[15]

In Lithuanian refugee camps, the first to appear were various information brochures obtained and distributed by all possible means, as the demand for information in the native language was very high among the refugees at this uncertain time. Already by the end of 1945, 135 Lithuanian periodicals were being published in Germany, 13 of which were prepared in printing shops, eight of which were newspapers: *Lietuva* [Lithuania] in Munich (the first issue appeared on August 16, 1945), *Aidai* [Echo] in Munich (September 1, 1945), *Mūsų kelias* [Our way] in Dillingen (September 1, 1945), *Žiburiai* [Lights/Fireflies] in Augsburg (October 5, 1945), *Laisvės varpas* [Freedom bell] in Lübeck (November 26, 1945), *Mūsų viltis* [Our hope] in Fulda (1945), *Naujas gyvenimas* [New life] in Munich (December 1, 1945), and *Tėvines garsas* [Glory of the homeland] in Schweinfurt (December 23, 1945). Five of those newspapers were published for an extended period of time. The most important centers of the Lithuanian press became the German cities of Augsburg, Munich, and Wiesbaden. In 1946, 32 new newspapers appeared, as well as magazines for children and young people (*Saulutė* [Sunshine], *Skautų aidai* [Echo of the scouts]) and as important professional magazines (*Tremties mokykla* [School in exile], *Žingsniai* [Steps], and others).

Since most of Lithuania's journalistic associations emigrated from Lithuania to Germany, there was no shortage of qualified workers.

16 Lithuanian publishing houses were established in Germany (the first ones in Tübingen, Augsburg, and Munich). Lithuanian books were printed there: from 1945 to 1949, a new book was published every week.

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[15] V. Bartusevičius, *Die Litauer in Deutschland 1944–1850*, p. 151; my emphasis.

The publishing work was very hard. The first obstacle was just getting the permission to operate from the occupation authorities, which was not easy. There was a shortage of paper, and the German printing shops did not have Lithuanian fonts.

Due to the strict censorship in place at the time, all texts had to be translated into English. It was not until 1947 that the censorship was relaxed.

Between 1945 and 1948, a total of 775 Lithuanian books were published in free Europe. In the first decade after the war, book publishing was the dominant cultural expression of the Lithuanian emigration; in terms of both circulation and quality, it surpassed anything published in Soviet Lithuania at the time (in 1952, nine novels were published in exile; by comparison, only one was published in Lithuania).

In 1946 and 1947, congresses of the Lithuanian Writers' Union were held in Tübingen and Augsburg. Lithuanian writers took an active part in political life. An example is the Lithuanian poet and author of elegiac lyric poetry Jonas Aistis, who in 1952 joined the information service of Radio Free Europe and wrote scathing pamphlets about Lithuanian communists and "minions of the Russians." He was probably convinced (and not without reason) that his pamphlets, rather than his poems, were more important for saving and improving the morale of the Lithuanian people during the Russian occupation.

However, the greatest merit of Lithuanian writers was the creation of literature itself, which developed intensely under the conditions of exile, in the DP camps. It was filled with deep patriotic feelings.

> Lithuanian writers, Kubilius writes, who crossed the Memel near Tilsit in 1944, carried with them the vision of their abandoned homeland as a fervent source for their work. [...] For the children of Lithuanian peasants who found themselves in exile, there was nothing more beautiful than the white dirt path of the homeland, the creaking of the well reel, and the Sunday bells. [...] The world of the Lithuanian countryside frozen in the pre-war time became the embodiment of human values that were irreversibly lost, and the rural way of life was assigned the importance of the foundation of the nation's existence.[16]

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[16] V. Kubilius, *Literatur in Freiheit und Unfreiheit. Die Gesciche der litaunischen Luteratur von der Staatsgründung bis zur Gegenwart*, Oberhausen 2002, p. 146.

There were birch trees, fish, and dragonflies – brothers and sisters of the shepherd children (from the collection of short stories titled *Anoj pusėj ežero* [Across the lake], by Pulgis Andriušis, 1947). Bread was baked there on maple leaves, and Low-Lithuanian shrines stood along the roads (in the collection of novellas titled *Miestelis, kuris buvo mano* [The town that was mine], by Nelė Mazalaitė, 1966).

The Lithuanian literary identity based on grandiose visions of an abandoned homeland turned over time to the real, often dramatic experiences of refugees in the DP camps, to the image of war-ravaged Germany.

Medardas Bavarskas outlined in his novel titled *Pilkieji namai* [Gray houses] (1948) the poor life in the DP camps lacking any perspectives for the future. A close analogy to this image can be found in Polish émigré literature from the same period, for example, in the novel titled *Obóz wszystkich świętych* [Camp of all saints] by Tadeusz Nowakowski.

Vincas Ramonas, in his deeply emotional novel *Kryžiai* [Crosses] (1947), tried to find the reasons for the bolshevization of Lithuania. He identified them to be free-thinking, liberalism, and lack of religiosity in the Lithuanian society, and concluded: either Bolshevism or God – there is no other way.

The émigré literature, fervently proclaiming its belief in the liberation of the Lithuanian people ("and I believe in Lithuania, she will endure…", wrote Jonas Aistis) and poetizing the nation's heroic defiance of the Soviet occupation, could not, however, in the real historical circumstances, show the path leading to that freedom. The feeling of powerlessness of the small nation, the awareness of the sacrifice being made, and the doubt accompanying that awareness are vivid in this literature.

Those émigré poets felt that they existed in a disaster-stricken world, a world "during the sunset," a world "at the moment of twilight," and, according to Henrikas Nagys, they experienced a very real conviction that they were among the last poets of their nation.

The Lithuanian literature in exile changed rapidly, especially in the early 1950s, when there was a "second wave" of resettlement, i.e. mass emigration of Lithuanians from the DP camps, and when the center of Lithuanian émigré culture moved to the USA. However, almost all of the well-known writers who later became recognized in America brought with them the

experience of the Germany of the 1940s – literally and symbolically. And as their work left its mark on the cultural life of Europe and Germany, so the legacy of their youth spent in Germany was also present in their later works as a "lesson of German" – as Siegfried Lenz said.

Kazys Bradūnas, who got his degree in Lithuanian studies in Vilnius in 1943 and moved from his hometown of Kiršai to East Prussia in the autumn of 1944, began to be the first to admit a generation of young writers to the Munich-based periodical *Aidai.* He saw in the continuation of Lithuanian artistic activity an opportunity for the survival of the nation and a task consisting in expressing the spiritual opposition, to which he felt called as a "gravedigger and stonemason" from the first years of his emigration as to the mission of his life. He remained firm in his belief that the poetic word is born from the primordial foundations of a nation's existence, that it encompasses its entire history and "trembles with concern for its future."

Even in Bradūnas' first collections of poetry, the simplicity of the poetic word and its musicality are based on a quiet observation of the unchanging form of being. These early works include his collection *Apeigos* [Rite] (1948). In his poems, the concept of *žemė* [land, earth, country] becomes a fundamental value, surrounded by an aura of romantic worship. Left behind, the native land smells of a sacrificial fire from afar, and the poet is the priest who watches it to make sure that it is not extinguished. The poet, living in Germany, sees his country as a directly present reality. The prepared bread, which will be cut after the prayer, is laying on the table. The pleasantly lyrical eloquence of the images and the calm sound of the melodious phrases are not yet a song of loss. Only in the book *Maras* [Plague] (1947) would the loss of the homeland be shown in symbolic images of the "black death" ravaging everything as a creeping non-being.

Bradūnas moves along a "blood-soaked road" deep into the forest, where his fallen friends lie. "All young / All beautiful / With rue by the cap / Promised to death." The death of the forest brothers, warriors for freedom, is seen as a holy sacrifice of the nation, and the poet, in his sorrowful anger, is simultaneously caught up in a burning sense of guilt (why am I not with them?) and powerlessness (what can be done?). "I burn with

shame / Fierce are the eyes of the insurgents, / And our hands are empty, / And my hands are empty…"[17]

One can imagine what a motivating force this poetry had in itself during the Cold War.

Jonas Mekas completed his education at the gymnasium in Biržai in 1943. When he was in the German DP camps in Wiesbaden and Kassel, he was, like Bradūnas, gripped by the "longing of people without a country." The original existence of peasants freed from the historical and civilization framework was also for him the only source of his paintings. The objects of that existence, cited individually and very concretely, represent in Mekas' early poetry the ultimate, all-encompassing, and eternal truth.

His book *Semeniškų idilės* [Semeniškiai bucolics] – referring to the name of the writer's birthplace in Lithuania – which appeared in Germany in 200 copies, became one of the most original works of Lithuanian poetry in exile. In that book, the author updated the language of prose in a denser and more substantive form. Mekas created poetic epics of the developed Lithuanian countryside by placing new elements (individual homesteads – khutors, harvesters, milk canisters, reading newspapers aloud) in the eternal rhythm of the seasons. However, the action, taking place in the present day, shifts to the area "on that side of the border." This world is touched by the "hands of memory." These are the "blue horizons of my childhood," to which one returns from the barrenness and emptiness of exile as to a lost paradise.

In 1944, Marius Katiliškis (the pseudonym of Albinas Vaitkus, 1914–1980) did his military service in 1944 and appeared in Germany at the end of that year. He published his first collection of novellas *Prasilenkimo valanda* [Hour of guilt] there in 1948. In doing so, he intended to portray "my country and the fate of its people as I experienced it and as I saw it." In his memory, he carried – as he emphasized – a stockpile of rich vocabulary and "not handfuls, not bags, but a whole granary" of details of daily village life. Katiliškis' story about a northern Lithuanian village – the collective protagonist of his works – is based on the realist tradition of Lithuanian epic.

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[17] The quote is based on the German translation: V. Kubilius, *Literatur in Freiheit und Unfreiheit*, pp. 152–153.

A panorama unfolds here of a pre-war village that is developed, well-fed, socially stable, and growing in cultural importance: draining fields, thoroughbred cows from Denmark, a German tractor in the backyard, freshly brought hay, books and newspapers in the house. The guiding motif of agricultural strength and self-confidence, the motif of the immutability and sanctity of the agrarian order, reigns supreme. "It was wonderful to live and be a farmer who reaps his harvest and feels strong, independent, and called to his work," Katiliškis writes. However, the writer could not truly get lost in this "paradise of his childhood." A bitter awareness develops in the subtext of his longing visions of the impossibility of return and of the annihilation, which gives his work the melody of existential loss.

Birutė Pūkelevičiūtė, who studied German studies at the Vytauto Didzioji University in Kaunas, was a youth theater actress and later, in the 1940s, played in the Lithuanian theater in Augsburg, was not recognized as a writer until the 1950s in Toronto. But the author brought with her the most important spiritual experience to Canada from Germany. Her first novel *Aštuoni lapai* [Eight leaves] (1956) features her heroine and also her favorite psychological character: "the girl of wind and reeds," full of radiance, harmony, and the breath of spring. Even in the hell of war, she remains pure, gallant, and graceful, unaffected by the destruction and the degrading conditions. Like most Lithuanian works of the first émigré years, the novel *Aštuoni lapai* deals with leaving Lithuania, except that the center of the values being destroyed here is not the countryside and the lives of farmers, but Kaunas – the "white city" of the author's youth. The white tower of the city hall is shining. A train is crossing the green bridge. Rafters are floating on the Neris River. Cafe "Monika" and Italian ice cream, melting like light snow. Mother is sitting in the garden and stoning cherries for marmalade. It is an idyllic space of home where there is nothing foreign or evil. From this sweet, pleasant, and enclosed space, whose borders gradually merge with those of the tiny native country, the novel's protagonist suddenly emerges in the burning city of Danzig amid falling bombs and drunk soldiers going crazy. At this moment of horror and fainting, relatives with the mother emerge from the depths of memories, along with lyrical images of the "white city" offering comfort at the time of impending doom.

"I have never felt a greater attachment to my nation than on that night in burning Danzig...,"[18] Pūkelevičiūtė would say using the words of the heroine of her novels.

Henrikas Nagis (1920–1996), who did Germanic studies, Lithuanian studies, and philosophy at the Kaunas University before the war, continued his education in Germanic studies and art history at the universities of Freiburg in Germany and Innsbruck in Austria. In 1949, he defended his doctoral thesis on the development of Georg Trackl's poetry. He published his first poetry book *Eilérščiai* [Poems] in 1946 in Innsbruck. He was one of the reformers of Lithuanian poetry and categorically rejected the naive, tender, and melodic rhythm of the old poetry. From German Expressionism (Georg Trackl, Richard Dehmel) he took a de-individualized, angry speaking style and the dark color of splashing visions corresponding to the feelings of a generation that matured "in the hell of war and in the gray, crushing uncertainty of tomorrow characteristic of the post-war times." A note of sad anxiety and inner agitation that does not allow one to live in harmony with oneself or the rest of the world became the core of his poetry.

Alfonsas Nyka-Niliūnas graduated with a degree in Romance Studies from the Vilnius University in 1942. In exile, he deepened his philosophical and art history studies at the Universities of Tübingen and Freiburg. He published his first poetry book titled *Praradimo simfonijos* [Symphonies of loss] in Tübingen in 1946. Nyka-Niliūnas' poems, imbued with an angry-painful tone and full of hopelessness, were written as a result of loss and are an expression of man's collision with the mystery of annihilation and emptiness, which is constantly transforming itself.

"Terrible and unjust / are the laughing gods, / because my God / can only cry,"[19] wrote Nyka-Niliūnas.

Antanas Škėma, who was already well-known in 1936–1944 as an actor in the theaters of Kaunas and Vilnius, continued his stage activities in Germany, where he co-founded Lithuanian theater groups in Augsburg and Hanau as an actor and director. There he became more and more intensively engaged in literature, dramaturgy, and literary studies. He published

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[18] Ibidem, p. 162.
[19] Ibidem, p. 171.

his first collection of novellas titled *Noudėguliai ir kibirkštys* [Remnants of embers and sparks] in Tübingen in 1947. In that book, as in the work titled *Šventoji Inga* [Saint Inga], which he started to write while still in a German DP camp and published in 1952, the author acts as a witness to traumatic events such as the first deportations, the armed uprising in June 1941 (of which he himself was a participant), the Nazi occupation, the mass extermination of Jews, the escape from Lithuania, and death in burning trains and bombed air raid shelters. Influenced by modern poetic theater, Škėma decided to break the "conservative everydayness" of Lithuanian drama. Already in his first play *Julijana* (1943), he abandoned the usual intonation of everyday conversations that had been accepted until then. The characters in the drama collide with each other motivated by the global chaos. They feel thrown to the edge of the abyss, deprived of the strength to return to the crossroads they once overlooked. The most important issues of Škėma's late dramas (*Živilė*, 1947; *Pabudimas* [Awakening], 1950; and others) – fidelity to the principles of freedom and betrayal – are set in the realities of the first Soviet occupation (hideous characters of collaborators of the Russian secret police, execution of prisoners and the like). A secret police agent who broke into a group of freedom fighters becomes the embodiment of the myth of Cain's betrayal. The eternal dilemma of national existence emerges, a question that has been recurring for centuries: whether to resist occupation after losing in the armed struggle, or to bow to foreign oppression in order to stay alive and protect one's home and loved ones.

The activities of Lithuanian visual artists in DP camps were no less intensive than the literary ones. According to the data collected by Povilas Reklaitis,[20] who uses sources available in "Five Years of Exile 1944–1949: Materials for the History of Life in Exile," a Lithuanian-language manuscript by V. Aleks, when the Red Army started its occupation of Lithuania in July 1944, 76 Lithuanian visual artists went on exile to Germany along with 80,000 refugees. In the summer, the year of capitulation (1945), they were placed in DP camps in the western occupation zones of Germany. The creative activities of these Lithuanian artists in exile were manifold: they

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[20] P. Reklaitis, "Die Bildende Kunst der litauischen Emigration 1945–1966", *Acta Baltica* 1966, vol. VI, p. 237.

organized exhibitions, were involved in art publications, illustrated books, magazines, and newspapers, helped set up stages, and worked as educators.

There were five Lithuanian art studios in Germany. On October 10, 1945, a studio headed by Česlovas Janušis, where applied art was also studied, was opened in Würzburg. Artists such as Povilas Osmolskis and Vladas Vijejkis taught here. In 1948, the studio was moved to Schweinfurt, where it operated as a part of the Würzburg Institute of Education.[21] Other studios that were active at that time were the Art Studio in Augsburg, headed by the graphic artist Vaclovas Ratas (since 1946), the Folk Art Studio, headed by architect Jonas Mulokas (Augsburg, 1946), the Art Studio in the Hanau camp, headed by the artist J. Kaminskas (established on April 22, 1946), and the Art Studio in Groß-Hessepe (established on July 15, 1946).

In Freiburg, in the French occupation zone, Vytautas Kazimieras Jonynas founded the Ecole Supérieure des beaux arts et métiers (College of Fine Arts and Handicraft), officially opened on July 11, 1946, which was intended to be a continuation of the national College of Fine Arts and Handicrafts (the former Kauno meno mokykla) in the new world. The French occupation authorities issued the permission to open the College to Jonynas on February 11, 1946. A lot of time was spent searching for suitable premises for the school (it was located not in the city itself, but in a picturesque village, the so-called Schwarzer Wald – Black Forest) and arranging the paperwork for the equalization of the diplomas issued by the collage with those of the art universities of France. Active assistance in all these activities was provided to Jonynas by the UNRRA board. In May, an advertisement appeared in newspapers inviting anyone willing to start or continue their war-interrupted education. Very wide age limits were set: from 16 to 40. The high-school graduates were divided into three categories depending on their prior preparation, and were required to take entrance exams. Classes at the College began on July 11, 1946. At the time, the College had three departments: art, ceramics, and folk art. Over time, the facilities of the College were expanded. Studios were opened to prepare specialists in the following fields: 1) artistic weaving, 2) artistic ceramics, 3) graphic design, 4) decorative painting, and 5) stage design.

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[21] V. Liulevičius, ed., *Lietuvių švietimas Vokietijoje*, Chicago 1969, pp. 611–612.

The most talented Lithuanian artists in exile were invited to work at the College. Painting was taught by Adomas Galdikas (in 1946–1947), Viktoras Vizgirda (in 1947), and Adolfas Valeška (in 1947–1949); sculpture – by Aleksandras Marčiulionis (in 1946–1948) and Teisutis Zikaras (a son of the well-known Lithuanian sculptor Juozas Zikaras; in 1948–1949, later he worked in Melbourne, Australia); drawing – by Vytautas Jonynas, Vytautas Kasiulis, Vytautas Kmitas (in 1946–1948); graphic art (in various forms and techniques) – by Telesforas Valius (in 1946–1948), Adolfas Vaičaitis, and Alfonsas Krivickas (in 1948); artistic weaving – by Anastasia and Antanas Tamošaitis (in 1946–1948); ceramics by – Antanas Muraitis (in 1946–1948), Juozas Bakis (in 1948–1949); and the art history course was taught by an Estonian, Aleksis Rannit.

The College, according to the terms of its establishment and registration, was intended to teach art to students from among the expatriates of all nationalities. However, in practice, it became a Lithuanian national school. All 16 educators holding full-time positions at the school – with the exception of the only Estonian, Alexis Rannit – were Lithuanian, and similarly, as many as 80 percent of the students came from the Lithuanian émigré circles. The "international minority" of the student collective were Latvians, Estonians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Romanians, and Czechs. The languages in which they communicated with each other and in which paperwork was handled were French and German. The teaching of both languages occupied a significant part of the teaching time, and it is should be mentioned that a course of the German language was taught in 1947–1948 by the well-known Lithuanian poet Henrikas Nagis.

The curriculum of the College reproduced that of the Kaunas Art School (Kauno meno mokykla), and in everything that concerned the teaching of nature, perspective, and anatomy, strict academic rules were adhered to. Drawing from nature took up the largest part of the teaching time. After graduation, students of the creative specialties had practically two options:

1) to return to Lithuania as a person equipped with knowledge of its culture and proficient in the area of national tradition (the latter understood as the tradition of folk creativity, reflected in professional artistic culture); or 2) to participate in the European ("Western," global) art "in-

dustry" in accordance with all the strict requirements of the contemporary art market, fashions, and demand, especially when it comes to artists of "practical" specialties, such as creators of ceramics, art textiles, and graphic design.

By 1948, the College held three exhibitions of its alumni's art.[22] The final exhibition was held in August 1949. In 1948, five artists, including one sculptor, received diplomas from the College. A total of 135 students received their education there by 1949[23] (Povilas Reklajtis mentions the number 94 as the number of graduates of the Freiburg school in 1949).[24] The group of graduates of the College in the second half of the 1940s included quite a few talented and later well-known artists with sound professional training and in-depth knowledge of the national artistic legacy and the Lithuanian cultural traditions, as well as the treasury of Lithuanian folk art. The plethora of the College's alumni included such outstanding people as Romas Viesulas, Vytautas Ignas, Albinas Elskis, Algirdas Kurauskas, Henrikas Šalkunas, Jurgis Sapkus, and Antanas Mončis, who worked in Paris, as well as the young sculptor Juozas Bakis, who was the first Lithuanian artist to create abstract sculptures.

An interesting part of the early art history of the Lithuanian diaspora is related to the holding of the first Lithuanian exhibitions in Germany (sometimes these were international exhibitions, held jointly with Latvians, Estonians, and émigrés of other nationalities). Such exhibitions were held in galleries in Schongau and Hanau as early as in 1945. Later, these exhibitions were held in art studios and the first art museums and galleries of German cities restored after the wartime paralysis.

The catalogs preserved at the Lithuanian Cultural Institute in Lampertheim-Hüttenfeld (West Germany) (printed in one of the most primitive ways, almost on cigarette and wrapping paper, with the stamps of the wartime commanders and commissioners of the western occupation

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[22] From a speech by V.-K. Jonynas at the first congress of the World Union of Lithuanian Visual Artists. A collection of files relating to the World Union of Lithuanian Artists (PLDS). Sheet 10 – ALIK.

[23] *Lithuanian Artists at the Freiburg Ecole des Arts et Metiers*, in: *Refugee Artists in Germany 1945–1950*, p. 10.

[24] P. Reklaitis, *Die Bildende Kunst...*

zones), testify to the desperate efforts of Lithuanian artists to maintain the national cultural tradition and their creative activity under conditions of ruin, hunger, and daily camp life. Of the early exhibitions of Lithuanian art or contemporary art with the participation of Lithuanian artists in Austria and Germany that we know of, the following exhibitions are particularly noteworthy: the international "Refugee Exhibition" in Bregenz in 1945; the exhibition held in the following year at the Lithuanian art college in Würzburg; Adomas Galdikas's first individual exhibition in Freiburg, which showcased his 29 paintings created already in Germany between 1944 and 1946; the remarkably interesting and, in its own way, programmatic exhibition of two of the most prominent representatives of the Baltic artistic diaspora: the Estonian Eduard Vijralt (Viiralt) and the Lithuanian Vytautas Kasjulis, held successively in 1946 in Hamburg, Lübeck, Kiel, and Freiburg; V.-K. Jonynas' first individual exhibition, opened in November 1946 in Freiburg, and his subsequent exhibitions held jointly with the painter Adomas Galdikas and the graphic artist Paulius Augustinavičius; the group exhibitions of Lithuanian artists in Tübingen and Baden-Baden (several until 1948); finally, an exhibition of amateur art and folk art, including all possible kinds of handicrafts and applied art, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the declaration of Lithuanian independence (February 16, 1918 – February 16, 1948), held in Rebdorf.

An exhibition of four Lithuanian wood engraving masters – Viktoras Petravičius, Paulius Augius, Telesforas Valius, and Vaclovas Ratas – and the well-known Estonian graphic artist Eduard Viiralt, organized in Freiburg in 1947 and held in Göttingen in 1948, received wide coverage (not only by the Lithuanian newspaper *Žiburiai*, but also in the professional art theory literature of the following years).

The great exhibition of Lithuanian art held in 1948 at the refugee camp in Hanau can be considered the culmination of the results of the development of Lithuanian art in Germany in the first years after the war. It included 369 works by 30 artists (painters, graphic artists, sculptors, and craftsmen), and also formed the basis of the first exhibition of Lithuanian émigré art after World War II, which was opened in New York in 1949.

An important event in the history of Lithuanian artistic emigration in the postwar years was the establishment of the World Union of Lithuanian

Artists (PLDS – Pasaulio Lietuvių Dailininkų Sajunga) and its first founding convention. From the very beginning, the efforts to unite all Lithuanian émigré artists in one creative union had clear political overtones related to the protest against the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. The "Proclamation to Lithuanian Artists," which was signed by Česlovas Janušas, Kazimieras Varnelis, Antanas Rukštelė, and Kazimieras Žylinskas, who formed the Organizing Committee of the PLDS (1948), stated:

> The Red Army occupied our homeland, most of the Lithuanian intelligentsia emigrated abroad, to Western Europe, in protest of this monstrous lawlessness. Among this intelligentsia are Lithuanian artists who, while living abroad, take active part in exhibitions, publish in art publications, work in schools and courses, and with their art participate in the fight for Lithuania's freedom.[25]

The Organizing Committee of the Union summarized the results of the four-year period of the new Lithuanian emigration (1944–1948), noting that "the successes of Lithuanian artists are greater than could have been expected under such conditions, but the lack of such an organization inhibits the work of developing Lithuanian art in exile."[26]

Along with the proclamation, the Organizing Committee sent out application forms for admission to the Union and invitations to the inaugural convention, which was to be held on October 23 and 24, 1948, in the Bavarian town of Schwäbisch Gmünd, in the fifth block of the Lithuanian camp. Accommodation and food for the visitors were to be provided by the Lithuanian Red Cross. Involved in the organization of the convention were "Lithuanian artists from all countries of the world, former members of the Association of Lithuanian Artists, art school graduates who have already received their diplomas in exile, and colleagues-architects."[27]

The PLDS bylaws, registered in the USA, set forth the following basic principles for the organization and activities of the Union:

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[25] Collection of files on the World Union of Lithuanian Artists (PLDS), Sheet 1 – ALIK; here and hereafter translated from the original documents in Lithuanian by the author.

[26] Ibidem, Sheet 1.

[27] Ibidem, Sheet 3.

§ 1. The PLDS is an organization uniting all Lithuanian artists of all specialties and all types of visual arts, including artists-architects, residing outside the territory of Lithuania.

§ 2. The PLDS's task is to care for the development of Lithuanian art and architecture and to create conditions for professional artistic activity, as well as to respect professional ethics and protect copyrights.[28]

Admission to the Union was based on a simple majority of votes of board members and a qualified majority (2/3rds of the votes) if the candidate did not have a diploma and art education. There was also a type of membership for anyone who showed support for the development of Lithuanian art in exile, and honorary membership for outstanding cultural activists, the so-called "friends of Lithuanian art." The list of the participants in the first convention, attached to the minutes,[29] indicates that the idea of establishing the PLDS received a relatively wide response and approval among the Lithuanian émigré community, although far from all active Lithuanian émigré artists participated in this undertaking. From the very beginning, the greatest initiative was shown by artists of not very great talent (neither Česlovas Janušas nor other members of the PLDS organizing committee held prominent places in the history of Lithuanian art of the 20th century), but inclined to engage in, among other things, commercial, political, and pro-national activity. Striking parallels to this situation can be found in the activities of the organizing committee and then the board of the Association of Lithuanian Artists of the USSR, in the materials of the first "joint meetings" (for example, in Vilnius on October 12, 1944)[30] and conventions. There, too, it were by no means the true leaders of national artistic culture who came to the fore, but "activists" prone to political profiteering and possessing a necessarily impeccable reputation according to Real Socialism (creators of "national art, understood by the people," part of which were the landscapes of Antanas Žmuidzinavičius and the

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[28] Ibidem, Sheet 4.

[29] Ibidem, Sheet 7.

[30] I had the opportunity to get acquainted with the materials of that convention still during the Soviet period in the state archive of literature and art of the Lithuanian SSR, Fond 146 / I, sheets 1, 8, and 10.

realistic sculptures of Prtras Vaivad). Both there (in Vilnius) and here (at the convention in Schwäbisch Gmünd) there was no shortage of dilettantes. On the wave of the political boom surfaced names of people unknown to anyone, in fact, with no connection to the great national artistic tradition, demanding to assume the leading positions in the ruling structures. The more prominent figures remained in the shadows: the presidium of the first congress of the Union of Soviet Artists of the Lithuanian SSR did not include Justinas Vienožinskis, the inaugural congress of the World Union of Lithuanian Artists in Schwäbisch Gmünd did not include Viktoras Vizgird, Adomas Galdikas, or Vytautas Kasiulis.

At the same time, both here and there, a stable majority of Lithuanian artists was forming, who simply had no other way and no other creative perspective than to become involved in the Union (here – the Union of Soviet Artists, there – the PLDS). Therefore, there was no shortage of talented great artists of high authority (in Soviet Lithuania: Juozas Mikėnas, Antanas Gudaitis, Vytauyas Jurkūnas, and many other, by no means secondary figures), who by their presence and their participation supported the establishment of the union, giving it the importance and legal status of a truly national creative organization. Adomas Varnas, Vytautas Jonynas, Vladas Vaitekunas, Adolfas Vaičaitis, Stasys Kudokas, Kazimieras Janulis, Teofilas Petraitis, Povilas Osmolskis, and other great artists came to the opening convention of the PLDS. Of those authorized, 16 more artists confirmed their participation in absentia in the creation of the convention, including Jonas Mackevičius from Switzerland, Jonas Steponavičius, and others.

The presidium of the convention was elected, with Adomas Varnas as its chairman. The delegates observed a minute of silence in memory of their colleagues who died in Lithuania and abroad. The welcome speech on behalf of the College of Fine Arts and Handicrafts was delivered by V.-K. Jonynas. A. Rukštelė's lecture provided detailed information about the work of the Lithuanian artists living in the occupation zones of Germany and Austria, as well as in other countries in 1944–1948. It was supplemented by Adolfas Vaičaitis with a summary of Western press reviews of Lithuanian artists' exhibitions. The convention elected the board of the PLDS, which included A. Varnas, V.-K. Jonynas, and K. Varnelis, as well as A. Vaičaitis, A. Rukštelė, and Č. Janušas as candidates.

The PLDS conducted its activities in Germany only for a short time. As early as on December 11, 1948, on the motion of Adomas Varnas, a resolution was passed to transfer the Union's board and secretariat to the USA. At the same time, also in America, the PLDS, known by its acronym LWAA (Lithuanian World Artists Association), remained an international organization that brought together Lithuanian artists from Europe, Australia, and other continents.

The PLDS was not the only organization of Lithuanian émigré artists. Back in 1947, the Lithuanian Art Institute (Lietuvių Dailės Institutas) and the Lithuanian Union of Architects were opened.

The Lithuanian Art Institute was founded in Freiburg in November 1947. Unlike the PLDS, it was an elite organization in which membership was possible for artists with the highest standing in the overall ranking and possessing the greatest creative authority. An organization in the Soviet Union analogous to the Lithuanian Art Institute can be considered the Academy of Fine Arts of the USSR, established in exactly the same year, although given the ideological and creative orientation. The two institutions operated according the principle of antinomy: if the Soviet academy, the first Lithuanian member-correspondent of which was Antanas Žmuidzinavičius, was to be a "stronghold of socialist realism," the Lithuanian Art Institute was oriented toward *l'art moderne* in the broad sense of the socalled "modernism." Among the first 15 founding members who received an invitation to join the Institute were professors from the Freiburg School of Fine Arts and Handicraft, as well as leading Lithuanian representatives of fine arts residing at the time in other German cities (P. Augius, V. Petravičius, and others) and abroad (Petras Kiaulėnas in Chicago, Vytautas Kašuba in New York, Adomas Galdikas in Paris, etc.). The first chairman of the LDI was Viktoras Vizgirda, whose election, for people familiar with the history of Lithuanian art, is a clear indication of the direction the Institute's activities were to take.

Exhibitions organized by the Institute (consisting only of works by its members) were held in Amsterdam, Rome, Paris, Brussels, Constance, Baden-Baden, Göttingen, Nuremberg, and Freiburg. Publications issued by the Institute familiarized a wide audience with selected works of Lithuanian art.

Among the best known was the album *Lithuanian Art Abroad* (Munich, 1948).

To an equal extent as efforts at national unification, attempts were made, admittedly more cautiously and less hurriedly, at international unification of émigré artists, primarily from the Baltic republics. Less than a month after the inaugural PLDS convention, on November 20, 1948, a general meeting of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian artists was convened in Geislingen, at which the project of organization of a joint portable exhibition to be launched in Heidelberg in February 1949 was adopted. It was quite a large project, in which 40 square meters of display space was to be set aside for each of the three nations. The exhibition was to be accompanied by concerts, plays, performances by folk groups and soloists, and political actions. Characteristically, the idea of such cooperation between the three Soviet Baltic republics and holding their joint exhibitions (on opposing ideological positions, of course) was put forward in Moscow almost at the same time and resulted in very important artistic events: joint exhibitions of Baltic artists in 1950–1960. Neither in the USSR nor in exile, however, this event did not lead to any reconciliation that would integrate the creative forces of artists from the three different nations, because with all the commonality of their fate and willingness to cooperate, the impression of the uniqueness of their own national histories, cultural traditions, and artistic schools prevailed, and Lithuanians – both in exile and in the USSR (like Latvians and Estonians) preferred to speak on their own behalf and preserve their own national identity, without turning it into a common "Baltic identity."

In general, the work of Lithuanian artists in exile in the second half of the 1940s was not significantly different from how they worked and what they did in Lithuania before and during the war. It is clear that there was a kind of refreshing of the scope of their work's topics: works appeared that directly reflected the events of recent years and the new situation (scenes of camp life, landscapes of destroyed German cities) or that were indirectly triggered by the dramatic conflicts and restless moods of the refugees. And yet there was little novelty (including in purely thematic terms, not to mention structural and stylistic) in Lithuanian émigré art of the period. At the same time, a conservative, "reproductive" tendency prevailed – the desire to retain the memory of the past, to reproduce with

maximum accuracy what had been done before, to repeat those landscape motifs, those book illustrations, those monumental-decorative compositions on which their authors worked at home, in Lithuania, and which were left behind the front line, behind the national border. Everything that the artists did not manage or could not take with them, they tried to reconstruct from memory. Therefore, a huge part of the works exhibited in the second half of the 1940s consisted of a mixture of old works, replicas, original repetitions, and variations on earlier themes. The work was dominated by a sense of nostalgia, longing for the homeland, and spiritual trepidation expressed in religious art forms. The most common symbolic expression of this symbiosis of the old pagan spirit and Catholicism, was the Lithuanian wooden memorial cross. Such crosses appeared in places where Lithuanian refugees appeared and were immortalized in paintings and graphic art as a memory of old cemeteries, abandoned graves of parents, and historical peculiarities of Lithuania. The special cult of Lithuanian folk art (its decorative elements, ornamental motifs, and expressions of naive-archaic "primitives") runs through all types and genres of art, appearing in various forms in the works of Lithuanian graphic artists, sculptors, painters, applied artists, and architects.

Lithuanian artists residing in Western Europe followed current developments with great interest and discovered for themselves the values of world culture, from which they had been separated definitively since 1940. At that time, in countries freed from fascist dictatorship, abstract art was experiencing its post-war renaissance and was making a triumphant march across the continent. However, not only was culture subjected to the process of ideologization and a rigid orientation toward "socialist realism" in the Lithuanian SSR, but also under the free conditions of emigration, Lithuanian art of the second half of the 1940s proved to be still unprepared and incapable of being organically integrated into the contemporary global artistic process. Against the background of what was already happening in the studios of European artists, this art appeared archaic. However, it cannot be said that it demonstrated only the folkloric and ethnographic exoticism of a country little known to Europeans. In essence, it also mastered the broad spectrum of aesthetic possibilities and means of expression of contemporary art of the changing Europe of the second half of the 1940s.

As in any extreme situation (for example, in the years of revolution and war), under conditions of mass emigration and camp life, of all the visual arts, graphic art, which had maximum operative capabilities, came to the fore. Drawing (including sketches from nature that were gaining prominence as important historical documents of the era) almost became the main creative activity in the 1940s, not only of professional graphic artists, but also of many painters, sculptors, and architects in the Lithuanian émigré community. At the same time, not only drawing, but also printed graphics, made primarily with the wood engraving technique, as well as plane and decorative graphics, made in accordance with the tradition of folk painting (chromolithograph), having a heightened expression of black and white contrasts and sharp contours, came to the fore in Lithuanian art.

All in all, for the first few years in exile, under difficult conditions, despite a lack of paper and equipment, Lithuanian artists managed to produce publications richly saturated with graphic material. These include the album *40 Wood Cuts* with an introduction by P. Jurkus and prints of engravings by P. Augius-Augustinavičius, V. Petravičius, V. Ratas, and T. Valius (1947); illustrations (101 engravings) by Paulius Augius-Augustinavičius for the fairy tale *Egle – Queen of Snakes* with text by Salomea Neris (1947); the poetic collection *November Nights* by Henrikas Nagys with illustrations by V. Petravičius (1947); the album *Lithuanian Wedding Rites* by Alfonsas Dargys (1947); the collected poetic works of F. Kirš with illustrations by V. Petravičius (1948); *Lithuanian Songs* with illustrations by V. Petravičius (1948); *Seasons* by K. Donelaitis with illustrations by V.-K. Jonynas (1948); and an album of engravings by Vaclovas Ratas *Twelve Brothers-Ravens* (1949); this list of Lithuanian graphic publications is still far from complete.

Caricatures were published in the form of separate printed leaflets and posters, and were placed in the pages of Lithuanian newspapers and special humor magazines. One of them was "Dipukas" (an ironic translation of the acronym DP – Displaced Person), published in the Kempten camp, the first issue of which appeared on August 10, 1946. Newspapers, magazines, and books were full of drawings that depicted with primitive simplicity the bestiality of the Soviet occupiers in Lithuania and the heroic deeds of the "green brothers" hiding in the Lithuanian forests. Political caricature was naturally dominated by blatant anti-Soviet propaganda, and the Lith-

uanian Communist "Šluota," which was experiencing a noticeable rise in prominence in Vilnius during that period, had its inverse reflection in the satirical graphics in emigre publications.

Among the Lithuanian artists working in Germany between 1945 and 1951, graphic artists earned special respect. Their accomplishments were the subject of numerous articles in the German art magazine *Kunstwerk*, which was published in Baden-Baden at the time.

Most of these graphic artists came from the Kaunas School of Art and from the "Ars" Union of Artists founded in 1930. In their works, they attempted to combine elements of Lithuanian folk art and new Western European trends and forms (primarily expressionism and primitivism). Drawing on this wealth of folklore abroad (perhaps even more so than at home, since the exile intensified their longing for the distant homeland), Lithuanian émigrés of the postwar period were able to achieve considerable successes that contributed to the development of not only Lithuanian but also German culture.

In his wood engravings and linocuts, Viktoras Petravicius was deeply in tune with the soul of Lithuanian folk wood engravings. His primitive figures were woven into the ornamentation and contained the symbolic content of the mysticism of life and the spirit of the homeland, which is comparable to Lithuanian folk songs – Dajnas. Characteristically, his triptychs are symbolically poetizing situations of exile and those in which flight, the horrors of war and of the Soviet occupation regime, and the struggle of the Lithuanian people behind the Iron Curtain are given the character of civil protest. Petravicius' linocuts were published in the album *Lino-Raižiniai* in 1949 in Munich with a foreword by Paulius Jurkus. Even earlier, Petravicius' graphic illustrations appeared in Lithuanian books published in Germany, written by F. Kirš (Dillingen, 1947) and G. Krivickiene (*Dainos – Vieux chants lithuaniens*, Freiburg 1948). In the pages of the Lithuanian press in exile (Augsburg's *Žiburiai* and later the *Aidai* newspaper in Chicago), Petravicius' works received excellent reviews.

> His inner excitement is suppressed by the visual art laws of his own style, Alexis Rannit wrote, and his spiritual states are captured in permanent forms through few means. Large planes show a deep, soft black, opposite a dazzling

white. Paper becomes a radiant light, which in a moment, with the sound of fanfare, will break the darkness.[31]

Related to him, but through his optimism and the method of composition completely different, is another creator of wood engravings, Paulius Augius. His illustrations show the Lithuanian world of fairy tales, as well as the intact romanticism of being in the cultural landscape of Samogitia with its chapels, crosses, and the piety of the people. This is probably also why Lithuanian critics in exile considered Augius "an artist of the Samogitian country" (1961). He used his wood engravings to illustrate *Žalčio pasaka* [The snake's tale] by S. Salomėja Nėris (1947) and poems by Vytautas Mačernis (his book *Poezija* [Poetry] was published in Chicago in 1961). The exhibition commemorating him, held after his death in 1962 in Chicago, gave a broad and rich idea of his graphic art works.

A central figure among the Lithuanian emigre artists in Germany during the first postwar years was Vitautas Jonynas. At the time, he was a young and energetic artist, already famous for his illustrations to *Seasons* by K. Donelaitis and other graphic works created before the war. The artist's style of expressive graphic art, his sophisticated artistic primitivism, his rich variations on the theme of Samogitian painting, the favorite motifs of his work dictated by the beauty and romanticism of "Lithuanian crosses," his graphic portrait gallery with images of prominent representatives of the national scientific, creative, and political elite, including the well-known portrait of the President of the Republic of Lithuania Antanas Smetona, his variations on the themes of Lithuanian literary classics – all this determined Jonynas' special popularity in the emigre community, who, thanks to him, could immerse themselves in the past and experience a magical enchantment with the Lithuanian land, nature, and culture. "Jonynas – Lithuania's second soul"[32] – this is what Alexis Rannit wrote about the artist in the preface to an album of his wood engravings pub-

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[31] A. Rannit, "Vier litauische Holzschneider," *Das Kunstwerk* 1948, no. 1–2, p. 46.

[32] Idem, *V. K. Joninas. Un xylographe Lithuanien. A Lithuanian Wood-Engraver. Ein litauishe Holzschneider*, Baden-Baden 1947, p. 24.

lished in Baden-Baden in 1947, and this is exactly how the artist's work was perceived by his compatriots living abroad – as the soulmate of Lithuania.

Over time, new themes, content, and pictorial solutions emerged in his work, related to works of German and French literature. While still in Kaunas in 1943–1944, he completed a series of engravings-illustrations for Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*; in 1946, in Freiburg, he created nine engravings – illustrations for Prosper Merime's novel. In his drawings and watercolors, the artist tried to capture the landscapes of destroyed and rebuilt European cities (*Kirche in Reingarten*, *Castle in Meersburg* – drawings from 1947); at the same time he turned to industrial graphic design, created emblems of many German states (lands) and cities, as well as numerous ex-librises of private individuals. At a philatelic congress in Hamburg in 1947, the series of stamps he created was recognized as the most beautiful in Europe.

Jonynas was not the only prominent graphic artist, and one can speak of a plethora of excellent Lithuanian graphic artists in exile – primarily creators of wood engravings. They include P. Augius, V. Petravičius, and T. Valius – all well-known already in Lithuania, creatively mature artists, each of whom adopted his own style. All of them possessed tremendous creative energy, which was unleashed in the second half of the 1940s and manifested itself mainly in "resurrecting the past," restoring what had been lost, striving to reconstruct, repeat, and revive by the power of their love and fantasy the Lithuania they had lost, which, similar to the mythical Atlantis, was falling to the bottom of historical non-existence with all its peasant khutors, chapels and crosses, churches and calvaries, with everything that existed before the war in life and art.

At the same time, however, a new despair, bringing with it a new perception of the world, transformed the meaning and style of this graphic art. Thus, the *Cry from the Baltic Shore* (1948) by Telesforas Valius could only at first glance appear to be a repetition or expansion of the content behind his 1942–1943 graphic series *Tragedy on Our Coast* (from the lives of fishing settlements – a requiem for those who did not return from the sea). It was already quite a different "cry" – a signal of misfortune, a call for help from the shores of the Baltic Sea, with political overtones that leave no doubts. The open journalistic style of this work harmonized with

increased expression and graphic execution, which made this graphic art a character no longer suitable for an easel, but rather for a poster.

At that time, Lithuanian painting was still living in the fresh traditions of the Kaunas School of Art with all its typical decorativeness, expressiveness, high color culture, caring attitude to nature, and alertness to the singularity and uniqueness of life's plot and natural motifs. At the same time, the painting began to be dominated by a landscape that concealed the drama associated with the shock at the sight of the destroyed Germany and all Europe tired of the long war, as well as emotionality, mixed with bitter memory of the homeland left behind (far from Lithuania, the artists continued to paint landscapes with Lithuanian motifs). This bitterness and shock were most vividly expressed in the following works by Adomas Galdikas created between 1944 and 1946 and first shown at his individual exhibition in Freiburg in 1946: *Old graves*, *Prayer*, *Autumn Road*, *Dzukija Cemetery*, *Autumn in Freiburg*, *The Shore of Szwentoji*, *Cloudy Autumn*, *Dark Autumn Day*, *Autumn Mood*.

In Lithuanian painting, alongside the traditional genres of painting (portraits and landscapes), a new form of painting emerged, namely compositions for a new current topic – the life of refugees.

The painting *Refugees* by Povilas Kaupas (1898–1978) depicts the sorrowful march of an endless column of refugees through a devastated city, a hopeless procession – a move to nowhere. The author, who graduated from the Kaunas School of Art, left Soviet Lithuania as early as in 1940. He spent the entire war in Germany, where he later met his colleagues, Lithuanian refugees in 1944. He became a member of the Lithuanian Art Institute, taught at Freiburg's Ecole Supérieure des beaux arts et métiers, and later worked in the USA and Chicago.

The art that developed in the camp was dominated by small-scale, easel-based, "mobile" forms of painting and graphic art. At the same time, Lithuanian artists were attracted by monumental projects, for the realization of which in the conditions of the post-war, devastated Germany ways and means were found almost miraculously. Most often, these works were engulfed in religious ideas and were related to projects for the construction and decoration of Catholic churches, memorial crosses, chapels, etc.; these projects were often designed to function not so much in real (camp)

conditions, but rather in some ideal, imagined space of the lost Lithuania or the still not selected second homeland. Thus, in the mid-1940s, K. Varnelis created a design of mural paintings for the Church of the Resurrection in Kaunas, as well as two frescoes for walls that did not yet exist to immortalize them in architecture (notably, at that time in Soviet Lithuania mosaics and frescoes became popular in a "small-scale," easel-based form, remaining in the artist's studio or on display in the form of a "painting").

Jonas Mulokas worked on sketches of commemorative buildings at the Augsburg camp. Memorial crosses made according to his design were erected in a field between the two Lithuanian camps of Gaunsstetten and Gofeld. The structure became the spiritual shrine of Lithuanian exiles, which expressed their pain, despair, and historical memory of Lithuania.

In the late 1940s, a significant number of Lithuanian refugees left Germany and moved to the USA.

The Iron Curtain, which cut the Soviet bloc countries in two cultural parts, was for a long time an obstacle to the return of Lithuanian literature in exile to its homeland. The excellent works of émigré writers and Lithuanian magazines from abroad, which made their way into Lithuania by being "smuggled in" since the 1960s, embodied in the eyes of their readers the true art of the Lithuanian language unspoiled by ideological coercion. Let us not forget that Germany was the country that gave that language its raison d'être in the saddest stage of its history.