

Bridges

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600th Anniversary of Lithuania's Christianization

IS YOUR FOE EGOISM?

In his diary, Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis, who will be beatified June 28 in Rome, recorded this Christian view of "Freedom":

"Only then do we actually gain freedom when, liberated from the shell of our egoism, we take on the spirit of Christ... Then, how lucid the mind becomes, how free the spirit, how broad and open the heart! When love of the Divine expands the heart, it becomes so spacious that all people without distinction of position or nationality find a place in it."

He wrote this statement eight years before Lithuania regained her independence in 1918. He knew the inner strength an individual acquires when he learns to relate to others without his "shell of egoism" which destroys relationships with family, friends, colleagues, countries. With his life of humility and love, Matulaitis set an example for us all to follow.

Peasants kept the Lithuanian language alive and created folk art, highly valued today. Magnates scorned the native tongue and regarded the religious folk art too lowly for churches.

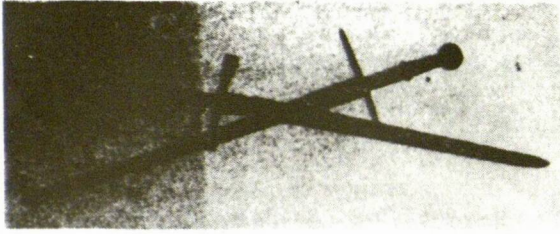
V. K. Jonynas



"Marija, Marija, save us from the formidable foe..."
In gardens, in woods,

peasant folk artists sculpted Marija, her heart pierced like their own





Algirdas Budreckis

CHRISTIANITY IN LITHUANIA

Polish Influences

The introduction of Polish influences in Lithuania began with the coronation of Jogaila as king of Poland and the introduction of Christianity into Lithuania through Poland. The polonizing movement at first affected the higher social strata. It gained momentum, not so much from the absorption by the Lithuanians of a western culture coming from Poland as the main source, but rather through the establishment of personal ties between the two neighboring aristocracies, and more so, from the subsequent unnecessary wide use of the Polish language, in preference to the Lithuanian, in churches, schools and influential circles.

When Jogaila formally accepted Christianity, Lithuania had no native clergy. A few German Franciscan monks lived in Vilnius and Naugardukas, where they had been first settled by Gediminas, and at Drohycczin and Lyda, where they had established themselves in later years (1350-1366). Some of these Franciscans may have learned the Lithuanian language and may have converted some natives. But their influence and numbers were insignificant, since, generally, the missionaries could not speak Lithuanian. As a result, three of the first four bishops of Vilnius were Poles. The Polish clergy continued to represent the majority of the Vilnius Capitula, even at the end of the 15th century.

The Polish influence existed not only in the Church, but also spread into the political and cultural fields. Although the magnates and the gentry of Lithuania had for more than a century indicated their unwillingness to merge with Poland into one political entity, nonetheless during that same period they unconsciously adopted Polish culture. Since the exaggerated notions of honor and liberty seemed to stem from Poland, they

JUNE 28 IN ROME

On June 28, 1987, Lithuanians from the free world will gather in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome for a *capella papale*, marking the 600th anniversary of the conversion of Lithuania, the last European nation to accept Christianity.

A *capella papale* is a papal Mass attended by all Cardinals in Rome at the time, the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See, and other dignitaries.

Scheduled as part of the solemnities is the beatification of Jurgis Matulaitis, Archbishop of Vilnius, a Marian who lived 1871 to 1927.

In connection with the 600th anniversary, an international scholarly symposium on related topics is scheduled in Rome, June 25th, by the Pontifical Historical Commission.

Grand Duke Mindaugas of Lithuania, together with members of his family and court, was baptized 736 years ago. He was crowned king of Lithuania, and the first diocese in Lithuania was established 734 years ago. However, Christianity did not make great inroads until the Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania was baptized in 1383, and Grand Duke Jogaila of Lithuania in 1387. Significant numbers of Lithuanians, notably the Samogitians, clung to paganism well into the next century.

Tenacious as the Lithuanians were in their adherence to paganism, they have been just as tenacious in their Catholicism, for 123 years under Russian czarist persecution, and now for over 45 years under Soviet communist persecution.

Special Masses are scheduled in cathedrals and parish churches in the U.S., Canada,

JUNE 28 IN LITHUANIA

Solemnities scheduled June 28, 1987, in Soviet-occupied Lithuania, marking the 600th anniversary of the Baptism of the Lithuanians, may be cancelled by Soviet government order.

The warning was issued to a meeting of Lithuanian bishops by the Commissioner for Religious Affairs in Soviet-occupied Lithuania, Petras Anilionis, at a meeting he summoned in Vilnius, Lithuania. Anilionis complained, "The example of the extremists has been followed even by the Committee for the Lithuanian Christianity Jubilee, led by Bishop Juozas Preikšas. In their letter to the Soviet government, they request impossible things such as the return of the Cathedral of Vilnius, of the Church of St. Casimir, of the Church of the Queen of Peace, in Klaipėda. These demands shall not be satisfied, and if the Jubilee Committee continues along the extremists' path, we will forbid the commemoration of the Baptism of Lithuania, and dissolve the committee itself."

Australia, England, France, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and elsewhere throughout the year.

At the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., a Mass is planned, with the Most Rev. Pio Laghi, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio to the United States, presiding, and Archbishop Hickey of Washington preaching.

Several cultural events are planned worldwide in connection with the religious services.

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gradually accepted the Polish language as a medium of social intercourse, and adopted Polish customs as a sign of social prestige. The peasants, since they were restricted by their subjugation to the boyars, were influenced by the example of their masters and by the clergy of their churches.

Despite the polonization in the religious, social, political and even cultural fields, the nobility defended the dignity of their Lithuanian origins against the Poles. In the 15th century they developed and publicized a theory that the Lithuanians had originated from the Romans. They attempted to substantiate their claims by emphasizing various similarities in the Lithuanian and Latin languages, and by proposing names of various fictitious or legendary Lithuanian rulers, beginning with Publius Libonus (Palemonas), a refugee Roman. In the 16th century, a number of polemical works appeared, sponsored in the main by Radvila the Black, which campaigned for the rejection of the proposed Polish-Lithuanian union.

The Reformation

It took less than 17 years for the doctrines of Martin Luther to reach the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. As early as 1520 Sigismund Augustus had forbidden the importation of Lutheran books and the propagation of Luther's writings in Poland. Through the influence of Sigismund's Italian wife, Bona Sforza, humanists resided in Cracow and Vilnius. German merchants in Lithuanian towns were inclined toward the new Lutheran doctrine, while the sons of the magnates and the gentry studied at German universities, and inevitably came into actual contact with the doctrines of Reformers.

The Reformation appealed to the Lithuanian gentry not because it proposed to correct existing defects in the Catholic Church, for in reality the gentry itself had been responsible for many of the prevalent vices. It attracted the magnates and the boyars because it offered a splendid opportunity to increase their already wide privileges. The Reform movement also initiated a series of clashes on religious issues which resulted in violence even as late as the middle of the 17th century. It likewise was the cause of the publication of some of the earliest books in the Lithuanian language and the establishment of a university in the Grand Duchy's capital, Vilnius. Since it never received full governmental support it failed to entrench itself as deeply in the Grand Duchy as it had succeeded in doing in Prussia, Livonia, and Scandinavia.

Jonas Tartila, a Catholic priest, is usually credited as being the first reformer. Tartila began his activities at the Church of Silelis in Samogitia with a public explanation of Luther's theses in 1535-36. That same year Grand Duke Sigismund issued a decree for-

bidding the propagation of Lutheran and Anabaptist teachings under pain of confiscation of personal property. Tartila was compelled to flee into Prussia.

The correspondence between Albrecht of Prussia and the Lithuanian magnates at this time revealed the wavering position of the prominent families of Bilevicius, Katkevicius, Radvila and Keskaila. And in 1950 the Franciscan monks at Vilnius began to preach Protestant doctrines in the Church of St. Ann, where from the beginning of the 16th century religious devotions had already been held in the German language for the accommodation of German merchants. In 1539, Abraham Kulvietis, who had studied under Erasmus and Melancthon, established a school in Vilnius favoring Protestant tendencies which was attended by several dozen sons of magnates. But through the efforts of Paul Alseniskis, bishop of Vilnius, acting with the approval of Grand Duke Sigismund Kulvietis, was compelled to exile himself to Koenigsberg in 1542. His school was suppressed.

Calvinism.

The chief supporters of the Reformation in the Grand Duchy were the Lithuanian magnates, at whose head was the Radvila family. After corresponding with Calvin at Geneva in 1555, the Radvilas became Calvinists. In 1557 at Lukiskiai in Vilnius, Nicholas Radvila the Black established an independent Calvinist Church. Sympathetic local clergy supplanted the Catholic priests, who refused to accede to the new doctrines, at Brasta, Nesvyzius, Kletsk, Birzai, Kedainiai Mordava and in other areas which either came under the jurisdiction of the Radvilas, or where they exercised the right of patronage for particular churches. Ministers of the new faith were likewise invited from Poland. Nicholas the Black sent Czechowicz and Wedrzyhowski to Switzerland for advanced study of the Calvinist doctrines.

In 1557, through the efforts of the same Nicholas Radvila the first synod of the Reformers was convened in Vilnius. On this occasion a Protestant Society, which lasted into the twentieth century, known as the "Lithuania Unit," was founded. This organization, in conjunction with the synods, evolved its own canon law and constituted a strong Calvinist force in Lithuania. In 1558, Radvila established a printing house at Brasta (Brest Litovsk), which published Protestant books in the Polish and Latin languages. In 1564, he also sponsored the publication of a new version of the Bible in the Polish language known as the *Biblia Brzeska* (The Bible of Brest), dedicated to Sigismund Augustus. In 1562, one of his assistants, Matthew Kviecinskis, undertook

the administration of another printing house at Nesvyzius, and there produced Luther's catechism in the Byelorussian language.

Many of the magnate families followed in the footsteps of Nicholas the Black and became Calvinists. And since they constituted the Council of the Lords of the Lithuanian Senate, the ruling body of the Grand Duchy had thereby definitely become Calvinistic. Thus, when the Protestants received their magna charta in Lithuania in 1563, guaranteeing members of all confessions equal rights and equal privileges, which in reality merely sanctioned an already existing fact, ten of the twenty-one signatories were Calvinists, three were Catholic bishops and the other eight were Catholic or Byelorussian Orthodox magnates.

The gentry imitated the magnates. The peasants, subject as they were in all matters to the gentry, were influenced by the Reform doctrines only insofar as the upper classes attempted to prevent them from attending Catholic services, and depriving them of Catholic priests and churches. Radvila remained a staunch supporter of Calvinism until his death in 1565.

Lutheranism.

Lutheranism, predominant in Poland's vassal state of Prussia, competed with Calvinism in Lithuania. It was sponsored mainly by Albrecht of Prussia, but never received the active support of the Lithuanian magnates. Albrecht harbored the first Lithuanian reformers, Jonas Tartyla, Stanislas Rapalavicus and Abraham Kulvietis. He corresponded with the aristocratic families of Bilevicius, Kmita, Keskaila, Katkevicius and Radvila. He sponsored the education of Vilentas, George Zablockis, Augustine Jomantas, Alexander Radvinenis, all Lithuanian boyars, in Protestant universities, and even journeyed to Vilnius in 1546, to urge a greater registration of Lithuanian students at Koenigsberg.

In appealing to the Lithuanian element in Prussia and neighboring Lithuania, Albrecht pursued a course different from that of the Radvilas. He approved and favored the use of the Lithuanian language spoken by the plainfolk. Consequently, Martin Mazvydas published a translation of Martin Luther's catechism in the Lithuanian language in 1547. To Lithuanian parishes he invited Lithuanian-speaking clergymen, such as Bretkunas and Vilentas. But the field open to Lutheran activity in Lithuania itself was restricted merely to the townspeople who associated with the German merchants. The peasants and villagers were subject to the Polonized Lithuanian gentry who favored Calvinism. Even in the areas of eastern Prussia bordering on the Grand Duchy and populated in the main by Lithuanians, Lutheranism made slow progress.

From Budreckis' History of Lithuania



A MAN FOR ALL REASONS

"What a piece of work is man!
How noble in reason! How infinite
in faculty! . . . In action,
how like an angel!"

Shakespeare

Albert Cizauskas

Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis, who is to be declared Blessed during the extraordinary ceremonies commemorating Lithuania's 600th year of Christianity, accomplished his life's work in the turbulent period when Lithuanian nationalism was reborn, a nationalism which had begun its decline with the advent of a politicized Christianity under Jogaila. The most impressive aspect of the Archbishop's life was that he refused to permit his high ecclesiastical office to be used for chauvinistic national purposes despite intense pressure, and thereby typified Christianity in its purest form untainted by politics. And yet his beatification will have significant political overtones, since it will publicize the plight of his native land suffering today under the tyranny of Soviet Marxism.

Archbishop Matulaitis died in 1927, sixty years ago, a few weeks before his countryman, Jonas Basanavicius. The two, born in the same area, represented the two elements of the Lithuanian renaissance, one of religion and the other of nationalism. With them died the line of great heroes of their country's rebirth, which began with Bishop Valancius.

It was appropriate that the Archbishop, who revived a religious order, the Marians, and founded another for women, both dedicated to the veneration of God's mother, was born near the town named for her, Marijampole, which has been profaned today with the name of the Lithuanian Communist, Kapsukas.

In ways that defined his character, Jurgis Matulaitis resembled Thomas More. Both were persons of deep piety and learning, both were practical men of affairs with a brilliant record of achievement, both refused to compromise the positions they held for principles they held dearer, and both, in the end, suffered martyrdom, More by losing his head, and Matulaitis by losing the bishopric of Vilnius.

A Promising Theologian

Orphaned at an early age, the young Jurgis was sent by relatives, who were then living in Poland, to seminaries in that country. There he distinguished himself, winning the highest honors. His Polish background was a mixed blessing, however. While it gave him an intimate insight into the Polish situation and character, an asset which played an important role in his career, it made him suspect to Lithuanian partisans who regarded him as "sulenkejusis," a supporter of the Polish cause. Nor did it help him with the Poles, who, with few exceptions, looked down upon him as a "Litvomanis," a derogatory Polish term for those who do not deny their Lithuanian heritage.

Another important influence on the formation of Matulaitis' character was the contraction of bone cancer at an early age. The deadly malady incapacitated him several times

and its pain afflicted him throughout his relatively short life of 56 years. Because of the cancer, he was compelled to give up parish work in Poland at the start of his clerical career and seek medical treatment in Germany. There, his restless spirit refused to accept the usual constraints binding an invalid so that he managed to attend the University of Fribourg in Switzerland where he obtained a Doctorate in Sacred Theology and reaped additional honors, bringing him to the attention of Church leaders.

After a partial recovery, Matulaitis was assigned to teach at a Polish seminary but once again his cancer flared up, and it was feared that one of his legs might have to be amputated. A priest with a growing reputation in ecclesiastical circles, he now gave one of the earliest indications of the kind of man he was by entering a hospital for the poor. There, an operation on his leg fortunately saved the infected limb.

No sooner had his condition improved, than the young theologian, whose writings were commanding widespread respect and admiration, unexpectedly revealed another side to his personality: that of the manager and man of action. In addition to theology, Matulaitis had probed deeply into theories of social justice, which were then at the forefront of intellectual inquiry in Europe, from Marxism at one end, to Papal encyclicals at the other. Matulaitis plunged into social work, founding in Warsaw an organization for workers which attracted over 50,000 members, and editing its newspaper. He also recruited students for Christian social action and, with the spirit of the crusader, organized "social action weeks" in Warsaw and Kaunas, thereby demonstrating that not only socialists but also the Church was concerned about the exploited condition of the European worker. Christian social action, of which Matulaitis was an early and effective exponent in Poland and Lithuania, was one of the important forces which helped to counter the spread of Communism in eastern Europe.

Matulaitis did not neglect his strictly religious responsibilities at this time. He re-organized a nuns' convent and chaired a priests' society. In the midst of all this activity, he also found time to give support and encouragement to his countrymen in Warsaw, who were often the victims of discrimination by the Polish majority.

The energetic man of action was soon recalled to his role of scholar. In 1907, he was appointed the first occupant of the chair of sociology at the prestigious Academy of St. Petersburg. As the Encyclopedia Lituanica puts it, Matulaitis' "keen intellect, deep knowledge, and thorough teaching of practical social problems" attracted not only students but even professors at the Academy to his classes.



Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis who will be beatified June 28 exemplified mankind's highest spiritual development.

revised the order's rule and brought it into the 20th century. Communities of Marians were soon founded or reopened in Switzerland, the United States, Poland, Lithuania, Belorussia, Latvia and Italy, in that order. Expansion continued after Matulaitis' death into England, Argentina and Portugal. The work of the rejuvenated order can best be illustrated by its activities in Lithuania: its members taught primary and secondary schools; operated model farms, craft workshops and printing presses; and ran libraries and theatrical facilities. In Chicago, the Marians publish the "Draugas," one of the foremost Lithuanian Catholic journals; in Thompson, Connecticut, they run a well-known prep school that has attracted attention and support from non-Lithuanians.

In today's spirit of giving women a more meaningful role in the religious life of the church, he founded the congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in 1918 in Lithuania. The order also prospered and expanded to the United States. Through the Archbishop's foresight, the nuns concentrate in fields which are much in demand in the contemporary world, such as nursing, and caring for pre-school age children and the aged.

Agitation in Brooklyn

The first of two visits to the United States took place a year before the outbreak of World War I. His purpose was to establish the Marian congregation in the United States, five years earlier than in Lithuania itself, which indicates the importance he attached to the growing influence of the Lithuanian communities here. Matulaitis' unpretentious personality shows up in a remark to a fellow priest in Chicago before his arrival that he would be contented with whatever accommodations could be found. He says this so much better in Lithuanian: "Mes nesame ponai, tai ir bet kur pasitenkisim."

In a letter to another priest, Matulaitis wrote about his unceasing round of pastoral work among the Lithuanian immigrants who were sorely in need of spiritual guidance and social enlightenment. The future Archbishop had given two sermons in an unnamed Lithuanian parish in Brooklyn (Annunciation?) and then conducted a discussion in the parish hall on social questions, a subject dear to his heart. All at once, a considerable agitation erupted and "socialists" launched a bitter personal attack on him. Everything finally ended well, but he remarks, somewhat ruefully, that it would have been better if he had confined himself to religious matters. While understandable, this observation appears somewhat inconsistent with Matulaitis' pioneering work among Polish and Lithuanian laborers and with his reputation of never seeking, but never avoiding, rational discussion with those who disagreed with him on issues he deemed important. Perhaps, it was because "rational" discussion in this instance was impossible.

War

In 1914, Matulaitis went to Warsaw where he took possession of a run-down monastery outside of town and, within

He kept climbing up the academic ladder, but his boundless energies were seeking an outlet in more practical work.

Revival of the Marians

It was at this time that the first great turning point in his life occurred. He petitioned the Pope to let him restore the Marian order of which only one monk in Lithuania remained. With the impending death of the aged Father Senkus in the monastery at Marijampole, the once-flourishing order would become defunct. The Russians had disbanded the order in 1864, exiling its members to Siberia or forcing them to be absorbed into the diocesan clergy. The Marians had been founded in Poland in 1673 to honor Mary's Immaculate Conception, teach the poor and pray for the souls in purgatory. The order grew rapidly for the first hundred years, with communities established in Lithuania, Italy and Portugal. Religious persecution, however, dealt it virtually mortal blows, forcing its members out of Italy and Portugal even before the order's dispersal in its own homeland by the Russians.

And so it came about that a Lithuanian restored an order founded by a Pole. Pope Pius X acceded to Matulaitis' request, and, as usual, the latter, with enthusiasm and zeal, began the immense work of bringing back to life a religious community on the verge of extinction. "He saw monasticism not exclusively as a means of personal sanctification, but rather as a dynamo for social action and cultural life," according to the Encyclopedia Lithuanica. In this spirit, he

(Continued from page 5)

a year, re-established the Polish branch of the Marians. But the times were difficult. The war between the Germans and the Russians on Polish and Lithuanian soil inflicted untold hardships upon the people of both countries. In Warsaw, Matulaitis saw the numbers of homeless orphans multiplying rapidly as the war continued. Characteristically, he took direct action, organizing a shelter for these war orphans and even begging in the streets of the ravaged city for whatever he could obtain to help the helpless young ones.

His courageous and selfless work came to the attention of Monsignor Achille Ratti, the Vatican's official "visitor" to Poland. (A "visitor" is required to scrutinize the religious life and ecclesiastical administration of a country on behalf of the Vatican.) The two soon became warm friends. When Ratti was notified he would be elevated to the rank of Archbishop, he placed himself, for a period of eight days, under Matulaitis' spiritual guidance in preparation for this step. It was not surprising that when the Archbishop returned to Rome, he became a warm supporter of the energetic and humanitarian Lithuanian priest. Ratti subsequently became Pius XI, who himself elevated Matulaitis some years later to the rank of Archbishop.

The Reluctant Bishop

The next important step in Matulaitis' churchly career differed greatly in its effect upon him. The rebirth of the Marian order gave him a sense of accomplishment and joy. His election to the see of Vilnius, however, brought him nothing but anguish and frustration. For good reason, he has been called the "Martyr of Vilnius" and his tenure there as his "Golgotha."

In the waning days of World War I, the Vatican selected Matulaitis to be Bishop of Vilnius despite widespread opposition from both the Poles and the Lithuanians. The political situation in eastern Europe at this time was a patchwork quilt of pent-up nationalistic aspirations after centuries of suppression by the German, Austrian and Russian empires. Nowhere was this more evident than in Lithuania's historic capital, as it underwent successive occupations by the Poles, the Bolsheviks and the Lithuanians, all wrestling for control of the city. At the end of a year of inconclusive warfare between the three, the League of Nations assigned control of Vilnius to Lithuania. Poland, however, was determined to revive the moribund Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and seized the city in a military coup. Ironically, Poland was the first country after World War I to defy the League, an example it came to rue years later when it lost its independence to Adolph Hitler.

It was into this snake-pit of contending national rivalries that the Holy See sent Matulaitis, a Lithuanian. The Poles interpreted the appointment of a "Litvomanis" as a hostile political act and bitterly contested it. Even Lithuanian authorities, under Antanas Smetona, distrusted Matulaitis, regarding him as a Polonized churchman because of his training and work in that country. Approached by the Lithuanians, the future Bishop did not mince words. He told them he understood they wanted him to be the instrument of Lithuanian supremacy over the Poles, a sort of "hammer" with which he would crack the skulls of the Polish

clergy, or like a broom that would sweep them out. But Matulaitis made it plain to them that, while he did not desire this high honor, if forced to accept it, he would be the shepherd of all his flock, that he would not be the Bishop of a Lithuanian, or Polish, diocese, but of a Catholic one. Confronted with such integrity, the Lithuanians accepted him, notifying the Holy See to that effect.

There was one other center of opposition to his appointment: Matulaitis himself. He even wrote to Eugenio Pacelli, then the Papal Nuncio at Munich (later to become Pius XII), pleading that he was a politically-unacceptable candidate, and that all he wished was to work with his Marians. Even the Polish chapter of the Marians, at Matulaitis's behest, petitioned the Nuncio to convince the Vatican to withdraw Matulaitis's name. Pacelli replied that all these protestations convinced him that Matulaitis was indeed the right person for the position. The official notification came in a letter from his friend Ratti who wrote that the Holy Father would not accept any further procrastination. (It is significant that Matulaitis was befriended and respected by two future Popes.)

Matulaitis had no choice now but to accept the bitter cup he was given, realizing that he would please no one in a city ridden with nationalistic factions and political intrigues. He made it plain, from the very beginning, however, that he would be the Bishop of all the people, and not of any particular class or nationality.

He was consecrated Bishop at Kaunas on December 1, 1918, and installed as Bishop of Vilnius a few days later. The corrosive spirit of nationalistic politics intruded even into these sacred rites. A heated controversy arose about the language to be used during the installation ceremonies. Matulaitis adopted an elegant solution. He addressed the clergy in Latin, then the congregation, in Polish as well as in Lithuanian. While this procedure did not please the more extreme partisans, it satisfied most. In fact, his Lithuanian address is said to have been the first time since the 15th century that Lithuanian had been used at a Bishop's installation in the Vilnius Cathedral. It was indeed a chauvinistic mine-field that the new Bishop was treading. At the dinner in his honor, the Polish clergy dared to toast their new Bishop as one who would help restore the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Matulaitis responded that his ministry was a spiritual one, and had nothing to do with political matters.

Vilnius under the Bolsheviks

No sooner had he been installed as Bishop, than the Bolsheviks ran the Polish administration out of the city. Matulaitis had been advised to flee, but he was determined, as the new Bishop, not to abandon his flock, even, as he admitted, at the possible cost of his life.

In his diary, Matulaitis provides a graphic, eye-witness account of those troubled days. The Poles, he writes, were in full control of the city one day, the white eagle of Poland flying everywhere. The next day, the Poles were gone. The feared invaders marched into the deserted streets of Vilnius, where only a few old women were brave enough to show themselves, on their way to church.

(Continued next month)



VYTAUTAS THE GREAT

Thomas A. Michalski, Ph.D.

Vytautas the Great, the eldest son of Birute and Kestutis was born into a troubled world. It was a time in which the very existence of the Lithuanian people and emerging state were seriously threatened. Internally, Lithuania was both blessed and cursed by the appearance of almost too many capable, brilliant yet factious and ambitious leaders. Oftentimes they were at odds with one another to the detriment of the Lithuanian people. The country was plagued by civil war, fratricide and murder. Mindaugas had been assassinated at an earlier date. Kestutis was strangled while under the roof of his kinsman, Jogaila. To the west, Lithuania was threatened by the Teutonic Order, a German religious military organization. The Teutonic Knights traced their origin to the crusades. After the end of the crusades against the Saracens in the Holy Land, they sought another mission and found it on the shores of the Baltic Sea.

With the blessing of both pope and emperor, the Teutonic Knights entrenched themselves on Baltic littoral, at a time when the Baltic peoples, among them the Lithuanians, were yet disunited. The Teutonic Knights vanquished one Baltic people after another. They conquered the Pommeranians, and the Prūsai or Old Prussians from whom Prussia took its name. They subjugated the Letts and the Livs in what is now Latvia and Esthonia. They threatened and cajoled

the Masurians, a slavic people in what is now north central Poland. They attacked the Finno-Russians in their attempts to subjugate the area now known as north-western Russia around Novgorod and Pskov. During the reign of Grand Duke Gediminas (1316-1341) the Teutonic Knights began their systematic onslaughts against Lithuania with the backing of the German States, England, France, the Scandinavian countries and Bohemia. Lithuania stood virtually alone against the combined military and technological might of almost all of western Europe. To make a bad situation even worse the German "Drang nach Osten" or "Drive to the East" was blessed by the pope, and sanctioned by the emperor in the name of Christ. The Baltic shores were to be baptized in blood and thoroughly Germanized in the process. The conquered Prūsai did not accept German rule passively. They rose twice against their oppressors during the period 1242-1249 and again between 1260-1274. They were brutally suppressed each time.



Vytautas the Great was a brilliant warrior and administrator, renowned for his tolerance and flexibility. He Christianized Lithuania.

The war between the Teutonic Knights and Lithuania lasted some two hundred years. Lithuania withstood massive attacks by the Teutonic Knights who were not simply content with "baptizing" the non-Christian Lithuanians. They often terrorized and wasted the neighboring Catholic Poles and Eastern Orthodox Christians in the north of Russia when it was convenient, without much resistance.

Lithuania, especially Žemaitija, suffered terribly. The land was repeatedly ravaged by fire and sword. Agriculture and the economy were in constant shambles. Trade was destroyed. The population was consistently decimated. The natural growth of the nation was stunted almost completely. The country never recovered from the loss of and natural growth of population. Natural and normal relationships between Lithuania and the rest of Europe were interrupted for some two hundred years. Cultural development was retarded. Above all, the Christianization of the nation was set back

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Vytautas (from page 7)

generations when all of the rest of Europe had accepted Christianity either from Rome or Byzantium. Christianity and especially Roman Catholicism became repugnant to Lithuanians in general but particularly to the Žemaičiai who bore the brunt of what was blasphemously called "christianization" by the Germans who "baptized in blood", "by fire and sword!"

To survive, Lithuania needed allies. Both Jogaila and Vytautas looked southward. Poland was both a victim of the Teutonic Knights and Roman Catholic. To mute the anti-Lithuanian propaganda spread by the Teutonic Knights throughout Western Europe, Jogaila agreed to accept Roman Catholicism through Poland. He became King of Poland in 1386, with the understanding that Lithuania would be baptized into the Roman Catholic faith in 1387 to be followed shortly thereafter by Žemaitija. Both Vytautas and Jogaila viewed the Polish military alliance as a military and political necessity if Lithuania was to survive. Within a short time however, Vytautas and Jogaila began to differ on the nature of their understanding of the Polish alliance.

Vytautas perceived the Lithuanian-Polish connection as a temporary pact between two equal and sovereign nations. Jogaila, as king of Poland, saw the military alliance as the basis for a more permanent and lasting arrangement between the two countries. After all, Poland was but a fairly small country in the European scheme of things at the time, much like Bohemia. Unlike Bohemia, Poland was militarily strong. It was also economically prosperous and technologically advanced in comparison with Lithuania which had spent itself on two hundred years of war with the Teutonic Knights. Lithuania had already absorbed areas much larger than Poland politically. She ruled Kiev, "the mother of Russian cities," Volhynia, Podolia, and most of the Ukraine, all of Byelorussia and significant portions of Great Russia.

In Jogaila's mind, Poland, too, had been joined to and added to the dynastic holdings of his family, the Gediminaičiai later known as the Jagiellonians. Jogaila opted for an essentially European-oriented Lithuania and Roman Catholicism to disarm Lithuania's western opponents. Poland was seen as nothing more than a viaduct. Poland was to provide Lithuania with the means of entering into the mainstream of European Catholic civilization. Nationality and ethnicity were probably never uppermost in his mind or the mind of Vytautas. Both were products of their time. The concepts of nationality, ethnici-

ty and nation states developed centuries later.

In 1410, the Lithuania-Polish alliance bore fruit. The Teutonic Knights, their number augmented by armed forces from all of Western Europe, were decisively defeated by the combined Lithuanian-Polish armed forces at Grunwald in Prussia. As king of Poland, Jogaila technically outranked Vytautas, Grand Duke of Lithuania, but it was Vytautas who personally led the combined Lithuanian-Polish task force, augmented by Tartar, Eastern Slavic and Bohemian contingents, into battle. The Teutonic Knights were completely routed by Vytautas, who had been a warrior since his youth. The Teutonic Knights never seriously threatened Lithuania or Poland again. During the Protestant Reformation they were one of the first German states to accept Lutheranism and secularization. The battle had been won.

With the defeat of the threat from the West, Vytautas was freed to pursue his ambitions in the Orthodox Christian East. Under Gediminas, (1275-1341), Lithuania began to expand eastward, occupying Minsk, Vitebsk, Polotzk and parts of the region of Smolensk. Gediminas styled himself as "rex Letwinorum et Ruthenorum", "King of the Lithuanians and Ruthenians" (Russians). Algirdas (1345-1377), continued the policy of Lithuanian expansionism. In 1349, he conquered all of the Ukraine. He attacked Moscow itself, three times. He allowed and encouraged his sons whom he appointed as his representatives in the East to accept the Eastern Orthodox faith of their subjects.

Vytautas continued the policy of his predecessors. Under his reign, Lithuania extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea. He reoccupied Smolensk, waged several campaigns against Pskov and laid siege to Moscow several times. By diplomacy, the city state of Great Novgorod was brought into the Lithuanian political orbit. He engaged the remnants of the Tartar Golden Hordes several times with unequal success. As a result he was active in their councils and exerted a great deal of influence over their policies.

Lithuanian rule was generally welcomed by the Eastern Orthodox populace. Vytautas and his predecessors were just and tolerant rulers. They were the protectors and patrons of the Eastern Orthodox Church in their domains. Vytautas himself often acted as an arbiter between squabbling factions in the Eastern Orthodox Church. He actively sought the independence of the Eastern Orthodox Church in his realm in correspondence with the head of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Ecumenical Patri-

arch, in Turkish occupied Constantinople, as a prelude to the reunification of all Christians, both Eastern and Western, under his rule. He continued the policy of Algirdas. Lithuanians sent to govern Lithuania's eastern provinces accepted the Eastern Orthodox faith of their subjects. Many married Orthodox Christian women, whose children were born into Eastern Christian Slavic culture. Their children soon adopted the language of their mothers. Within a very short time, many of the relatives of Algirdas, Vytautas and Jogaila, the descendants of Gediminas and his allies remained Lithuanian ethnically, but lost their native language as they adopted the Eastern Orthodox religion and the Slavic idiom and customs of those they ruled. Lithuania absorbed much of what is now the western part of the Soviet Union politically.

Culturally and religiously, Lithuania proper was not faced with the possibility of being absorbed into the Eastern Orthodox Slavic world. After the defeat of the Teutonic Order in 1410, and the coronation of Jogaila as king of Poland in 1386, Vytautas was the supreme ruler in all of Lithuania. Had he accepted Eastern Orthodoxy, no doubt he could have easily been acclaimed the first czar of all of Russia, Byelorussia and the Ukraine. To have done so, he would have had to turn his back on his own Lithuanian people. He chose to remain Lithuanian, sacrificing his own personal ambitions for the good of his people.

Having secured his power in both the east and west, Vytautas turned his attention anew to the Lithuanian-Polish alliance. With the passage of time, Jogaila fell more and more under the influence of the Polish nobility in Krakow. He became their prisoner in a very real sense. To them, he was always a foreigner, a non-native barbarian and doubtful neophyte Christian. He was used, misused and abused by the royal court in Krakow. According to some historians, Jogaila often threatened to abdicate the Polish throne and return to Vilnius. He loved Lithuania, his homeland and despised the intrigues of the Polish nobility. Yet, he knew that if he abdicated the Polish throne, it would surely fall to the German Hapsburgs. Poland itself would become a vassal of German interests directed against Lithuania. He himself would be accused of apostasy by the Teutonic Knights. The results of the Battle of Grunwald-Tannenberg would be undone. Lithuania would again be threatened anew by the Germans from the west, north and south. The fledgling Roman Catholic faith in Lithuania proper would be undermined. The Eastern Orthodox

Russian-oriented element in Lithuania would assume control and Lithuania would be drawn totally into the Eastern Orthodox orbit. There was no going home. He had antagonized both the non-Christian Lithuanian *bajorai* and the Eastern Orthodox *bajorai*, among them his own relatives on his mother's side (his mother was an Eastern Orthodox Christian) by accepting Roman Catholicism. In Lithuania, he had good reason to fear for his life. After all, Mindaugas was assassinated by Lithuanian non-Christians partially because of his acceptance of then hated Christianity. Jogaila, often maligned and denigrated by Lithuanian inter-war historians, was indeed a prisoner of history. He died the lonely death of a politically displaced person far from his beloved Lithuanian forests. He was buried in the crypt of the Royal Wawel Castle in Krakow, Poland, where he remains to this day.

Although enemies at the outset, Vytautas and Jogaila worked out their very real differences for the good of Lithuania. Jogaila furthered the political interests of Lithuania in the West with the support of Vytautas. Vytautas furthered the political interests of Lithuania in the East with the support of Jogaila. As a result, Lithuania survived 200 years of armed attack from the West, and Russian cultural and religious penetration from the East.

Ironically, several Polish historians now view the Lithuanian-Polish alliance as a mistake. Jogaila and Vytautas are blamed for ignoring Polish interests and pursuing Lithuanian objectives at the expense of Poland. For all practical purposes, they point out, Poland was indeed joined politically to Lithuania and not Lithuania to Poland. Poland, they maintain, never gained anything of value from the Lithuanian-Polish alliance after the defeat of the Germans. They further argue that the Lithuanian nobility adopted the Polish language and customs to insure their rule in Poland was finalized. Poor Jogaila seems to have no friends among most Lithuanian, Polish, German and Russian historians! Vytautas himself, does not escape their pen. Vytautas is blamed for welcoming thousands of Polish knights into Lithuania. He is further blamed for supporting and importing Polish Roman Catholic clerics into Lithuania where they provided a counterbalance to Eastern Orthodox russophile clerks in the chancellery of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy!

Vytautas, the Great, was a great man. He was indeed a great warrior. From his youth, he accompanied his father Kestutis to the battlefield. He was personally very

courageous. He was a veteran of many hand-to-hand battles with the Germans, Tartars and Russians. He put his own life on the line for his country and people many, many times. He was an astute diplomat. He continuously dealt with some of the most accomplished diplomats of his time. He skillfully conducted negotiations with the Holy Roman Emperor, the Pope of Rome, several Grand Masters of the Teutonic Knights, the Khans of the Golden Horde, the Sultan of Turkey, the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church in Constantinople, the various Great Dukes and Dukes of Russia, Byelorussia and the Ukraine, not to mention the shrewd Polish nobility and his own stubborn Lithuanian *bajorai*. He was indeed the most respected sovereign in all of Western and Eastern Europe in his day.

Vytautas lived to be about eighty years of age at a time in which most men died by their forties. Not only did he survive scores of battles, but disease as well. Vytautas was physically very strong and healthy. He was known for his habits of moderation. He never stuffed himself as did other sovereigns. He abstained totally from alcoholic beverages and was known for his high standards of cleanliness and personal morality. He was an exceptionally tolerant man. No individual in Lithuania was ever persecuted for his or her faith or nationality.

All were welcome in Vytautas' Lithuania. Lithuania was the home of Lithuanians, Jews, Karaims, Tartars, Poles, Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians as well as Armenians, Greeks, Latvians and others. Vytautas was so known for his tolerance in religious matters that the Bohemians then in intra-religious conflict between Catholics and Hussites offered him their crown! Vytautas was a brilliant administrator, who streamlined and modernized the Lithuanian government. There was nothing mean or vile in his nature. He was an educated man for his time. In addition to his native Lithuanian, he was no doubt also fluent to one or another degree in German, Slavonic, Polish, Latin and Tartar. He was a dreamer, yet a realist. He survived some 80 years in a most troubled world. He was noble—both in victory and defeat. Above all, he was courageous, tolerant and flexible in his dealings with others. He saved the Lithuanian people and state from the junk heap of history. He left his people with a legacy of pride that has in many ways sustained them for centuries through equally troubled times into our own day. He embodied the Lithuanian folk saying, "Kas bus, tas bus, o Lietuva nepražus", "What will be will be, but Lithuania will never perish!"



In Memoriam

Adele Swedish

Sister, my grief's too deep for tears.
Tears are for torn flesh and searing pain
And death's the anodyne.

But my grief is selfish.
I mourn your loss in earthly time,
Forgetting the transfigured resurrection,

Losing sight of where you are,
Now blessed and full of grace
And in the company of the Holy Spirit.

Albert Cizauskas

WHEN GERMANS DISCOVERED

Lithuanian Folksong, the Daina

Charles Meltzer

Albinas Azukas, who submitted this Meltzer article, added these interesting observations of his own:

In going through the accumulation of years, preparatory to moving, I'm finding all sorts of old and forgotten notes, clippings, etc., like the enclosed sloppily typed article from a 1919 edition of *Musical America*, in which Charles Meltzer, writing about Lithuanian folk songs, introduced the American public to "the interesting people which is now asking for admission to the community of free and civilized people."

I don't think anyone who knows Lithuania can think of it as being as gray

and grim as Meltzer saw it. The Lithuania I discovered fifty years ago was something of a paradise for me, after I had grown up in the coalmining area of Pennsylvania, a grim and grey country if there was one. I still thrill with ecstasy when I recall the first sight and sound of a skylark high up in the sky, over a meadow awash with flowers, early on a spring morning with the sun still not high in the sky.

Meltzer's unfamiliarity with the Lithuanian language causes him to miss the beauty of the folksongs. He has no notion of the emotional impact contained in our use of diminutives which he presents as naive sentimentality. And he does not understand the Lithuanian's love

of their flora, so rich with cultural symbolism. To him, the lovely rue (*ruta*) which is a joyous symbol of purity to a Lithuanian, looks merely "doleful".

It seems to me that Charles Meltzer got most of his information from Germanes, based on the 1825 edition of 85 Lithuanian folksongs by L.G. Reza, for which a review was written by J. Goethe two or three years later. It also seems to me, that the publication of Reza might well be responsible for a very considerable influence of our *dainos* on the German *Lieder*, rather than the other way around. It's not always the situation that the old and large "great" impacts the young and small and weak.

If the folksongs of a race are the expression of its heart and soul, then the Lithuanians are the simplest of all people. The lilts and rhythms which distinguish most of their *dainos* astonish one by their naivete. And this despite the fact that the old Lithuanian tribes of the Borussian wing were somewhat affected by their contact with the more sophisticated Germans, while those who were near the Poles and Russians were unmistakably influenced by Slavonic thought.

In many of the *dainos* the opposed qualities of the Slavs and Germans mingle. The sentimentality of the more Western race is tinged with the melancholy so characteristic of the Russians. But in a majority of the Lithuanian folksongs which have been handed down to us, there is a sincerity more childlike than one finds in some of the "lieder" of Franz and Schubert. The Lithuanian melodies and texts reflect the greys and greens of a depressing homeland, the mists of marshes, woods and wastes and lonely plains. They interpret nature in her more humbler moods. In all, there is the suggestion of a life that rarely glows with sunlight. A life hedged in and barred from flaming joys. Vague yearnings for a brighter, broader existence mark the *dainos*. Love, as the Lithuanian minstrels paint it, is timid and plain-tive, rather than ardent.

Many songs of the Baltic bard voice deeper hunger for companionship and sympathy. In all, there are more sighs and tears than smiles, and in a few there are signs of humor. They sing of orphans seeking comfort; of sisters stretching out their arms to brothers for protection against enemies; of sweethearts too ingenuous in their courtships as to be pitiful. In Lithuanian love song, one hears the echo of a hopeless undertone of a gently, ill-used race. The

prayer for sunlight is habitual and inherited from the first pagans who were led by fate or chance to choose their homes beneath grey, uninspiring skies.

For many centuries the Lithuanians were separated from the outer world by the conformation of their country. Streams and morasses parted even tribe from tribe. And, of necessity, their outlook became narrow. The landscapes which are pictured in their songs lack breadth and distance. Yet it is plain that they are dear to those who sing them. The nightingale and cuckoo charmed the rustics of the Lithuanian land more surely than they did the Italian peasants. Their horses, dogs and sheep, their farms and woods, to them are full of interest.

But all one hears in the *dainos* is pathetic. Through all one feels the cruelty of life; and need of greater joy and space and sunshine. Tears, half repressed, well up in the *dainos*. In many cases, too, one finds obscure reverions to the longings of the early Baltic settlers who worshipped fire and bowed heads before the sun.

The doleful rue has a more prominent place in the poetic flora of the Lithuanians than the white lily or the exuberant blood-red rose. Of the trees, those chiefly favored by the anonymous bard are the birch and maple, and the unattractive alder.

The frequent employment and diminutives in the *dainos* makes it difficult in translating to do justice to the originals without lapsing into mawkishness. The beast and flowers, the youths and maidens, in the folksongs of the primitive Baltic peoples, are referred to as "little cows" and "little dogs", as "rose-lets" and "lilykins", as "lasses" and "laddies". To Lithuanians this seems right and natural. To others it may smack of bathos.

Perhaps the most ambitious, and beyond question the most literary, of the Lithuanian folksongs is a symbolical lamentation of a mother whose dear daughter has just died. With no small eloquence, it describes the funeral rites, the summoning of that dead maiden's bier, and her departure from her home for her last resting place. This sort of song is of the class named *raudos*, dirges. The imagery of the bard who wrote the words is almost semitic. The mother calls her daughter her "white lily", her "red rose", her "Fragrant clover", her "full-blown sunflower". She bids her child bow her acknowledgements to her friends and neighbors for attending the festival in her honor. She speaks of the dead maiden's beautiful robe and of her journeying from her home, alas, forever, while the guests sing songs to speed her on her way to the "land of souls".

"My little daughter", says the mother to her child, "thou

bride among souls, I set free as a soul bride. But never shall thou come again to visit me. I shall see thee here no more".

The ideas which underlie the verses of this *rauda* may be unclear, but in effect they are poetic, and, when sung with the right fervor and expression, the verses should be extremely poignant. The real beauty of the Lithuanian folksongs was, till a hundred years ago or less, unsuspected and undreamt of by the great nations of the European world. It is impossible to hear or read the *dainos* (and above all the weird *raudos*) of the interesting people which is now asking for admission to the community of free and civilized nations, without feeling that, apart from all their courage, shown in their fight against the red tyranny of the Leninists, they are as worthy as the Czechs and Jugoslavs.

(From *Musical America*, 1919)

DAINA: A NOBLE PATTERN OF SURVIVAL

What could be sweeter than our daina
sung in Lithuania by young Lithuanians?

Lithuanian folk song, the *daina*, rises spontaneously at dinner tables around the world wherever Lithuanians have made their home. The main language spoken at the table is not always Lithuanian; it might be English, German, Portuguese, Spanish. . . but the *daina* rises in Lithuanian chorus with unrestrained gusto. The *daina* remains as a challenging irony, a natural outburst of joyousness, sadness and tenderness, in the face of conquerors intent on annihilating national cultures.

The *daina* was more instrumental than perhaps any other activity in strengthening Lithuanians to withstand foreign absorption and complete demoralization as a people. For hundreds of years, the language was ridiculed by Polonized squire and priest. It was sometimes dubbed the "language of the devil" and eventually the most gracious folk song was condemned as "a sin".

Yet, despite serfdom, poverty and degradation, Lithuanians celebrated the joy of life with the *daina* which emanated from their spirit as from an unfathomable well. Song and work were inseparable. They sang as they labored in the fields and, winters, under their humble roofs. They sang in their deep forests and beside their glistening lakes. They sang at weddings and at funerals, creating vast folk dramas of these two experiences of life. The *daina* is a natural, spontaneous celebration of all that rises out of the good earth and then must return to it. It iterates our primeval pagan tribute to Earth.

Interestingly, there is an absence of crude and obscene Slavic elements in the *daina*. Love is the central theme, delicately combining tenderness for man, woman and child — family and neighbor — with zest for hard work and with glory for our relationship with birds and beasts and the smaller bits of nature such as the carrot and the rue. The *daina* constitutes a system of ethics and morals interwoven musically with the activities of everyday life. It undoubtedly generated the vitality of the Lithuanian peasant in the

ultimate survival of Lithuania and her language.

The value of the *daina* as folk art was first recognized not by Lithuanian scholars but by foreigners who believed the Lithuanian language was dying out. They were convinced that Lithuania would be only a historical memory in another hundred years. They took special interest in studying her language and folk songs. Immanuel Kant advised that Lithuania should be protected by the state because "her language possesses the key which solves the enigmas not only of philology but of history."

In 1747, the German pastor Ruhig published "Betrachtungen der Litauischen Sprache" and included three *dainos*, with a shy apology to the German public: "Some may feel it is outrageous to think of attributing delicacy to such an uncultivated and despised language as Lithuanian." Lessing read the *dainos* and wrote: "The pious man apologizes for citing such trifles. In my opinion, he should have apologized for not citing more. Those precious rarities gave me no end of delight." Herder, in his "Stimmen der Volker in Liedern," published eight translations, wishing he had more to include. Goethe, too, found the *daina* delightful. In 1825, Rhesa published a collection of 85 *dainos* with music and German translations, which were so well received that some critics suspected Rhesa of having written the songs himself. Jacob Grimm, however, praised the work and Goethe declared, "Another of my desires has been fulfilled."

It was only after Germany received these songs with such serious admiration that the Poles and Russians began to recognize the value of the *daina*. The simple Lithuanian peasant, in the meantime, remained ignorant of the rising interest in his culture and he sang his *daina*, daily gathering from it a noble pattern of living while the very people who had so long tried to annihilate all things Lithuanian were discovering admirable qualities in the peasants' creativity, which they had tried to kill.

Demie Jonaitis

(Condensed from "PoetLore, World Literature and Drama".)



Urda and Shelmerdene, by Auste
at the Paroda '87, Traveling Art Exhibit.



AUSTĖ

**translates our
little-understood pagan ancestors
into her art**

Auste Pečiūra of New York, in a statement published by *Interview*, admits that she had a very odd childhood: "My parents had no desire to be in this country; they wished to be in Lithuania." Austė's mother was a descendant of Vytautas the Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania, and her uncle had been the Minister of Culture. Austė was born in Detroit, and, as one interviewer points out, was raised without television.

She did not speak English at first, since mother and grandmother insisted on Lithuanian. Austė's imagination was fed with Lithuanian folklore and customs. At mealtimes and every night, she listened to different stories with great suspense. Her mother used to organize a group of Lithuanian girl scouts, awakening them in the middle of the night for adventurous hikes. When in the woods, her mother would tell the girls fairytales. Austė's imagination was fired with eerie fairytale imagery — evil witches and lonely princes with sharp teeth and swirling masses of hair, dancing in landscapes overgrown with poppies and dense trees.

In an article "Austė: Romantic Occultist," Lita Hornick expressed her belief that the pagan rituals enacted by Austė around the campfire caused her to revolt against her Catholic religious training. "She had her first argument with a priest at the age of six and, at thirteen, refused communion."

In the painting titled "Urda and Shelmerdene," Austė demonstrates her occult tendencies with an imagery that comes from her subconscious. The critics attempting to describe this and other paintings by Austė use word imagery that is as lavish as the paintings they describe: The heroines in Austė's pictures stare hypnotically at the viewer with cat's eyes full of shadows; the pictures are pretty as nightshade and sweet as poisoned candy; the female personae emerge from black flowers and swirl in their elongated arms and fingers. "Thus," Lita Hornick ends her review, "we have a rich and highly original imagery."

Algimantas Kezys



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Detail of "Lithuania" by V. Ignas

Old Customs

Springtime among Our Forefathers

At the start of the 20th century, almost 90% of Lithuania was bound up with village life and farming. The boys and girls who would eventually become your forefathers were rural. Their parents produced most household utensils and clothing at home.

There was a special magic for youth in the warming and lengthening days of spring. At the ages of 10 and 12, a boy was taught how to harness and unharness horses, to yoke and unyoke oxen, and to harrow. Between 14 and 16, he was permitted to plough his first furrow.

He would kneel for his father's blessing. The two then recited a prayer to the earth, kissed it, and ploughed in some bread baked for the occasion. The rest of the bread they consumed, sharing it with the horses and oxen. The two ploughmen returned from the field together, the son leading the oxen, as a full-fledged ploughmen. The father relinquished his place at the table to the son, letting him slice the family loaf as a sign that the youth was now a recognized bread winner.

A girl's coming of age was attested by the first loaf of bread she baked. On a Friday, the mother handed her the flour which she mixed into a dough and let ferment. On Saturday morning, she kneaded the dough and allowed it to rise. She formed the loaves and incised a cross on the top. The bread was eaten that day by the family as they recited her praises.

Her siblings celebrated by victoriously carrying her outdoors on a stool, as a young woman now eligible for matchmakers. On that day, the mother took some of the daughter's bread to the local sauna (Lith. *pir-*

tis) to give the neighbors a treat and to boast about her new helper. The daughter was expected at that time to produce her first weaving, demonstrating that she was also accomplished in that important craft.

The lives of the family and the village were closely interlinked. In such a social situation, what boy or girl could not but be motivated to learn to tend to animals and the baking of bread?

What was beyond human control was taken care of. In the springtime, the first thunder of the season was considered a blessing of the land. Sheep and goats were released from the barn into the sunlight. Cattle and horses were released more cautiously. Some farmers waited until the Feast of St. George (April 23), because the saint was considered the protector of cattle, especially of horses.

When cattle were put out to pasture, the master of the house walked around his herd three times and prayed to St. George not to allow bears, wolves or foxes to harass the precious livestock.

A shepherd boy drove the livestock out to pasture, while everyone at home fasted until their return. Then, the master of the house, standing at the head of the table with a drink in his hand, prayed for rain, a rich pasture, health for the animals and protection from St. George.

Only then did the family finally sit down to eat together. At the end of the 19th century, the custom still survived when herdsmen walked around their herd three times, prayed and tossed eggs at the animals. Any animal that was struck by an egg and later killed by wolves was paid for by the neighbors.

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17.00—Mrs. A.M. Trainis, Richmond Hill, NY; Jos. B. Lukas, New Haven, CT; Julius Vilciauskas, Waterbury, CT

12.00—Louis Stukas, Morganville, NJ; Mr. & Mrs. C. Rugienius, Philadelphia, PA; John Dougal, Thorndike, MA; Alphonse Balsis, Green Creek, NJ

10.00—Moteru Vieniye, Woodhaven, NY; Charles Gwazdouskas, Waterbury, CT; Snieguole Jurskyte, Philadelphia, PA; Ruta Kozakaitis, Watertown, CT; Ben Kvietkauskas, Poquonock, CT; Virginia Pauza, Rochester, NY; Susan Covalesky, Dover, NJ; Cecilia Stulgaitis, Sylvania, OH; Julia Leitnik Roberts, Indianapolis, IN

9.00—Mrs. Sarah Grobosky, Pittston, PA

7.00—Mrs. Edmund Ganis, Wilkes Barre, PA; Bernard Kascavage, Yardley, PA; Anthony Alikonis, Reading, PA; Carl Kazakauskas, Philadelphia, PA; Zigmans Grybinas, O'Fallon, IL; Ellie Lemmens, Duluth, MN; Stanley Romanoski, Morgantown, WV; Mrs. Mary Shulin, Lakewood, NJ; Mrs. Arlene Stolarick, Haddonfield, NJ; Mr. & Mrs. A. Trakimas, Redondo Beach, CA; Paul Rizauckas, New Britain, CT; Mr. & Mrs. Vito Val, Oak Brook, IL; Josephine Walsh, Quincy, MA; K. Vaiciulis Vernon, Ellington, CT.

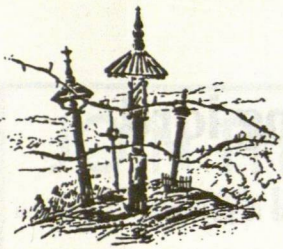
6.00—Mr. & Mrs. A.J. Givellis, Coventry, RI

5.00—Walter Lazdauskas, Baker, OR; Renata Puntolillo, No. Arlington, NJ

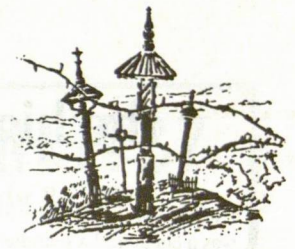
4.00—Mr. & Mrs. A. Akelaitis, Flemington, NJ; Victoria Ceceta, NY; Anna Levonowich, Kenosha, WI; Edward Prancikitas, Holbrook, NY; Lynn Cox, Philadelphia, PA; Barbara Schmidt, Milford, CT

3.00—Stanley Balyas, Grand Rapids, MI; Charles Alicks, Pawllys Isl., SC; Florence Schneider, Waukegan, NY; Mr. & Mrs. A. Bileris, Richmond Hill, NY

2.00—Mrs. Nellie Dumcius, Watertown, CT; Oleg Geschwendt, Cicero, IL; Vileja Gloede, Santee, CA; T. Gobuzas, Blauvelt, NY; Edward Greetis, Worth, IL; Albin Grenda, M.D., Jacksonville, FL; A. Balsys, Montauk, NY; Mrs. K.V. Jonaitis, Chicago, IL; Vytautas Jurgela, So. Boston, MA; Stella Kaulakis, Chicago, IL; Joseph Laucka, Bethesda, MD; Mrs. S. Mesec, Waukegan, IL; Kestutis Mitkevicius, Boston, MA; Emily Oster, Ft. Lee, NJ; Irene Beyers, Portland, OR; John Pacesa, Brooklyn, NY; Richard Paulauskas, Worthington, OH; Mel Mickevicius, Chicago, IL; Albin Papeika, Hamden, CT; Julia Busanovich, Philadelphia, PA; George Bakunas, Torrington, CT; Joseph Chernouskas, Oxford, CT; Dorothy Dubinsky, Ansonia, CT; Nancy Gorden, Bogota, NJ; Joseph Gustaitis, Brooklyn, NY; Irene Hornyik, Corvallis, OR; Blanche Kohanski, Flemington, NJ; Stella Keciioris, Carmel, NY; John Kudzma, Nashua, NH; Mr. & Mrs. A. Lukosevicius, Middletown, NJ; Olga Kupris, W. Edmeston, NY; John Ketorkus, Racine, WI; Anne Marie Lithkousky, Holland, PA; Mr. A. Migliore, Glendale, NY; Richard Mills, White Plains, NY; Mrs. Jenny Mound, Parsippany, NJ; Albert Molis, Gunderland, NY; Anna Nardini, Tamaqua, PA; Anne Navarro, Huntington, NY; Mrs. Palubinskiene, Baltimore, MD; Mr. Roy Povell, New York, NY; Julia Paskevich, Holbert, San Antonio, TX; Loretta C. Peterson, Gates Mills, OH; Mrs. Millie Pletz, Bronx, NY; Pauline Putrimer, E. Windsor, CT; Agrafina Romutis, Pittsburgh, PA; Mary Tamy, Pittsburgh, PA; Lorraine Taoras, Springfield, VA; Carolyn St. Pierre, Jaffrey, NH; Edward Trumpick, Amsterdams, NY; Emilia Sadosis, Verona, NJ; Mrs. S. Sakalys, E. Greenwich, RI; R. Thomann, Slate Hill, NY; George Yesolaitis, Wayne, NJ; Walter Yuska, E. Dorset, VT;



SECOND ANNUAL
DAY OF PRAYER
FOR



LITHUANIA

Saturday, June 13, 1987

To commemorate the 46th Anniversary of the mass arrests and deportation of the thousands of Lithuanian people from their homeland begun on June 14, 1941.

Solemn Mass – 1:00 pm
Bishop Paulius Baltakis, O.F.M.
Main Celebrant
Rev. Casimir Pugevičius
Homilist



Outdoor Procession – 3:30 pm
Devotions and Benediction

- * Exhibit of Lithuanian weavings and artwork
- * Ethnic artwork from Lithuania available for sale
- * Lithuanian food available in spacious cafeteria
- * Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid Display
- * Colorful participation of Lithuanian organizations and parishes.

Please Participate



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Coordinator: Father Timothy Burkauskas, O.S.P.



the high-spirited youth and the cheating lord

In a certain land there lived a lord who was a cheat and a swindler. He was always tricking his workmen and robbing them; and, to one of them, a cheerful, highspirited youth, he had not paid his wages for three years on end.

Now, this young workman was walking along the river bank one day when he met a man coming toward him.

"Where are you coming from?" asked the workman.

"From where the road takes its beginning."

"Good! I can see you're a bright lad, so let's be friends. You and I will go to that devil of a lord of mine together. I'll go in first and you stand outside and listen to what he and I talk about. Then you'll know what to say to him later."

Back went the workman to the lord's house.

"You haven't paid me my wages for three years, Your Honour," said he to the lord. "Can't you give me some beer at least?"

"I have no beer," the lord replied. "There's been a poor crop of barley this year."

This did not daunt the workman who knew how stingy and stupid was the lord.

"I recently paid a visit to my kinsmen who work on one of the estates near here," said he, "and the barley they grow is really something! Why, they make twelve barrels of beer out of one ear."

"It can't be!" the lord cried. "I'll send one of my servants to see if it's true or not."

Off went the servant to do the lord's bidding, and the first person he met was the workman's new friend.

"Where do you come from, my good man?" asked he.

"The very place you're bound for."

"Had they a good crop of barley this year?"

"I don't know, for I wasn't there when they were making beer. I did see them cutting the barley though. Ten men were at it for three days and it was axes they were using."

The servant gave the man ten copper pieces and asked him to come with him to the lord and tell him all about it.

The man agreed.

"Is it true about the barley?" asked the lord of the servant.

"It is indeed, sir. I've even brought someone with me who'll bear me out."

The lord was in a fix and he knew it.

"Come in a year. I will pay what is owing you in cabbage."

The workman went away, but when the year was up he dressed his friend in a woman's clothes and went with him to see the lord, himself walking in front and his friend dragging along behind him.

"I've come to get my cabbage, Your



Baltic Folk Tale

A few people still remember how, in the beginning of this century in Lithuania, people used to gather evenings in dimly lit cottages, work at chores, and tell tales. Some of the story tellers became so good at improvising and acting out their stories they held their audience spellbound. Theirs has become a lost art, but the old tales remain meaningful today for we still have people around who resemble the lord in this story.

Honour," said he to the lord.

"I have no cabbage, we've had a poor crop of it this year," the lord replied, spreading out his hands.

"Well, in the place I've just been to, the lord had such a rich crop of it that they shredded twelve barrels full out of a single head."

"It can't be!" cried the lord. "I'll send one of my servants to see if it's true or not."

Off went the servant and he met the workman's friend dressed up as a woman.

"Where do you come from?" the servant asked.

"The place you are bound for."

"Had they a good cabbage crop this year?"

"I don't know, for I wasn't there when they were salting the cabbage. But I did see that they were using twelve horses to cart one cabbage stump."

"What did they want it for?"

"To make a bridge. It was just big enough to span a river."

Said the servant:

"Here are ten copper pieces for you for making my way shorter. Come with me to my lord and tell him all about it."

Back came the servant to the lord's house.

"Is it true that they had as rich a crop of cabbage as the workman said?" the lord asked him.

"It is indeed, sir. I have brought a woman with me who comes from there and she will bear me out."

The lord turned to the workman.

"All right, then," said he. "Come back next year and perhaps the hens will be laying well.

Then I'll be able to pay what is owing you in eggs."

When spring came round they went to see the lord again, the workman walking in front and his friend, a beard pasted to his chin, following.

"How are your hens laying, Your Honour?"

"Badly, very badly. In fact, they haven't laid a single egg. There was nothing to feed them with."

"Well, I'm just back from a place where they feed hens with stars."

"It can't be!" cried the lord. "I'll send my servant to see."

Off went the servant, and the first person he met was the workman's bearded friend.

"Where do you come from?" asked he.

"The place you are bound for."

"Have you seen anyone there feeding hens with stars?"

"No. But I did see three men rolling one egg on to a frying pan."

The servant gave the bearded man ten copper pieces and bade him repeat what he had just said to the lord.

Back came the servant to the lord's house.

"Is it true about the hens?" asked the lord.

"Indeed it is, sir! They feed the hens with stars and the hens lay eggs so large that it is all three men can do to lift one egg. I have brought a man with me from those parts and he'll bear me out."

The lord saw that he would be hard put to it to get rid of his workman.

"Come back in a year," said he, "and tell me of the greatest fool you will have seen. Then I'll pay what is owing you."

Off went the workman, he spent the year any which way and then came back again to see the lord.

"Well, what have you seen that you would like me to hear about?" asked the lord.

"I have been travelling the year round and I have seen many strange and wonderful things. In one place I went to I saw a man sitting on the edge of a forest and that is what he had been doing for ten years. His beard was so long that it stretched over the ground and there were swallows nesting under it and also behind his ears. A crowd of people milled round him and they were all filled with wonder to see anyone so foolish."

"Why does he sit there?"

"He wants his lord to take pity on him. The poor man hasn't been paid his wages in ten years."

"Why do people think this man a fool?"

"Because he hasn't lost hope that a lord will treat a man justly."

At this, the lord, who understood very well what his workman was hinting at, bade his servants drive him out from his house.

JOIN THE PILGRIMAGE TO ROME IN 1987

The 600th Lithuanian Christianity Jubilee takes place June 24 - July 2, 1987

Special celebration plans include:

Pope John Paul II's audience with the Lithuanian pilgrims.
 Holy Father's Sunday Mass and Beatification at St. Peter's Basilica.
 Mass at St. John Lateran Basilica.
 Mass at the Basilica of 12 Apostles.
 Lithuanian Choir performance at St. Peter's Basilica.
 Lithuanian Cultural Congress.
 Buffet banquet at the Castel Sant'Angelo.



<i>Prices:</i>	Hilton	from Chicago	\$1530.00
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	Polo	from Chicago	\$1310.00
	Michelangelo/Grand	from Chicago	\$1255.00
	Nordland	from Chicago	\$1090.00

Departures from Los Angeles - add \$150.00 to the above prices.

Departures from Boston, New York, Toronto - subtract \$50.00 from above prices.

Prices do NOT include \$13.00 airport taxes. Prices may fluctuate with the exchange rate.

Prices Include: Round trip air via ALITALIA 747 jet
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*Hospitality Desk

*Luggage, portorage, land taxes

*Buffet party at Castel Sant'Angelo

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Alex Lauraitis is offering two 2-week preconvention tours:

A.) Venice, Innsbruck, Switzerland, Geneva, Lugano.

B.) Venice, Austria, Budapest, Yugoslavia.

He is also offering a 1-week preconvention tour through Italy.

Romas Kezys is offering a 1-week preconvention tour through Germany and Switzerland.

Camp Dainava

Because of its great success during the past three years, a practical Lithuanian language course for adult beginners, intermediate beginners and advanced students will be given again this summer, August 16th to 23rd, at Lithuanian Youth Camp Dainava, near Manchester, Mich. The course will take place during the annual session of the Lithuanian Language Teachers Seminar. Because of Pennsylvania Lithuanian Day on August 16th, the course can be arranged for August 17th to 24th for students from Pennsylvania.

Practical language lessons will be given each morning. The afternoons and evenings will be filled with Lithuanian Folk Dance lessons, songs and cultural programs, all conducted in the Lithuanian language.

The emphasis and goal of this course will be to teach the enrolled students a large, practical vocabulary. Students will then be taught to utilize these words in grammatically correct sentences.

The entire family can vacation at Camp Dainava. The price of the one-week course, including room and board is around \$90 per person. For children—less. There are family rates.

Those interested in registering for this opportunity to learn to speak Lithuanian are urged to register not later than June 15th at the following address: Bronius Krokys, 1124 Hedgerow La., Philadelphia, PA 19115. Inquiries by phone may be made at (215) 671-0397. There is a \$5.00 registration fee.



In Loving Memory of

CHARLES P. TREPPE

Spring Hill, Fl.

April 23, 1985

Requested by Elizabeth E. Treppe

Day of Prayer
for Lithuania

June 13 - 1 p.m.

National Shrine
of Our Lady of
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Visi lietuviai taupo lietuviškoje Kasoje

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**Cooking**

with
Aldona Marcavage

MYSTERY PANCAKES

2 eggs, beaten
1 cup shredded, raw potatoes
1 cup shredded, raw zucchini
½ cup shredded carrots
¼ cup chopped onions
¼ cup chopped red or green peppers
3 tbsp. flour
½ tsp. salt
1 tsp. chicken broth
dash of ground red pepper
few drops Worcestershire sauce

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Spoon mix onto hot oiled frying pan. Cook over medium heat for about 3 minutes or until golden brown. Keep warm on baking sheet in warm oven until all pancakes are fried. May be served with sour cream.

**ONUTE'S
CHEESECAKE BARS**

(from Ann Petrus)

CRUST:
1 cup flour
1 cup chopped walnuts
⅓ cup brown sugar
⅓ cup melted butter

Mix dry ingredients in bowl. Pour in butter. Toss. Pat dough into 13x9x2. Greased pan (up on sides a little). Bake at 350° for 10 to 12 min. (watch). Cool 5 min.

FILLING:
1 lb. cream cheese, softened at room temp.
¾ cup sugar
1 tbsp. lemon juice
3 eggs

Beat cream cheese, sugar, lemon juice until light. Add eggs one at a time, beating well. Pour into baked crust. Bake at 350° approximately 25 min. (top will not brown). Place under broiler for one minute. Cool. Refrigerate ½-hour before cutting into small squares.

**FISH SALAD
with
HORSERADISH SAUCE**

2 lbs. cold boiled halibut or cod fillet
4 tbsp. horseradish
1 pt. sour cream
1 tsp. salt
dash sugar
⅛ tsp. ground pepper
2 tbsp. chopped onion
1 tbsp. white vinegar
3 tbsp. chopped fresh dill
1 medium head lettuce
2 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
3 tomatoes, peeled, cut into wedges

Squeeze horseradish dry. In large mixing bowl, combine horseradish, sour cream, salt, pepper, onions, vinegar, sugar, 2 tbsp. chopped dill. Break fish into 2-inch chunks and carefully fold into sour cream dressing. marinate for at least ½-hour in refrigerator; then arrange fish, sauce and all on bed of dried, chilled lettuce leaves. Garnish with sliced eggs and tomato wedges and strew remaining chopped dill over salad.

LEGATION OF LITHUANIA
2622 16TH ST.
WASHINGTON, DC 20009

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

May I convey greetings from all British Lithuanians on this side of the Atlantic, and in particular the members of DBLJS (Lithuanian Youth Association in Great Britain).

Personally, I find Bridges a useful way of improving my knowledge of Lithuanian history and culture. The journal appeals to many young people in our organization who regrettably do not speak Lithuanian adequately, and in this sense it is a more useful medium for developing our national identity.

We know that many Bridges readers have either British connections or interests; I would be most grateful to use your column to seek sponsors who would wish to assist our community in sending young Lithians to PLJK VI - The World Lithuanian Youth Congress being held in Australia this Christmas. Would sponsors please send their donations/enquiries (with name and address for return certificate) to:

A. Blinstrubas
Lithuanian House
2 Ladbroke Gardens
London W11 2PJ
England

Širdingas ačiū

*Gėrardas Jakimavičius
Nottingham, England*

Thank you for your article "The Hiatus" in the May issue of Bridges. Also for your review of my book "Faces of Two Worlds" in the previous issue. Both articles offered new insights even to me who am the author of the art show Paroda '87 and the book. This is the kind of reviewing that we need and can profit from.

*Algimantas Kezys
Chicago, Ill.*

I am very happy that a journal exists that is so informative and is written in English. All too often, major Lithuanian works are published solely in Lithuanian with little or no concern in providing a translation in an international language, e.g., English. This is often detrimental to the American-Lithuanian, half-Lithuanian and the non-Lithuanian who is interested in the subject material but is unable to appreciate its

content. The Soviets understand this and their books quite often contain English and German and French translations, alongside the native Lithuanian. Perhaps the Lithuanian community here should also start thinking in these terms. Again, your magazine fills a void. Keep up the good work!

*Al Lukosevicius,
New Monmouth, NJ*

Re: a photo by Kapočius at Beekeeping Museum, Rumšiškės, Lithuania. Statue of Idol confuses me. Do you have a better picture? 3-dimensional with its historical background, measurements and purpose? I would like to use this in our discussions on the origin of Lithuanians (Samogitians-Livonians). Thank you!

*Petras Kantakevicius,
Syracuse, NY*

I write a small genealogy newsletter (circ. 100) for Lithuanian-Americans. I would like your permission to reprint articles from Bridges that are of interest to my relatives. I really would like all of them to get your magazine, as I think it is excellent. I find that many are uninformed of "things" Lithuanian. Your Bridges would help fill this gap.

*Louis Dylus,
Fairfax, VA.*

I enjoy all the stories of myths and superstitions and look for more about our parents' ancient beliefs. Wish I had known about Bridges years ago. Ačiū.

*Ms. G.M. Baron,
Waukegan, IL.*

Thank you for a great journal. I've already sent subscriptions to my six grown children (all 100% Lithuanian, born here in the U.S.A., as we were, too). All of us, including our grandchildren, are proud of our Lithuanian blood. Everyone enjoys Bridges—every bit of it, including the letters from readers.

*Cecilia Stulgaitis,
Sylvania, OH*

A sister at the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in Putnam, Ct., sent me a copy of Bridges and I found it very informative.

I am tracing my Lithuanian grandmother's ancestry. Please enter my subscription. I think many Americans could learn a lot by reading views like the anti-Communist ones that I saw in Bridges.

*Dave Bennett,
Pasadena, TX*

Thank you for your dedication and efforts. Your publication is read with great interest. Of great interest was the article about the village of Punks in Poland, very close to the Lithuanian border. A Lithuanian poster hangs on the wall of my high school classroom, in addition to an "It's Exciting to be Lithuanian" sticker on my file cabinet. I also have Poland & Solidarnosc posters in my classroom.

*John A. Dougal,
Thorndike, MA*

Enclosed: this donation with hope that your great work may continue. Thoroughly enjoy your Bridges. Labai ačiū.

*Dr. Jonas Bernotavičius
Hyannis, MA.*

Bridges informs me so much about my family background that I never knew.

*Helen Stagg,
La Jolla, CA*

WANTED: EDITOR FOR BRIDGES

Applicant must be knowledgeable about current and past Lithuania, willing to learn, adaptable, financially independent, and dedicated to rallying Lithuanian Americans to work towards the goal of liberation for the people of Lithuania. Please send resume and suggestions to:

Demie Jonaitis
Editor of Bridges
79-18 Park Lane South
Woodhaven, N.Y. 11421